



APPENDIX K: DEIS DOCUMENTATION AND COMMENTS

DEIS Documentation

The BR Loop Tier 1 DEIS was distributed in October 2011 to various federal, state and local agencies and public libraries within the 5 Parish area. Also, a copy of the Executive Summary, along with access to an electronic version, was distributed to public officials within the 5 Parish area. Refer to Appendix I of the DEIS for a complete list of the circulation.

The BR Loop Tier 1 DEIS Notice of Availability was issued in the Federal Register on November 10, 2011. A copy of the NOA is shown below. Note that the DEIS comment period was extended by the FHWA Project Delivery Team Leader to January 23, 2012.



70130

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key data or information should be submitted for the public docket. To ensure that proprietary information is not inadvertently placed in the docket, submissions containing such information should be sent directly to the contact person listed above and not to the public docket. Information covered by a claim of confidentiality will be disclosed by EPA only to the extent allowed and by the procedures set forth in 40 CFR part 2. If no claim of confidentiality accompanies the submission when EPA receives it, EPA will make it available to the public without further notice to the person making comments.

Dated: November 4, 2011.

Margo Tsirigotis Oge,

Director, Office of Transportation and Air Quality, Office of Air and Radiation.

[FR Doc. 2011-29168 Filed 11-9-11; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 6560-50-P

ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY

[ER-FRL-8999-9]

Environmental Impacts Statements; Notice of Availability

Responsible Agency: Office of Federal Activities, General Information (202) 564-1399 or <http://www.epa.gov/compliance/nepa/>. Weekly receipt of Environmental Impact Statements. Filed 10/31/2011 Through 11/04/2011 Pursuant to 40 CFR 1506.9.

Notice

Section 309(a) of the Clean Air Act requires that EPA make public its comments on EISs issued by other Federal agencies. EPA's comment letters on EIS are available at: <http://www.epa.gov/compliance/nepa/eisdata.html>.

Rebuilding Plan, Annual Catch Limits, Management Measures, Red Grouper—Annual Catch Limits, Management Measures, Grouper Accountability Measures, Gulf of Mexico, *Review Period Ends:* 12/12/2011, *Contact:* Roy E. Crabtree (727) 924-5301

EIS No. 20110378, Draft EIS, FHWA, LA, Tier 1—Baton Rouge Loop Toll Facility Project, Proposed as a 90 to 105 mile long Circumferential Controlled Access Free-Flow Toll Roadway with two new Mississippi River Crossings, in Parishes of Ascension, East Baton Rouge, Iberville, Livingston, and West Baton Rouge, LA, Comment Period Ends: 01/09/2012, *Contact:* Carl N. Highsmith (225) 757-7615

EIS No. 20110379, Draft EIS, USN, HI, Basing of MV-22 and H-1 Aircraft in Support of III Marine Expeditionary Force (MEF) Elements, Construction and Renovation of Facilities to Accommodate and Maintain the Squadrons, HI, Comment Period Ends: 12/27/2011, *Contact:* John Bigay (808) 472-1196.

EIS No. 20110380, Second Draft Supplement, NRC, TN, Related to the Operation of Watts Bar Nuclear Plant Units 2, New and Updated Information, Operating License, Rhea County, TN, Comment Period Ends: 01/24/2012, *Contact:* Justin Poole (301) 415-2048.

EIS No. 20110381, Draft EIS, WAPA, AZ, Quartzsite Solar Energy Project and Proposed Yuma Field Office Resource Management Plan Amendment, Implementation, Right-of-Way Application to the BLM, La Paz County, AZ, Comment Period Ends: 02/08/2012, *Contact:* Liana Reilly (720) 962-7253.

EIS No. 20110382, Draft EIS, DOI, OO, Programmatic EIS—Outer Continental Shelf Oil and Gas Leasing Program—

10/07/2011: Extending Comment Period from 11/21/2011 to 12/21/2011.

Dated: November 7, 2011.

Cliff Rader,

Acting Director, NEPA Compliance Division, Office of Federal Activities.

[FR Doc. 2011-29188 Filed 11-9-11; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 6560-50-P

ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY

[FRL-9490-2]

Notice of Public Meeting of the Interagency Steering Committee on Radiation Standards

AGENCY: Environmental Protection Agency.

ACTION: Notice of Public Meeting.

SUMMARY: The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) will host a meeting of the Interagency Steering Committee on Radiation Standards (ISCORS) on November 14, 2011, in Washington, DC. The purpose of ISCORS is to foster early resolution and coordination of regulatory issues associated with radiation standards. Agencies represented as members of ISCORS include the following: EPA; Nuclear Regulatory Commission; Department of Energy; Department of Defense; Department of Transportation; Department of Homeland Security; Department of Labor's Occupational Safety and Health Administration; and the Department of Health and Human Services. ISCORS meeting observer agencies include the Office of Science and Technology Policy, Office of Management and Budget, Defense Nuclear Facilities Safety Board, as well as representatives from both the States of Illinois and Pennsylvania. ISCORS



DEIS Comments

During the DEIS comment period, comments were received from resource agencies, local/regional agencies, private organizations/groups, public officials, and other interested persons.

Resource Agencies

FEMA - Region VI
LA Dept. of Environmental Quality
LA Dept. of Wildlife and Fisheries
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
U.S. Coast Guard
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency - Region 6
U.S. Department of the Interior
U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service - Lafayette Field Office

Comments received from the resource agencies are contained within this Appendix and summarized in Table 7.1. A response has been prepared for each comment and it has been noted which sections of the EIS have been revised based on the comments.

Local / Regional Agencies

BREC
City of Central Council
Lake Pontchartrain Basin Foundation
Livingston Parish Council
Livingston Parish Public Schools
Parish of Ascension School Board

Private Organizations / Groups

Arnold Acres Homeowners Assoc.
Citizens for Highways and Infrastructure in Livingston Parish
Louisiana Environmental Action Network
Neighbors In Action
Sierra Club

Public Officials

Assistant Attorney General
LA delegation representing Livingston Parish and City of Central (submitted by Neighbors in Action)
LA Representative, District 59
LA Representative, District 65
LA Senator, District 13
LA Senator, District 6
Mayor, City of Walker (submitted by Neighbors in Action)



Livingston Parish Councilman-Elect, District 1
Livingston Parish President-Elect (submitted by Neighbors in Action)
Livingston Parish Sheriff-Elect (submitted by Neighbors in Action)

Other Interested Persons – Written Comments

A total of 337 written comments were received from other interested persons during the DEIS comment period. Of this total, 64 written comments were written on a form produced by the *Central City News* newspaper and submitted to the team individually. In addition, 65 of the 337 written comments were submitted by the editor of the *Central City News* newspaper.

Other Interested Persons – Oral Comments Received at the Public Hearings

There were a total of 39 oral comments received from other interested persons at the five public hearings. Of these comments, six comments were received in East Baton Rouge Parish, 11 comments were received in Livingston Parish, 12 comments were received in Ascension Parish, three comments were received in Iberville Parish and seven comments were received in West Baton Rouge Parish.

*Note that seven other interested persons submitted both an oral and written comment

Comments received from local/regional agencies, private organizations/groups, public officials, and other interested persons are located within the CD included in this Appendix. The comments have been categorized by subject code (see Table 7.2a) and summarized in Table 7.2b.

Table 7.2b presents a summary of the comments received along with a response for each comment as appropriate. The project team thoroughly analyzed, categorized, and responded to all comments pertinent to the proposed project. The response code shown in Table 7.2b has been identified on each comment or transcript as appropriate and can be found on the CD included in this Appendix.



**Table 7.1
 RESOURCE AGENCY DEIS COMMENTS AND RESPONSES**

No.	Ref.	Comment	Response	Revised EIS	Revised Pages
FEMA (11/14/11)					
1	App. E, App. I	Request that Parish Floodplain Administrators be contacted for the review and possible permit requirements	<i>A copy of the Tier 1 DEIS was circulated to all Parish Floodplain Administrators. This is documented in Appendix I, Tier 1 EIS Circulation. No comments were received from the Parish Floodplain Administrators regarding the DEIS during the comment period. Therefore, a follow up letter was sent to each flood plain administrator requesting comments and permit requirements. The correspondence letters with the floodplain administrators have been included in Appendix E, Public and Agency Coordination.</i>	X	I-6, E-219
US DOI, F&W (12/21/11)					
2	Ch. 5, page 5-10	The rationale for eliminating alternatives should be substantiated with documentation that demonstrates that the eliminated alternatives do not fulfill project objectives	<i>The purpose of the Tier 1 EIS is to identify and study potential corridors within which the BR Loop project could be constructed and then to identify a preferred corridor(s). The subsequent Tier 2 EIS will identify and analyze potential alternative alignments within the preferred corridor(s) for the BR Loop project. Chapter 5 has been revised in order to better demonstrate the iterative corridor refinement process, including evaluation of various impacts to the human, natural, and physical environments, as well as how the eliminated corridors do not fulfill the project objectives/purpose.</i>	X	Ch.5
3	Ch. 5, page 5-11	The DEIS does not fully contain US requirements (i.e. migratory bird impacts, mature jurisdictional forested wetland locations, threatened/endangered species surveys) nor does the DEIS discuss the environmentally preferable alternative(s).	<i>FEIS has been revised to include the US regulatory requirements for Waters of the US, including wetlands - including Section 404 and EO 11990 (Section 3.12), threatened/endangered species (Section 3.14), and migratory birds (Section 3.14)</i> <i>In accordance with 40 CFR 1505.2(b), FEIS Section 5.4 has been revised to identify the environmentally preferable alternative for the North, South and East Units. Along with the identification of the environmentally preferable alternatives for each unit, the following text was added explaining what the environmentally preferable alternative is and how it relates to NEPA:</i> <i>“Within each unit write-up below, the environmentally preferable alternative is also identified in accordance with 40 CFR 1505.2(b). The environmentally preferable alternative is the alternative that causes the least damage to the biological and physical environment. Note that NEPA is a procedural law that requires agencies to take a hard look and clearly communicate to the public the anticipated environmental impacts to various resources, in light of possible mitigation and minimization efforts. NEPA, however, does not require agencies to select the alternative that is most preferable from an environmental perspective.”</i>	X	Ch.5
4	Ch. 5, page 5-12	Desire to assist in identifying the environmentally preferable alternative(s).	<i>In accordance with 40 CFR 1505.2(b), FEIS Section 5.4 has been revised to identify the environmentally preferable alternative for the North, South and East Units. Along with the identification of the environmentally preferable alternatives for each unit, the following text was added explaining what the environmentally preferable alternative is and how it relates to NEPA:</i> <i>“Within each unit write-up below, the environmentally preferable alternative is also identified in accordance with 40 CFR 1505.2(b). The environmentally preferable</i>	X	Ch.5

Bold Text = Changes/modifications made to Tier 1 EIS based on the DEIS comment.



**Table 7.1
 RESOURCE AGENCY DEIS COMMENTS AND RESPONSES**

No.	Ref.	Comment	Response	Revised EIS	Revised Pages
			<i>alternative is the alternative that causes the least damage to the biological and physical environment. Note that NEPA is a procedural law that requires agencies to take a hard look and clearly communicate to the public the anticipated environmental impacts to various resources, in light of possible mitigation and minimization efforts. NEPA, however, does not require agencies to select the alternative that is most preferable from an environmental perspective. NEPA is also intended to enable agencies to make fully informed project decisions in light of environmental consequences, to inform the public about those consequences, and allow the public an opportunity to participate in the process through commenting."</i>		
5	Ch. 5, page 5-13	All apparent surveys/delineations should be completed and presented to resources agencies in order to identify the environmentally preferred alternative as required by NEPA prior to eliminating alternatives.	<i>The level of analysis for the Tier 1 EIS is on a broad scale at the corridor level. Given the large size of the Baton Rouge Loop project study area and the multitude of various corridors under consideration, it was considered impracticable to conduct field surveys/delineations. However, information relating to the location, type, density, etc. was gathered for the various environmental resources and compiled into a GIS database. Additional information was also obtained through public comments and agency coordination (see Comment No. 34). The initial corridor screening process, as detailed in Comment No. 36, was utilized to vet project corridors under consideration. As stated in Chapter 6, specific field surveys/delineations will be conducted and presented to the resource agencies as part of the Tier 2 EIS once the scope of the BR Loop Project has been narrowed to a preferred corridor(s).</i>	-	-
6	3.14, Ch.6	Special consideration for threatened/endangered species (reference to letter dated 3/10/09), bald eagle, and colonial nesting birds.	<i>Federally listed threatened and endangered species as listed in the USFWS letter dated 3/10/09 are accounted for within Section 3.14 of the Tier 1 EIS. A future action has been added to Section 6.2 stating that further consultation will occur with USFWS regarding the Alabama (inflated) heelsplitter mussel, the Gulf sturgeon, and the West Indian manatee if the project will directly or indirectly affect the Amite River; and the pallid sturgeon if directly or indirectly affecting the Mississippi River.</i> <i>Given that the Comite River is designated as a Louisiana Natural and Scenic River, a statement has been added to Section 6.4 (Permitting) stating that a Scenic River Permit may be required. Abidement by the National Bald Eagle Management (NBEM) Guidelines will be identified as a future action in Section 6.2. A commitment has also been added in Section 6.2 for a qualified biologist to inspect the proposed work sites (forested wetlands) prior to construction for the presence of undocumented nesting colonies during the nesting season.</i>	X	6-2, 6-3, 6-5
LDWF (1/5/12)					

Bold Text = Changes/modifications made to Tier 1 EIS based on the DEIS comment.

Baton Rouge Loop Tier 1 EIS
 Project No. 07-PR-MS-0002
 S.P. No. 700-96-0011
 F.A.P. No. STP-9609(504)



**Table 7.1
 RESOURCE AGENCY DEIS COMMENTS AND RESPONSES**

No.	Ref.	Comment	Response	Revised EIS	Revised Pages
7	T & E	Waddill Wildlife Refuge and Maurepas Swamp Wildlife Management Area are within the project area. The study area also intersects Bluebonnet Swamp.	<i>The Waddill Wildlife Refuge is discussed in Section 3.4.1 of the Tier 1 EIS. The EIS states in Section 3.4.1 that, "The Waddill Wildlife Refuge is located in the Project North Unit study area but is outside of any [corridor] sections."</i> <i>The Maurepas Swamp Wildlife Management Area (WMA) is located approximately 5 miles southeast from the E1 Section of the Project East Unit. This WMA is outside of any corridor sections.</i> <i>Bluebonnet Swamp is located in the Project South Unit study area but is outside of any corridor sections.</i>	-	-
8	T & E	Comite River is within the project area and is designated as scenic river.	<i>Section 3.11 of the Tier 1 EIS includes a discussion of the Comite River in the North Unit as a Scenic River. Scenic River Permits are required for all activities on or near System Rivers that may detrimentally impact the ecological integrity, scenic beauty or wilderness qualities of those rivers. Based on Exhibit 3-69 of Tier 1 EIS Volume 3, Corridor Sections N9, N7, and N5 cross the Comite River. If one of these corridor alternatives is selected as part of the preferred corridor alternative in the Tier 1 Record of Decision, coordination will need to occur with LDWF during the Tier 2 EIS and Section 6.4 (Permitting) has been updated to include a Scenic River Permit.</i>	X	6-6
9	T & E	4 natural areas registered by the LDWF thru the LNHP (Louisiana Natural Heritage Program)	<i>The project team called Judy Jones at LDWF on 3/15/12 as comment suggested (225-765-2822). The four natural areas are all large forested areas. Landowners have registered these areas with the Louisiana Natural Heritage Program as added protection from encroachment. The LDWF works with the landowners to help further protect these registered areas. Ms. Jones has provided us with maps of the natural area locations within the study area for the project file.</i>	-	-
10	T & E	Several bird nesting colonies on or near the designated study area	<i>Comment noted. Detailed field reconnaissance and surveys will occur once a preferred project alignment within the preferred project corridor is identified as part of the Tier 2 EIS level evaluation. A summation of the following has been added to Section 6.2, Commitments, to occur prior to the commencement of construction: If work for the proposed project will commence during the nesting season, a field visit to the worksite (no more than two weeks before the project begins) will be conducted to look for evidence of nesting colonies. To minimize disturbance to colonial nesting birds, all project activity occurring within 300 meters of an active nesting colony for nesting wading birds will be restricted to the non-nesting period (September 1 - February 15); and for colonies of gulls, terns, and/or black skimmers, all project activity occurring within 400 meters (700 meters for brown pelicans) of an active nesting colony will be restricted to the non-nesting period (September 16 through April 1). Colonies will be surveyed by a qualified biologist to document species present and the extent of the colonies and a survey report will be provided to LDWF.</i>	X	6-3
11	T & E	If work for the proposed project will commence during the nesting season, conduct a field visit to the worksite to look for evidence of nesting colonies.	<i>See Comment No. 10.</i>	-	-

Bold Text = Changes/modifications made to Tier 1 EIS based on the DEIS comment.



Table 7.1
RESOURCE AGENCY DEIS COMMENTS AND RESPONSES

No.	Ref.	Comment	Response	Revised EIS	Revised Pages
12	T & E	10 Bald Eagle nesting sites are recorded in the study area	<p><i>The location of Bald Eagle nesting sites were provided by USFWS. These locations were incorporated into the GIS database utilized within the corridor development and screening process (see Comment No. 33 for methodology). The location of recorded nesting sites were avoided where practicable in the creation of potential BR Loop Corridors. In instances where avoidance was not practicable due to other constraining factors, National Bald Eagle Management Guidelines will be followed. Detailed field reconnaissance and surveys will not occur until a preferred alignment has been identified as part of the Tier 2 EIS.</i></p> <p>The following has been added to Section 6.2, Commitments: The following guidelines will be adhered to in accordance with the National Bald Eagle Management Guidelines as established by the USFWS:</p> <p><i>1. If the proposed project will be visible from the nest</i></p> <p><i>a. Maintain a buffer of at least 660 feet (200 meters) between project activities and the nest (including active and alternate nests). If a similar activity is closer than 660 feet, then you may maintain a distance buffer as close to the nest as the existing tolerated activity.</i></p> <p><i>b. Restrict all clearing, external construction, and landscaping activities within 660 feet of the nest to outside the nesting season</i></p> <p><i>c. Maintain established landscape buffers that screen the activity from the nest</i></p> <p><i>2. If the proposed project will not be visible from the nest</i></p> <p><i>a. Maintain a buffer of at least 330 feet (100 meters) between project activities and the nest (including active and alternate nests). If a similar activity is closer than 330 feet, then you may maintain a distance buffer as close to the nest as the existing tolerated activity.</i></p> <p><i>b. Restrict all clearing, external construction, and landscaping activities within 660 feet of the nest to outside the nesting season</i></p>	X	6-4
13	T & E	Various other species for special consideration may be located within the project study area: alabama shad, manatee, pallid sturgeon, gulf sturgeon, inflated heelsplitter, southern rainbow, southern pocketbook, southern creek mussel, rayed creekshell, southern hickorynut, spruce pine-hardwood mesic flatwoods, small flower hemicarpha, and square-stemmed monkey-flower.	<p><i>Section 3.17 (T&E Species) in the Tier 1 DEIS identifies and discusses T&E Species of the project Parishes and critical habitat of these T&E species located within the various proposed corridor sections. The Federally Listed T&E species by Parish discussed in Section 3.17 include the Gulf Sturgeon, Inflated Heelsplitter, Manatee, Red-Cockaded Woodpecker, Pallid Sturgeon, Bald Eagle, Alabama Shad, and the Louisiana Black Bear. As noted in Section 3.17, at the Tier 1 analysis stage, it is not feasible to determine if any T&E or critical or sensitive habitat would be impacted. However, field reconnaissance and surveys will occur at the Tier 2 analysis stage once a preferred alternative alignment is designated.</i></p>	-	-

Bold Text = Changes/modifications made to Tier 1 EIS based on the DEIS comment.



**Table 7.1
 RESOURCE AGENCY DEIS COMMENTS AND RESPONSES**

No.	Ref.	Comment	Response	Revised EIS	Revised Pages
14	T & E	If at any time Heritage tracked species are encountered within the project area, please contact the LNHP Data Manager.	<i>The level of analysis for the Tier 1 EIS is on a broad scale at the corridor level. Given the large size of the Baton Rouge Loop Project Study Area and the multitude of various corridors under consideration, it was considered impracticable to conduct field surveys/delineations at this level of analysis. However, information relating to the location, type, density, etc. was gathered for the various environmental resources, compiled into a GIS database, and used for the corridor vetting process. Specific field surveys/delineations will be conducted and presented to the resource agencies as part of the Tier 2 EIS once the scope of the BR Loop Project has been narrowed to a preferred corridor(s). The following statement has been added to Section 6.1, Future Actions: If at any time Heritage tracked species are encountered, the LNHP Data Manager will be contacted.</i>	X	6-3
US DOI, Office of Environ't Policy & Compliance (1/6/12)					
15	Section 4(f)	Document the coordination with Louisiana Office of Cultural Development, Division of Historic Preservation in compliance with Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act	<i>Coordination with SHPO regarding the cultural resources study and Section 4(f) and 6(f) resources has been ongoing throughout the Tier 1 EIS process. Chapter 3 and Appendix E of the FEIS have been revised to include documentation of SHPO's formal acceptance of the Cultural Resources Study report.</i>	X	3-25, E-218
16	Section 6(f)	DEIS provides sufficient detail in the requirements of the Section 4(f) process but provides vague detail regarding the LWCF Section 6(f) process and conversion requirements. Expand DEIS to provide regulatory requirements of the Section 6(f) process under 36 CFR Part 59 and the criteria that must be met prior to receiving approval for conversion.	<i>Regulation text has been added to Chapter 4 of Tier 1 EIS to cover Section 6(f) resources:</i> <i>"Section 6(f) of the Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) Act (16 U.S.C. 460L) requires that the outdoor recreational facilities acquired or developed with Department of Interior financial assistance under the LWCF may not be converted to non-recreational use unless approval is granted by the National Park Service (NPS) to substitute property of reasonably equivalent usefulness and location and of at least equal fair market value. In accordance with the regulatory requirements of 36 CFR Part 59, requests for conversion approval must be submitted in writing by the State Liaison Officer to the appropriate NPS Regional Director. The following prerequisites must be met for conversion approval:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evaluation of all practical alternatives to the proposed conversion; • The substitution property must be of at least equal fair market value; • The substitution property must be of reasonably equivalent usefulness and location as that being converted; • The substitution property must meet the eligibility requirements for LWCF assisted acquisition and constitutes or is part of a viable recreation area; • Partially converted sites must remain recreationally viable, or otherwise be replaced; • Accomplishment of coordination with other Federal agencies; • Completion of guidelines for environmental evaluation and consideration by NPS; • Adherence to state intergovernmental clearinghouse review procedures; and • The conversion and substitution must be in accordance with the Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP) and/or equivalent recreation plans. <i>All conversions require amendments to the original project agreements that should be submitted concurrently with conversion requests or when the details of the conversion have been worked out with NPS."</i>	X	4-1

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No.	Ref.	Comment	Response	Revised EIS	Revised Pages
17	T & E	Provided copy of comments from USFWS.	See responses to Comment No. 2 through 6.	-	-
USCG (1/13/12)					
18	General	We find that the DEIS does not fully address comments raised in our prior correspondence (6/21/10 & 6/28/10). The following comments should be addressed in the DEIS.	<i>Comment noted.</i>	-	-
19	3.13, Navigation	A description of historic, current, and prospective waterway navigational usage, including type, frequency, and dimensions of each vessel for each bridge crossing over a navigable waterway should be included in the EIS. Additionally, the EIS should identify how construction and operation of the bridges will impact commercial and recreational navigation, if applicable. Information on projected vertical and horizontal clearances for each proposed bridge structure crossing a navigable waterway should be included in the EIS.	<i>Text within Section 3.13 Navigation & Navigable Waters has been revised to include more discussion on the navigation usage for each navigable waterway crossing within the 3 units of the project. Also, a graphic has been incorporated to help exhibit potential barge configurations likely to occur at the crossings.</i> <i>Text within Section 3.13 Navigation & Navigable Waters has been revised to include a discussion on potential impacts to the navigation during construction at each proposed crossing location.</i> <i>Text within Section 3.13 Navigation & Navigable Waters has been revised to include vertical and horizontal clearances for each potential navigable waterway crossing within each unit discussion.</i>	X	3-68
20	Ch. 6, Permitting	A USCG bridge permit will be issued under authority of the General Bridge Act of 1946 (33 U.S.C. 525) rather than Section 9 of the Rivers and Harbors Appropriation Act of 1899.	<i>Section 6.4 has been revised as suggested.</i>	X	6-5
21	Future Actions, Commitments, Mitigation, and Permits	USCG recognizes that the Tier 1 EIS does not identify site-specific environmental resource, land use, demographic and socioeconomic impacts. Therefore, it is recommended that the Tier 2 environmental documentation include the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Description of preferred alternative, • Description of air quality, • Description of endangered and threatened species • Description of water resources • Description of coastal barrier resources • Identifying whether a wetlands finding was completed • Description of migratory birds, essential fish habitats, national marine 	<i>Comment Noted. Site-specific studies to the natural, physical, and human environments will be conducted as part of the Tier 2 EIS. Section 6.1, Future Actions, of the EIS lists these additional studies anticipated for Tier 2 EIS phase of the project. Text has been modified in Chapter 6 to specifically identify future studies anticipated and the appropriate regulation(s).</i>	X	6-1

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No.	Ref.	Comment	Response	Revised EIS	Revised Pages
		sanctuaries, and marine mammals present in the project area and impacts <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Description of Section 106 properties within the project area and impacts Description of construction impacts to environmental resources 			
22	Permitting	Navigation and environmental impacts specific to each waterway crossing will need to be included in the bridge permit applications to the USCG. It is suggested that these bridge-specific impacts be documented in the EIS to potentially expedite preparation of these applications.	A new section, Section 3.13.4, United States Coast Guard Bridge Permit Factors, has been added to the EIS following the navigation discussion. Also, a reference to Chapter 6 has been included in this section.	X	3-74
US Army Corps of Engineers - New Orleans District (CEMVN) (1/20/12)					
23	Chapter 5	Be aware that potential alternatives that are less damaging may be eliminated using percentages of impact in order to obtain potential scale of magnitude impacts within each corridor alternative	<p>Comment noted. Chapter 5 has been revised in order to better demonstrate the iterative corridor refinement process, including evaluation of various impacts to the human, natural, and physical environments, as well as how the eliminated corridors do not fulfill the project objectives. In order to eliminate subjectivity in the corridor evaluation analysis, the comparison and evaluation of the corridor alternatives as presented in Chapter 5 has been modified within the Tier 1 FEIS. The following changes have been made: All Qualitative Ranking Matrices (see Tables 5.2, 5.4, and 5.6) have been removed for the Tier 1 FEIS. Instead of corridor rankings being based on the results of the Qualitative Ranking Matrices, corridor rankings have been based on the Quantification Matrices presented in Tables 5.1, 5.3a, 5.3b, and 5.5.</p> <p>Additional evaluation parameters have also been added to the Quantification Matrices, including environmental justice, estimated amount of wetlands impacted by habitat type by corridor as well as information regarding fragmentation of wetlands and proximity of wetlands to development (see Comments #38, #43, and #44). Chapter 5 text has been revised for the Tier 1 FEIS such that the ranking process is no longer described from a qualitative perspective, but instead has been based on the hard data presented in the Quantification Matrices. Additionally, public and agency comments on the Tier 1 DEIS has been documented as part of a separate Public Hearing report. Information obtained from these comments have been integral in the determination of a Preferred Corridor Alternative. As such, a description of public comments, including key factors, likes, and dislikes related to the corridor alternatives, have been included in the Chapter 5 Tier 1 FEIS discussion and a summary table has been included in Appendix K.</p>	X	Ch.5
24	Chapter 2, Chapter 5	CEMVN can only permit the least damaging practical alternative; therefore, CEMVN recommends determining which alternatives are practical prior to removal of an alternative from consideration. 40 CFR 230.10 (2) defines	Based on revisions to Chapter 5 described in Comment No. 23 above, the corridor evaluation process identifies the least damaging practicable corridor alternative(s) and how other corridor alternatives do not fulfill the project objectives / purpose.	X	Ch.5

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No.	Ref.	Comment	Response	Revised EIS	Revised Pages
		practicable alternatives as those which are available and capable of being done after taking into consideration cost, existing technology, and logistics in light of the overall project purposes. CEMVN recommends that CAEA confirm its definition of the overall project purpose and confirm CAEA's criteria for determining practicable alternatives are defensible.			
25	Wetlands	As practicable alternatives are determined, CEMVN recommends that CAEA take all necessary steps to avoid and minimize impacts to wetlands.	<i>Comment noted. Practicable steps will be taken to avoid and minimize impacts to wetlands as practicable alternatives are determined.</i>	-	-
<i>EPA, Region 6 (1/20/12)</i>					
26	General	EPA rates the Tier 1 DEIS as EO-2, EPA has Environmental Objections and Requests Additional Information in the Tier 1 Final EIS.	<i>Coordination and follow-up discussions have occurred with EPA during the EIS revisions process to ensure concerns are addressed. Comments have been addressed as appropriate.</i>	-	-
27	General	FEIS should include the full BR Loop Implementation Plan as an appendix	<i>The technical memorandums of the Implementation Plan have been included on a CD as part of Appendix G in the Tier 1 FEIS.</i>	X	G-1
28	General	FEIS should include a more robust evaluation process, allowing for a meaningful comparison of the environmental impacts associated with each corridor alternative, particularly with regards to wetland impacts.	<i>The purpose of the Tier 1 EIS is to identify and study potential corridors within which the BR Loop project could be constructed and then to identify a preferred corridor(s). The subsequent Tier 2 EIS will identify and analyze potential alternative alignments within the preferred corridor(s) for the BR Loop project. Chapter 5 has been revised in order to better demonstrate the iterative corridor refinement process, including evaluation of various impacts to the human, natural, and physical environments, as well as how the eliminated corridors do not fulfill the project objectives. Specific to wetlands, information regarding wetlands impacted within each proposed corridor segment by habitat type has been added to Chapter 5 of the Tier 1 FEIS as part of the comparison and evaluation of alternatives. The continued screening process concerning wetlands considers evaluation of impacts to higher functional valued wetlands (e.g., emergent wetlands vs. forested wetlands). See Comment Nos. 43 through 45 below for additional discussion related to the evaluation of wetland impacts.</i>	X	Ch.5
29	General	No decision on a Preferred Corridor should be made until adequate information is made available in the Tier 1 EIS.	<i>Chapter 5 has been revised in order to better demonstrate the iterative corridor refinement process, including evaluation of various impacts to the human, natural, and physical environments, as well as how the eliminated corridors do not fulfill the project objective / purpose.</i>	X	Ch.5

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Table 7.1
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30	General	Responses to comments should be placed in a dedicated section of the Tier 1 FEIS, or its appendices, and should include specific location where the revision, if any, was made. If no revision was made, an explanation should be included.	<i>Comment noted. Responses to DEIS comments from resource agencies and EIS revision locations where applicable have been added to the Tier1 FEIS as part of Appendix K. Also, comments from other interested persons is included as part of Appendix K.</i>	X	App.K
31	General	Send our office 2 copies of the Tier 1 FIES and an internet link when it is sent to the Office of Federal Activities EPA (Mail Code 2252A), Ariel Rios Federal Building, 1200 Pennsylvania Ave, N.W., Washington, DC 2004.	<i>Comment noted. EPA office will be sent the requested copies of the Tier 1 FEIS.</i>	-	-
32	Chapters 1, 2	Define and discuss how the corridors meet the requirement of having logical termini and independent utility	<p><i>With the cooperation of the FHWA and the LADOTD, the project was divided into three units: the North, the South, and the Eastern Units (see Figure ES-2 or Figure 2-6 of the Tier 1 EIS). Although the Baton Rouge Loop is a circumferential roadway, each of the three units has established independent utility and can function on its own, without further construction of adjacent units. These three units have the following corridor level logical termini:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>• North Unit: 1-10 in West Baton Rouge Parish as the western logical terminus and 1-12 in Livingston Parish as the eastern logical terminus</i> <i>• South Unit: 1-10 in West Baton Rouge Parish as the western logical terminus and 1-10 in Ascension Parish as the eastern logical terminus</i> <i>• Eastern Unit: 1-12 in Livingston Parish as the northern logical terminus and 1-10 in Ascension Parish as the southern logical terminus</i> <p><i>At the request of FHWA, an interchange study was developed by the Project Team that documented the spacing of system-to-system interchanges. This study, entitled Potential System-to-System Interchange Locations, established that a fully-directional, system-to-system interchange would be provided at each of the major interchanges of the interstate system and would satisfy AASHTO interchange spacing guidelines. Additionally, all traffic movements would be provided at each interchange and the safety and flow of traffic on the existing interstate system would not be adversely impacted.</i></p> <p><i>A discussion of independent utility and the logical termini for the three corridor units has been added to Chapter 1 of the Tier 1 FEIS. The system-to-system interchange study is discussed in Section 2.4.4.2 of the Tier 1 FEIS. Alignment-specific logical termini would be developed during the Tier 2 process.</i></p>	X	1-1
33	Chapter 2	Describe process for identifying large avoidance areas or constraints	<p><i>ArcGIS workstation software was applied at a screening level to the best available data for a Tier 1-level evaluation. No single, accepted GIS approach exists for screening potential constraints from environmental and socioeconomic data for corridor development. Our approach shares some compatibility with the GISST, since it utilizes similar types of GIS data for producing the alignment constraints.</i></p> <p><i>The Baton Rouge Loop GIS data consisted of environmental and socioeconomic data as listed in the Implementation Plan, Technical Memorandum 2, page 2-6. The GISST and the Baton Rouge Loop approaches have common data limitations that include insufficient spatial resolution,</i></p>		

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			<p><i>inaccurate data, or outdated data. For example, land use GIS data may not contain the location of newly constructed subdivisions or the footprint of industrial plants or existing features may be incorrectly located. However, the Baton Rouge Loop GIS data benefited from the inception of the project with the local area knowledge contributed by the Project Team, stakeholders, and resource/regulatory agency representatives who augmented the GIS analysis by improving the accuracy of the environmental and socioeconomic data for corridor alternative identification.</i></p> <p><i>Our approach differs from the GISST in the way the data are used in the route selection process. For example, the GISST generates a single vulnerability or impact score for a project, whereas, the Baton Rouge Loop GIS approach allows for a multi-level, visual evaluation of groups of constraints accompanied with groups of data showing the mapped location and quantity of the constraints. Similar types of data such as soils, wetlands, and farmlands, etc. were grouped to view how they were correlated by size, location and quantity and then compared with other groups of data to identify the overall constraints.</i></p> <p><i>Summary data tables are listed by constraint and corridor segment in Section 4 of the Implementation Plan, Technical Memorandum 2. Identifying the corridor alternatives was an iterative process, repeatedly combining the local area and professional knowledge of the Project Team, agencies, stakeholders and the public to collectively identify corridor alternative alignments. The constraint data were examined in groups to identify how they interact or are correlated on large-scale maps and data tables, then ranked by the Project Team according to the number of features present and grouped for further discussion and refinement with the agency and stakeholder personnel. The alternatives were relocated and plan view sections were identified in response to that information.</i></p> <p><i>Figure 1 (located at the end of this comment/ response table) depicts the general GIS approach and how that methodology was applied to the Baton Rouge Loop. In general, the GIS approach comprises the data acquisition from various sources and uploading that data to a server for data conversion to geospatial data for GIS analysis to produce a project solution. The lower portion of the figure tracks that approach as utilized for the Baton Rouge Loop where Geospatial Data Sources relating to the natural environment, physical environment and socioeconomic factors were stored on our Data Server to generate Geospatial Data for Study Area Data Analysis, thus yielding an Informed Decision Making Solution for a Tier 1-level evaluation.</i></p> <p><i>The evaluation draws upon GIS resources for hardcopy, softcopy, and web-based exhibits for scoping and corridor identification, an iterative process that changes in response to the regulations and needs of the stakeholders, agencies and public. The approach taken here commenced with the identification of the study area in tandem with project data relating to the natural environment, physical environment and socioeconomic factors. To the extent that project-specific data were available, the natural/physical environment and socioeconomic GIS data were compiled to produce large-scale maps to assist project team members with identifying initial candidate corridors. All GIS-based data resides on a server in a statewide repository of files for Louisiana in a GIS format.</i></p> <p><i>The GIS files available and used in this project are listed in the Implementation Plan, Technical Memorandum 2, page 2-6. Data not cited in that document, but included in the GIS were: true</i></p>		

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			<p><i>color and false color vertical imagery, digital raster graphic (DRG) USGS quadrangle maps, and LiDAR. GIS mapping determined quantitative impacts according to their spatial extent, location in the study area and occurrence in data tables. Some impacts included the wetland type, wetland acreage, schools, landfills, floodzones, threatened and endangered species, cultural resources, etc. within the potential corridors. The large-scale maps were the basis for developing preliminary corridors by project team members and CAEA, FHWA and LADOTD.</i></p> <p><i>The hardcopy maps were augmented with the onscreen application of the GIS to highlight and solicit information regarding implications for initial corridors in a project team, agency, and stakeholder meeting convened in Baton Rouge, Louisiana. The environmental and socioeconomic factors exhibited on the maps were also characterized by tabular data that were evaluated and ranked by Project Team members according to the level of impact within each section of an alignment. The overall GIS practice follows an iterative approach where environmental and socioeconomic data were assessed with ArcMap workstation GIS for 5 parishes comprising 1,060 sq. miles, yielding series of constraint maps, report maps, large format public meeting maps and digital tabular data and textual files for a series of evaluations by the project team, agencies, stakeholders and the public to identify the Tier 1-level project corridors.</i></p>		
34	Chapter 2	Describe tools/processes used to gather input on avoidance constraints from various agencies	<p><i>At the onset of the project scoping process, an exhaustive search was performed to obtain all spatial analysis data for the study area, including geographic boundaries and terrain, municipal and community features, environmental resources, etc. The Project Team coordinated with numerous resource and regulatory agencies to obtain all relevant spatial data. A complete listing of all GIS data and data sources is provided in Section 2.1 (pages 2-6 through 2-8) of the Implementation Plan, Technical Memorandum No. 2.</i></p> <p><i>Once the metadata was obtained, the GIS Approach detailed in Comment No. 33 (and pictured in Figure 1 at the bottom of this comment/response table) was used to assemble the constraints mapping, thereby identifying avoidance and/or minimization areas relating to the human, natural, and physical environments necessary for the screening of the corridor alternatives. This corridor screening process is further discussed in the response to Comment No. 36 below.</i></p> <p><i>Valuable insight about the study area, including constraining elements, was also gathered through various outreach efforts. These outreach efforts are detailed in the attached Implementation Plan, Technical Memorandum No. 6, Public & Agency Outreach. In summary, an Executive Committee (Parish Presidents), a Stakeholder Committee (civic and community leaders), and an Advisory Committee (technical experts appointed by the Executive Committee) met regularly throughout the corridor development process to provide input relative to the corridor alternative screening efforts. Additionally, open houses were held to inform the public about the project and obtain input in identifying constraints and modifying proposed corridors. The Project Team also held several small group meetings upon request by civic and other interested parties and individual meetings as requested/needed to inform key individuals or stakeholders.</i></p> <p><i>As part of the coordination and consultation process, the Agency Outreach & Coordination Guide was created to facilitate and document how coordination would occur between the Project Team</i></p>	X	2-1, App.G

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			<p><i>and agencies. Agency coordination efforts are detailed in Section 5 of the Implementation Plan, Technical Memorandum No. 6 and Chapter 7 and Appendix E of the Tier 1 EIS. Multiple agency coordination meetings were held throughout the corridor screening process with the FHWA, LADOTD, the United States Army Corp of Engineers (USACE), and the United States Coast Guard (USCG). In March 2009 and July 2009, agency coordination meetings were conducted to provide project updates and solicit input on the corridor alternative screening and refinement process. A live GIS demonstration explaining the screening process and rationale for the development of various corridor alternatives was presented at the March 2009 meeting. Additionally, agencies were invited to comment on the proposed range of alternatives and the overall screening approach. Agencies represented at the March 2009 and/or July 2009 meetings included the Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries (LDWF), Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), U.S. Department of Agriculture Natural Resources Conservation Service (USDA NRCS), U.S. Geological Survey Louisiana Water Science Center (USGS LWSC), Department of Natural Resources Coastal Management Division (DNR CMD), Department of Environmental Quality Office of Environmental Assistance (DEQ OEA), etc. The meeting minutes from the March 2009 and July 2009 agency coordination meetings, including the complete list of agency attendees, are provided within Appendix E of the Tier 1 EIS.</i></p> <p>The Implementation Plan Technical Memorandums have been included in Appendix G and more clarification has been added in Section 2.2 of the FEIS regarding the corridor refinement process.</p>		
35	Chapter 2	Include the Implementation Plan in the EIS	See response to Comment No. 27.	X	App.G
36	Chapter 2	Explain methodology used to apply the data and evaluate the corridors	<p><i>The corridor alternative development and refinement process is detailed within the Baton Rouge Loop Implementation Plan, Technical Memorandum No. 1. Below is a brief summary of the methodology used to apply spatial analysis data and input gained via public, committee (i.e., Executive, Stakeholder, and Advisory Committees), and agency coordination efforts in order to evaluate and screen the corridor alternatives.</i></p> <p><i>Development of the Universe of Alternatives</i></p> <p><i>The GIS corridor alternative screening methodology described in Comment No. 33, combined with the Project Team's extensive knowledge of the project's study area, were collaboratively utilized in the development of the initial Universe of Alternatives. From these data, several major features were identified as primary influences on where potential corridors could be located. The single most important controlling factor in determining potential corridors for the Loop was locating reaches of the Mississippi River where an acceptable river crossing could occur. Concurrence with the USCG, USACE, and other state agencies and navigational interests was integral in establishing feasible and reasonable potential crossing locations. Additionally, avoiding and/or minimizing impacts to large-scale environmental and existing community and municipal features (e.g. Baton Rouge Metropolitan Airport, Port of Baton Rouge, LSU, Southern University, etc.), as well as the spacing of interchanges along 1-10 and 1-12, geometric criteria, and other engineering considerations, also influenced the locations of potential alignments. With the goal of avoiding and minimizing to the greatest extent possible impacts to the human, physical, and natural environments, numerous potential corridor alignments were developed (see</i></p>	X	2-1, App.G

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			<p><i>Figure 3-4 of Implementation Plan, Technical Memorandum No. 1).</i></p> <p><i>Then, potential corridors were established based on the most reasonable and feasible alignments (see Figure 3-5 of Implementation Plan, Technical Memorandum No. 1). Several alignments were grouped into single corridors. Corridor widths were set based on specific environmental and physical constraints.</i></p> <p><i>Corridor Refinement Process</i></p> <p><i>The refinement of corridor widths and placement, along with the elimination of corridors, required consideration of several factors. Along with further investigation of potential Mississippi River crossings, a more stringent screening evaluation was completed that combined the avoidance and/or minimization of impacts to environmental factors, input from corridor traffic modeling, and feedback from the public, resource/regulatory agencies, and elected officials.</i></p> <p><i>Constraints mapping in GIS (methodology detailed in Comment No. 33) identified areas of environmental concern. These areas of environmental concern are mapped within the Implementation Plan, Technical Memorandum No. 2 (see Figures 2-1 through 2-8) and included:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>• Dense residential areas, community facilities, and planned development;</i> <i>• Public lands, parks, and recreation facilities;</i> <i>• National Register of Historic Places Districts and Properties;</i> <i>• Potential hazardous materials sites;</i> <i>• Wetlands;</i> <i>• Potential Rare, Threatened and Endangered Species Habitat;</i> <i>• Floodplains; and</i> <i>• Water bodies.</i> <p><i>Additionally, traffic models were utilized in the corridor refinement process to both eliminate and refine corridor placements. Because relieving traffic congestion is the foremost goal of this project, corridors were refined to maximize ridership of the Loop, thereby relieving other existing major roadways. Also, because the Loop would be a toll-funded project, the ability to finance the project is directly related to the volume of traffic attracted to the Loop. Finally, continued feedback from resource/regulatory agencies, the public, and from the Executive, Stakeholder, and Advisory Committees were all compiled and considered (see Comment No.34). All of these factors were incorporated into a Corridor Evaluation Matrix. The Corridor Evaluation Matrix is presented as Figure 4-12 of Implementation Plan, Technical Memorandum No. 1. In summary, the following evaluation factors were considered for each corridor alternative:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>• Ability to adequately relieve existing and future projected congestion* (see FEIS Chapter 1, Section 1.3.2 for existing and future traffic conditions - based on the Traffic and Revenue Study completed for the proposed project (2010 – on file within the project administrative record).</i> <i>• Ability to generate sufficient toll revenue;</i> <i>• Construction cost;</i> <i>• Right-of-Way cost;</i> <i>• Community effect/conflicts with planned development;</i> 		

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			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Impacts to public properties; • Impacts to wetlands and floodplains; • Impacts to other environmentally sensitive areas; and • Impacts to Mississippi River navigation. <p>Within the Corridor Evaluation Matrix, a red “X” has been shown in the column for factors that were evaluated to be negative for a particular segment.</p> <p>Based on the matrix results, the Project Team was able to identify the combination of corridor segments having the fewest negative impacts. Those remaining corridors were carried forward for evaluation as part of the Tier 1 EIS. The evaluation and ranking methodology of those remaining corridors as completed in the Tier 1 EIS is discussed in Comment No. 47.</p> <p>* Note – In relation to the traffic modeling: The Capital Region Planning Commission (CRPC) is the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) for the five parish area where the Baton Rouge Loop alternatives are located. The CRPC uses a transportation model that is commonly used by MPOs across the U.S. for modeling existing and future traffic flow on all major roadways. The CRPC has modified the model to take into account the regional roadway network and is responsible for updating the model over time to account for roadway modifications (e.g. addition of new roads, widening of existing roads, changes in roadway operational characteristics such as added signalization and changes in access), changes in local population characteristics, and future development. The purpose of the model is to provide a forecast of how much traffic, or travel demand, will occur on roadways throughout the region. The model can estimate that demand for different lengths of time or for specific times in the future. It estimates the travel demand by using a balancing principle, taking into account where people live and work (heavily relying on U.S. Census data) as well as data on land uses within the modeling area that function as traffic generators. Mathematical algorithms are used to estimate the most efficient routes that people and businesses will use to travel between origins and destinations. The model can be adjusted to reflect changes in the roadway network as well as population growth and development patterns in the region. CRPC uses this model to predict future transportation needs for the five-parish region, accounting for the likely availability of funding for future projects. CRPC also used the model to evaluate the effects of proposed roadway improvements by superimposing these improvements on the existing or projected roadway network. The model will re-distribute traffic volumes, allowing for assessment of the proposed project’s effects on the operational characteristics of the entire roadway network (traffic volumes, levels of service, and expected congestion).</p> <p>The Implementation Plan Technical Memorandums have been included in Appendix G and more clarification has been added in Section 2.2 of the FEIS regarding the corridor refinement process.</p>		

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37	Chapter 3	General Comments - Discuss the applicable laws, regulations, requirements or executive orders and include the responsible agency. Characterize the natural environment of the project and discuss broad level environmental impacts.	All applicable laws, regulations, requirements, or executive orders, as well as responsible agencies has been added to Chapter 3 of the Tier 1 FEIS for each of the evaluated resources of the human, natural, and physical environments.	X	Ch. 3
38	Chapter 3	Environmental Justice - The Tier 1 DEIS makes no assessment on vulnerable communities in any of the alternative areas.	<i>A goal of the Tier 1 EIS analysis was to establish relatively large (1,000 to 4,000 foot-wide) alternative corridors for the project that would utilize undeveloped or sparsely developed lands to the maximum extent possible to avoid community impacts, including relocations, whether or not those communities contained EJ populations (that is, residential areas in general were used as a constraining factor). Within prospective corridors, the Tier 1 investigation attempted to identify corridor sections that may have a high potential for Environmental Justice (EJ) populations on a level commensurate with a broad, regional Tier 1 type of analysis.</i> <i>Low income and minority demographic data was obtained for the refined corridors, as presented in Section 3.3 of the Tier 1 EIS. As part of the Tier 1 FEIS, these data have been mapped using GIS and the extent to which a corridor would likely impact an Environmental Justice has been assessed. As a result, an exhibit has been added to Volume 3. Environmental Justice has been incorporated as an evaluation parameter to Chapter 5 of the Tier 1 EIS to be utilized in the comparison and evaluation of corridor alternatives.</i>	X	Ch.5, Exhibits 3-120 thru 3-122
39	Chapter 3	Tribal Issues - The Coastal tribes should have an opportunity to provide input on the project.	<i>As shown in Appendix I, Tier 1 EIS Circulation, the following federal tribes received a copy of the Tier 1 DEIS: Chitimacha tribe of Louisiana, Coushatta Tribe of Louisiana, Tunica – Biloxi Tribe of Louisiana, Mississippi Band of Choctaw Indians, Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma, Alabama Coushatta Tribe of Texas, and Jena Band of Choctaw Indians. The Project Team has added the other coastal tribes to the distribution list (Appendix I) to ensure they are informed of the project as it progresses further.</i>	X	I-5
40	Chapter 3	Public Involvement - EPA suggests reviewing FHWA's PI policy for ways to involve underserved and vulnerable communities and to insure these communities have an opportunity to be involved.	<i>The public involvement process for the project has been documented in Chapter 7 and Appendix E of the Tier 1 EIS and Implementation Plan, Technical Memorandum No. 6 (Public and Agency Outreach).</i> <i>Our public involvement consultant on the project team is a DOTD certified DBE, with specific expertise in designing outreach programs for minority, underserved and vulnerable populations. For the project's public involvement plan, care was given to assuring that public meetings and hearings were held in accessible and familiar locations, that invitations to participate came from other trusted sources and community voices in addition to the project team, and information was provided at the meetings in a way that was easily understood. In addition to a review of NEPA Public Involvement requirements, a review was made of FHWA's "Transportation Planning Process Resource Guide", "Innovations in Public Involvement for Transportation Planning" and "Public Involvement Techniques for Transportation Decision-Making", to assure inclusion of appropriate techniques and strategies for reaching underserved populations.</i> <i>In the beginning of the project, in coordination with CAEA, DOTD and FHWA, three main groups were established to accommodate a larger geographic area and obtain more input from various</i>	-	-

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			<p><i>aspects of the community, including underserved populations. The Tier 1 DEIS and Implementation Plan, Technical Memorandum No. 6 describes these communities and outlines the outreach made as well as various community meetings held for civic and public groups in the area.</i></p> <p><i>Three rounds of public meetings and one round of public hearings were held throughout the region with five separate locations for each round to accommodate local citizens within each of the five parishes impacted by the project. Each public meeting venue was evaluated and chosen based on ease of access and familiarity by local residents. Local elected officials in each parish were asked to recommend the most frequently used venues where local residents would feel comfortable attending a public meeting. For example, in East Baton Rouge Parish, public meetings were held at the BREC Headquarters building because it is located near the geographic center of the parish, on a main thoroughfare, on an active bus route for those dependent on public transit, with ample parking adjacent to the building, and in a building that hosts many free public programs that attract the public.</i></p> <p><i>The project team worked to make underserved populations comfortable in the open house format meetings by providing a diverse project team capable of answering questions, with public involvement specialists floating throughout the process to engage those who may feel hesitant to participate. Project team leaders made staffing assignments based on team members' personal knowledge of cultural, environmental and historic issues in the rural parishes so that local citizens could talk with a project engineer with intimate knowledge of their concerns.</i></p> <p><i>To further help engage the public in the process, persons at the welcome table provided a printed outline of the information available at the meeting, what information participants would find at each station and the expertise available to them through one-on-one conversations with project engineers. A brief introductory video, featuring iconic landmarks in rural communities was used at the public meetings to brief attendees, set the stage for discussion and engage participants in the open house process by empowering them with information.</i></p> <p><i>The project team focused heavily on public outreach through the local media, project website, and community leaders to connect with underserved and vulnerable groups within the project area. Public meetings were publicized through local newspapers in each parish as well as radio and television stations in the metropolitan area. Each advertisement offered additional assistance to individuals with disabilities, noted the public website, and (in the case of the DEIS Public Hearing) included public library locations where a hard copy of the Tier 1 DEIS could be viewed. Information was provided on the project website at least 30 days in advance of each meeting and all presentation materials from the public hearings were posted on the project website for public viewing, including the electronic files for the entire Tier 1 DEIS and the comment form. Electronic public meeting/hearing invites were distributed to committee members, individuals who had visited the public website or attended previous public meetings, local elected officials and others who serve specific constituencies to invite to the meetings.</i></p> <p><i>At the public hearings, participants were provided with comment forms or invited to give their oral comments and feedback to a court reporter. This service was encouraged to anyone who may have felt it would take too long to provide written comments, or who may have felt intimidated by</i></p>		

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			<p><i>a written process.</i></p> <p><i>In advance of public meetings, outreach was made to local elected officials, faith-based groups and other community leaders to encourage them to invite constituent groups. Small group meetings were provided for groups that preferred more focused discussions or facilitation by a trusted community leader.</i></p> <p><i>As documented in Appendix I, notification letters on the DEIS publication were sent to all local, regional and state officials informing them of the Tier 1 DEIS publication, link to the project website and public library locations where hard copies could be viewed. Also, included with the letter was a copy of the Tier 1 DEIS Executive Summary for their use and to communicate to their constituents. Similar distribution has been made for the FEIS.</i></p> <p><i>Other methods of reaching out to underserved and vulnerable groups within the project area will be considered again during the Tier 2 EIS phase when more specific roadway alignments are being evaluated for the three segments of independent utility.</i></p>		
41	Chapter 3	Air Quality - Indicate how estimates of air emissions will be incorporated into the Tier 2 stage of the project.	<p><i>Wording has been added to the Tier 1 EIS that regional emissions modeling will be conducted to determine conformity of the project with the Louisiana TIP/STIP at the time that studies are conducted to prepare the Tier 2 EIS for this project.</i></p> <p><i>Modeling will be performed either by the regional planning agency (CRPC) or another entity under the direction of FHWA and LADOTD. This modeling will utilize more detailed information on traffic volumes and roadway geometry (including interchange location) than was developed for the broad-brush Tier 1 analysis. The effect of the proposed project on regional air emissions will account for changes in VMT on the regional roadway network as well as changes in traffic characteristics such as operating speed, delay, congestion, and levels of service, factors that will affect both local and regional air emissions. The modeling will be able to determine whether the proposed roadway improvements will change the quantity of criteria pollutants being emitted by vehicles on the regional network and whether these emissions will jeopardize compliance with the maintenance designation of the Baton Rouge area. If the area is determined to be in noncompliance with the 2008 eight-hour ozone standard by the USEPA, the modeling will also be used to demonstrate that the proposed improvements will not violate, or contribute to continued violation, of this or any other NAAQS.</i></p> <p><i>In regard to construction impacts on air quality, additional wording has been added to the Tier 1 EIS regarding use of best management practices for controlling emissions from construction activities. Mention has been made of new requirements for the use of lower sulfur fuels in on- and off-road diesel-powered vehicles and equipment. A statement has also been added indicating that disposal of construction debris and construction-related waste will be conducted in accordance with applicable federal, state, and local regulations.</i></p>	X	3-45
42	Chapter 3	Threatened and Endangered Species - Important and critical habitat should have been included as avoidance criteria in the corridor	<p><i>Rare, threatened and endangered (RTE) species data and critical habitat information were included as avoidance and minimization criteria in the corridor development process (see Section 4 of the Implementation Plan, Technical Memorandum No. 2). LDWF data regarding</i></p>		

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 RESOURCE AGENCY DEIS COMMENTS AND RESPONSES**

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		development process.	<p><i>RTE species and sensitive habitat locations were provided to the Project Team and used in GIS to generate maps depicting these resources, which are shown in Figure 2-8 in the Implementation Plan, Technical Memorandum No. 2 and discussed further in Section 2.2.8 of Technical Memorandum No. 2.</i></p> <p><i>The following is a summary of agency correspondence from the USFWS and LDWF concerning RTE species and sensitive habitats (see Appendix E, Public and Agency Coordination, in the Tier 1 EIS for details). The USFWS and LDWF were involved in initial project meetings and the Project Team received comments from USFWS and LDWF concerning RTE species. Specifically, in a letter dated 10 March 2009, the USFWS identified the following federally listed species to be considered during the corridor screening process with respect to the Amite River crossings: the Alabama inflated heelsplitter mussel (<i>Potamilus inflatus</i>), the Gulf sturgeon (<i>Acipenser oxyrinchus desotoi</i>), the West Indian manatee (<i>Trichechus manatus</i>) and with respect to the Mississippi River crossings: the pallid sturgeon (<i>Scaphirynchus albus</i>). USFWS stated that further consultation for <i>P. inflatus</i>, <i>A. o. desotoi</i>, and <i>T. manatus</i> would be needed if crossing the Amite River and consultation concerning <i>S. albus</i> would be necessary if crossing the Mississippi River.</i></p> <p><i>In a letter from LDWF dated 08 April 2009, LDWF stated that the agency agrees to serve as a participating agency and "It is the intent of LDWF to avoid and/or minimize, to the greatest extent practicable, project impacts to wetlands, Scenic Rivers, as well as other water bodies, riparian corridors, and other fish and wildlife resources." The team received a second response letter from LDWF dated 19 March 2009 which identified sensitive habitats and species which should be avoided if possible. Specifically, Spruce-Pine Hardwood Flatwood forests were located within one mile of the proposed project. LDWF stated that although the corridor sections depicted would not be expected to impact this natural community, caution should be used if construction is undertaken in that area. LDWF also identified the inflated heelsplitter (<i>P. inflatus</i>) as a critically imperiled species that could potentially be impacted by this project (Amite River). Additional sensitive areas near the project included bird nesting colonies. LDWF stated that a review of their databases revealed no other anticipated impacts to RTE species or sensitive habitats.</i></p> <p>Clarification has been added to Chapters 3 and 5 regarding the potential impacts to Threatened and Endangered and protected species.</p>	X	3-75, Ch.5
43	Chapter 3	Wetlands - The Tier 1 DEIS does not provide sufficient information to differentiate among corridor alternatives based on potential environmental impacts.	<p><i>Given the nature of the study area, complete avoidance of wetland areas with implementation of a Baton Rouge Loop project would be impossible. However, from the onset of the corridor alternative development process, efforts were made to avoid major wetland areas to the extent practicable.</i></p> <p><i>At the Tier 1-level of analysis, wetlands were preliminarily evaluated based on broad corridor identification (see Table 4-3 on page 2-40 in Implementation Plan, Technical Memorandum No. 2 and the narrative following that table in the Implementation Plan). Corridor sections were widened where appropriate to allow greater adjustment of final alignments (which will be determined in the Tier 2-level analysis) in order to avoid/minimize wetlands impacts (i.e., using widened corridor sections to allow movement of alignments to the wet/non-wet boundary to avoid or minimize wetland impacts; move alignments to follow other disturbed corridors). Certain</i></p>	X	Ch.5

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**Table 7.1
 RESOURCE AGENCY DEIS COMMENTS AND RESPONSES**

No.	Ref.	Comment	Response	Revised EIS	Revised Pages
			<p>corridors and/or corridor sections containing critical wetlands habitats were eliminated (see the Spanish Lake discussion in Comment #46 below) per the screening processes discussed in the Implementation Plan, Technical Memorandum No. 2.</p> <p>Unavoidable wetlands impacts within corridors (those corridors where wetland features span the entire width of the proposed corridor) were used to identify corridor sections requiring widening to allow greater flexibility in the placement of the final alignments to either avoid wetlands or minimize wetlands impacts (alignment shifting). These alignment shifts (to be determined as part of the Tier 2 EIS) would then be utilized to minimize wetlands impacts as well as impacts to wetlands of higher functional value (i.e., allow for impacts to emergent wetlands vs. higher functional value wetlands such as cypress-swamp forested wetlands). Wetlands were one of the many environmental factors used to screen the initial corridor identification and included RTE species, public lands, floodplains, surface water, etc., as detailed in Section 4 of the Implementation Plan, Technical Memorandum No. 2.</p> <p>The acreage and type of wetlands contained within each corridor are shown in Table 4-3 and are graphically displayed in Figure 4-3 of the Implementation Plan, Technical Memorandum No.2 presented in Appendix G of the FEIS. The actual impact to wetlands depends largely on the pre-project planning, design, and the types of highway structures and construction techniques employed for the project. Accordingly, the acres listed in Table 4-3 are estimates of the total wetland area contained within each corridor segment. As specific roadway alignments are developed (as part of the Tier 2 level analysis), the total acreage of wetlands potentially affected would be reduced.</p> <p>The wetlands mapping revealed that corridor segments with the greatest potential to impact wetlands were located in those corridors in the southern portion of the project boundary area. Wetlands were included as one of the key factors analyzed in the corridor evaluation matrix presented in Figure 3-1 of the Implementation Plan, Technical Memorandum No. 2 (specifically, "Disproportionate Impacts to Wetlands and Floodplains"). The percentage of wetlands impacted and estimated potential wetland acreage impacts within each corridor segment by habitat type has been added to Chapter 5 of the Tier 1EIS as part of the comparison and evaluation of alternatives. The continued screening process concerning wetlands will consider evaluation of the impacts to higher functional valued wetlands (e.g., emergent wetlands vs. forested wetlands) as well as consideration of fragmentation of wetlands and proximity of wetlands to development.</p> <p>The USACE, in a response dated 13 March 2009 referenced to project's requirement for Department of Army (DA) permits (which includes a wetlands delineation and subsequent jurisdictional determination issued by the Corps) if the project impacts wetlands or waters of the U.S. This letter also referenced the need to coordinate with the LDNR concerning Louisiana Coastal Zone impacts, if any. In a letter dated 09 April 2009, the USFWS recommended that the project team consider widening/shifting corridors which "would allow for possible roadway alignments that are less intrusive in large tracts of forested habitat". A second letter from USFWS letter dated 10 March 2009 encouraged the project team to coordinate with the USACE concerning wetlands and potential wetlands impacts. The above correspondence letters are</p>		

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**Table 7.1
 RESOURCE AGENCY DEIS COMMENTS AND RESPONSES**

No.	Ref.	Comment	Response	Revised EIS	Revised Pages
			included in Appendix E of the Tier 1 DEIS. Also see Comment No. 44 below.		
44	Chapter 3	Provide estimated acreage of direct wetland impact by section broken down by wetland type	Comparative wetlands impacts (acres) by habitat type, by corridor were presented in Table 4.3 in the Implementation Plan, Technical Memorandum No. 2. Wetlands acreages in each corridor segment were calculated using GIS in conjunction with USFWS National Wetlands Inventory (NWI) databases and NRCS hydric soils maps. The wetlands mapping revealed that corridor segments with the greatest potential to impact wetlands were located in those corridors in the southern portion of the project boundary area. Wetlands were included as one of the key factors analyzed in the corridor evaluation matrix presented in Figure 3-1 of the Implementation Plan, Technical Memorandum No. 2 (specifically, "Disproportionate Impacts to Wetlands and Floodplains"). The percentage of wetlands impacted and estimated potential wetland acreage impacts within each corridor segment by habitat type has been added to Chapter 5 of the Tier 1 EIS as part of the comparison and evaluation of alternatives. The continued screening process concerning wetlands will consider evaluation of the impacts to higher functional valued wetlands (e.g., emergent wetlands vs. forested wetlands) as well as consideration of fragmentation of wetlands and proximity of wetlands to development.	X	Ch.5
45	Chapter 3	Show locations where roadway would be elevated to reduce wetlands impacts	Areas that require elevated roadways to reduce/mitigate impacts to wetlands will be determined through proper agency coordination and compliance in later phases of the project. As stated in the Tier 1 EIS in Section 2.4.3. Elevated Roadways, "Sections of the route maybe elevated above existing terrain within environmentally sensitive areas to reduce the footprint of the roadway and minimize disruption to the natural environment." The concept of "End-on" construction and other techniques will be considered to further reduce impacts and will be discussed at future agency coordination meetings.	-	-
46	Chapter 3	Provide more detail on potential impacts to Spanish Lake and Amite River floodplain	The early stages of the Tier 1 corridor identification process recognized that the screening process should seek to minimize potential impacts to floodplains such as the Spanish Lake and Amite River floodplain. As such, constraints included approaches that followed the avoidance-minimization process in order to minimize impacts to floodplains such as the Spanish Lake and Amite River floodplains. These approaches included shifting corridor sections to minimize impacts to these sensitive areas. For example, Corridor Section S6 was removed from further consideration due in large part to potential impacts of this section to the Spanish Lake floodplain. A detailed explanation is found in Section 3 of Implementation Plan, Technical Memorandum No. 2, Corridor Evaluation Matrix (Figure 3-1). Figure 3-1 identifies several key evaluation factors including "Disproportionate Impacts To Wetlands and Floodplains" with specific comments	X	2-1

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**Table 7.1
 RESOURCE AGENCY DEIS COMMENTS AND RESPONSES**

No.	Ref.	Comment	Response	Revised EIS	Revised Pages
			<p>referring to the Spanish Lake area "Disruption to Spanish Lake wetlands and environmentally sensitive areas".</p> <p>More clarification has been added in Section 2.2 of the FEIS regarding the corridor refinement process.</p>		
47	Chapter 5	<p>The evaluation and ranking process is vague and confusing. No overarching evaluation methodology was established. The evaluation process is flawed. Resources should not be evaluated solely on the percentage of the resource within a corridor.</p>	<p>The overarching methodology utilized throughout the corridor screening process as documented in the Baton Rouge Loop Implementation Plan is presented in Comment Nos. 33 and 36 above.</p> <p>Once the Universe of Corridor Alternatives was narrowed down through this initial screening process presented in the Implementation Plan, Technical Memorandum No. 1, the remaining feasible corridors were further refined and evaluated within the Tier 1 EIS. The evaluation parameters were discussed and selected by the Project Team in conjunction with FHWA, LADOTD, and the Capital Area Expressway Authority (CAEA).</p> <p>In order to eliminate subjectivity in the corridor evaluation analysis, the comparison and evaluation of the corridor alternatives as presented in Chapter 5 has been modified within the Tier 1 EIS. The following changes have been made: All Qualitative Ranking Matrices (see Tables 5.2, 5.4, and 5.6) have been removed from the Tier 1 EIS. Instead of corridor rankings being based on the results of the Qualitative Ranking Matrices, corridor rankings will be based on the Quantification Matrices presented in Tables 5.1, 5.3a, 5.3b, and 5.5 from DEIS.</p> <p>Additional evaluation parameters have also been added to the Quantification Matrices, including environmental justice by estimated percentage of wetlands impacted by habitat type by corridor (see Comment Nos.38, 43, and 44). Chapter 5 text has been revised for the FEIS such that the ranking process is no longer described from a qualitative perspective, but instead has been based on the hard data presented in the Quantification Matrices. Additionally, public and agency comments on the Tier 1 DEIS were summarized as part of the EIS and have been included in a Public Hearing report and summary tables are included in Appendix K. Information obtained from these comments were considered for determining a Preferred Corridor Alternative. As such, a description of public comments, including key factors, likes, and dislikes related to the corridor alternatives, will be included in the Chapter 5 Tier 1 EIS discussion.</p> <p>From a Tier 1 EIS analysis standpoint, it is reasonable to evaluate resources on a large scale; that is, how much of a resource is located within a corridor alternative. Until a proposed alignment is developed within the Tier 2 analysis, direct impacts to resources/issues on a smaller scale are generally not determined. However, as is demonstrated throughout Section 4 of the Implementation Plan, Technical Memorandum No. 2, resources were not solely evaluated based on the percentage of that resource within the proposed corridor alignment. For example, on page 2-41 of Implementation Plan, Technical Memorandum No. 2, a qualitative discussion is presented for each corridor segment comparing the percentage of total wetlands within the corridor to the 1) location of the wetlands within that corridor and 2) likelihood that the wetlands could be avoided once a project alignment is developed given the width of the proposed corridor</p>	X	Ch.5

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**Table 7.1
 RESOURCE AGENCY DEIS COMMENTS AND RESPONSES**

No.	Ref.	Comment	Response	Revised EIS	Revised Pages
			<i>alternative.</i>		
48	Chapter 5	The DEIS should include an explanation of how a preferred alternative will be selected.	<p><i>In order to determine the preferred corridor alternative, additional analysis on the following two environmental factors have been completed and incorporated into the Tier 1 FEIS Chapter 5: environmental justice and wetlands.</i></p> <p><i>In relation to environmental justice, the areas of low income and minority populations as obtained from the U.S. Census Bureau have been mapped via GIS and utilized as an evaluation parameter for the identification of a Preferred Corridor Alternative. The extent to which a corridor would impact an EJ population has been assessed and incorporated as an evaluation parameter in Chapter 5 (Comparison and Evaluation of Alternatives) of the Tier 1 EIS.</i></p> <p><i>The percentage and estimated acreage of wetlands impacted within each corridor segment by habitat type has been added to Chapter 5 of the Tier 1 EIS as part of the comparison and evaluation of alternatives. One aspect of this continued screening process concerning wetlands will include evaluation of the impacts to higher functional valued wetlands (e.g., emergent wetlands vs. forested wetlands).</i></p> <p><i>Comments received on the Tier 1 DEIS have also been considered as part of the preferred alternative identification process. These comments have been reviewed and organized in summary tables. A summary of the information gained from these comments has been incorporated into Appendix K and discussed in Chapter 5 (Comparison and Evaluation of Alternatives) of the Tier 1 FEIS as it relates to the preferred corridor.</i></p> <p><i>In summation, the additional evaluation parameters described above, along with input received from the public and from resource/regulatory agencies, has been used in the identification process of a preferred corridor alternative</i></p>	X	Ch.5, App. K
49	Chapter 5	Provide a summary of public input if it will be used as evaluation criteria.	<p><i>Summaries of the public input obtained as part of the public involvement outreach program are contained in Appendix E of the Tier 1 EIS. References have been added for the Tier 1 EIS Appendix E, as well as discussion added to Chapter 5 of the Tier 1 EIS for each corridor unit evaluation section to describe public comments including key factors, likes, and dislikes related to the corridor alternatives. A summary of the information gained from public and agency comments has been incorporated into Chapter 5 (Comparison and Evaluation of Alternatives), Appendix E, and Appendix K of the Tier 1 FEIS as it relates to the preferred corridor.</i></p> <p><i>See responses to Comment Nos. 47 and 48 for other adjustments proposed for Chapter 5 in the Tier 1 EIS which pertain to public input.</i></p>	X	Ch.5, App.K
LDEQ, Business & Community Outreach Div. (2/3/12)					

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Baton Rouge Loop Tier 1 EIS
 Project No. 07-PR-MS-0002
 S.P. No. 700-96-0011
 F.A.P. No. STP-9609(504)



**Table 7.1
 RESOURCE AGENCY DEIS COMMENTS AND RESPONSES**

No.	Ref.	Comment	Response	Revised EIS	Revised Pages
50	Hazardous Material	Depending on final alignment and footprint width of the proposed construction, a focused soils and groundwater assessment is likely needed. LDEQ assumes that this would occur in Tier 2 analysis when one or two alignment proposals are decided. The main portion of the site issues are at the Hwy 190 corridor over the Mississippi River, on the east side. There are several active and closed sites or units that could have a potential impact on any bridge construction.	<i>Comment noted. A focused soils and groundwater assessment would occur as part of the Tier 2 analysis when a preferred alignment has been designated for further evaluation.</i>	-	-
51	Air Quality	Please be advised that these parishes were designated by EPA as ozone-attainment parishes with maintenance plans under the 8-hour standard. Since this federally funded action is proposed for construction in these ozone-attainment with maintenance plan parishes, this highway project is subject to the State's transportation conformity regulations as promulgated under LAC 33:III.Chapter 14, Subchapter B.	<i>Comment noted. See response to Comment No. 41, above.</i>	-	-
52	Air Quality	If this project is deemed regionally significant it must be included in a conforming metropolitan transportation plan, i.e., included in comprehensive regional emissions analysis which demonstrates conformity to the State Implementation Plan for control of ozone.	<i>Comment noted. See response to Comment No. 41, above.</i>	-	-
<i>EPA Region 6 (2/21/12)</i>					
53	Implem. Plan Tech Memo. No. 1	Although a GIS system was used to compile data and draw corridors, there is no explanation of any route optimization software that utilizes topographic data, constraints data and construction costs to develop reasonable and feasible corridors	<i>The technical memoranda referenced were prepared during the Implementation Plan stage of the project prior to commencement of the NEPA process and were intended as an initial step to define important project parameters such as study area boundaries, potential environmental constraints, project need based on preliminary traffic analysis, initial corridor formulation, and to document public and agency input. The memoranda were prepared for, and reviewed by, the CAEA, FHWA, and LADOTD and served as technical reference documents to support the conclusions reached at the end of the IP stage related to advancement of the project into the NEPA stage. The technical memoranda serve an identical function in the NEPA phase of the project, i.e. as references, like journal articles, text books, or databases, to support or augment analyses presented in the Tier 1 DEIS. As references, the technical memoranda are not being circulated for comment. EPA comments that were concerned with how the technical</i>	-	-
54	Implem. Plan Tech Memo. No. 1	Without of summary of public input and committee meetings, we cannot discern what process or reasoning was used to eliminate or refine corridors.			

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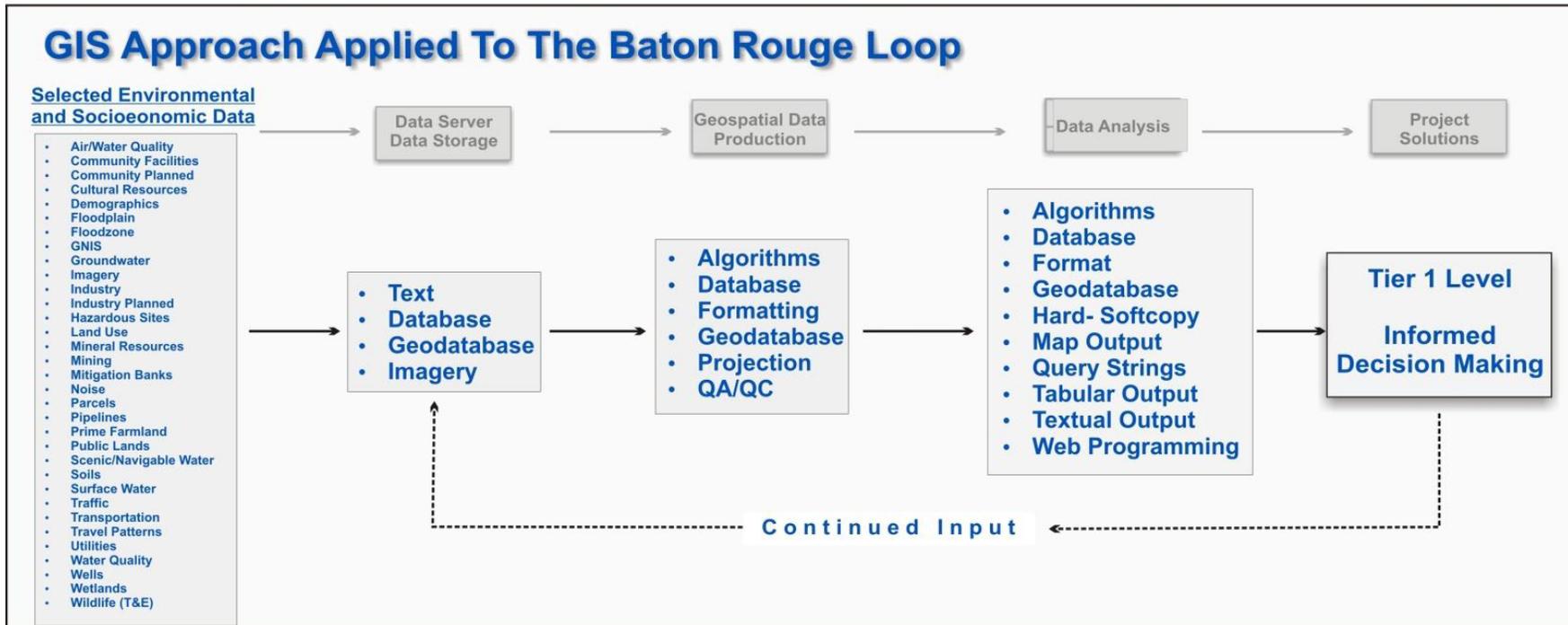
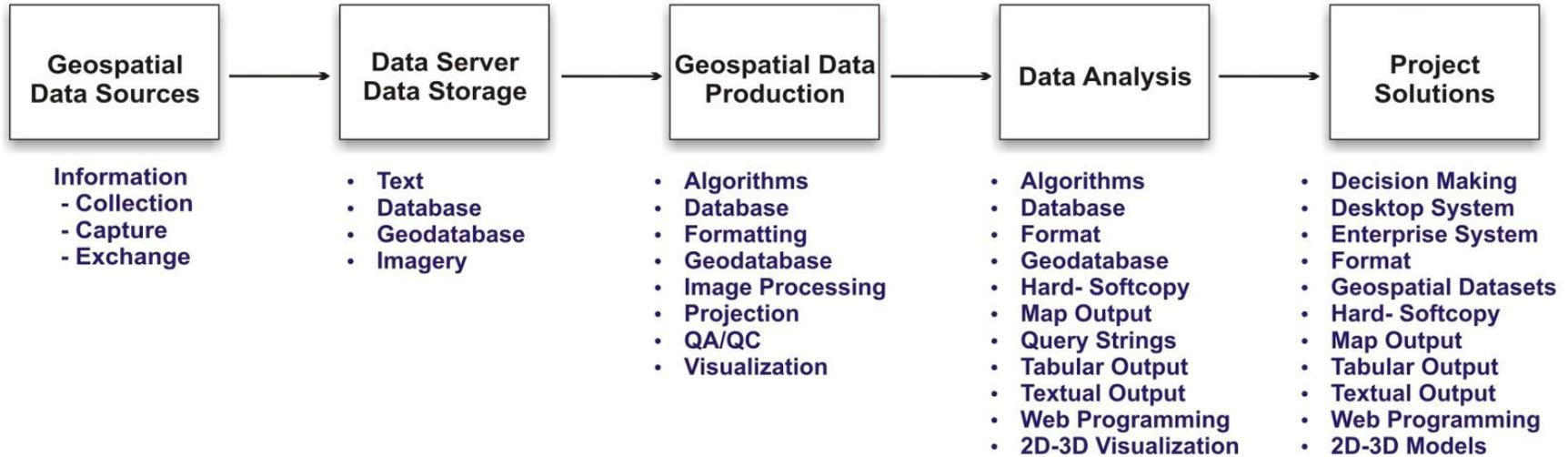
**Table 7.1
 RESOURCE AGENCY DEIS COMMENTS AND RESPONSES**

No.	Ref.	Comment	Response	Revised EIS	Revised Pages
55	Implem. Plan Tech Memo. No. 2	TM-2 does not provide sufficient information on wetland impacts to allow for the accurate selection of a least environmentally damaging practicable alternative	<p><i>memoranda were used to support project-related NEPA analyses were considered and have been addressed elsewhere. Comments that were concerned solely with the content of the technical memoranda have been noted for the record.</i></p> <p><i>Also see responses to Comment Nos. 26 through 49.</i></p>		
56	Implem. Plan Tech Memo. No. 2	TM 2 contains a misinterpretation of the CWA Section 404 requirement pertaining to selection of the least damaging alternative.			
57	Implem. Plan Tech Memo. No. 2	We suggest a more meaningful screening criteria be utilized that would place a score or value on various environmental resources so as to better rank corridors for impacts.			
58	Implem. Plan Tech Memo. No. 6	It would be useful to clearly summarize public and stakeholder input if that will be utilized as an evaluation criteria.			

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Figure 1. General GIS Approach





FEMA

FEDERAL EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT AGENCY
REGION VI
MITIGATION DIVISION

PUBLIC NOTICE REVIEW/ENVIRONMENTAL CONSULTATION

We have no comments to offer. We offer the following comments:

**WE WOULD REQUEST THAT THE PARISHES FLOODPLAIN ADMINISTRATORS
BE CONTACTED FOR THE REVIEW AND POSSIBLE PERMIT REQUIREMENTS
FOR THIS PROJECT.**

If project Federally Funded, we request project to be compliant with EP 11988 & 11990.

REVIEWER:

Mayra G. Diaz
Floodplain Management and Insurance Branch
Mitigation Division
(940) 898-5541

DATE: November 14, 2011



United States Department of the Interior

FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE
646 Cajundome Blvd.
Suite 400
Lafayette, Louisiana 70506



December 21, 2011

Mr. Steven M. Wright
National Park Service
Southeast Regional Office
Atlanta Federal Center, 1924 Building
100 Alabama Street, SW
Atlanta, Georgia 30303

Dear Mr. Wright:

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Service) has reviewed the Tier 1 Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) for the Baton Rouge Loop (SPN: 700-96-0011, FAPN STP-9609[504]) in Ascension, East Baton Rouge, Iberville, Livingston, and West Baton Rouge Parishes, Louisiana. The Service submits the following comments in accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (83 Stat. 852, as amended; 42 U.S.C. 4321 et seq.), the Migratory Bird Treaty Act (MBTA, 40 Stat. 755, as amended; 16 U.S.C. 703 et seq.), the Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act (BGEPA) (54 Stat. 250, as amended, 16 U.S.C. 668a-d), the Endangered Species Act (ESA) of 1973 (87 Stat. 884, as amended; 16 U.S.C. 1531 et seq.), and the Fish and Wildlife Coordination Act (48 Stat. 401, as amended; 16 U.S.C. 661 et seq.).

The information provided states that the alternatives considered in the DEIS consist of “a build alternative” and a “no build alternative”. The build alternative consists of corridor alternatives in three Baton Rouge Loop Units. The three project units are the North Unit, the South Unit, and the East Unit and within each unit are various smaller corridor sections (sections). The sections combine to form multiple alternatives in each unit. Descriptions of those alternatives are as follows:

- North Unit

The North Unit alternatives are comprised of 3 major land cover types (agricultural land 32% to 35%, wetlands 32.2% to 36.3%, and developed land 15.4% to 20%); within the North Unit are 5 corridor alternatives (NA, NB, NC, ND, & NE) and 14 corridor sections (N1-N14). The Corridor Alternative NA has the least amount (27.30%) of palustrine forested wetlands (PFO) while Corridor Alternative ND contains the largest amount of PFO (31.15%). The North Unit Corridor Section N2 contains the smallest percentage (4.41%) of PFO while Section N5 contains the largest amount of PFO at 53.86%.

- South Unit

The South Unit alternatives are primarily comprised of wetlands (52.71% to 61.64%) with agriculture land the second largest (33.11% to 43.03%) and developed land third (2.8% to 5.5%).

Within the South Unit are 18 corridor alternatives (SA-SR) and 14 corridor sections (S1-S14). The South Unit Corridor Alternative SI has the least amount of PFO (47.17%) while SB contains the largest amount of PFO (56.03%). The South Unit corridor Section S13 has the least amount of PFO (5.74%) and Corridor Section S2 contains the largest amount of PFO at 85.64%.

- East Unit

The East Unit alternatives are predominantly comprised of wetlands (48.93% to 53.76%) with forested land the second most abundant (20.69% to 22.94%) and developed land third (2.4% to 2.84%). Within the East Unit are 8 corridor alternatives (EA-EH) and 10 corridor sections (E1-E10). The East Unit Corridor Alternative, EA has the least amount of PFO (42.23%) while EG contains the largest amount of PFO (47.29%). The East Unit Corridor Section E10 has the least amount of PFO (26.23%) and East Unit Corridor Section E7 contains the largest amount of PFO at 95.34%.

In Chapter 5, Section 5.4, page 5-10, the DEIS discusses which corridor alternatives are recommended for further evaluation and which alternatives are recommended for elimination. Some of those alternatives within the North Unit corridor and the East Unit corridor are being dropped from further evaluation based on public and stakeholder comments. The rationale for eliminating alternatives should be substantiated with documentation that demonstrates that the eliminated alternatives do not fulfill project objectives. The National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (83 Stat. 852, as amended; 42 U.S.C. 4321 et seq.), Section 1502.25 Environmental review and consultation requirements states that to the fullest extent possible, agencies shall prepare draft environmental impact statements concurrently with and integrated with environmental impact analyses and related surveys and studies required by the Fish and Wildlife Coordination Act (16 U.S.C. 661 et seq.), the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (16 U.S.C. 470 et seq.), the Endangered Species Act of 1973 (16 U.S.C. 1531 et seq.), and other environmental review laws and executive orders. According to our review, the DEIS does not fully contain those requirements (i.e., migratory bird impacts, mature jurisdictional forested wetlands locations, threatened/endangered species surveys) nor does the DEIS discuss the environmentally preferable alternative(s). The National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (83 Stat. 852, as amended; 42 U.S.C. 4321 et seq.), Section 1502.2(b) Environmentally Preferable Alternative states that, in cases where an EIS has been prepared, the Record of Decision (ROD), must identify all alternatives that were considered, "...specifying the alternative or alternatives which were considered to be environmentally preferable." The environmentally preferable alternative is the alternative that will promote the national environmental policy in NEPA. Ordinarily, this means the alternative that causes the least damage to the biological and physical environment. It also means the alternative which best protects, preserves, and enhances historic, cultural, and natural resources. The Service desires to assist in identifying the environmentally preferable alternative(s). However, because locations of federally listed species and their habitat, migratory birds and their habitat, and mature jurisdictional forested wetlands within the proposed project areas are presently unknown; the environmentally preferable alternative(s) is also unknown at this time. Accordingly, all appurtenant surveys/delineations should be completed and presented to resource agencies in order to identify the environmentally preferable alternative as required by NEPA prior to eliminating alternatives.

Threatened/Endangered Species

In a letter dated March 10, 2009, our office provided comments' regarding the subject proposal's potential to impact threatened and endangered species within the proposed project area. That letter is attached for your review.

Migratory Birds

Bald Eagle

The proposed project area may provide nesting habitat for the bald eagle (*Haliaeetus leucocephalus*), which was officially removed from the List of Endangered and Threatened Species as of August 8, 2007. However, the bald eagle remains protected under the MBTA and BGEPA. Comprehensive bald eagle survey data have not been collected by the Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries (LDWF) since 2008, and new active, inactive, or alternate nests may have been constructed within the proposed project area since that time.

Bald eagles typically nest in large trees located near coastlines, rivers, or lakes that support adequate foraging from October through mid-May. In southeastern Louisiana parishes, eagles typically nest in mature trees (e.g., baldcypress, sycamore, willow, etc.) near fresh to intermediate marshes or open water. Bald eagles may also nest in mature pine trees near large lakes in central and northern Louisiana. Major threats to this species include habitat alteration, human disturbance, and environmental contaminants. Furthermore, bald eagles are vulnerable to disturbance during courtship, nest building, egg laying, incubation, and brooding. Disturbance during these periods may lead to nest abandonment, cracked and chilled eggs, and exposure of small young to the elements. Human activity near a nest late in the nesting cycle may also cause flightless birds to jump from the nest tree, thus reducing their chance of survival.

Please be aware that the Service has developed National Bald Eagle Management (NBEM) Guidelines to provide landowners, land managers, and others with information and recommendations to minimize potential project impacts to bald eagles, particularly where such impacts may constitute "disturbance," which is prohibited by the BGEPA. A copy of the NBEM Guidelines is available at:

<http://www.fws.gov/southeast/es/baldeagle/NationalBaldEagleManagementGuidelines.pdf>.

Those Guidelines recommend: (1) maintaining a specified distance between the activity and the nest (buffer area); (2) maintaining natural areas (preferably forested) between the activity and nest trees (landscape buffers); and (3) avoiding certain activities during the breeding season. During any project construction, on-site personnel should be informed of the possible presence of nesting bald eagles in the vicinity of the project boundary, and should identify, avoid, and immediately report any such nests to this office. If a bald eagle nest occurs or is discovered within 1,500 feet of the proposed project area, then an evaluation must be performed to determine whether the project is likely to disturb nesting bald eagles. That evaluation may be conducted on-line at: <http://www.fws.gov/southeast/es/baldeagle>. Following completion of the evaluation, that website will provide a determination of whether additional consultation is necessary.

On September 11, 2009, the Service published two federal regulations establishing the authority to issue permits for non-purposeful bald eagle take (typically disturbance) and eagle nest take when recommendations of the NBEM Guidelines cannot be achieved. Permits may be issued for nest take only under the following circumstances where: 1) necessary to alleviate a safety emergency to people or eagles, 2) necessary to ensure public health and safety, 3) the nest prevents the use of a pre-existing human-engineered structure, or 4) the activity or mitigation for the activity will provide a net benefit to eagles. Except in emergencies, only inactive nests may be permitted to be taken. The Division of Migratory Birds for the Southeast Region of the Service (phone: 404/679-7051, e-mail: SEmigratorybirds@fws.gov) has the lead role in conducting consultations and issuance of permits. Should you need further assistance interpreting the guidelines, avoidance measures, or performing an on-line project evaluation, please contact this office.

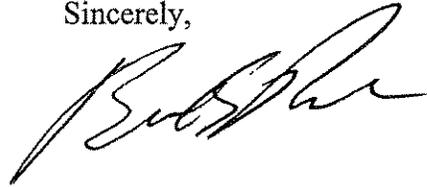
Colonial Nesting Birds

The proposed project would be located in areas where colonial nesting waterbirds may be present. Colonies may be present that are not currently listed in the database maintained by the Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries. That database is updated primarily by monitoring the colony sites that were previously surveyed during the 1980s. Until a new, comprehensive coast-wide survey is conducted to determine the location of newly-established nesting colonies, we recommend that a qualified biologist inspect the proposed work sites (forested wetlands) for the presence of undocumented nesting colonies during the nesting season. Once the surveys have been conducted, we request that rookery and nest locations be reported to Patti Holland (337/291-3121) with our office and to Mr. Mike Seymour (225/765-2281) with the Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries, Natural Heritage Program. In addition, for areas containing the nesting wading birds listed below, all project related activities should correspond with each species project activity window and all project personnel should avoid affecting them during the breeding season (i.e., the time period outside the activity window).

Species	Project Activity Window
Anhinga	July 1 to March 1
Cormorant	July 1 to March 1
Great Blue Heron	August 1 to February 15
Great Egret	August 1 to February 15
Snowy Egret	August 1 to March 1
Little Blue Heron	August 1 to March 1
Tricolored Heron	August 1 to March 1
Reddish Egret	August 1 to March 1
Cattle Egret	September 1 to April 1
Green-backed Heron	September 1 to March 15
Black-crowned Night-Heron	September 1 to March 1
Yellow-crowned Night-Heron	September 1 to March 15
White and White-faced Ibis	September 1 to April 1
Roseate Spoonbill	August 1 to April 1

We appreciate the opportunity to provide comments in the planning stages of this proposed project and look forward to our continued participation in the project evaluation process. If you need further assistance, please contact Joshua Marceaux (337/291-3110) of this office.

Sincerely,



Brad S. Rieck
Deputy Supervisor
Louisiana Ecological Services Office

Attachment:

cc: FWS, RO, Atlanta, GA
DOI, OEPC, Washington, D.C. (Attn.: Ethel Smith)
Corps of Engineers, New Orleans, LA
EPA, Dallas, TX
NMFS, Baton Rouge, LA
FHWA, Federal Highway Administration, Baton Rouge, LA
LADOTD, Baton Rouge, LA
LDWF, Wetland Permitting Program, Baton Rouge, LA
LDWF, Natural Heritage Program, Baton Rouge, LA



United States Department of the Interior

FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE
646 Cajundome Blvd.
Suite 400
Lafayette, Louisiana 70506



March 10, 2009

Mr. Edd Manges
Capital Area Expressway Authority
9100 Bluebonnet Centre Boulevard, Suite 301
Baton Rouge, Louisiana 70809

Dear Mr. Manges:

Please reference your February 20, 2009, letter, requesting our participation in an agency scoping meeting for the proposed Baton Rouge Loop toll highway to be located in Ascension, East Baton Rouge, Iberville, Livingston, and West Baton Rouge Parishes, Louisiana. Your letter also provided a project description and map identifying preferred corridor alternatives that are being advanced into the Tier 1 Environmental Impact Statement phase. We have reviewed the information you provided, and offer the following comments in accordance with the Endangered Species Act of 1973 (87 Stat. 884, as amended; 16 U.S.C. 1531 et seq.), the Fish and Wildlife Coordination Act (48 Stat. 401, as amended; 16 U.S.C. 661 et seq.), and the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (83 Stat. 852, as amended; 42 U.S.C. 4321 et seq.).

Federally listed as a threatened species, the Alabama (=inflated) heelsplitter mussel (*Potamilus inflatus*) occurs in the Amite River (Louisiana [with one report in the Pearl River]) and the Tombigbee and Black Warrior Rivers (Alabama). In Louisiana, the mussel occurs between Louisiana Highway 37 and Louisiana Highway 42 (with the highest concentrations between Grangeville and Port Vincent). This freshwater mussel is typically found in soft, stable substrates such as sand, mud, silt, and sandy gravel, in slow to moderate currents. Heelsplitter mussels are usually found in depositional pools below sand point bars, and in shallow pools between sandbars and river banks. Major threats to this species in the Amite River are the loss of habitat resulting from sand and gravel dredging, and channel modifications for flood control.

The Gulf sturgeon (*Acipenser oxyrinchus desotoi*), federally listed as a threatened species, is an anadromous fish that occurs in many rivers, streams, and estuarine waters along the northern Gulf coast between the Mississippi River and the Suwanee River, Florida. In Louisiana, Gulf sturgeon have been reported at Rigolets Pass, rivers and lakes of the Lake Pontchartrain basin, and adjacent estuarine areas. Spawning occurs in coastal rivers between late winter and early spring (i.e., March to May). Adults and sub-adults may be found in those rivers and streams until November, and in estuarine or marine waters during the remainder of the year. Sturgeon less than two years old appear to remain in riverine habitats and estuarine areas throughout the year, rather than migrate to marine waters. Habitat alterations such as those caused by water control structures that limit and prevent spawning, poor water quality, and over-fishing have negatively affected this species.

The West Indian manatee (*Trichechus manatus*), federally listed as an endangered species,

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occasionally enters Lakes Pontchartrain and Maurepas, and associated coastal waters and streams during the summer months (i.e., June through September). Manatee occurrences appear to be increasing, and they have been regularly reported in the Amite, Blind, Tchefuncte, and Tickfaw Rivers, and in canals within the adjacent coastal marshes of Louisiana. They have also been occasionally observed elsewhere along the Louisiana Gulf coast. The manatee has declined in numbers due to collisions with boats and barges, entrapment in flood control structures, poaching, habitat loss, and pollution. Cold weather and outbreaks of red tide may also adversely affect these animals.

The pallid sturgeon (*Scaphirhynchus albus*) is an endangered fish found in Louisiana, in both the Mississippi and Atchafalaya Rivers (with known concentrations in the vicinity of the Old River Control Structure Complex); it is possibly found in the Red River as well. The pallid sturgeon is adapted to large, free-flowing, turbid rivers with a diverse assemblage of physical characteristics that are in a constant state of change. Detailed habitat requirements of this fish are not known, but it is believed to spawn in Louisiana. Habitat loss through river channelization and dams has adversely affected this species throughout its range.

If the proposed project will directly or indirectly affect the Amite River, further consultation with this office will be necessary regarding the Alabama (inflated) heelsplitter mussel, the Gulf sturgeon, and the West Indian manatee. If the proposed project will directly or indirectly affect the Mississippi River, further consultation with this office will be necessary regarding the pallid sturgeon.

The proposed project would cross the Comite River, which is designated as a Louisiana Natural and Scenic River. Please contact the Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries, Natural and Scenic Rivers Program (318/343-4045) for further information regarding any additional permits that may be required to perform work on the above referenced water body.

As you are aware, the proposed project would likely impact wetlands. For a complete jurisdictional wetland delineation of the proposed project, please contact Mr. John Bruza (504/862-1288) at the New Orleans District, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (Corps). If the Corps determines that the proposed project is within their regulatory jurisdiction, official U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service comments will be provided in response to the corresponding Public Notice.

We appreciate the opportunity to provide comments regarding this proposed activity. If you need further assistance, please contact Seth Bordelon (337/291-3138) of this office.

Sincerely,



Brad S. Rieck
Deputy Supervisor
Louisiana Field Office

cc: LDWF, Natural and Scenic Rivers Program, Baton Rouge, LA
LDWF, Natural Heritage Program, Baton Rouge, LA
FHWA, Baton Rouge, LA
LADOTD, Baton Rouge, LA



BOBBY JINDAL
GOVERNOR

State of Louisiana
DEPARTMENT OF WILDLIFE AND FISHERIES
OFFICE OF WILDLIFE

ROBERT J. BARHAM
SECRETARY
JIMMY L. ANTHONY
ASSISTANT SECRETARY

Date January 5, 2012
Name Suzanne McCain
Company Capital Area Expressway Authority
Street Address 9100 Bluebonnet Centre Blvd; Suite 301
City, State, Zip Baton Rouge, LA 70809
Project BR Loop Project Tier 1 Draft Environmental Impact Statement
Project ID 0
Invoice Number 12010501

Personnel of the Habitat Section of the Coastal and Nongame Resource Division have reviewed the preliminary data for the captioned project. The response letter addresses species of conservation concern within the Baton Rouge Loop project area located in Ascension, East Baton Rouge, Iberville, Livingston and West Baton Rouge parishes. This letter is an update to the original response letter submitted by the Louisiana Natural Heritage Program (LNHP) on January 27, 2009.

Our database indicates that Waddil Wildlife Refuge and Maurepas Swamp Wildlife Management Area are within the project area. No activities shall occur within any Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries (LDWF) wildlife management area / refuge without first obtaining a Special Use Permit from LDWF. Please contact Mr. Mike Windham at 225-765-2807 to obtain the Special Use Permit. The study area also intersects Bluebonnet Swamp. 7

The Comite River is located within the Baton Rouge Loop project area, and is a waterbody that has been designated as a Scenic River. Contact Keith Cascio with LDWF at 318-343-4045 concerning this Scenic River. 8

The database indicates that there are 4 natural areas that have been registered by the Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries through the Louisiana Natural Heritage Program. If you have any questions, please contact Judy Jones at 225-765-2822. 9

Our database indicates the presence of several bird nesting colonies on or near the designated study area. Please be aware that entry into or disturbance of active breeding colonies is prohibited by the Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries. In addition, LDWF prohibits work within a certain radius of an active nesting colony. 10

Nesting colonies can move from year to year and no current information is available on the status of these colonies. If work for the proposed project will commence during the nesting season, conduct a field visit to the worksite to look for evidence of nesting colonies. This field visit should take place no more than two weeks before the project begins. If no nesting colonies are found within 400 meters (700 meters for brown pelicans) of the proposed project, no further consultation with LDWF will be necessary. If active nesting colonies are found within the previously stated distances of the proposed project, further consultation with LDWF will be required. In addition, colonies should be surveyed by a qualified biologist to document species present and the extent of colonies. Provide LDWF with a survey report which is to include the following information: 11

1. qualifications of survey personnel;
2. survey methodology including dates, site characteristics, and size of survey area;
3. species of birds present, activity, estimates of number of nests present, and general vegetation type

- including digital photographs representing the site; and
4. topographic maps and ArcView shapefiles projected in UTM NAD83 Zone 15 to illustrate the location and extent of the colony.

Please mail survey reports on CD to: Louisiana Natural Heritage Program
La. Dept. of Wildlife & Fisheries
P.O. Box 98000
Baton Rouge, LA 70898-9000

To minimize disturbance to colonial nesting birds, the following restrictions on activity should be observed:

- For colonies containing nesting wading birds (i.e., herons, egrets, night-herons, ibis, roseate spoonbills, anhingas, and/or cormorants), all project activity occurring within 300 meters of an active nesting colony should be restricted to the non-nesting period (i.e., September 1 through February 15).
- For colonies containing nesting gulls, terns, and/or black skimmers, all project activity occurring within 400 meters (700 meters for brown pelicans) of an active nesting colony should be restricted to the non-nesting period (i.e., September 16 through April 1).

If you have any questions, want additional information, or need to coordinate activities on waterbird nesting colonies or Brown Pelicans, please contact Beau Gregory at 225-765-2820. 12

Our records indicate that the proposed project has 10 Bald Eagle (*Haliaeetus leucocephalus*) nesting sites in the study area. This species is protected under the Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act (16 U.S.C. 668-668c) and the Migratory Bird Treaty Act (16 U.S.C. 703-712) and is protected by the state of Louisiana. All Bald Eagle nests (active, inactive, or seemingly abandoned) should be protected, and no large trees should be removed. For more information on avoiding impacts to Bald Eagles, please refer to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) Bald Eagle Management Guidelines at: <http://www.fws.gov/southeast/es/baldeagle/>.

The Alabama Shad (*Alosa alabamae*) may occur within the study area. This species, which was added to the candidate species list in 1997, spawns in large flowing rivers over sand, gravel, and rock substrates from January to April. The Alabama Shad has experienced significant population declines in the last forty years due to an increase in water control structures, poor water quality, and commercial and navigational dredging of sand bars. Habitat protection is recommended for this species by avoiding disturbances such as the construction of dams, water pollution, and siltation. In addition, it is important to avoid disturbances of the soil / stream bottoms. If you have any questions, please contact Beau Gregory at 225-765-2820. 13

Manatee (*Trichechus manatus*) may occur in the surrounding water bodies of your site location. Manatee are large mammals inhabiting both fresh and salt water. Although most manatee are year round residents of Florida or Central America, they have been known to migrate to areas along the Atlantic and Gulf coast during the summer months. Manatee are an endangered species protected under the Endangered Species Act of 1973 and the Federal Marine Mammal Protection Act of 1972. In Louisiana, taking or harassment of the manatee is a violation of state and federal laws. Critical habitat for manatee includes marine submergent vascular vegetation (sea-grass beds). Areas with sea-grass beds should be avoided during project activities. Report all manatee sightings to the Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries at 225-765-2821 or 1-800-442-2511.

The Pallid Sturgeon (*Scaphirhynchus albus*) may occur in water bodies near your proposed project. The pallid sturgeon is listed as endangered under the Endangered Species Act (16 U.S.C. 1531-1544) and is confined to the Mississippi and Atchafalaya rivers in southern Louisiana. This species requires large, turbid, free-flowing riverine habitat and is adapted to living close to the bottom of large, shallow rivers with sand and gravel bars. Pallid sturgeon typically spawn from July-August, but successful reproduction has been severely reduced due to habitat modification. This includes the loss of habitat through the construction of dams that have modified flows, reduced turbidity, and lowered water temperatures. We advise you to take the necessary measures to avoid the breeding season and any degradation of water quality in the Mississippi River.

The proposed project may also impact the gulf sturgeon (*Acipenser oxyrinchus desotoi*) and its designated critical habitat. The gulf sturgeon is listed as threatened on both the federal and state species list. Major population limiting factors are thought to include barriers to spawning habitats and habitat loss associated with the construction of water control structures,

including dams and sills. Other threats identified include modification to habitat associated with dredged material disposal and poor water quality associated with contamination. Please contact the USFWS to coordinate activities within this critical habitat unit.

The Inflated Heelsplitter (*Potamilus inflatus*) may potentially be impacted by the proposed project. This species is listed as threatened under the Endangered Species Act (16 U.S. C. 1533-1544) and is considered critically imperiled in the state of Louisiana. The preferred habitat of this species is soft, stable substrate in slow to moderate currents. It has been found in sand, mud, silt, and sandy-gravel, but not in large gravel or armored gravel. The degradation of water quality is one of the leading threats to this species. We recommend you to take erosion control measures at the proposed construction site to minimize degradation of the water quality. These measures include silt fencing, mulches, seeding and vegetation to decrease the amount of soil eroded by rainfall and runoff. This will prevent any degradation of water quality as a result of silt-laden runoff from the construction site. All construction waste and debris should be placed in containers and disposed offsite. We also recommend surveying 500 feet upstream and downstream of the project site for the presence of heelsplitters. If this mussel is found, the applicant must contact Beau Gregory with LDWF at 225-765-2820 and Debbie Fuller with USFWS at 337-291-3124 to coordinate activities.

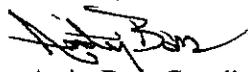
The Southern Rainbow (*Villosa vibex*), Southern Pocketbook (*Lampsilis ornata*), Southern Creekmussel (*Strophitus subvexus*), Rayed Creekshell (*Anodontoidea radiatus*) and Southern Hickorynut (*Obovaria jacksoniana*) are considered critically imperiled to rare in the state of Louisiana. Current stresses include impoundments and clear-cutting and the resulting increase in silt. Habitat protection is recommended by avoiding disturbances such as water pollution, siltation, and the construction of dams. In addition, it is important to avoid disturbances of the soil / stream bottoms. If you have any questions, please contact Beau Gregory at 225-765-2820.

Spruce pine-hardwood mesic flatwoods is a natural community that is considered imperiled to rare in the state with a S2S3 rank. Surveys should be conducted to determine the extent of the occurrence and to avoid impacting this natural community. If you have any questions, want additional information or need to coordinate activities, please contact Amity Bass at 225-765-2975.

There are two plant species that also occur within the project area. Small flower hemicarpha (*Lipocarpa micrantha*) is considered critically imperiled in the state with a S1 rank and Square-stemmed Monkey-flower (*Mimulus ringens*) is considered imperiled with a S2 state rank. If you have any questions or need additional information on either of these species, please contact Amity Bass at 225-765-2975.

The Louisiana Natural Heritage Program has compiled data on rare, endangered, or otherwise significant plant and animal species, plant communities, and other natural features throughout the state of Louisiana. Heritage reports summarize the existing information known at the time of the request regarding the location in question. The quantity and quality of data collected by the LNHP are dependent on the research and observations of many individuals. In most cases, this information is not the result of comprehensive or site-specific field surveys; many natural areas in Louisiana have not been surveyed. This report does not address the occurrence of wetlands at the site in question. Heritage reports should not be considered final statements on the biological elements or areas being considered, nor should they be substituted for on-site surveys required for environmental assessments. LNHP requires that this office be acknowledged in all reports as the source of all data provided here. If at any time Heritage tracked species are encountered within the project area, please contact the LNHP Data Manager at 225-765-2643. If you have any questions, or need additional information, please call 225-765-2357.

Sincerely,



Amity Bass, Coordinator
Natural Heritage Program

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GOVERNOR

State of Louisiana
DEPARTMENT OF WILDLIFE AND FISHERIES
OFFICE OF WILDLIFE

ROBERT J. BARHAM
SECRETARY
JIMMY L. ANTHONY
ASSISTANT SECRETARY

INVOICE

RETAIN THIS COPY FOR YOUR RECORDS

Date January 5, 2012
Invoice Number 12010501
Project BR Loop Project Tier 1 Draft Environmental Impact Statement
Name Suzanne McCain
Company Capital Area Expressway Authority
Street Address 9100 Bluebonnet Centre Blvd; Suite 301
City, State, Zip Baton Rouge, LA 70809
Number of Quads Reviewed 0
Total Due \$0.00

Payment should be made to "Louisiana Department of Wildlife & Fisheries" within 30 days of the date of this invoice. Please include the invoice number on your check and return a copy of this invoice with your remittance to the following address:

Louisiana Department of Wildlife & Fisheries
Attn: Jennifer Riddle
P.O. Box 80399
Baton Rouge, LA 70898-0399

Should you have any questions regarding this invoice, for review of the Louisiana Natural Heritage database for information on known sensitive elements at a charge of \$20.00 per quad reviewed, please contact LNHP at (225) 765-2357.



BOBBY JINDAL
GOVERNOR

State of Louisiana
DEPARTMENT OF WILDLIFE AND FISHERIES
OFFICE OF WILDLIFE

ROBERT J. BARHAM
SECRETARY
JIMMY L. ANTHONY
ASSISTANT SECRETARY

INVOICE

RETURN THIS COPY OF INVOICE WITH PAYMENT

Date January 5, 2012
Invoice Number 12010501
Project BR Loop Project Tier 1 Draft Environmental Impact Statement

Name Suzanne McCain
Company Capital Area Expressway Authority
Street Address 9100 Bluebonnet Centre Blvd; Suite 301
City, State, Zip Baton Rouge, LA 70809
Number of Quads Reviewed 0
Total Due \$0.00

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United States Department of the Interior

OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY
Office of Environmental Policy and Compliance
1001 Indian School Road NW, Suite 348
Albuquerque, New Mexico 87104



ER 11/1018
File 9043.1

January 6, 2012

Suzanne McCain, P.E.
HNTB Corporation
Baton Rouge Loop Team Leader
9100 Bluebonnet Centre Boulevard, Suite 301
Baton Rouge, Louisiana 70809

Dear Ms. McCain:

The U.S. Department of the Interior has reviewed the Tier 1 Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) and Section 4(f) Evaluation for the Baton Rouge Loop, SPN: 700-96-0011, FAPN STP-9609(504), in Ascension, East Baton Rouge, Iberville, Livingston, and West Baton Rouge Parishes, Louisiana. The Department offers the following comments and recommendations for your consideration as you develop the final document.

General Comments

We welcome this opportunity to cooperate with the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), the Louisiana Department of Transportation and Development (LADOTD), and the Capitol Area Expressway Authority (CAEA). The Tier 1 DEIS contains a great deal of valuable information concerning human and natural resources and issues relating to the proposed access improvement for I-12 east of Baton Rouge near Walker to I-10 west of Baton Rouge, I-10 west of Baton Rouge to I-10 south of Baton Rouge, and I-10 south of Baton Rouge to I-12 east of Walker, Louisiana.

Section 4(f) Evaluation and Section 6(f) Resources

As discussed in the DEIS, the Tier 1 analysis has identified a list of Section 4(f) resources believed to reside in the area potentially affected by the preliminary alternatives. However, the draft Section 4(f) Evaluation fails to document the coordination effort with the Louisiana Office of Cultural Development, Division of Historic Preservation in compliance with Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act. The Department asks that the current coordination effort be documented in the subsequent release of the final EIS.

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The DEIS combines the U.S. Department of Transportation Act Section 4(f) and the Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) Act Section 6(f) analysis under a joint discussion throughout the document. The DEIS provides sufficient detail in the requirements of the Section 4(f) process but provides vague detail regarding the LWCF Section 6(f) process and conversion requirements. The Department requests that the DEIS be expanded to provide the regulatory requirements of the Section 6(f) process under 36 CFR Part 59 and the criteria that must be met prior to receiving approval for conversion.

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U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Comments

17

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service submits the following comments in accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) of 1969 (83 Stat. 852, as amended; 42 U.S.C. 4321 et seq.); the Migratory Bird Treaty Act (MBTA, 40 Stat. 755, as amended; 16 U.S.C. 703 et seq.); the Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act (BGEPA) (54 Stat. 250, as amended, 16 U.S.C. 668a-d); the Endangered Species Act (ESA) of 1973 (87 Stat. 884, as amended; 16 U.S.C. 1531 et seq.); and the Fish and Wildlife Coordination Act (48 Stat. 401, as amended; 16 U.S.C. 661 et seq.).

The information provided states that the alternatives considered in the DEIS consist of “a build alternative” and a “no build alternative”. The build alternative consists of corridor alternatives in three Baton Rouge Loop Units. The three project units are the North Unit, the South Unit, and the East Unit and within each unit are various smaller corridor sections (sections). The sections combine to form multiple alternatives in each unit. Descriptions of those alternatives are as follows:

- **North Unit**
The North Unit alternatives are comprised of 3 major land cover types (agricultural land 32% to 35%, wetlands 32.2% to 36.3%, and developed land 15.4% to 20%); within the North Unit are 5 corridor alternatives (NA, NB, NC, ND, & NE) and 14 corridor sections (N1-N14). The Corridor Alternative NA has the least amount (27.30%) of palustrine forested wetlands (PFO) while Corridor Alternative ND contains the largest amount of PFO (31.15%). The North Unit Corridor Section N2 contains the smallest percentage (4.41%) of PFO while Section N5 contains the largest amount of PFO at 53.86%.
- **South Unit**
The South Unit alternatives are primarily comprised of wetlands (52.71% to 61.64%) with agriculture land the second largest (33.11% to 43.03%) and developed land third (2.8% to 5.5%). Within the South Unit are 18 corridor alternatives (SA-SR) and 14 corridor sections (S1-S14). The South Unit Corridor Alternative SI has the least amount of PFO (47.17%) while SB contains the largest amount of PFO (56.03%). The South Unit corridor Section S13 has the least amount of PFO (5.74%) and Corridor Section S2 contains the largest amount of PFO at 85.64%.
- **East Unit**
The East Unit alternatives are predominantly comprised of wetlands (48.93% to 53.76%) with forested land the second most abundant (20.69% to 22.94%) and developed land third (2.4% to 2.84%). Within the East Unit are 8 corridor alternatives (EA-EH) and 10 corridor sections (E1-E10). The East Unit Corridor Alternative, EA has the least amount

of PFO (42.23%) while EG contains the largest amount of PFO (47.29%). The East Unit Corridor Section E10 has the least amount of PFO (26.23%) and East Unit Corridor Section E7 contains the largest amount of PFO at 95.34%.

In Chapter 5, Section 5.4, page 5-10, the DEIS discusses which corridor alternatives are recommended for further evaluation and which alternatives are recommended for elimination. Some of those alternatives within the North Unit corridor and the East Unit corridor are being dropped from further evaluation based on public and stakeholder comments. The rationale for eliminating alternatives should be substantiated with documentation that demonstrates that the eliminated alternatives do not fulfill project objectives. The NEPA of 1969 (83 Stat. 852, as amended; 42 U.S.C. 4321 et seq.), Section 1502.25, Environmental review and consultation requirements, states that to the fullest extent possible, agencies shall prepare draft environmental impact statements concurrently with and integrated with environmental impact analyses and related surveys and studies required by the Fish and Wildlife Coordination Act (16 U.S.C. 661 et seq.), the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (16 U.S.C. 470 et seq.), the ESA of 1973 (16 U.S.C. 1531 et seq.), and other environmental review laws and executive orders. According to our review, the DEIS does not fully contain those requirements (i.e., migratory bird impacts, mature jurisdictional forested wetlands locations, threatened/endangered species surveys) nor does the DEIS discuss the environmentally preferable alternative(s). The NEPA of 1969 (83 Stat. 852, as amended; 42 U.S.C. 4321 et seq.), Section 1505.2(b) Environmentally Preferable Alternative states that, in cases where an EIS has been prepared, the Record of Decision, must identify all alternatives that were considered, "...specifying the alternative or alternatives which were considered to be environmentally preferable." The environmentally preferable alternative is the alternative that will promote the national environmental policy in NEPA. Ordinarily, this means the alternative that causes the least damage to the biological and physical environment. It also means the alternative which best protects, preserves, and enhances historic, cultural, and natural resources. The FWS desires to assist in identifying the environmentally preferable alternative(s). However, because locations of federally listed species and their habitat, migratory birds and their habitat, and mature jurisdictional forested wetlands within the proposed project areas are presently unknown, the environmentally preferable alternative(s) is also unknown at this time. Accordingly, all appurtenant surveys/delineations should be completed and presented to resource agencies in order to identify the environmentally preferable alternative as required by NEPA prior to eliminating alternatives.

Threatened/Endangered Species

In a letter dated March 10, 2009, FWS provided comments regarding the subject proposal's potential to impact threatened and endangered species within the proposed project area. That letter is enclosed for your review.

Migratory Birds

Bald Eagle

The proposed project area may provide nesting habitat for the bald eagle (*Haliaeetus leucocephalus*), which was officially removed from the List of Endangered and Threatened

Species as of August 8, 2007. However, the bald eagle remains protected under the MBTA and BGEPA. Comprehensive bald eagle survey data have not been collected by the Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries (LDWF) since 2008, and new active, inactive, or alternate nests may have been constructed within the proposed project area since that time.

Bald eagles typically nest in large trees located near coastlines, rivers, or lakes that support adequate foraging from October through mid-May. In southeastern Louisiana parishes, eagles typically nest in mature trees (e.g., baldcypress, sycamore, willow, etc.) near fresh to intermediate marshes or open water. Bald eagles may also nest in mature pine trees near large lakes in central and northern Louisiana. Major threats to this species include habitat alteration, human disturbance, and environmental contaminants. Furthermore, bald eagles are vulnerable to disturbance during courtship, nest building, egg laying, incubation, and brooding. Disturbance during these periods may lead to nest abandonment, cracked and chilled eggs, and exposure of small young to the elements. Human activity near a nest late in the nesting cycle may also cause flightless birds to jump from the nest tree, thus reducing their chance of survival.

Please be aware that the FWS has developed National Bald Eagle Management (NBEM) Guidelines to provide landowners, land managers, and others with information and recommendations to minimize potential project impacts to bald eagles, particularly where such impacts may constitute “disturbance,” which is prohibited by the BGEPA. A copy of the NBEM Guidelines is available at:

<http://www.fws.gov/southeast/es/baldeagle/NationalBaldEagleManagementGuidelines.pdf>.

Those Guidelines recommend: (1) maintaining a specified distance between the activity and the nest (buffer area); (2) maintaining natural areas (preferably forested) between the activity and nest trees (landscape buffers); and (3) avoiding certain activities during the breeding season. During any project construction, on-site personnel should be informed of the possible presence of nesting bald eagles in the vicinity of the project boundary, and should identify, avoid, and immediately report any such nests to this office. If a bald eagle nest occurs or is discovered within 1,500 feet of the proposed project area, then an evaluation must be performed to determine whether the project is likely to disturb nesting bald eagles. That evaluation may be conducted on-line at: <http://www.fws.gov/southeast/es/baldeagle>. Following completion of the evaluation, that website will provide a determination of whether additional consultation is necessary.

On September 11, 2009, the FWS published two federal regulations establishing the authority to issue permits for non-purposeful bald eagle take (typically disturbance) and eagle nest take when recommendations of the NBEM Guidelines cannot be achieved. Permits may be issued for nest take only under the following circumstances where: 1) necessary to alleviate a safety emergency to people or eagles, 2) necessary to ensure public health and safety, 3) the nest prevents the use of a pre-existing human-engineered structure, or 4) the activity or mitigation for the activity will provide a net benefit to eagles. Except in emergencies, only inactive nests may be permitted to be taken. The Division of Migratory Birds for the Southeast Region of the FWS (phone: 404/679-7051, e-mail: SEmigratorybirds@fws.gov) has the lead role in conducting consultations and issuance of permits.

Colonial Nesting Birds

The proposed project would be located in areas where colonial nesting waterbirds may be present. Colonies may be present that are not currently listed in the database maintained by the LDWF. That database is updated primarily by monitoring the colony sites that were previously surveyed during the 1980s. Until a new, comprehensive coast-wide survey is conducted to determine the location of newly-established nesting colonies, we recommend that a qualified biologist inspect the proposed work sites (forested wetlands) for the presence of undocumented nesting colonies during the nesting season. Once the surveys have been conducted, we request that rookery and nest locations be reported to Patti Holland (337/291-3121) with FWS Field Office, Lafayette, LA, and to Mr. Mike Seymour (225/765-2281) with the LDWF, Natural Heritage Program. In addition, for areas containing the nesting wading birds listed below, all project related activities should correspond with each species project activity window and all project personnel should avoid affecting them during the breeding season (i.e., the time period outside the activity window).

<u>Species</u>	<u>Project Activity Window</u>
Anhinga	July 1 to March 1
Cormorant	July 1 to March 1
Great Blue Heron	August 1 to February 15
Great Egret	August 1 to February 15
Snowy Egret	August 1 to March 1
Little Blue Heron	August 1 to March 1
Tricolored Heron	August 1 to March 1
Reddish Egret	August 1 to March 1
Cattle Egret	September 1 to April 1
Green-backed Heron	September 1 to March 15
Black-crowned Night-Heron	September 1 to March 1
Yellow-crowned Night-Heron	September 1 to March 15
White and White-faced Ibis	September 1 to April 1
Roseate Spoonbill	August 1 to April 1

Summary Comments

The Department has a continuing interest in working with the FHWA, LADOTD, and the CAEA to ensure that impacts to resources of concern to the Department are adequately addressed. For matters related to Section 4(f) Evaluation and 6(f) resource comments, please coordinate with Steven M. Wright, NPS Southeast Regional Office, Planning and Compliance Division, at (404) 507-5710, or at Steven_M_Wright@nps.gov. For matters related to FWS comments, please coordinate with Mr. Joshua C. Marceaux, Fish and Wildlife Biologist, FWS Field Office, Lafayette, Louisiana at (337) 291-3110, or at Joshua_Marceaux@fws.gov.

We appreciate the opportunity to provide these comments.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in purple ink that reads "Stephen R. Spencer". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long horizontal flourish at the end.

Stephen R. Spencer
Regional Environmental Officer

Enclosure

cc: Louisiana Department of Culture Recreation & Tourism, Office of Cultural
Development, Division of Historic Preservation, Baton Rouge, LA
Attn: Nicole Hobson-Morris
Louisiana Department of Transportation and Development, Baton Rouge, LA
Attn: Noel Ardoin
Capital Area Expressway Authority, Baton Rouge, LA
Attn: Melvin Holden, Chairman



Ms. Suzanne McCain, P.E., HNTB
Baton Rouge Loop Team Project Manager
Capital Area Expressway Authority
9100 Bluebonnet Centre Boulevard, Suite 301
Baton Rouge, Louisiana 70809

Dear Ms. McCain:

We have received your letter dated October 28, 2011, which forwarded copies of the two-volume Baton Rouge Loop Tier 1 Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) and invited the Coast Guard to provide comments. The Coast Guard previously submitted comments regarding the DEIS on June 21, 2010 and June 28, 2010 (enclosed for your convenience). We find that the 2011 DEIS does not fully address comments raised in our prior correspondence. The following comments should be addressed in the DEIS:

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1. Navigation- A description of historic, current, and prospective waterway navigational usage, including type, frequency, and dimensions of each vessel for each bridge crossing over a navigable waterway should be included in the EIS. Additionally, the EIS should identify how construction and operation of the bridges will impact commercial and recreational navigation, if applicable. In addition to the guide clearances cited in the EIS, information on projected vertical and horizontal clearances for each proposed bridge structure crossing a navigable waterway should be included in the EIS. The impacts that these clearances may have on navigation and upstream/downstream current and prospective development should also be addressed in the EIS.

19

2. Permitting- A Coast Guard bridge permit will be issued under authority of the General Bridge Act of 1946 (33 U.S.C. 525) rather than Section 9 of the Rivers and Harbors Appropriation Act of 1899. This correction should be made to Chapter 6, section 6.4. Permitting.

20

3. Future Actions, Commitments, Mitigation, and Permits- The USCG recognizes that the Tier 1 EIS does not identify site-specific environmental resource, land use, demographic and socioeconomic impacts. Therefore, it is recommended that the Tier 2 environmental documentation include the following:

21

- A description of the preferred alternative, identifying waterway crossings, approaches and alignment.
- A description of Air Quality to include whether the project is in an area of attainment, maintenance or non attainment for each of the criteria pollutants in the NAAQS. The EIS should include conformity determination(s) for General and/or Transportation Conformity and state whether the project is listed in the State Implementation Plan (SIP), Transportation Improvement Plan (TIP) or Regional Transportation Plan (RTP).

- A description of endangered and threatened species, which shall identify the date of the completed Biological Assessment and/or Opinion, impacts to proposed species, mitigation, and compliance with the Endangered Species Act of 1973.
- A description of water resources to identify whether a Water Quality Certificate is required and the status of its application, impacts to Wild and Scenic Rivers and American Heritage Rivers, and compliance with the Clean Water Act and Safe Drinking Water Act.
- A description of coastal barrier resources present in the project area and impacts to these resources due to the proposed project. Identify whether the state has a Coastal Zone Management (CZM) Program and if the project is within the boundaries of the CZM program or if it will impact CZM resources.
- Identifying whether a Wetlands Finding was completed and the results of the findings.
- A description of migratory birds, essential fish habitats, national marine sanctuaries, and marine mammals present in the project area and impacts to these resources. Identify compliance with the Migratory Bird Act, Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Acts, Magnuson-Stevens Act, Marine Mammal Protection Act of 1972, and National Marine Sanctuaries Act.
- A description of Section 106 properties within the project area and impacts to these resources. Identify compliance with the National Historic Preservation Act, Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act, Antiquities Act of 1906, Archaeological Resources Protection Act of 1979, and American Indian Religious Freedom Act of 1978.
- A description of construction impacts to environmental resources.

4. Navigational and environmental impacts specific to each waterway crossing will need to be included in the bridge permit applications to the USCG. It is suggested that these bridge-specific impacts be documented in the EIS to potentially expedite preparation of these applications.

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Thank you for the opportunity to provide input. We look forward to working with you and your team on this significant transportation project. If we can be of further assistance, please contact our office.

Sincerely,



DAVID M. FRANK
Chief, Bridge Administration Branch
U.S. Coast Guard
By direction

2 Enclosures

Copy: Mr. Bob Mahoney, FHWA, Baton Rouge, LA
LTJG Brian Dochtermann, CG MSU, Baton Rouge, LA
Ms. Shelly Sugarman, COMDT (CG-5512), Washington, DC



DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
 NEW ORLEANS DISTRICT, CORPS OF ENGINEERS
 P. O. BOX 60267
 NEW ORLEANS, LOUISIANA 701600267

REPLY TO
 ATTENTION OF:

Operations Division
 Regulatory Branch

January 20, 2012

SUBJECT: Baton Rouge Loop Draft Tier 1 Environmental Impact Statement
 MVN-2009-0805-MS

Ms. Suzanne McCain, P.E.
 Capital Area Expressway Authority
 9100 Bluebonnet Centre Boulevard, Suite 301
 Baton Rouge, Louisiana 70809

Dear Ms. McCain:

In response to your letter dated October 28, 2011, please accept the following as the United States Army Corps of Engineers – New Orleans District’s (CEMVN) comments regarding the Tier 1 Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) for the proposed Capital Area Expressway Authority (CAEA) Baton Rouge Loop Project.

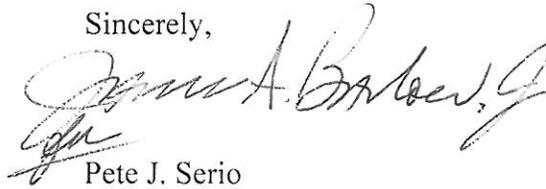
Chapter 3 of the DEIS discusses the potential impacts to various resource types within each corridor alternative. CEMVN understands CAEA utilized percentages of impact in order to obtain potential scale of magnitude impacts within each corridor alternative. Please be aware that potential alternatives that are less damaging may be eliminated using this method. 23

Chapters 2 and 5 of the DEIS discusses comparison and selections of alternatives. Please be aware that CEMVN can only permit the least damaging practical alternative; therefore, CEMVN recommends determining which alternatives are practicable prior to removal of an alternative from consideration. 40 CFR 230.10 (2) defines practicable alternatives as those which are available and capable of being done after taking into consideration cost, existing technology, and logistics in light of the overall project purposes. CEMVN recommends that CAEA confirm its definition of the overall project purpose and confirm CAEA’s criteria for determining practicable alternatives are defensible. 24

As practicable alternatives are determined, CEMVN recommends that CAEA take all necessary steps to avoid and minimize impacts to wetlands. 40 CFR Section 230.10(a)(3) sets forth rebuttable presumptions that 1) alternatives for non-water dependent activities that do not involve special aquatic sites are available unless clearly demonstrated otherwise and 2) where a discharge is proposed for a special aquatic site, all practicable alternatives for that proposed discharge that do not involve special aquatic sites are presumed to have less adverse impact on the aquatic environment, unless clearly demonstrated otherwise. 25

Should you have any questions or require additional information, feel free to contact Mr. Stephen D. Pfeffer at 504-862-2227.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Pete J. Serio".

Pete J. Serio
Chief, Regulatory Branch



UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY

REGION 6
1445 ROSS AVENUE, SUITE 1200
DALLAS, TX 75202-2733

January 20, 2012

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

Dear Mr. Bolinger:

In accordance with our responsibilities under Section 309 of the Clean Air Act (CAA), the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), and the Council on Environmental Quality regulations for implementing NEPA, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Region 6 office in Dallas, Texas, has completed its review of the Tier 1 Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) prepared by the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA). The FHWA and the Louisiana Department of Transportation and Development are proposing to construct a new highway loop, the Baton Rouge Loop, in the Parishes of Ascension, East Baton Rouge, Iberville, Livingston, and West Baton Rouge, Louisiana.

EPA rates the Tier 1 DEIS as "EO-2", i.e., EPA has Environmental Objections and Requests Additional Information in the Tier 1 Final EIS (FEIS). EPA's Rating System Criteria can be found at: <http://www.epa.gov/oecaerth/nepa/comments/ratings.html>. Detailed comments are enclosed with this letter which more clearly identify our concerns and the informational needs requested for incorporation into the Tier 1 FEIS. Most importantly, the Tier 1 FEIS should include the full Baton Rouge Loop Implementation Plan as an appendix, as well as incorporate a more robust evaluation process, allowing for a meaningful comparison of the environmental impacts associated with each corridor alternative, particularly with regards to wetlands impacts. No decision on a Preferred Corridor should be made until adequate information is made available in the Tier 1 FEIS. Responses to comments should be placed in a dedicated section of the Tier 1 FEIS, or its appendices, and should include the specific location where the revision, if any, was made. If no revision was made, an explanation should be included.

EPA appreciates the opportunity to review the Tier 1 DEIS. Please send our office two copies of the Tier 1 FEIS and an internet link when it is sent to the Office of Federal Activities, EPA (Mail Code 2252A), Ariel Rios Federal Building, 1200 Pennsylvania Ave, N.W., Washington, DC 20004. Our classification will be published on the EPA website, www.epa.gov, according to our responsibility under Section 309 of the CAA to inform the public of our views on the proposed Federal action.

Re: NEPA 309 Review
Baton Rouge Loop Tier I DEIS

If you have any questions or concerns, please contact John MacFarlane of my staff at macfarlane.john@epa.gov or 214-665-7491 for assistance.

Sincerely,



John Blevins
Director
Compliance Assurance and
Enforcement Division

cc: Carl Highsmith
Federal Highway Administration

Pete J. Serio
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers

**DETAILED COMMENTS ON THE
FEDERAL HIGHWAY ADMINISTRATION'S
TIER 1 DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT
FOR THE
BATON ROUGE LOOP in the
PARISHES OF ASCENSION, EAST BATON ROUGE, IBERVILLE, LIVINGSTON,
AND WEST BATON ROUGE, LA**

BACKGROUND: The Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) proposes to construct a high-speed, toll facility project, proposed as a 90 to 105 mile long circumferential controlled access free-flow toll roadway with two new Mississippi River crossings. Because the project proposes work in wetlands and structural crossings of various waterways in the project area, a Department of the Army permit pursuant to section 404 of the Clean Water Act (CWA) is required before any construction activities.

EPA understands that a Tier 1 Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) focuses on broad issues over a wide area. However, we feel that the characterization of the project area and its analysis of impacts to the human and natural environment falls short of National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) intentions. As 23 CFR § 771.111 states, "For major transportation actions, the tiering of EISs as discussed in the CEQ regulation (40 CFR § 1502.20) may be appropriate. The first tier EIS would focus on broad issues such as general location, mode choice, and area-wide air quality and land use implications of the major alternatives. The second tier would address site-specific details on project impacts, costs, and mitigation measures." As the regulation states, a first tier EIS should focus on "land use implications of major alternatives." No implications or consequences of constructing a major transportation project are analyzed, even on a broad scale in the Tier I DEIS. We believe that it does not provide vital information that would allow for accurate differentiation among alternative corridors.

The following detailed comments are offered for your agency's consideration:

DETAILED COMMENTS

Chapter 2 – Alternatives Considered

According to 23 CFR § 771.111(f), each preliminary corridor should have logical termini and independent utility. This section should define and discuss how and if the preliminary corridors meet this requirement. 32

The Tier I DEIS identifies several sensitive environmental elements, such as Spanish Lake and the Amite River. Ideally, in determining which corridors would be brought forward for analysis within the Tier 1 DEIS, a process should have been undertaken that would 1) identify large scale avoidance areas or constraints, and 2) utilize a computer based optimization tool, such as GIS or Quantm™ software. It is unclear from the Tier 1 DEIS if any such tools/processes were utilized. An Implementation Plan study is mentioned several times, and it is EPA's understanding that much of the corridor development and refinement occurred within the study. 33 34

Re: Tier I DEIS
Baton Rouge Loop

However, the Implementation Plan is not included as an appendix, leaving the public and resource agencies unable to determine whether screening of corridor alternatives was done appropriately. EPA believes it is absolutely necessary that the full Implementation Plan be included in the Tier 1 FEIS in order for reviewers to understand the methodology used for corridor development. This is a vital consideration when considering the appropriate range of alternatives studied.

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Chapter 3 – Project Environment – Resources and Potential Impacts

General Comments

This section should discuss appropriate and applicable laws, regulations, requirements, or Executive Orders and include the responsible agency. It should characterize the natural environment of the project area and disclose general/broad level environmental impacts of a major transportation project.

37

We feel that none of the resources were properly evaluated for impacts and that comments would be similar for each resource. However, we have included specific comments related to environmental justice, tribal issues, threatened/endangered species, and wetlands as impacts to these resources could rise to the level of significant.

Environmental Justice

Executive Order 12898 - Federal Actions to Address Environmental Justice in Minority Populations and Low-Income Populations states that the EPA, when reviewing environmental effects of proposed action of other Federal agencies under section 309 of the Clean Air Act, 42 U.S.C. section 7609, shall ensure that the involved agency has fully analyzed environmental effects on minority communities and low-income communities, including human health, social, and economic effects. EPA recommends that an analysis of minority and low-income communities should be included in the Final Tier 1 EIS.

An Environmental Justice analysis will identify minority and low-income populations within the project area and evaluate project impacts to those communities. Identification of any significant low income or minority areas would determine avoidance areas. Thus, corridors could be routed away from these areas. Furthermore, if these low income or minority areas are unavoidable, it will provide mitigation efforts to minimize those effects. The Tier 1 DEIS makes no assessment on vulnerable communities in any of the alternative areas.

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Tribal Issues

A review of the Cultural Resources section concluded that a distribution list of potentially affected Federally and State Recognized Tribes in Louisiana was not included. There is one tribe to the northwest of the project and several tribes to the south of the project that should be included in the public involvement process.

Re: Tier I DEIS
Baton Rouge Loop

On February 20, 2009, a solicitation of views was sent out and included the Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma and Alabama-Coushatta Tribe of Texas. The Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma recommended an archeological survey prior to construction and asked that they be allowed to review the survey.

The one Tribe to the northwest of the proposed project is the Jena Band of Choctaw. EPA recommends notifying them of the project and including them in any public involvement processes. The State also recognizes five coastal Tribes in Louisiana. Those tribes estimate about 36,000 Tribal members who for over 600 years, have lived near the Louisiana coast. While consultation with these tribes is not required by the Federal government due to the non-Federal Recognition status of these Tribes, it would be due diligence to include them in consultation meetings. At a minimum, these Tribes should have the opportunity to provide input on the proposed project. Below is the contact information for the Jena Band of Choctaw and the Coastal Louisiana Tribes:

Jena Band of Choctaw Indians
PO Box 818
1052 Chanaha Hina Street
Jena, LA 70532
337-584-1401

Grand Cailou/Dulac Band of Biloxi-Chitimacha
Chairwoman Marlene Foret
985-709-4161
www.lctci.com

Point au Chien Indian Tribe
Chief Albert Naquin
985-856-5336
www.lctci.com

Bayou Lafourche Band of Biloxi-Chitimacha
Chief Randy Verdun
225-485-8765
www.lcti.com

United Houma Nation
Chief Thomas Dardar
985-665-4085
www.unitedhoumanation.org

Isle de Jean Charles Band of Biloxi-Chitimacha
Chief Charles Verdin
985-232-1286
www.lcti.com

Public Involvement

Chapter 7 outlines the public involvement process. We are very concerned that underserved populations may not have attended meetings or even be aware of the proposed project. EPA suggests reviewing FHWA's Public Involvement Techniques for Transportation Decision-making for ways to involve underserved and vulnerable communities and to insure that these communities have an opportunity to be involved and provide comments.

Air Quality

This section of the Tier I DEIS refers to CFR 40 § 93.126 for an exemption from air quality conformity modeling at this Tier 1 development stage of the project. This is consistent with EPA and FHWA interpretation of allowable exemptions under CFR 40 § 93.126. However, please indicate how estimates of air emissions will be incorporated into the Tier 2

Re: Tier I DEIS
Baton Rouge Loop

or later development stage of the project, to allow for a greater understanding of the anticipated magnitude of emissions, and how these emissions will or will not impact air quality for the Baton Rouge area.

Effective December 30, 2011, the Baton Rouge area will be redesignated to attainment of the 1997 8-hour ozone National Ambient Air Quality Standard (NAAQS) (76 FR 74000, November 30, 2011). Upon this redesignation, the area will be identified as a maintenance area for the standard, and still subject to the requirements of transportation and general conformity, as specified in Clean Air Act 176(c)(5)(B).

It should also be noted that EPA expects that the Baton Rouge area will be designated nonattainment for the 2008 8-hour ozone NAAQS, a more stringent air quality standard (0.075 ppm) than the 1997 8-hour ozone NAAQS (0.08 ppm). On December 9, 2011, EPA Region 6 submitted a letter to Governor Bobby Jindal stating EPA's initial intention to designate the Baton Rouge area (East Baton Rouge, Ascension, Iberville, Livingston and West Baton Rouge Parishes) as nonattainment of the 2008 ozone standard. The designation process for the 2008 ozone standard will be completed in April 2012.

Any demolition, construction, rehabilitation, repair, dredging or filling activities have the potential to emit air pollutants and we recommend best management practices be implemented to minimize the impact of any air pollutants. Furthermore, construction and waste disposal activities should be conducted in accordance with applicable local, state and federal statutes and regulations.

EPA encourages the use of clean, lower-emissions equipment and technologies to reduce pollution. EPA's final Highway Diesel and Nonroad Diesel Rules mandate the use of lower-sulfur fuels in non-road and marine diesel engines beginning in 2007.

Threatened and Endangered Species

The Tier I DEIS identifies several threatened and/or endangered species (T&E) and their critical habitat that may occur in the project area. It also states that many corridors cross important and designated critical habitat for these species. Important and critical habitat should have been included as avoidance criteria in the corridor development process. EPA strongly recommends that FWHA invite the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to collaborate on establishing avoidance areas for T&E species so as to avoid any unnecessary impacts to these rare and important species.

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Wetlands

The Tier I DEIS correctly identifies wetland impacts as a potentially significant adverse environmental effect of the proposed Baton Rouge Loop. Clean Water Act (CWA) Section 404 requires that wetland impacts be avoided and minimized to the maximum extent practicable (with compensatory mitigation to offset unavoidable adverse impacts). This is accomplished first and foremost through the analysis of potentially less environmentally damaging alternatives.

Re: Tier I DEIS
Baton Rouge Loop

The rigor of such an alternatives analysis should be commensurate with the magnitude of potential wetland impacts. A rigorous alternatives analysis appears warranted in this case, given the size and scope of the proposed loop project and the amount of wetlands in the study area. Beyond this statutory requirement, the fact that addressing coastal wetland loss in Louisiana is both a Federal and state priority only serves to increase the importance of avoiding wetland impacts. While much of the study area is not in the state's coastal zone, portions of the proposed project could adversely affect coastal aquatic resources (e.g., such as the Amite River floodplain as it relates to the Maurepas Swamp and the Pontchartrain Basin). Thus, there is a need for this proposed project to be consistent with the broader effort to restore coastal Louisiana.

The Tier I DEIS does not provide sufficient information to discriminate amongst corridor sections and corridor alternatives based on potential wetland impacts. In the Tier 1 DEIS, percentage of wetland land cover relative to total land cover is used as the primary means for comparing potential wetland impacts among various sections and alternatives. However, the percentage of wetlands in a given section or alternative does not necessarily correlate with the actual extent and severity of wetland impacts that would occur if the particular option were selected. Construction of a roadway in a section with a relatively low percentage of wetland land cover could in fact result in greater wetland impacts than construction of the road in a section with a higher percentage of wetland land cover depending on the size and shape of the section and the distribution of wetlands therein. Moreover, comparing sections or alternatives based solely on percent wetland land cover does not allow for consideration of the condition or functional value of wetlands within each option. Eliminating a section or alternative after having only assessed wetland impacts in terms of percent wetland land cover could rule out less environmentally damaging options which is contrary to the requirements of CWA Section 404.

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According to the Tier I DEIS, a "selected corridor" is to be identified during the Tier 1 DEIS public comment period. It appears that such a selected corridor alternative would then be presented in the Tier 1 Final EIS. Tier 2 NEPA documents would focus solely on segments of the preferred corridor. As noted above, however, the Tier 1 DEIS does not provide sufficient information to differentiate among corridor alternatives based on potential environmental impacts. Less damaging corridor alternatives could be eliminated from consideration based on a faulty assumption regarding the correlation between percent wetland cover and the acreage and value of potential wetland impacts. Again, in the absence of more detailed information on potential wetland impacts, it would be premature to identify a preferred corridor alternative.

The Tier 1 EIS for this project would, by definition, not be of the same level of detail as a traditional EIS. Nevertheless, more information on potential wetland impacts is needed to identify a preferred corridor alternative. Such additional information should include estimated acreage of direct wetland impacts by sections and alternatives, broken down by wetland type. This could be done, for example, by drawing a representative road alignment for each alternative, based on a common set of assumptions regarding right of ways, water crossings and so on. While such a representative alignment might not be exactly the same as the actual alignment to be developed in subsequent phases, it would allow for an approximation and comparison of the acreage of potential wetland impacts for each alternative given a common

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Re: Tier I DEIS
Baton Rouge Loop

set of planning assumptions. Locations where the proposed roadway would likely be elevated to reduce wetland impacts should also be identified prior to selection of a preferred corridor alternative. This would help with the initial assessment of potential indirect impacts due to altered hydrology. .

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There should also be more detail on potential impacts to valuable aquatic resources such as the Spanish Lake area and the Amite River floodplain. Finally, there should be an effort to identify, at the programmatic level, the functional condition of wetland areas that might be impacted by the various sections and alternatives under consideration. This might be done, for example, by identifying and labeling wetland areas based on the degree to which such areas have been affected by human activities. A highly fragmented, drained or otherwise modified wetland is presumably of lower condition relative to the same type of wetland in a less degraded state. Such programmatic assessments can be made using aerial photography in conjunction with local knowledge and "ground-truthing" with site inspections.

46

Additional wetland impact assessment is necessary and would develop sufficient information to allow for accurate identification and selection of the least environmentally damaging corridor alternative, prior to initiation of more detailed analyses on segments of independent utility.

Once the least environmentally damaging practicable corridor alternative has been identified, subsequent phases of the NEPA process should rigorously examine ways to avoid and minimize wetland impacts within the selected corridor alternative (presumably on a segment-by-segment basis). To that end, EPA recommends the following strategies be considered:

- Site the road in non-wetland locations to the maximum extent practicable.
- Where it is not practicable to avoid wetlands, elevate the road and use end-on construction to the extent practicable to minimize short- and long-term impacts to wetlands associated with changes in hydrology and other adverse effects.
- Build atop or adjacent to existing roads and other linear rights of way to the maximum extent practicable. (This helps minimize fragmentation of existing habitat blocks.)
- Locate interchanges away from areas where wetlands comprise a significant portion of the undeveloped landscape. (This can reduce the potential for the proposed road to induce or facilitate development in wetlands.)

Again, however, this more detailed segment-by-segment analysis of ways to avoid and minimize wetland impacts should come only after there has been more effective analysis of the potential wetland impacts associated with the various sections and alternatives contained in the Tier 1 DEIS.

Re: Tier I DEIS
Baton Rouge Loop

For questions regarding wetlands comments, please contact EPA, Region 6 wetlands staff member, Mr. John Ettinger, at 504-862-1119 or ettinger.john@epa.gov.

Chapter 5 – Comparison and Evaluation of Alternatives

The evaluation and ranking process is vague and confusing. It appears no overarching evaluation methodology was established. As stated in Section 5.1, “For each individual Unit Corridor Alternative, evaluation parameters were quantified or a ‘desirability/feasibility’ value assigned. Using best professional judgment, each Corridor Alternative evaluation parameter was then given a qualitative ranking of High, Medium, or Low on a Unit basis by the Project Team”. Desirability is subjective and could be construed differently by different evaluators. However, we understand that “feasibility” in relation to evaluating cost, constructability, and traffic/transportation improvement is a standard criterion for highway projects and is an objective evaluation. 47

The qualitative ranking criteria are confusing. The Tier I DEIS rankings are high (H), medium (M), and low (L). Where H is the best/most desirable and L is worst/least desirable. However, in most cases, H would denote higher impacts and L would denote mean lower impacts. Perhaps a numerical ranking would be more appropriate. However, we believe the evaluation and ranking process is flawed. Resources such as wetlands, prime farmlands, and developed land are evaluated solely on percentage of the resource within the corridor. As stated in the Wetlands comments, the percentage of a particular resource in a given section or alternative does not necessarily correlate with the actual extent and severity of impacts to that resource. Beyond percent coverage, there is very little explanation of the methods used to apply the data and evaluate the corridors. In order for reviewers to be able to make a meaningful comparison of the environmental impacts associated with each corridor alternative, it is necessary that a more robust and detailed evaluation process be used. Based on the potential for significant impacts to Section 404 and other environmental resources, and the expanse of indirect and cumulative impacts of the project, EPA recommends forming a more meaningful and useful evaluation and ranking methodology. This could be accomplished by compiling a GIS database of various datasets and imposing a scoring structure on the data using various mathematical formulas.

We suggest reviewing the Geographic Information System Screening Tool (GISST) User’s Manual for guidance on how to develop an environmental assessment identification and prioritization tool for the Baton Rouge Loop project. GISST is a system that uses GIS coverage and imposes a scoring structure on this data so that decisions can be made. The scoring structure consists of criteria, using 1 as a low concern and 5 as a high concern. An internet link to the GISST User’s Manual is provided here: <http://www.epa.gov/region6/6en/xp/enxp2a3a.htm>. Another tool that could be used is the Regional Ecological Assessment Protocol (REAP). REAP is used to identify important ecological areas that should be avoided. REAP information is used to aid in project planning and scientific research, ultimately leading to better environmental assessments, improved understanding, and enhanced decision-making. We can provide the REAP GIS data upon request for use in project development and in determining avoidance areas.

Re: Tier I DEIS
Baton Rouge Loop

EPA is concerned how a Preferred Alternative will be selected before the Tier 1 FEIS. The Tier 1 DEIS should have included an explanation as to how this will occur. It is mentioned in the document that several corridors would be appropriate to eliminate based on public and stakeholder input. It would be useful to clearly summarize public and stakeholder input if that will be utilized as an evaluation criteria.

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In summary, there is insufficient information in the Tier 1 DEIS to enable differentiation among sections and alternatives. It would be premature to eliminate sections and/or alternatives from further consideration without having more accurately assessed potential adverse impacts to the various resources. To address these inadequacies, EPA believes that, at the minimum, the Tier 1 FEIS should include the full Baton Rouge Loop Implementation Plan as an appendix, as well as incorporating a more robust evaluation process, allowing for a meaningful comparison of the environmental impacts associated with each corridor alternative, particularly with regards to wetlands impacts. No decision on a Preferred Corridor should be made until appropriate information is made available to EPA and the public in the Tier 1 DEIS or Tier 1 FEIS.

Suzanne McCain

From: Beth Altazan-Dixon <Beth.Dixon@LA.GOV>
Sent: Friday, February 03, 2012 10:14 AM
To: Suzanne McCain
Subject: DEQ SOV 700-96-0011/3110 Baton Rouge Loop Tier 1 Draft EIS

January 27, 2012

Suzanne McCain, P.E.
Baton Rouge Loop Team Leader
Capital Area Expressway Authority
9100 Bluebonnet Centre Boulevard, Suite 301
Baton Rouge, LA 70809

RE: Baton Rouge Loop Tier 1 Draft Environmental Impact Statement (EIS)-DEQ SOV 700-96-0011/3110
CAEA Project No. E – 2009 – 001
S.P. No. H.005201 (700-96-0011)
F.A.P. No. STP-9609(504)
Ascension, East Baton Rouge, Iberville, Livingston & West Baton Rouge Parishes, Louisiana

Dear Ms. McCain:

The Louisiana Department of Environmental Quality (LDEQ), Business and Community Outreach Division has received your request for comments on the above referenced project. Sites were identified as having potential impacts such as active RCRA sites, oil and gas sites, LUST sites, inactive solid waste sites, etc. Depending on final alignment and footprint width of the proposed construction, a focused soils and groundwater assessment is likely needed. LDEQ assumes that this would occur in Tier 2 analysis when one or two alignment proposals are decided. The main portion of the site issues are at the Hwy. 190 corridor over the Mississippi River, on the east side. There are several active and closed sites or units that could have a potential impact on any bridge construction. 50

Additionally, the Assessment Division of the Office of Environmental Compliance has reviewed the information provided in your letter of October 28, 2011, regarding the referenced project in Ascension, East Baton Rouge, Iberville, Livingston and West Baton Rouge Parishes. Please be advised that these parishes were designated by EPA as ozone-attainment parishes with maintenance plans under the 8-hour standard. Since this federally funded action is proposed for construction in these ozone-attainment with maintenance plan parishes, this highway project is subject to the State's transportation conformity regulations as promulgated under LAC 33:III.Chapter 14, Subchapter B. 51

If this project is deemed regionally significant it must be included in a conforming metropolitan transportation plan, i.e., included in a comprehensive regional emissions analysis which demonstrates conformity to the State Implementation Plan for control of ozone. 52

Should you have any questions regarding state rules and regulations pertaining to transportation conformity, please contact me at (225) 219-3719. Thank you for affording us the opportunity to comment on this transportation project.

Sincerely,

Yasoob Zia
Environmental Scientist Manager

Assessment Division

lhw

700-96-0011/3110

Beth

Beth Altazan-Dixon, EPS III
Performance Management
LDEQ/Office of the Secretary
Business and Community Outreach and Incentives Division
P.O. Box 4301 (602 N. 5th Street)
Baton Rouge, LA 70821-4301
Phone: 225-219-3958
Fax: 225-325-8148
Email: beth.dixon@la.gov



UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY

Region 6

1445 Ross Avenue, Suite 1200

Dallas, TX 75202-2733

February 21, 2012

Carl Highsmith
Project Delivery Team Leader
Federal Highway Administration
Louisiana Division
5304 Flanders Drive, Suite A
Baton Rouge, LA 70808

Re: Baton Rouge Loop Implementation Plan Review

Dear Mr. Highsmith,

EPA Region 6 submitted our comment letter on the Baton Rouge Loop Tier 1 Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) to your office on January 20, 2012. In that letter, we requested the Tier 1 DEIS include the Baton Rouge Loop Implementation Plan (IP) as an appendix. In response to that request, FHWA provided us the six volume IP. We reviewed the IP, focusing primarily on Technical Memorandum No. 2 (TM-2) – Environmental Overview. It was determined that the IP, especially TM-2, does not contain the information and data requested. Detailed comments on the IP are below.

Technical Memorandum No. 1 – Corridors, Design Features, and Cost Estimates

Corridor Development and Refinement

Although a Geographic Information System (GIS) was used to compile data and draw corridors, there is no explanation of any route optimization software that utilizes topographic data, constraints data, and construction costs to develop the most reasonable and feasible routes and corridors. Thus, it's difficult to determine how the corridors were developed and placed on a map. 53

As stated on page 1-40, Community Input, public and agency feedback was crucial in the corridor refinement process. In addition, on page 1-41, a corridor refinement process took place on April 17, 2008. However, without a summary of public input and committee meetings, we cannot discern what process or reasoning was used to eliminated or refine corridors. 54

Technical Memorandum No. 2 (TM-2) – Environmental Overview

Wetlands

As with the Tier 1 DEIS, TM-2 compares loop corridors according to percent wetland cover. The flaws of this approach are discussed in our comments on the Tier 1 DEIS. TM-2 also provides the acreage of wetlands in each corridor. This acreage data only serves to reinforce the

concerns we raised with the Tier 1 DEIS' reliance on percent wetland cover to discriminate among alternatives. For example, Table 4-3 in TM-2 shows that corridors with relatively low percent wetland cover could nevertheless have a greater acreage of wetlands. Additionally, TM-2 does not provide any information on the functional condition of wetlands in the different corridors. As stated in our comments on the Tier 1 DEIS, there are several methods that could be developed to assess the functional conditions of wetlands without ground-truthing. Wetland functionality could be based on contiguous acreage (fragmentation) and/or proximity to developed areas. Areas of high fragmentation (transportation corridors) could be assumed to have lower functionality than areas of large contiguous acreage. Occurrence of rare, threatened, or endangered species in a wetland area could be a good indicator of high wetland functionality.

Thus, the TM-2 does not provide sufficient information on wetland impacts to allow for the accurate selection of a least environmentally damaging practicable alternative. Consistent with our comments on the Tier 1 DEIS, additional analysis on potential wetland impacts should be conducted prior to the elimination alternatives discussed in the Tier 1 DEIS. 55

Finally, note that TM-2 contains a misinterpretation of the CWA Section 404 requirement pertaining to selection of the least damaging alternative. Specifically, on page 2-39, the memorandum contains the following statement: "The guidelines also require applicants to seek the least damaging most practical alternative and to mitigate for any unavoidable impacts to wetlands." This is incorrect. The CWA Section 404(b)(1) Guidelines mandate that the Corps of Engineers can only permit the least environmentally damaging practicable alternative. Practicability is defined in terms of cost, logistics, and existing technology. Practicability, in this sense, is a yes or no question. There is no allowance or flexibility to select a more damaging alternative because it might be seen as something that is "most" or more practicable than another alternative. 56

Corridor Evaluation

Although Table 4-5, located on page 2-51, is a good graphic representation of corridor impacts, it is basing those impacts only on percentage of land cover, number of facilities, or number of water crossings. As stated in our Tier 1 DEIS comments, we suggest a more robust and detailed evaluation process be used. We also suggested that a more meaningful screening criteria be utilized that would place a score or value on various environmental resources so as to better rank corridors for impacts. The TM-2 did not provide the additional information that we requested in our comment letter. 57

Technical Memorandum No. 6 (TM-6) – Public and Agency Outreach

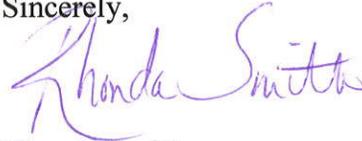
As mentioned in the Tier 1 DEIS, several corridors would be appropriate to eliminate or carry forward for analysis based on public and stakeholder input. As stated in our comment letter, it would be useful to clearly summarize public and stakeholder input if that will be utilized as an evaluation criteria. A summary of public and agency meetings is not included in TM-6. Without a summary, it is difficult to distinguish a trend, either a preference for or against a certain corridor alternative. 58

Conclusion

In summary, we do not believe that the IP, especially TM-2, contains the information and data requested in our comment letter. However, we continue to ask that the IP be included as an appendix to the Tier 1 EIS (electronic version is preferred), as it does give additional background information and details related to design, costs, traffic studies, and public involvement.

If you have any questions or concerns, please contact John MacFarlane of my staff at macfarlane.john@epa.gov or 214-665-7491 for assistance.

Sincerely,



Rhonda Smith
Chief, Office of Planning
and Coordination



Table 7.2a
Subject Codes for Other DEIS Comments and Responses

Subject Code	Subject
AL	Alternatives
AQ	Air Quality
BIO	Biological Resources
CON	Construction Impacts
CH	Cultural/Historic
CIR	Circulation/Traffic
C/N	CEQA/NEPA Issues
CP	Corridor Preservation
CUM	Cumulative Impacts
EE	Emergency Evacuation
ED	Economic Development
FN	Funding
HE	Human Environment
HW	Hazardous Waste/Materials
LU	Land Use
MM	Mitigation Monitoring
NOI	Noise
NEI	Not EIS Issue
NR	No Response
OP	Opinion
PD	Project Description
PS	Public Services
PN	Purpose and Need
RD	Request for Data
RB	Residential/Business Relocation
TR	Transit
WE	Wetlands
WR	Water Resources
4F	Section 4(f)
106	Section 106

Baton Rouge Loop Tier 1 EIS

Project No. 07-PR-MS-0002

S.P.No. 700-96-0011

F.A.P. No. STP-9609(504)



**Table 7.2b
Summary of Other DEIS Comments and Responses**

Revised: 3/6/2014

NEW ID	Issue	Response	Commenters	Oral Commenters
ALTERNATIVES				
AL-1	Prefer to improve and widen existing roads and bridges or constructing elevated interstate within existing right of way instead of constructing the BR Loop	<i>The BR Loop is only one component in relieving the traffic congestion in the Baton Rouge region. Various improvements along state and local roads continue to make progress and are being funded independently of the BR Loop project, including widening of existing I-10 and I-12 to 6 lanes in the Baton Rouge area. As with any NEPA evaluation process, the projects listed in the regional planning model and STIP have been included as part of the no-build alternative presented in the Tier 1 EIS documents and will continue to be considered as the BR Loop project develops into the Tier 2 EIS phase. The traffic analysis performed during the Tier 1 EIS has included projected improvements (local, state, and interstate routes) which are contained in the Baton Rouge regional planning model for future traffic year. Projects which are anticipated to be completed prior to construction of the BR Loop have been included in the traffic model. Models continue to show that, even if constructed, all of the proposed projects in the Long Range Transportation Plan would not meet our transportation needs.</i>	R. Anslave, T. Ansalve, Atkinson, Avant, Axel, Babcock (CHILP), C.Baker, F.Baker, J.Baker, M.Baker, West, J. West, Bercegeay, Mayeaux, D. Mayeaux, Blanchard, Bolen, Brady et al, Brecheen, Chair, Chemin, C. Chemin, J. Chemin, Cullen, Curtis, L. Cutrer, Daigle, Davison (Neighbors In Action form letter), Demoulin, Duplessis, Erdey, Evans, Evans (Neighbors In Action form letter), Font, Garner, Gautreaux, Ginn, C.Ginn, H. Graham, Harbin, R.Harrison, Hay, Haynes, M.Haynes, A.Hill, S.Hill, S.Hoge, Holland, T. Jackson, Z.Jackson, Jones, V.Johnson (Neighbors In Action form letter), Killebrew (Neighbors In Action form letter), J.Koraneck, Krake, Kropog, E.Lambert, K. Lambert, R.Lambert, K.Landry, B.Lane, S.Laporte, Larigue, Leteff, Lilly, Lipoma, 2012 Livingston Parish Council, 2011 Livingston Parish Council, Livingston Parish & City of Central Legislative Delegation, Lynch, Malik, Manning, Maranto, W. Matlock, Matthews, Maust, Mayers, McCarley, E.McGaha, T.McGaha, I.McKnight, M.McKnight, Meaux, N./A.Messina, A.Moore, G.Moore, M./J.Morgan, Mustachia, Neyrey, Norred, Orges, S.Orges, Parent, Paxton, Perkins, W./A.Poche', A./O.Prestridge, O.Prestridge, Provost, Richardson, Ricks, B.Salaro, Scanlan, E.Smiley, R.Smiley, Spaulding, Stafford, Stansell, Stevens, A.Stewart, Thacker, K.Thibodeaux, S.C.Thibodeaux, D.Thompson, E.Walker, K.Walker, L.Walker, L.Watson, M.Watson, Rh.Watson, Ro.Watson, E.Watts, M.Watts, R.Watts, Webb, Welch, P.West, J.West, K.White, M.White, Wilcher (Sierra), K.Wills, Wilsey, Womack, Zeller	Savoy, Magee, Hillensbeck, Zito, Zeller, Armentor, Tate,
AL-2	First priority is a bypass from West Baton Rouge to Gonzales area	<i>The Capital Area Expressway Authority (CAEA) acknowledges that obtaining funding for the entire project will be difficult given its estimated construction cost and revenue projections for the entire project. Therefore, it is anticipated that the project will need to include a staged implementation for the 3 units of the loop (North, South, and East). Based on the preliminary traffic and revenue calculations and preliminary cost estimates it is projected that the north unit will have the most benefit to the region as the first phase of implementation. By constructing the project in phases, funding becomes more feasible and allows the Louisiana Department of Transportation and Development (LADOTD) & Capital Area Expressway Authority (CAEA) to begin collecting revenue from tolls before moving forward with the next segment.</i>	M.Baker, Bourg	
AL-3	Supports Mississippi River Bridge crossing near Plaquemine instead of West Baton Rouge Parish (Corridor Segment S12).	<i>Comment noted.</i>	Berthelot, Poche', Ristroph, M.Watson	Mire, Blair, Harris,
AL-4	What other alternatives have been taken into consideration other than developing a loop?	<i>See AL-1</i>	Blacklock, D. Davison, Harbin, Hay, V. Johnson, C. Killebrew, Mustachia, G.Salaro, Ragland, Womack	
AL-5	Prefer route(s) that is less populated	<i>The purpose of the Tier 1 EIS is to evaluate the purpose and need of the project along with the potential environmental and human impacts. Corridor alternatives have been developed with this balance of benefit and impacts in mind. Routes further out of Baton Rouge area will have less impacts to residential properties but are more likely to have more impacts to farmland. Also, the purpose and need of the project states that a primary goal of the project is to reduce traffic congestion in the Baton Rouge area and tolls would be the main mechanism for funding. Considering a corridor further away from the Baton Rouge area that is less populated would be less likely to generate the traffic required to realize the relief of traffic in the region. Furthermore, a corridor closer to the urban area of Baton Rouge would impact more properties and greatly increase the cost of the project which would deem the project unfeasible. If the region waits longer to initiate this type of project growth and development may reduce the potential to alleviate any local traffic congestion.</i>	Blacklock, D. Caillouet, Church, Demoulin, R. Mayers, W.White	
AL-6	Loop should be built in area that would benefit the most people.	<i>See AL-5</i>	Bialock	
AL-7	Make improvements to existing roads in conjunction with segments of the loop to relieve traffic and minimize impacts.	<i>There will be potential to utilize local roads and incorporate a frontage road system in some areas along the proposed loop route. However, it is unlawful to force a toll on an existing public road. The Baton Rouge Loop will still be required to adhere to the applicable laws of public transportation. In areas where environmental and right-of-way impacts are minimized, the existing roadway network will be utilized to the extent practical.</i>	Bourg, Dugas, Sliman	

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**Table 7.2b
Summary of Other DEIS Comments and Responses**

Revised: 3/6/2014

NEW ID	Issue	Response	Commenters	Oral Commenters
AL-8	Several routes in Ascension have been eliminated, yet all routes in northern Livingston Parish are still under consideration.	<i>Corridor alternatives have been modified, added, re-introduced, or eliminated based on various criteria through the Implementation Plan and NEPA process. See Section 2.2 and Appendix G of the Tier 1 EIS document for more information on the development of corridors within the Implementation Plan. Section 5.3 documents the evaluation process for the corridors considered within the Tier 1 EIS.</i>	Denham	
AL-9	Supports using existing MRBs in the region (i.e. Sunshine or St. Francisville) as part of the loop to reduce costs and reduce bypass traffic through Baton Rouge	<i>A corridor alternative using the Sunshine bridge in Donaldsonville was considered during the initial Implementation Plan. The preliminary traffic analysis results showed little traffic relief for the Baton Rouge region because only thru traffic would benefit from a route this far from the metropolitan area and therefore, does not meet the purpose and need of the project. The St. Francisville bridge is even further out from the metropolitan area so it would not have much affect on the Baton Rouge traffic congestion. For example, the existing US 190 Mississippi River Bridge could be used temporarily in the northern unit to minimize costs of initial construction. If this temporary option is utilized, the portion of shared roadway (Loop & US 190 including the US 190 Mississippi River Bridge) would not charge tolls until the BR Loop road became independent of the existing roadway network again.</i>	Caillouet, Gourley, Lillard, Malik, E.Mayers, Mayhall, L. Meaux, Scanlan	Magee, Truxillo, Lamberson
AL-10	Traffic is a Baton Rouge problem and thus, solutions should be confined to Baton Rouge	<i>The traffic congestion in the Baton Rouge area is a regional issue and affects anyone who lives, works, or attends school in the region. Therefore, solutions should not be confined to one specific area. See Section 2.7 of the Tier 1 EIS which discusses the preliminary traffic analysis.</i>	Aguillard, P. Caillouet, Gee, Harbin, S. Hill, Hoge, Miller, C.Moore, M./J.Morgan, Nickens, Zeller	Nickens, L.Hall,
AL-11	As you move corridors further away from Baton Rouge area, the loop makes less sense and less chance for success	See AL-5	P. Caillouet, Graham, J.Landry, K.Landry, Melancon	
AL-12	Do not use existing US190 Mississippi River bridge as part of the loop.	<i>Ultimately, there would be a new Mississippi River crossing in this location parallel to the 70+ yr. old bridge that exists today. However, the existing bridge could be used temporarily to reduce costs of initial construction. If this temporary option is utilized, the portion of shared roadway (Loop & US 190 including the US 190 Mississippi River Bridge) would not charge tolls until the BR Loop road became independent of the existing roadway network again.</i>	Demoulin	
AL-13	Corridors as shown have a disregard to local impacts (i.e. property owners, churches, schools) yet some areas have been promised to not be disturbed.	<i>Corridor Alternatives presented in the Tier 1 EIS were developed by considering existing constraints located within the region. Subdivisions, churches, schools, public facilities and parks, large industry complexes, Mississippi River crossings, etc. were all considered when the initial corridors were developed during the Implementation Plan, See Section 2.2.2.2 of the Tier 1 EIS document. During the Tier 1 EIS phase further refinements were made to determine the final set of corridor alternatives and an evaluation process has been conducted to identify a Preferred Alternative based on the various components of the NEPA studies, including impacts to human environment and overall environment. See Section 5.2 & 5.3 of the Tier 1 EIS document. It also noted that the corridors presented in the Tier 1 EIS do not represent the proposed right of way needed for the project. During the Tier 2 EIS routes and alignments will be developed for the Selected Corridor Alternative, as identified in the Tier 1 ROD. The proposed right of way required will be 400 ft. wide instead of the 1000' to 3000' width shown for a corridor alternative.</i>	Blacklock, Davison (Neighbors In Action form letter), Denham, Evans (Neighbors In Action form letter), Jackson, V.Johnson (Neighbors In Action form letter), Killebrew (Neighbors In Action form letter), Krake, Kropog, Mustachia, R.Watts, Womack,	
AL-14	Duplication of work near E8 with proposed parish road	<i>Local transportation facilities will continue to require improvements separate from the BR Loop project.</i>	Fiero	
AL-15	S-12 is too far out	See AL-5	Fiero	
AL-16	Prefer ND or NE Corridors using N9 section for the north unit because it will bring the most benefit to Central in terms of traffic relief and economic development	<i>Comment noted.</i>	Giles, Lawrence, Starns	
	Loop should be built closer to populated ares of Baton Rouge.	AL-11		
AL-17	We do not need both all three bypasses (North, South, and East). Motorists will choose shortest loop segment to go around Baton Rouge so why build three.	<i>The purpose and need of the project as outlined in Section 1.3 of the Tier 1 EIS states that the intent of the BR Loop is to provide an alternate route for motorists. It is noted that local traffic constitutes a large majority of the traffic on the interstates in the Baton Rouge region. The BR Loop is a facility intended to offer an alternative for local traffic commuting to work or through traffic wanting to avoid the Baton Rouge urban area. As stated in Section 2.4.4 of the Tier 1 EIS, interchanges would be located along the BR Loop to allow motorists access points on and off the facility. For the through traffic passing through Baton Rouge, each unit of the project (north, south, east) is considered a segment of independent utility. Motorists using the north unit segment would be getting from/to I-10 west of Baton Rouge to/from I-12 east of Baton Rouge. Motorists using the south unit segment would be going from/to I-10 west of Baton Rouge to/from I-10 east of Baton Rouge. Additionally, more in-depth traffic & revenue analysis will help determine which segments will most likely be needed initially.</i>	A. Meaux, Graham	
AL-18	Consider truck lanes on existing interstate to help increase the flow of traffic in the area	<i>This would not meet the purpose and need of the project as outlined in Section 1.3 of the Tier 1 EIS.</i>	Hollard, Z.Jackson, Welch	

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**Table 7.2b
Summary of Other DEIS Comments and Responses**

Revised: 3/6/2014

NEW ID	Issue	Response	Commenters	Oral Commenters
AL-19	Elevated sections over wetlands will be expensive. Why can't an elevated highway be constructed along I-10 or I-12 instead of constructing elevated sections over wetlands?	<i>The configuration of the existing interstate would have to be significantly modified to accommodate an elevated interstate-type structure, which may be more expensive & disruptive to the existing development adjacent to the footprint of the existing interstate. Furthermore, this will not help with the redistribution of traffic within the region, but may likely contribute to the congestion of the local roads that tie into the interstate today.</i>	J.Lambert	
AL-20	S8 was removed from consideration in 2008 but is now still considered a corridor alternative	<i>See AL-8</i>	Malik	
AL-21	Oppose S9, S10, & S11 corridors due to the loss of an industry buffer zone and could potentially result in higher liability for the plants.	<i>Comment noted.</i>	Malik	
AL-22	Include an alternative further out from Baton Rouge region for bypass traffic	<i>See AL-5</i>	E.Mayers, Sistrunk, D.Thompson, M.Thompson, E.Walker, K.Walker, M.Watson	Zeller, Reynerson, Jones,
AL-23	Prefer E6 because it will impact less people	<i>Comment noted.</i>	L.Meaux	
AL-24	Prefer N12	<i>Comment noted.</i>	Neyrey	
AL-25	Where are the proposed major river crossings?	<i>As discussed in the Tier 1 EIS document (Section 3.7.1.4 & 3.13), the proposed major river crossings include the Mississippi River, the Amite River, and the Intracoastal Waterway. A detailed breakdown of all water body crossings can be found in Section 3.11.</i>	Davison (Neighbors In Action form letter), Evans (Neighbors In Action form letter), V.Johnson (Neighbors In Action form letter), Killebrew (Neighbors In Action form letter)Pittman	Duplessis,
AL-26	Proposed routes are feasible and have less impacts to existing homes	<i>Comment noted.</i>	Poche	
AL-27	Prefer N8 corridor in the north unit	<i>Comment noted.</i>	Provost	
AL-28	Having a new MRB further apart from the existing MRBs would be helpful in the event of a ship or barge accident	<i>The locations of the potential Mississippi River crossings are dictated by the United States Coast Guard and United States Army Corps of Engineers. Due to the impact of barge & deep draft vessel traffic on the river, many potential river crossing locations were eliminated from further consideration from the beginning of the BR Loop Implementation Plan to current.</i>	Ristroph	
	Prefer alternative that will relieve traffic and have the least impacts to general populated area.	<i>AL-5</i>		Bruce,
AL-29	How will a corridor be selected? Who will make the final decision?	<i>The Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) & Capital Area Expressway Authority (CAEA) will ultimately make the final decision on the preferred corridor for the BR Loop project.</i>	Davison (Neighbors In Action form letter), Evans (Neighbors In Action form letter), V.Johnson (Neighbors In Action form letter), Killebrew (Neighbors In Action form letter)	
AL-30	Suggest incorporating service roads within the typical section for access to future developments.	<i>The proposed typical section as discussed in Section 2.4.2 of the Tier 1 EIS allows for potential frontage/service roads along the facility as part of the proposed 400' required right of way.</i>		Pedneau,
AL-31	Prefer MRB crossing in West Baton Rouge Parish	<i>Comment noted.</i>		Tilton,
AL-32	Oppose N11 and N12 due to impacts to schools	<i>Comment noted.</i>		Tate,
AIR QUALITY				
AQ-1	Concerned about air pollution impacts	<i>In the Tier 2 EIS phase, when the Selected Corridor is analyzed/evaluated, potential air pollution/quality impacts will be better identified as well as countermeasures for mitigation.</i>	Arnold Acres Homeowners Assoc., C.Baker, Campagna, Day, Maust, T.McGaha, Neyrey, Orr (LEAN), Stafford, Sturdivant, K.Walker, Webb, Wilcher (Sierra Club), Wiley, Zeller	
AQ-2	Concerned air quality conformity modeling for East Baton Rouge area does not include BR Loop.	<i>Section 3.9 in the Tier 1 EIS summarizes the Baton Rouge air conformity regulations currently in place. At this time, the proposed project is not required to be part of the Baton Rouge area air quality conformity modeling due its early development stage (Tier 1 EIS). However, it also states that the proposed project would need to be placed on the MPO TIP prior to construction. As mentioned in Section 6.1 "Future Actions", air quality analysis will be required during the Tier 2 EIS phase in accordance with FHWA and DOTD policy. At this future date, more information will be available regarding the route location, length, projected traffic, and its impacts on the existing Baton Rouge air conformity.</i>	Orr(LEAN)	
AQ-3	BR loop project should compare air quality impacts of a passenger rail line as part of the EIS.	<i>The purpose & need of the Baton Rouge Loop project is to provide an alternate route for motorists. While the BR Loop can potentially accommodate other modes of transport, the intent of this study is not to evaluate all potential modes of transportation for traffic congestion relief. If any other mode of transport is considered in the Baton Rouge area, that project will be required to conform to the requirements of NEPA as well.</i>	Orr(LEAN)	
AQ-4	Also should consider impacts to air quality based on potential loss of natural areas and agricultural land.	<i>See AQ-1</i>	Orr(LEAN), Wilcher (Sierra Club)	

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**Table 7.2b
Summary of Other DEIS Comments and Responses**

Revised: 3/6/2014

NEW ID	Issue	Response	Commenters	Oral Commenters
BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES				
BIO-1	Project will have an impact on global warming	<i>A new subsection (Section 3.9.4) addressing Greenhouse Gas (GHG) emissions was added to the Air Quality section of Chapter 3 of the EIS. The new section defines GHGs and discusses CEQ's <u>Draft NEPA Guidance on Consideration of the Effects of Climate Change and Greenhouse Gas Emissions</u> (February, 2010). In summary, to date, no national standards have been established regarding GHGs, nor has the USEPA established criteria or thresholds for GHG emissions. Per the 2010 draft CEQ guidance, "Many agency NEPA analyses to date have found that GHG emissions from an individual agency action have small potential effects. Emissions from many federal actions would not typically be expected to produce an environmental effect that would trigger or otherwise require a detailed discussion in an EIS." Given that climate impacts of carbon dioxide emissions are global in nature, analyzing how alternatives evaluated in an EIS might vary in their relatively small contribution to a global problem is not likely to better inform decisions. Further, due to the interactions between elements of the transportation system as a whole, emissions analyses would be less informative than analyses conducted at regional, state or national levels. Because of these concerns, carbon dioxide emissions cannot be evaluated usefully in this FEIS in the same way that other vehicle emissions are addressed in the discussion of air quality impacts. Both FHWA and DOTD are actively engaged in the development of strategies to reduce transportation's contribution to GHGs. GHG reduction strategies as implemented by FHWA and DOTD are presented in the EIS. FHWA and DOTD will continue to pursue these efforts as productive steps to address this important issue. FHWA and DOTD will review and update its approach to climate change at both the project and policy level as more information emerges and as policies and legal requirements evolve.</i>	Day	
BIO-2	Project will have an impact on the ecosystems and wildlife (natural habitats, local farmland, water bodies) in the area. Concerned with expanded growth and lack of planning.	<i>While some impacts are anticipated to the environment, the NEPA process is followed to ensure that these impacts are managed & conform to all environmental protection guidelines. The BR Loop project is currently following the NEPA process to achieve environmental clearance for design & construction of this project.</i>	Day, Hay, L.Mayers, R.Moore, Pestoff, Sturdivant, Wilcher (Sierra Club)	
CIRCULATION/TRAFFIC				
CIR-1	Concerned about access points for motorists and/or emergency vehicles along proposed loop	<i>Potential interchange locations have been considered for the proposed project based on urban and suburban guidelines set by AASHTO and Louisiana Department of Transportation and Development (LADOTD) on interchange spacing. These potential locations have been used to establish preliminary cost estimates and traffic analysis. Further refinement will be necessary during the Tier 2 EIS phase when an Interchange Justification Study is prepared.</i>	Baker, Curtis, Ro Watson, Zeller	Conerly, Tate,
CIR-2	In reviewing Ascension Parish loop corridors, a majority of I-10 thru Baton Rouge will divert off I-10 at Donaldsonville, including hurricane evacuations from the gulf coast. This alleviates congestion of I-10 and I-12 Interchange	<i>The Baton Rouge Loop may be potentially utilized in emergency situations to help facilitate traffic during evacuation events, interstate shutdowns, etc. This type of agreement would be worked out through regulating agencies.</i>	Armentor	

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**Table 7.2b
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Revised: 3/6/2014

NEW ID	Issue	Response	Commenters	Oral Commenters
CIR-3	Most of the traffic on existing interstates is local traffic and therefore traffic diverted off of the interstates will be negligible with a loop.	<p><i>Based on available traffic counts and projections included in Appendix A and in the Traffic and Revenue Technical Memorandum, it is evident that local traffic contributes significantly to the heavy traffic volumes and congestion on I-10 and I-12 in the Baton Rouge vicinity during peak periods. Data indicate that traffic volumes increase substantially near the outskirts of the Baton Rouge urban area, with a corresponding decrease in Level of Service, and decrease noticeably outside of the urbanized area. However, through traffic, including commercial heavy truck traffic, also contributes significantly to the total traffic stream. In particular, existing heavy truck volumes are very high on I-10, currently comprising approximately 14 percent of the total traffic volume in the Baton Rouge area, which is substantially higher than the 6-8 percent typically occurring on other portions of the interstate highway system around the country. This is due, in part, because I-10 is a major east-west transportation corridor of national importance to the movement of commercial traffic, as described in Appendix A. It is likely that through traffic on I-10 and I-12 would utilize a circumferential route like the Baton Rouge Loop to avoid the congestion of the urban core and save time and travel expense.</i></p> <p><i>It should be recognized that current traffic congestion in the study area is not confined to the interstate highways. Many major arterials and connecting roadways carry so much traffic, especially during peak periods, that widespread backups and delays occur routinely. Traffic signals, cross-street and driveway traffic, school bus operations, and other factors combine to hinder smooth traffic flow on primary and secondary roadways during peak periods. Over the past decade, the increasing number of vehicles on many principal arterials that are incapable of handling these higher volumes has extended the evening peak traffic period to two or three hours in duration. For these reasons, it is expected that the amount of local traffic that would divert to the Loop to avoid congestion on local roadways and for reasons of convenience would not be negligible. In particular, commuters driving to/from work may be attracted to a more efficient travel route like the Loop that offers smoother traffic flow with less delay and less stress. Quantitative data to determine how much local traffic might utilize the Loop will be obtained through analyses such as origin/destination surveys that will be performed as part of the preparation of the Tier 2 EIS.</i></p>	Armentor, Church, D. Davison (Neighbors In Action form letter), Duplessis, Evans (Neighbors In Action form letter), Graham, R.Harrison, Jones, V.Johnson (Neighbors In Action form letter), Killebrew (Neighbors In Action form letter), Krake, J.Lambert, McGaha, M./J.Morgan, Mustachia, Paxton, W./A.Poche', Ragland, Ricks, Stafford, Thacker, L.Walker, E.Watts, R.Watts, Zeller	
CIR-4	Proposed project will not relieve traffic congestion	<p><i>As stated in Section 1.3 "Purpose and Need" of the Tier 1 EIS document, "the intent of the Baton Rouge Loop is to provide an alternate route for motorists to reduce existing & projected future congestion and delay on Interstates 10 & 12 and other major arterial corridors. In addition, the traffic analysis performed during the Tier 1 EIS has included projected improvements (local, state, and interstate routes) which are contained in the Baton Rouge regional planning model for future traffic year. Projects which are anticipated to be completed prior to construction of the BR Loop have been included in the traffic model. Models continue to show that, even if constructed, all of the proposed projects in the Long Range Transportation Plan would not meet our transportation needs.</i></p>	Atkinson, Brecheen, S.Hernandez, S.Hill, Jarreau, R.Lambert, K. Lambert, Lilly, 2011 Livingston Parish Council, Livingston Parish & City of Central Legislative Delegation, McCarley, Orges, Stafford, Womack, Avant, F.Baker, Bolen, Brecheen, J. Chemin, P. Chemin, Cullen, Davison (Neighbors In Action form letter), Dyess, Evans (Neighbors In Action form letter), Hansen, J.Hill, S.Hoge, Holland, Hopper, V.Johnson (Neighbors In Action form letter), Killebrew (Neighbors In Action form letter), J.Landry, Lillard, Livingston Parish & City of Central Legislative Delegation, Lynch, A.Matlock, Maust, R.Mayers, Mayhall, McCarley, E.McGaha, T.McGaha, M.McKnight, W.Messina, M./J.Morgan, B.Salaro, Spaulding, Starkey, Starns, E.Watts, M.Watts, R.Watts, Welch, G.White	Hernandez,
	Proposed project will not relieve traffic congestion in Baton Rouge	CIR-4		Sadden,
CIR-5	Questions whether the southern route will solve traffic problems	See AL-17	Axel, Jeansonne, A. Meaux, Nickens	
CIR-6	When I-49 south from Lafayette to New Orleans is completed, how will the traffic volumes be affected through Baton Rouge?	<p><i>Interstate 10 is a major east-west route in the United States. Traffic studies that show the impacts to interstate and other roadway systems that intersect with I-49 will be available to the public at some point depending on the stage of the I-49 corridor improvement project.</i></p>	M.Baker	Hall,
CIR-7	A loop would help relieve traffic congestion and/or provide access to new areas.	Comment noted.	Bayhi, Belle, Bergeron, Brunet, Clark, Evans, B.Fisher, Fontenot, Indest, Kelly, Lambert, D.LeJeune, Pater, Ristroph, Roberts, Sliman, C.Stewart, Wall, Welborn	
CIR-8	Motorists will be faced with additional travel time due to toll road	<p><i>Due to the free-flow nature of the Loop as a toll road, travel time is expected to be reduced for motorists who utilize the BR Loop. Please refer to Table 2.39 in Chapter 2 for average speed projections with and without the BR Loop.</i></p>	W. Avant, Davison (Neighbors In Action form letter), Evans (Neighbors In Action form letter), Font, V.Johnson (Neighbors In Action form letter), Killebrew (Neighbors In Action form letter), Livingston School Board, Bolen, Maust, E.McGaha, Ricks, Thacker, E.Watts, M.Watts, K.White	
CIR-9	Traffic will increase in surrounding areas and local roads will not be able to handle the additional capacity.	See AL-1	E. Atkinson, Blalock, Davison (Neighbors In Action form letter), Evans (Neighbors In Action form letter), Font, Francis, J. Gee, Gourley, V.Johnson (Neighbors In Action form letter), Killebrew (Neighbors In Action form letter), J.Landry, Manning, Maranto, Maust, T.McGaha, Miley (City of Central Resol.), R.Moore, V.Taylor, M.Thompson, G.White, K.White, Wilsey, Womack, Zeller,	Tate,

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**Table 7.2b
Summary of Other DEIS Comments and Responses**

Revised: 3/6/2014

NEW ID	Issue	Response	Commenters	Oral Commenters
CIR-10	Why haven't Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) or Louisiana Department of Transportation and Development (LADOTD) not presented plans to improve traffic flow and patterns on surface streets before now?	<i>The Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) only regulates federal highways such as the interstate system. Louisiana Department of Transportation and Development (LADOTD) typically handles state highway improvements. Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPO's) over parishes typically have long range highway programs in place to address State, City, and Local roads. Based on available funding and prioritization of projects, these improvements may be delayed.</i>	Bolen	
CIR-11	Commuters traveling to/from downtown at peak times contributes to the traffic congestion. Propose staggering work times to help relieve congestion.	<i>State agencies currently allow staggered work hours to help reduce peak hour congestion.</i>	J. Chemin	
CIR-12	Due to projected increases in fuel costs, it is anticipated that Americans will be driving far less a decade from now. This will impact both the future year traffic estimates f the proposed loop and toll revenue.	<i>The impacts of future fuel cost increases on the number of vehicles on the road will be offset to some extent by improved fuel efficiencies of the traffic fleet. Nonetheless, rising fuel costs may have an effect on travel behavior, perhaps encouraging some people to limit the number of day-to-day discretionary trips they make. However, reducing the number of these discretionary trips would not have a major effect on traffic volumes in the Baton Rouge area given the magnitude of the congestion problem that already exists and will worsen in the future. Beyond these discretionary trips, people will still have to drive to work and school and run mandatory errands for which there would be no travel options other than use of a private vehicle (since the Baton Rouge area lacks an extensive public transit system), and commercial traffic will continue regardless of fuel prices. There are several other factors that will likely have a more significant influence on traffic volumes than fuel prices, including regional population growth and its associated increase in the number of vehicles in service. The model used by the CRPC to project traffic throughout the regional roadway network accounts for these factors. A general description of the parameters used by the model as the basis for its future traffic projections is presented in the Traffic and Revenue Technical Memorandum.</i>	Day	
CIR-13	Concerned there will be bottle neck at I-12 tie in of the loop	<i>As described in Section 2.4.4.1 of the Tier 1 EIS document, fully directional (system-to-system) interchanges are anticipated with any interstate crossing of the BR Loop. This type of interchange provides free-flow movement from the interstate to the BR Loop.</i>	Hay	
CIR-14	How will someone access local roads without spending time or money on the loop?	<i>Generally, the BR Loop will provide either overpasses or interchanges to maintain local roadway network connectivity. Cutting off existing local access is not the intent of the BR Loop project.</i>	Hay, Hoge	
CIR-15	Do not see traffic benefit for East bypass	<i>See AL-17</i>	A. Meaux, L.Meaux	
CIR-16	Synchronize traffic lights to reduce congestion	<i>While synchronizing traffic signals may help to address some of the issues with local roads, this solution may not reduce congestion on the interstate routes.</i>	Perkins	
	Consider other ways to reduce local traffic on interstates instead of building loop	<i>AL-4</i>		
CIR-17	The northern and southern units of the loop would attract thru traffic to New Orleans or Slidell on I-10 and I-12.	<i>See AL-17</i>	Ristroph	Duplessis,
CIR-18	The MRB crossing in Iberville Parish would relieve traffic from the interstate system in the Baton Rouge area.	<i>See AL-17</i>	Ristroph	

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**Table 7.2b
Summary of Other DEIS Comments and Responses**

Revised: 3/6/2014

NEW ID	Issue	Response	Commenters	Oral Commenters
CIR-19	Justify traffic numbers projected to use the loop and explain why it is different for different portions of the plan.	<i>The Capital Region Planning Commission (CRPC) is the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) for the five parish area where the Baton Rouge Loop alternatives are located. The CRPC uses a transportation model that is commonly used by MPOs across the U.S. for modeling existing and future traffic flow on all major roadways. The CRPC has modified the model to take into account the regional roadway network and is responsible for updating the model over time to account for roadway modifications (e.g. addition of new roads, widening of existing roads, changes in roadway operational characteristics such as added signalization and changes in access), changes in local population characteristics, and future development. The purpose of the model is to provide a forecast of how much traffic, or travel demand, will occur on roadways throughout the region. The model can estimate that demand for different lengths of time or for specific times in the future. It estimates the travel demand by using a balancing principle, taking into account where people live and work (heavily relying on U.S. Census data) as well as data on land uses within the modeling area that function as traffic generators. Mathematical algorithms are used to estimate the most efficient routes that people and businesses will use to travel between origins and destinations. The model can be adjusted to reflect changes in the roadway network as well as population growth and development patterns in the region. CRPC uses this model to predict future transportation needs for the five-parish region, accounting for the likely availability of funding for future projects. CRPC also used the model to evaluate the effects of proposed roadway improvements by superimposing these improvements on the existing or projected roadway network. The model will re-distribute traffic volumes, allowing for assessment of the proposed project's effects on the operational characteristics of the entire roadway network (traffic volumes, levels of service, and expected congestion).</i>	Davison (Neighbors In Action form letter), Evans (Neighbors In Action form letter), V.Johnson (Neighbors In Action form letter), Killebrew (Neighbors In Action form letter)	
CIR-20	Are there any projections for the change in traffic at the Magnolia Bridge crossing location if the loop were constructed?	<i>This information is not available at this time. More detailed traffic data may be available for this location during the Tier 2 EIS phase.</i>		Ellis,
CEQA/NEPA ISSUES				
C/N-1	EIS study does not adequately address the environmental impacts to our existing forest, wetlands, and farmlands. "Green zones" within the proposed routes should be protected.	<i>Based on the requirements & policies set forth by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), this Tier 1 EIS document provides a high-level analysis of environmental factors considered for the BR Loop project and is documented in Chapter 3 of the Tier 1 EIS. Once a selected corridor is established in the Tier 1 Record of Decision for further analysis, the Tier 2 EIS document will be developed and address impacts and protective measures for these environmental factors in a more detailed and comprehensive manner.</i>	Duplessis	
C/N-2	How can a Tier 1 be approved if environmental issues have not been addressed because final routes have not been determined?	<i>Although the goal of the Tier 1 EIS document is to select a final single corridor for the Baton Rouge Loop project in the Tier 1 Record of Decision, there is a possibility that more than one corridor option is carried forward into the Tier 2 analysis due to small variances in comparison of one option versus the other. This occurrence is not uncommon for a project of this size. The Tier 2 analysis will be the final state of comparison & elimination of corridor options. It is acceptable to Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) to carry more than one option forward into the Tier 2 phase.</i>	Davison (Neighbors In Action form letter), Evans (Neighbors In Action form letter), V.Johnson (Neighbors In Action form letter), Killebrew (Neighbors In Action form letter), M.J.Morgan, Mustachia	
C/N-3	Concerned about impacts to undeveloped land (agricultural, forested, open space, etc.)	<i>See C/N-1</i>	Wilcher (Sierra Club)	
C/N-4	What are the disadvantages of the loop?	<i>The Tier 1 EIS document accounts for the potential impacts of the project including the No-Build alternative. Please refer to the Tier 1 EIS document for more information.</i>	Zeller	
CONSTRUCTION ISSUES				
CON-1	Concerned about construction impacts	<i>A majority of the Baton Rouge Loop will be constructed in areas that does not affect daily traffic operations. In areas where interchanges, overpasses, or road improvements are required, the work zones will be no different than any other work zone established for the required work.</i>	Lawrence, Wilsey	
CON-2	Northern unit should be built first and southern unit built second.	<i>Comment noted. As stated in Section 2.9.5 (Project Phasing) in the Tier 1 EIS, "It is expected that individual sections of the proposed project will be developed under a staged implementation plan..." It continues by stating that the northern segment is most likely the first candidate based on the preliminary traffic projections. Upon FHWA's approval of the Tier 1 EIS and Record of Decision, the CAEA in consultation with FHWA, DOTD, and the regional MPO will be responsible for making decisions on which segments should move forward initially to the Tier 2 EIS and subsequent phases.</i>	Poche'	

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**Table 7.2b
Summary of Other DEIS Comments and Responses**

Revised: 3/6/2014

NEW ID	Issue	Response	Commenters	Oral Commenters
CORRIDOR PRESERVATION				
CP-1	Unclear on how corridors will be preserved once corridor is selected. (I.e. The implementation plan discusses that additional property can be taken near the highway for development use of the private investors because of their risk. This violates state law.)	<i>Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) is encouraging planners and engineers across the country to engage local entities to undertake corridor preservation plans for projects similar to this one. It involves planning out the zoning and development ahead of time before the project is constructed and notifying property owners near the project of changes that are soon to come. A corridor preservation plan allows the public and entities to outline how the adjacent property to the proposed improvement can be managed before, during, and after construction. As of right now, there is no corridor preservation plan in place for the proposed project. It is anticipated that a corridor preservation plan will be part of the Tier 2 EIS process for each segment of independent utility (north, south, and east units).</i>	Blacklock, Davison (Neighbors In Action form letter), Evans (Neighbors In Action form letter), V. Johnson (Neighbors In Action form letter), Killebrew (Neighbors In Action form letter), M./J.Morgan, Mustachia, B.Smith,	
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT				
ED-1	Concerned the project will negatively impact economic development (decrease tax revenue or inhibit commercial development) for surrounding areas	<i>Existing examples of new highway routes throughout the United States show significant positive economic benefits to the adjacent communities. Although economic development is not the purpose and need of the project, it is anticipated to be a positive outcome for the surrounding areas.</i>	Ard, Avant, Babcock (CHILP), Livingston Schools, R.Harrison, S. Hill, J.Korane, W.Messina, Miley (City of Central Resol.), B.Smith, Sturdivant, R.Watts, Wilsey	
ED-2	Better infrastructure in Baton Rouge area would encourage economic development.	<i>Comment noted.</i>	Bergeron, Brunet, Pater, Poche', Ristroph, C.Stewart, Swenson, Vivian	Zito,
ED-3	Investors have been guaranteed certain considerations with regards to development of commercial properties along the proposed routes	<i>It is uncertain how the project will be managed but whether it is through a public-private-partnership agreement or a public toll agency, the facility will be subject to the same planning and zoning guidelines and policies as any public roadway.</i>	Denham, J. Gee, Moore	
ED-4	If tax payers are forced to cover gap funds, these funds must be used to bolster the local economy by using local workers and supply companies during construction.	<i>Comment noted.</i>	Denham	
ED-5	Project is a necessity for Baton Rouge area to remain competitive and grow	<i>Comment noted.</i>	Fitch, Head, Huggins, Indest, Klein, Oubre, Ristroph, Swenson, Tucci, Vivian,	
ED-6	Support the project for Central City Growth	<i>Comment noted.</i>	Fontenot	Ellis,
ED-7	Request that majority of the workforce for construction be from the area and workers be U.S. citizens	<i>Comment noted.</i>	Gee	Del Valle,
ED-8	Consider northern route through St. Helena Parish for economic development	<i>Increasing the economic development of the St. Helena Parish is not part of the purpose and need of the project. Refer to Section 1.3 of the Tier 1 EIS document for a description of the purpose and need of the project.</i>	Lawrence	Tate,
ED-9	Commercial growth created by the loop will not benefit our people.	<i>See ED-8</i>	Maust, E.Watts, M.Watts	
ED-10	Economic development resulting from the loop should be promoted. Loop could potentially increase the tax revenue and/or increase land value.	<i>See ED-8</i>	Mayhall, Ristroph	
ED-11	Consider a auto/rail bridge at the Iberville crossing location based on the positive impact it would have on the economic development in the area. The location appears to be ideal for incorporating rail.	<i>The purpose and need does not include improving rail access across the Mississippi River. Pending the circumstances, this concept could be investigated in the Tier 2 process and subsequent design phases for the south unit. Note that including a rail component on the facility will increase initial costs and overall maintenance.</i>	Ristroph	
ED-12	A new MRB crossing in Iberville Parish would be the biggest economic benefit of the entire loop project	<i>See ED-8</i>	Ristroph	Giles,
ED-13	Is an economic study planned for the project?	<i>Increasing economic development in the region is not part of the purpose and need and there are no plans to conduct an economic impact study at this time. Additional investigations may be warranted during the Tier 2 EIS phase.</i>		Giles,
EMERGENCY EVACUATION				
EE-1	Project will provide alternate routes in emergency situations	<i>Providing an alternate route to I-10 and I-12 during hurricane evacuation is a positive outcome of the project yet it is not part of the purpose and need. See Section 1.3 of the Tier 1 EIS document for a description of the project purpose and need.</i>	Belle, Roberts	
EE-2	Further south the loop intersects with LA Hwy1, the better the hurricane evacuation potential it will serve	<i>See EE-1</i>	Ristroph	

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**Table 7.2b
Summary of Other DEIS Comments and Responses**

Revised: 3/6/2014

NEW ID	Issue	Response	Commenters	Oral Commenters
ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE				
EJ-1	Concerned about impacts to minority and low-income populations. Suggests that the EIS should evaluate whether the Loop provides the best transportation benefit for them.	<p><i>Presidential EO 12898, entitled Federal Actions to Address Environmental Justice in Minority Populations and Low-Income Populations (1994), requires that each federal agency "shall make achieving environmental justice (EJ) part of its mission by identifying and addressing, as appropriate, disproportionately high and adverse human health or environmental impacts of its programs, policies, and activities on minority populations and low-income populations..." In a memorandum concerning EO 12898, the President states that federal agencies should collect and analyze information concerning a project's impacts on minorities or low-income groups when required by the NEPA. If such investigations identify that minority or low-income groups experience disproportionate adverse impacts, then avoidance or mitigation measures are to be taken.</i></p> <p><i>The FHWA implements the requirements of EO 12898 through FHWA Order 6640.23 FHWA Actions to Address Environmental Justice in Minority Populations and Low-Income Populations (1998). EO 12898 and FHWA Order 6640.23 are primarily a reaffirmation of the principles of Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, as amended ("Title VI") and related statutes, the NEPA of 1969, USC Section 109(h), and other federal environmental laws emphasizing the incorporation of those provisions with the environmental and transportation decision making process.</i></p> <p><i>The proposed BR Loop project will evaluate impacts to minority and low-income populations in accordance with EO 12898 and the FHWA Order providing guidance for accurate and comprehensive implementation of EO 12898.</i></p>	Orr(LEAN)	
FUNDING				
FN-1	Project is fiscally constrained and due to state budgetary shortfalls it is unlikely state funding will be allocated to the project.	<i>To date, no funding sources (state or federal) have been identified for Tier 2 EIS, right of way, or construction. However, once the Tier 1 EIS phase has been completed, the timeline for funding must be presented and funding secured before the first segment of any portion of the Loop can be constructed.</i>	Day	
FN-2	How will the project be paid for and how many years?	<i>See FN-1</i>	Fiero	
FN-3	End this project and discontinue any and all funding	<i>Comment noted.</i>	Bolen, D. Erdey, Font, S. Hill, Norred, Orges, Parent, Richardson	
FN-4	Project is too expensive	<i>See AL-2</i>	Graham, Starkey, Starns, P.West, E. Watts, M. Watts, J.West	
FN-5	Who is paying for this?	<i>See FN-1. The CAEA is project lead managing the project. Funds for the Tier 1 EIS have been provided by East Baton Rouge Parish, Louisiana Department of Transportation and Development (LADOTD), and Federal Highway Administration (FHWA).</i>	Sadden,	
FN-6	Will Louisiana Department of Transportation and Development (LADOTD) have any control over the state funding designated to the project?	<i>Louisiana Department of Transportation and Development (LADOTD) has some input on state funding designated to the project. Officials from Louisiana Department of Transportation and Development (LADOTD) consult with the local MPO representatives and make recommendations on project priorities.</i>	Davison (Neighbors In Action form letter), Evans (Neighbors In Action form letter), V.Johnson (Neighbors In Action form letter), Killebrew (Neighbors In Action form letter),	

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**Table 7.2b
Summary of Other DEIS Comments and Responses**

Revised: 3/6/2014

NEW ID	Issue	Response	Commenters	Oral Commenters
HUMAN ENVIRONMENT				
HE-1	Concerned that the proposed project will affect existing community and quality of life	<i>The corridor alternatives considered in the Tier 1 EIS have been identified to minimize human and environmental impacts while trying to balance the needs of the region and quality of life for those who will be saving travel time with another access control facility in the region. Great efforts have been made throughout the Implementation Plan and Tier 1 EIS, and will continue, to minimize impacts. Specific routes and right of way will be identified during the next phase, Tier 2 EIS, which will include input from the public on how to incorporate the facility into the community with the least amount of impacts. Progress, including a facility like the BR Loop, is not possible without some types of impacts.</i>	Arhee, Altazan, Avant, Axel, Babcock (CHILP), Baker, C.Baker, Livingston School Board, Blalock, R. Blank, Brecheen, D. Caillouet, Catalanotto, P. Chemin, Church, Colello, Curtis, J. Darce, Davis, Davison (Neighbors In Action form letter), Dawson, Dyess, Duplessis, Erdey, Evans (Neighbors In Action form letter), Font, R. Francis, Gautreaux, Gee, Ginn, C. Ginn, Guidroz, D. Gaitrau, M. Gautreau, H.Gaitrau, J.Gaitrau, G.Servario, C.Gaitrau, Harbin, R.Harrison, M.Haynes, Heath, S.Hernandez, J.Hill, S.Hill, Hopper, Jackson, Jarreau, V.Johnson (Neighbors In Action form letter), Keating, Killebrew (Neighbors In Action form letter), Koranek, J.Koranek, Kraushaar, R.Lambert, B.Lane, S.Laporte, LeJeune, 2011 Livingston Parish Council, Livingston Parish & City of Central Legislative Delegation, Loper, Maranto, Maust, L.Mayers, R.Mayers, E.McGaha, T.McGaha, M.McKnight, Meaux, N./A.Messina, W.Messina, Miley (City of Central Resol.), Miller, A.Moore, C.Moore, G.Moore, R.Moore, M./J.Morgan, Muse, Mustachia, Neyrey, S.Orges, Ott, Paxton, Provost, Ragland, Richardson, Ricks, Rush, Sadden, Sistrunk, Stafford, Starsell, Starns, A.Stewart, M.Taylor, E.Walker, K.Walker, Rh.Watson, E.Watts, M.Watts, R.Watts, K.White, M.White, S./A.Wilkinson, K.Wills, S.Wills, Zeller	Nickens, J.A.Eiswirth, J.Eiswirth, L.Hall, Savoy, Zettlemoyer, Prestridge, Jones,
HE-2	Little consideration given to the needs of the people, and that the project is geared to economic development.	See HE-1 and ED-8	Blalock, Duplessis	
HE-3	Concerned project will bring light pollution	<i>Consideration for aesthetics (i.e. lighting design, pier shapes, landscaping, water features, etc.) will be part of the Tier 2 EIS phase once a specific routes are identified and evaluated. Commitments for these types of enhancements are typically outlined in the Tier 2 EIS and Record of Decision.</i>	Sturdivant	
HE-4	The proposed project would reduce my travel time and therefore give me more time to do other things.	<i>To reduce delay on the existing interstates is part of the purpose of this project. This would greatly improve quality of life for some motorists in the region and provide additional opportunities.</i>	L.Thibodeaux	
HE-5	The traffic congestion in Baton Rouge deters people from wanting to live or visit our area.	See HE-4	T.Thibodeaux, Tucci	
HE-6	Based on the traffic congestion in the area, job location is the major decision factor when considering a new position.	See HE-4	Tucci	
HE-7	Concerned project will bring trash	<i>The construction of new roads is not the direct cause of litter along the roadway. The maintenance of the new loop facility is one off the planned activities that will be ongoing for the life of the roads that are constructed.</i>	Zeller	
HE-8	Provide research on the effect on communities impacted by highways of this type.	See ED-1. The Tier 1 & subsequent Tier 2 phase of this project will help to outline and assess the impacts to the surrounding environment (natural, human, etc.) in the project area.	Davison, V. Johnson, C. Killebrew	
HAZARDOUS WASTE / MATERIALS				
HW-1	Concerned hazardous materials traveling on the proposed roadway will have potential for accidents endangering wildlife and residents	<i>The potential for hazardous material accidents exists on every road that vehicles transporting these types of materials drive on (interstate, state, and local). While the potential for these types of incidents are possible, they cannot be totally avoided in every situation.</i>	C.Baker, Curtis, Neyrey	
HW-2	Concerned the project would cross and potentially impact waste sites. Requests that a complete inventory and assessment of hazardous waste sites be completed.	<i>Section 3.15 of the Tier 1 EIS discusses the desktop analysis that was conducted for waste sites potentially impacted by the corridor alternatives. Tables 3.73 through 3.82 summarize the results of this analysis. More detailed investigations will be conducting during the Tier 2 EIS phase when more defined routes and alignments are known instead of a corridor.</i>	Orr(LEAN)	
LAND USE				
LU-1	It appears that investors are in control of land and zoning without the voice of local government	See ED-3	Avant, Gee, Hay	
LU-2	Plan calls for land use and zoning regulations in the chosen corridors to prohibit the use of land development of this land. What happens if the local authorities refuse to comply with this request or if we have planning already in place within the corridors?	<i>Part of the corridor preservation process is to coordinate with planners and developers in hopes of reaching workable solutions for all parties involved. Additionally, local planning commissions will be contacted and involved in the process to coordinate any approved, planned, or existing development prior to preserving a selected BR Loop right-of-way corridor (generally 400 feet).</i>	Davison (Neighbors In Action form letter), Evans (Neighbors In Action form letter), Font, V.Johnson (Neighbors In Action form letter), Killebrew (Neighbors In Action form letter), Ricks	
LU-3	Lack of local zoning or land use regulations do not exist for protecting a selected corridor.	See CP-1	Livingston Parish & City of Central Legislative Delegation, Ricks	
LU-4	A comprehensive regional plan needs to be developed and implemented.	<i>Several workshops have been held (i.e., Future BR, Focus Groups, etc.) to get the public involved in planning and developing a plan for East Baton Rouge Parish. Other parishes may be conducting meetings of this type, however it is uncertain that the BR Loop is being considered.</i>	Ragland	
LU-5	Concerned the project will encourage sprawl.	See LU-4	Wilcher (Sierra Club)	

Baton Rouge Loop Tier 1 EIS

Project No. 07-PR-MS-0002

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F.A.P. No. STP-9609(504)



**Table 7.2b
Summary of Other DEIS Comments and Responses**

Revised: 3/6/2014

NEW ID	Issue	Response	Commenters	Oral Commenters
NOT AN EIS ISSUE				
NEI-1	Only 2 parish leaders are supporting the project. Other parish leaders are opposing the project	<i>Comment noted.</i>	Denham, Lillard	Magee,
Request full investigation of how funds have been spent on the project		RD-13		
NEI-2	Summarize previous findings resulting from studies on a baton rouge loop	<i>The Baton Rouge Loop Implementation Plan summarizes previous studies performed in the Baton Rouge area (i.e. North Bypass study) .</i>	Davison (Neighbors In Action form letter), Evans (Neighbors In Action form letter), V.Johnson (Neighbors In Action form letter), Killebrew (Neighbors In Action form letter)	
NEI-3	Concerned that elected leaders do not support this project.	<i>Currently, there is a difference of opinion in terms of support for this project among currently elected officials. However, as the environmental process runs its course, the information presented in latter phases of the project may provide further insight into many of the questions/reservations that many concerned individuals currently have.</i>	Davison	
NOISE				
NOI-1	Concerned the proposed project will increase noise	<i>Typically noise analysis and impacts is evaluated during the Tier 2 EIS phase and therefore was not included as part of this Tier 1 EIS document. During the Tier 2 EIS phase, noise projections are more accurate and meaningful because the routes/alternatives are more defined with interchange locations and the traffic projections are more refined. Furthermore, mitigation measures will be defined in the Tier 2 phase of the project.</i>	Atkinson, Axel, C.Baker, Campagna, Curtis, V.Davis, Davison, Francis, Hidalgo, V. Johnson, C. Killebrew, Koranek, Maust, L.Mayers, T.McGaha, C.Moore, R.Moore, Mustachia, Neyrey, Perkins, Stafford, Sturdivant, M.Taylor, M.Thompson, K.Walker, Webb, G.White, K.White, Zeller	Hall, J.A.Eiswirth, L.Hall, Bruce, Tate,
NOI-2	Walls used for noise abatement will be unattractive	<i>See NOI-1. At this time it is unknown whether noise abatement measures will be warranted. More detailed studies during the Tier 2 EIS will reveal if this is feasible.</i>	V.Davis	
OPINION				
OP-1	Supports the project and would like to see it built soon	<i>Comment noted.</i>	Adams, Bayhi, Belle, Boe', Brewer, Dugas, Folse, Foster, Fox, Head, Huggins, Kirkpatrick, Klein, D.LeJeune, Machado, Prudhomme, Silman, Spiers, C.Stewart, Stolzenhaler, Tucci, Vivian, Webb, Welborn, Wilsey,	Pedneau, Sudernath, Miley, Mire, Amos, Mouton, Zito, Williams, Arnett,
OP-2	Oppose the BR Loop	<i>Comment noted.</i>	Ard, Arhee, Aguilard, Altazan, Ansalve, Arnold Acres Homeowners Assoc., Atkinson, Babcock, Bailey, Bagot, F.Baker, J. Baker, Beckers, West, J. West, Bercegeay, Bielkiewicz, Bielkiewicz, Camus, Blanchard, Blank, Bogart, Bolen, Boone, C. Brady, D. Brecheen, Broome, Brunett, Campagna, Camus, M. Camus, Carl, G. Carl, Caston, Catalanatto, Rushing, B&B Caston, Chair, Chemin, C. Chemin, T.Chemin, Coates, A. Coates, J. Chemin, P. Chemin, R. Lambert, Church, Colello, Cottano, Cullen, Curtis, Cutrer, L. Cutrer, Daigle, Darce', V.Davis, Dawson, Dinecola, Dyess, Ellis, Evans, Favaron, Fetterolf, Font, Wallace, Fralick, Garner, M.Garner, Gautreaux, J. Gee, Ginn, C.Ginn, Gourley, Guidroz, Hanegan, J. Harbin, Harrison, Hidalgo, A.Hill, J.Hill, S.Hill, Hunter, Jarreau, Johnson, S.Johnston, Jones, Keating, C. Killebrew, O.Kleinpeter, G.Kleinpeter, Corkern, Kraushaar, R.Lambert, K.Lambert, J.Landry, B.Lane, S.Laporte, LeJeune, Leteff, Lilly, M.Lindsey, B.Lindsey, Livingston Parish & City of Central Legislative Delegation, Livingston Parish Council (2011), Livingston Parish Council (2012), Livingston School Board, Loper, Lynch, Manning, Maranto, A.Matlock, W.Matlock, Maust, G.Mayeaux, D.Mayeaux, L.Mayeaux, L.Mayers, A. Messina, N. Messina, R. Messina, W. Messina, W.McDonald, R.McDonald, W.T.McDonald, T.Ellerbee, I.McKnight, M.McKnight, N.McLin, B.McLin, McMorris, Miley (City of Central Resol.), Miller, M. Morgan, Mustachia, Norred, Oberwortmann, R.Orges, S.Orges, Parent, Paxton, Peevey, Pence, W./A.Poche', A./O.Prestridge, O.Prestridge, Provost, Rayburn, Richard, Ricks, Fr.Roberts, B.Roberts, J.Roberts, Rush, Sadden, B.Salario, G.Salario, Sanford, Sistrunk, Stansell, Starkey, Starns, Stevens, Stoks, Sturdivant, B.Thibodeaux, S.C.Thibodeaux, M.Thompson, Y.Vince, M.Vince, L.Walker, Rh.Watson, Ro.Watson, C.Watts, E.Watts, J.Watts, M.Watts,	L.Hall, Savoy, Magee, Sadden, Prestridge, Armentor, Jones,
OP-3	Concerned that the project continues even though Governor vetoed funds for additional studies.	<i>Comment noted.</i>	Adams, Baker, Davison (Neighbors In Action form letter), D. Erdey, Evans (Neighbors In Action form letter), Harbin, S.Hill, Hopper, V.Johnson (Neighbors In Action form letter), Killebrew (Neighbors In Action form letter), K.Landry, Livingston Parish Council (2011), E.McGaha, M./J.Morgan, Mustachia, Richardson, E.Walker, E.Watts, M.Watts	

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**Table 7.2b
Summary of Other DEIS Comments and Responses**

Revised: 3/6/2014

NEW ID	Issue	Response	Commenters	Oral Commenters
OP-4	Locals have not been given opportunity to voice concerns or select the route.	<i>The public involvement process for the project has been documented in Chapter 7 and Appendix E of the Tier 1 EIS. Also, a copy of Implementation Plan Technical Memorandum No. 6 (Public and Agency Outreach) are contained in Appendix K of the Tier 1 EIS. At the beginning of the project, in coordination with CAEA, DOTD and FHWA, three main groups were established to accommodate a larger geographic area and obtain more input from various aspects of the region. The Tier 1 EIS and Implementation Plan, Technical Memorandum No. 6 describes these committees and outlines the outreach made as well as various community meetings held for civic and public groups in the area. In addition, 27 public meetings have been held throughout the region at various locations to accommodate local citizens within the metropolitan area and those from the surrounding rural parishes. This gave the public an opportunity to learn about the project and provide feedback throughout the project at various geographical locations. The purpose of the Tier 1 EIS is to recommend an alternative based on all the information evaluated throughout the process. This includes environmental impacts, engineering factors (i.e. costs, feasibility), traffic operations, public input, agency input, etc. as outlined in Chapter 3 and Chapter 5. All factors must be considered by FHWA before identifying a Selected Corridor in the Record of Decision. During the Tier 2 phase of the project, additional meetings will be held as more specific details of the Selected Corridor are developed.</i>	Avant, C.Baker, Font, Davison (Neighbors In Action form letter), Evans (Neighbors In Action form letter), Hay, T. Jackson, V.Johnson (Neighbors In Action form letter), Killebrew (Neighbors In Action form letter), J.Koraneck, Maust, M.J.Morgan, Mustachia, Pittman, Stansell, E.Walker, E.Watts, M.Watts	
OP-5	Oppose south section of the loop, in particular in Ascension Parish.	<i>Comment noted.</i>	Balock, Hernandez, D.Hernandez, E.Hernandez, S.Hernandez, Jeansonne, Landry, Malik, Mayers, Mayhall, Meaux, Nickens, Savoy, D.Taylor, M.Taylor, L.Watson, M.Watson	Hall, Hillensbeck, Hernandez,
OP-6	Proposed project will not benefit me or my community.	<i>Comment noted.</i>	E. Atkinson, W. Avant, Blanchard, Blank, Campagna, Davis, Evans, Favaron, Garner, Gautreaux, S.Hernandez, S.Hill, Hoge, Jarreau, Jeansonne, A.Moore, G.Moore, Muse, B.Roberts, D.Taylor, V.Taylor, K.Wills, S.Wills	Zettlemoyer, Jones,
OP-7	Proposed project will encourage residents to move further out	<i>Comment noted.</i>	Boone	
OP-8	No major city can progress without a loop	<i>Comment noted.</i>	Brewer	
OP-9	Support any roadway improvements that would facilitate an improved and safe flow for our delivery trucks. Traffic congestion and delays are very costly to us and to our customers	<i>Comment noted.</i>	Campbell	
OP-10	No one in my community supports the loop	<i>The project team has reviewed scientific surveys conducted by local groups or provided by Parish officials to help weigh public opinions on the project. The surveys have consistently indicated broad support for the Baton Rouge Loop project. Based on research findings in the Louisiana Transportation Study conducted by Survey Communications, Inc. for the Baton Rouge Regional Chamber using a very large survey sample of 1500, with statistically appropriate samples within each of the five parishes in the Loop project area, 83% believe the Baton Rouge region needs a loop around the city of Baton Rouge to relieve traffic congestion. By parish, those surveyed were in favor of building a Loop by the following percentages: Ascension Parish 78%, East Baton Rouge 79%, Iberville 90%, Livingston 79% and West Baton Rouge 88%. In addition, 88% of those surveyed in the five parish region favored making funding for the Baton Rouge Loop a priority so that construction could begin as soon as possible. The project team must balance the needs of the project along with impacts, both human and environmental. Local leaders have been encouraged to help make decisions and voice concerns through the Capital Area Expressway Authority (Capital Area Expressway Authority (CAEA)). Leadership and politics may change over time, but the region requires a long term plan to help relieve traffic congestion. The public involvement process for the Baton Rouge Loop has been quite extensive throughout the Implementation Plan and Tier 1 EIS process with a total of 27 public meetings and hearings advertised and held in the five parish area, and documented in Chapter 7 and Appendix E of the Tier 1 EIS. A similar program will be involved with the Tier 2 phase which will include more public meetings and stakeholder outreach.</i>	Church, Livingston Parish & City of Central Legislative Delegation, Mayers, E.Watts, M.Watts	
OP-11	Politicians/planners will make decisions based on individual gains from the project	<i>The purpose of this Tier 1 & subsequent Tier 2 EIS study is to follow the guidelines of the NEPA process to conduct an analysis on the proposed corridors, which will ultimately determine the Selected Corridor (as identified in the Tier 1 Record of Decision) to place an alignment for the Loop route within Tier 2. The environmental impacts of this project, along with human impacts and engineering factors, influence the decisions, which are reflected in the tiered EIS documents (Tier 1 & future Tier 2).</i>	Church, Curtis, Hopper, Krake, K.Landry, W.Messina, W.Messina, Pittman, W.JA.Poche, G.Salario, Sistrunk, R.Watts, K.Wills, Womack	
OP-12	Why isn't a public entity charged with this project (i.e. Louisiana Department of Transportation and Development (LADOTD), MPO) instead of a private entity?	<i>The Louisiana Legislature established the Capital Area Expressway Authority (Capital Area Expressway Authority (CAEA)), which is overseeing this project in coordination with Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and Louisiana Department of Transportation and Development (LADOTD).</i>	Curtis, Davison (Neighbors In Action form letter), Evans (Neighbors In Action form letter), Jones, V.Johnson (Neighbors In Action form letter), Killebrew (Neighbors In Action form letter), Lillard, Zeller	

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**Table 7.2b
Summary of Other DEIS Comments and Responses**

Revised: 3/6/2014

NEW ID	Issue	Response	Commenters	Oral Commenters
OP-13	A loop should have been built a long time ago in Baton Rouge area before the growth.	<i>Comment noted.</i>	Erdey, Evans, Jackson, Manning, Muse, Nickens, Richardson, E. Smiley, M.Watts, R.Watts	Nickens, J.Eiswirth, Amos, Harris, Bruce,
OP-14	Project team continues to ignore the voices of the people opposing the project including local officials	<i>See OP-4</i>	W. Avant, Davison (Neighbors In Action form letter), Evans (Neighbors In Action form letter), Font, Harrison, S.Hoge, Hopper, Johnson.V.Johnson (Neighbors In Action form letter), Jones, Killebrew (Neighbors In Action form letter), Lillard, Lindsey, 2011 Livingston Parish Council, Livingston Parish & City of Central Legislative Delegation, Maust, McCarley, E.McGaha, T.McGaha, Miley, Mustachia, B.Salaro, Savoy, B.Smith, Spaulding, Stafford, E.Watts, M.Watts, A. Wilkinson, Welch, Zeller	
OP-15	Oppose northern segment of the loop	<i>Comment noted.</i>	Herron, Kropog, K. Lambert, Lartigue, Ott (LEAN), D.Thompson, Womack	Williams, Reynerson,
OP-16	The only people who use loops are travelers going from one town or state to another.	<i>Based on the preliminary traffic analysis, local and through traffic would benefit from the project.</i>	S.Hill	
OP-17	Concerned local and state leaders do not have a grasp of the importance of addressing our traffic and planning issues on a global or regional level.	<i>Comment noted.</i>	Ragland	
OP-18	There is misinformation surrounding the costs, routes, and state-funding participation from the Capital Area Expressway Authority (CAEA)	<i>The information provided in the Tier 1 EIS document was based on the data that was available at the time the document was developed. The document explains how the costs were developed and what assumptions were made, and the remaining corridors are also discussed. Please refer to FN-5 for an explanation of funding for the project.</i>	Erdey, Richardson	
OP-19	Plans for the south unit of the loop has been abandoned due to significant opposition, indicating there is no longer a "loop" to study.	<i>At this point, no entire unit of the Baton Rouge Loop has been eliminated. The Record of Decision (ROD) at the end of the Tier 1 EIS phase will make the determination on a Selected Corridor alternative for further consideration in the Tier 2 EIS phase of the project.</i>	Erdey, Richardson	
OP-20	Development of a loop would be helpful to future growth and proper functioning of the healthcare sector of Baton Rouge's infrastructure/economy.	<i>Comment noted.</i>	Roberts	
OP-21	Remove local leaders from the decision making process so they are not pressured by supporters.	<i>Comment noted.</i>	Lynch, Sliman	
OP-22	Project will only benefit truckers	<i>See OP-16</i>	K.White	
OP-23	Are the decision makers for the Loop routes qualified and if so, by whom?	<i>Ultimately, FHWA officials are the decision makers in the NEPA process for the proposed project just as any other roadway project of this magnitude. The project team is charged with presenting the necessary data, analysis, and potential recommendations. The engineers and planners for this project were selected through a rigorous selection process approved by FHWA based on qualifications. During the NEPA process, FHWA is the only party with the authority to determine a corridor or route for a project. They are responsible for ensuring the process and all regulations have been adhered to properly. Lead agencies and participating resource agencies are consulted during the process to ensure specific impacts are adequately evaluated. The Tier 1 EIS process includes a Draft EIS, Final EIS and concludes with a Record of Decision. The Record of Decision is the document which officially states FHWA's selected alternative for a proposed project. The Tier 1 Record of Decision will identify a Selected Corridor Alternative to be investigated further in the Tier 2 EIS phase. During the Tier 2 EIS phase, FHWA will again be the main decision makers for the Selected Alternative route within the corridor.</i>	Womack	
OP-24	Encourage coordination with the City of Central for future phases of the project.	<i>Comment noted.</i>		Giles, Ellis
PROJECT DESCRIPTION				
PD-1	Please define the loop.	<i>As stated in the Executive Summary of the Tier 1 EIS, "The Baton Rouge Loop is proposed as a 90 to 105 mile long circumferential controlled access free-flow toll roadway around Baton Rouge, Louisiana, with two new Mississippi River crossings. The proposed project is located in the Parishes of Ascension, East Baton Rouge, Iberville, Livingston, and West Baton Rouge." Refer to Chapter 1 of the Tier 1 EIS for a more detailed project description and the purpose and need. Also, Chapter 2 of the Tier 1 EIS discusses each corridor alternative evaluated in the document. Corridor alternatives have been considered during the Tier 1 EIS to evaluate and alternatives based on high level analysis. Most of the corridors considered have a width greater than 1000'. During the Tier 2 EIS the Selected Corridor from the Tier 1 EIS Record of Decision will be used to determine potential routes/alignments for more detailed environmental and engineering analyses and determine a specific required right of way which is projected to be closer to 400' wide.</i>	Zeller	Tilton,

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**Table 7.2b
Summary of Other DEIS Comments and Responses**

Revised: 3/6/2014

NEW ID	Issue	Response	Commenters	Oral Commenters
PURPOSE AND NEED				
PN-1	Recognizes the need for an alternative around Baton Rouge due to the size and/or traffic congestion	<i>As stated in Section 1.3 of the Tier 1 EIS, the region needs the proposed project due to traffic congestion and delays occurring now and projected for the future, traffic flow is restricted at the I-10 and US 190 Mississippi River Bridge crossings without convenient alternative crossings, additional crossings are needed, lack of convenient alternative routes and system connectivity forces local traffic onto I-10 and I-12.</i>	Adams, Boe', Fisher, Head, Hodges, Kirkpatrick, Major, C.Morgan, Normand, Oubre, Roberts, Stolzenhaller, Swenson, Thacker, T.Thibodeaux, D.Thomas, L.Thomas, Tucci, Vivian	Pedneau, Amos,
PN-2	Our existing highway system is outdated	<i>Comment noted.</i>	Fisher, B.Fisher	
PN-3	A loop would improve safety	<i>Comment noted.</i>	Fisher, Indest, D.LeJeune, Swenson	Sudernath, Amos,
PN-4	Is the project intended to help alleviate local traffic or thru traffic in the region?	<i>As stated in Section 1.3 of the Tier 1 EIS, the project's purpose is to reduce existing and projected future congestion and delay on interstates, expand roadway capacity, address future travel demand, enhance connectivity, increase capacity and connectivity over the Mississippi River and be funded all are in part by toll revenues. Ideally, the project would attract local and through traffic to optimize capacity and reduce congestion on the interstates.</i>	Malik	
PN-5	Believe project is more about economic development rather than traffic relief.	<i>See ED-8</i>	E.Mayers, E.Watts, M.Watts, Womack	
PN-6	Project will benefit Plaquemine with faster and easier access to I-10 and I-12 without using a ferry or Donaldsonville bridge	<i>Comment noted.</i>	Oubre, Ristroph	
PN-7	Recognizes need for new MRB in Baton Rouge area	<i>See PN-1</i>	Tircuit, Tucci, G.White	Sudernath, Duplessis, Harris, Williams,
PN-8	What are the advantages of the loop? How would surrounding areas benefit?	<i>See PN-4</i>	Zeller	
PN-9	Is the project part of a state improvement plan?	<i>At the time of the Tier 1 EIS publication, the Baton Rouge Loop has not been listed in the State Transportation Improvement Plan (STIP). The project can continue forward to the Tier 2 EIS without this designation. Following the Tier 2 EIS process, it will be critical that the project become part of the MPO TIP and ultimately the DOTD STIP to move forward to design and construction.</i>	Davison (Neighbors In Action form letter), Evans (Neighbors In Action form letter), V.Johnson (Neighbors In Action form letter), Killebrew (Neighbors In Action form letter)	
PUBLIC SERVICES				
PS-1	Concerned project will generate public safety issues (i.e. Increase in crime, management of increased traffic, influx of illegal aliens)	<i>There is no known documentation that directly links the construction of a road of this type to issues such as crime, or the influx of illegal aliens. The Baton Rouge Loop project will help to redistribute traffic in the regional area, which in turn will help to alleviate traffic congestion within the existing roadway network. Typically, local entities benefit from the growth and development a facility like the Baton Rouge Loop. With increased growth and development, tax revenue increases which allows for increased services for the area. Coordination is critical between the local entity and the toll agency to delegate roles and responsibilities. In some cases, toll facilities include their own police force to help alleviate the burden on the local law enforcement. This is currently being implemented in many places throughout the country including the Crescent City Connection bridge in New Orleans, LA.</i>	Ard, Davison (Neighbors In Action form letter), Evans (Neighbors In Action form letter), Livingston School Board, Catalanotto, Font, Harbin, V.Johnson (Neighbors In Action form letter), Killebrew (Neighbors In Action form letter), R.Lambert, 2011 Livingston Parish Council, Livingston Parish & City of Central Legislative Delegation, Maranto, Maust, M.J.Morgan, Mustachia, Neyrey, Ott, Pittman, Ricks, Sturdivant, K.Walker, E.Watts, M.Watts, Womack, Zeller	Magee, Wesley,
PS-2	Concerned project will impact the transportation issues with school buses and school athletics (additional costs due to increase travel time, mileage and fuel costs and more required buses).	<i>See CIR-14</i>	Davison (Neighbors In Action form letter), Evans (Neighbors In Action form letter), Killebrew (Neighbors In Action form letter), Livingston School Board, Curtis, Hay, V.Johnson (Neighbors In Action form letter), Killebrew, Mustachia, Ricks, Zeller	Tate,
PS-3	Concerned project will displace schools, churches, cemeteries and public parks. (i.e. Amite Baptist, Live Oak High School, Live Oak Ballpark). Uncertain about the specifics on the relocation and assistance program planned for this project.	<i>As shown in Vol. 2 of the Tier 1 EIS document, Exhibits 3-35 thru 3-51 show locations of parks and community facilities such as schools, churches, cemeteries, and public parks. These features have been and continue to be identified as new developments are constructed. In the Tier 2 EIS phase of the project, alignments can be developed to avoid or minimize impacts to these features. Information provided by the Louisiana Department of Transportation and Development (LADOTD) Real Estate Section has been prepared and made available to the public at the recent December Public Hearings for the Baton Rouge Loop. They can be found on the www.brloop.com website to help answer questions about the relocation & assistance program.</i>	Bolen, Catalanotto, Curtis, Erdey, Gee, Godfrey, R.Harrison, Heath, Killebrew, J.Koranek, 2012 Livingston Parish Council, Livingston School Board, Maust, Melancon, C.Morgan, M.J.Morgan, Mustachia, Norred, Ott, Parent, Perkins, Pittman, Richardson, Ricks, Thacker, E.Walker, K.Walker	

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Revised: 3/6/2014

NEW ID	Issue	Response	Commenters	Oral Commenters
PS-4	Concerned project will cause additional financial burdens and stress on local public entities (i.e., Schools, DPW, local law enforcement, etc.) due to increased population and capacity on local roads	<i>Based on historic growth trends and future population projections provided by the US Census, it is anticipated that the population within the parishes of the project area would continue to grow, and accordingly, traffic congestion continue to increase, with or without implementation of the proposed project. The types of impacts referred to by the commenter are called indirect impacts. The Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ) defines indirect "effects" (synonymous with "impacts") as "... effects, which are caused by the action and are later in time or farther removed in distance, but are still reasonably foreseeable. Indirect effects may include growth-inducing effects and other effects related to induced changes in the pattern of land use, population density or growth rate, and related effects on air and water and other natural systems, including ecosystems." (40 CFR 1508.8(a))." An analysis of indirect impacts, which would assess potential encroachment alteration impacts (both ecological and socioeconomic), as well as induced growth impacts (i.e., project-induced land use change), is a detailed analysis predicated on understanding to a better degree than is possible in the high-level, corridor assessment Tier 1 EIS, the likely location of a proposed project alignment. Accordingly, the analysis of indirect impacts would occur as part of the Tier 2 EIS phase.</i>	Font, Davison (Neighbors In Action form letter), Evans (Neighbors In Action form letter), Livingston School Board, Jackson, Jones, V.Johnson (Neighbors In Action form letter), Killebrew (Neighbors In Action form letter), 2011 Livingston Parish Council, Livingston Parish & City of Central Legislative Delegation, Maranto, Maust, Miley (City of Central Resol.), M./J.Morgan, Muse, Mustachia, Pittman, Ricks, E. Smiley, E.Watts, M.Watts, R.Watts, Womack, Zeller	
PS-5	Concerned buses, visitors, and trucks servicing schools will be forced to pay high tolls	<i>No motorist will be forced to use the Baton Rouge Loop in any situation. The BR Loop is an alternate route to the existing roadway network.</i>	Livingston School Board	
PS-6	School times will be impacted due to the project	<i>See CIR-14. Also, See CON-1.</i>	Livingston School Board	
	Why are schools and churches not considered in the corridors outlined?	<i>AL-13</i>		
PS-7	Ascension School Board owns property within one of the corridors.	<i>See AL-13 & PS-3</i>	Duplechein	
PS-8	How many public structures will be affected by this project?	<i>See PS-3. Until a final corridor and route are selected, a determination of total impacts cannot be made. The Tier 2 EIS phase of this project will determine the final path of the route.</i>	Pittman	
RESIDENTIAL / BUSINESS IMPACTS				
RB-1	Concerned the project will displace citizens or businesses	<i>The project is only looking at very wide study areas right now for the Tier 1 EIS, generally ranging from 1000 ft to 4000 ft. The property within these corridors will not necessarily be impacted. The impacts to individual pieces of land will not be known until the Tier 2 process when specific alignments/routes are identified and proposed right of way is outlined which is projected to be 400' wide. Therefore, actual right-of-way acquisition will not occur until successful completion of the Tier 2 process and funding for the project is secured. Federal and state relocation and acquisition guidelines will be followed to insure fair compensation for all properties within the proposed right of way. Information provided by the Louisiana Department of Transportation and Development (LADOTD) Real Estate Section has been prepared and made available to the public at the recent December Public Hearings and on the www.brloop.com website to help answer questions about this process.</i>	Ard, F.Baker, Blalock, Bolen, Curtis, Erdey, Font, Godfrey, Harrison, Hay, Hoge, Hopper, Jeansonne, S.Johnston, Killebrew, J.Koraneck, J.Landry, K.Landry, Lawrence, Lipoma, 2012 Livingston Parish Council, Malik, Manning, Maust, L.Mayers, R.Mayers, McKee , M.McKnight, A.Moore, G.Moore, M./J.Morgan, Norred, Parent, Richardson, Ricks, E.Smiley, Stansell, Starkey, A.Stewart, Thacker, K.Walker, M.Watts, S./A.Wilkinson, M.Window, Zeller	Hall, J.A.Eiswirth, Zito, Zeller, Jones,
RB-2	Uncertain about the specifics on the relocation and assistance program planned for this project	<i>See RB-1</i>	Armentor, Babcock (CHILP), Blacklock, IR. Cutrer, Davison (Neighbors In Action form letter), Evans (Neighbors In Action form letter), Gee, Hay, Hopper, V.Johnson (Neighbors In Action form letter), Killebrew (Neighbors In Action form letter), Kropog, K.Landry, Lindsey, Lipoma, Mustachia, Norred, R. Smiley, M.Window	Conerly, L.Hall, Jones,
RB-3	Concerned because my residence will be potentially impacted by the proposed project.	<i>See RB-1</i>	Armentor, Arnold Acres Homeowners Assoc., Axel, R. Blank, Catalanotto, Church, R. Cutrer, Ellis, Evans, Francis, Goudeau, Henry, E.Hernandez, S.Hernandez, S.Hoge, Kraushaar, 2012 Livingston Parish Council, Maranto, N./A.Messina, A.Moore, C.Moore, G.Moore, R.Moore, Mustachia, Neyrey, Nickens, Perkins, Richard, Sadden, Sanford, A.Stewart, D.Taylor, M.Taylor, E.Walker, L.Walker, E.Watts, M.Watts	Conerly, Nickens, L.Hall, Savoy, Sadden, Hernandez, Bruce, Prestridge,
RB-4	Concerned about property value decreasing	<i>See ED-1</i>	Ballock, Campagna, Church, Francis, Davison (Neighbors In Action form letter), Evans (Neighbors In Action form letter), S.Hill, V.Johnson (Neighbors In Action form letter), Killebrew, Killebrew (Neighbors In Action form letter), Malik, Maranto, Maust, T.McGaha, Miller, R. Moore, M./J.Morgan, Muse, Mustachia, Mustachia, Richard, Stafford, A.Stewart, K.Walker, E.Watts, M.Watts, K.White, Wilsey, Zeller	L.Hall, Bruce,
RB-5	Cost for right of way will make project cost prohibitive	<i>The cost of right-of-way has been estimated and factored into the estimated project cost reported in the Tier 1 EIS document.</i>	Godfrey	
RB-6	How many displacements are anticipated with the project?	<i>See RB-1</i>	Pittman	
RB-7	The effect on residential area has been focused on the relatively few homes that would be displaced. Positive impacts need at least as much presentation as the not-in-my-backyard crowd has given to the potential negatives.	<i>Comment noted.</i>	Ristroph, Vivian	Sudernath,
RB-8	Support S13 because it has less potential displacements	<i>Comment noted.</i>	Tircuit	

Baton Rouge Loop Tier 1 EIS
Project No. 07-PR-MS-0002
S.P.No. 700-96-0011
F.A.P. No. STP-9609(504)



Table 7.2b
Summary of Other DEIS Comments and Responses

Revised: 3/6/2014

NEW ID	Issue	Response	Commenters	Oral Commenters
REQUEST FOR DATA				
RD-1	Maps need to be updated, concerned that impacts to human and environment were not considered	See AL-13	Avant, Baker, Bolen, Denham, Duplessis, Godfrey, R.Harrison, Hay, S.Hill, Hoge, S.Hoge, Jackson, Koranek, J.Koranek, Maranto, Maust, E.McGaha, T.McGaha, M./J.Morgan, Norred, Paxton, Pittman, B.Smith, Stafford, Thacker, E.Walker, L.Walker, Womack,	
	Have local elected officials had the opportunity to voice their opinion?	OP-4		
RD-2	Request that more definitive traffic analysis be conducted before going forward	Traffic modeling & analyses will be updated in the Tier 2 evaluation. For a project of this magnitude, a high-level analysis was used to compare corridor alternatives. In the Tier 2 phase of the project, a more detailed analysis will be conducted to provide more comprehensive traffic information.	Davison, F.Baker, M. Baker, V. Johnson	
RD-3	How can a Tier 1 approval be expected with using outdated traffic and cost information	As the Tiered EIS process continues, traffic and cost information will be updated. The information presented in the Tier 1 EIS document only served to provide a snapshot of anticipated cost and traffic data based on the information available at the time it was developed.	Blacklock, Davison, V. Johnson, C. Killebrew	
RD-4	Provide documentation on success rates of PPP similar to what is being proposed	See FN-1	Blacklock, Davison (Neighbors In Action form letter), Evans (Neighbors In Action form letter), Hay, V.Johnson (Neighbors In Action form letter), Killebrew (Neighbors In Action form letter), Maust,	
RD-5	Existing landmarks such as major local roads, towns, subdivisions, businesses, cemeteries, and public facilities should be marked on maps.	See PS-3. The Tier 1 EIS phase is meant to provide a high-level perspective of the project area. The Tier 2 EIS phase will provide a more detailed perspective with more "on-ground" features highlighted.	Bolen, Fiero, Hoge, Jackson, Koranek, J.Koranek, Maranto, Maust, E.McGaha, M./J.Morgan, Norred, Paxton, B.Smith, E.Walker, Womack	
RD-6	Conduct a private poll in each parish to see if the project is needed and worth the cost.	The purpose of this phase of the BR Loop project is to follow the NEPA process to ensure that the most reasonable corridor(s) is selected (in the Tier 1 Record of Decision) for consideration in the next phase of the project (Tier 2 EIS).	Church,	
RD-7	Please give specific reasons why the project team cannot reach a consensus on a preferred alternative.	See C/N-2	Curtis	
	Existing major local roads, towns, and public facilities should be marked	RD-5		
RD-8	Provide a schedule of Committee Meetings to the public.	Please refer to Chapter 7 of the Tier 1 EIS document.	Giles	
RD-9	Update cultural resource information	Vol. 2 of the Tier 1 EIS document contains several exhibits for environmental features such as cultural resources.	Hay	
RD-10	Update cost estimates to 2011	See RD-3	Hay	
RD-11	How accurate and current is the data being used?	As this process is lengthy and typically takes several years to complete, the work performed during interim phases are only intended to serve as placeholders and a means of comparison between alternatives. As time passes, data is updated as necessary to give a more accurate depiction of current or anticipated conditions.	Haynes	
	Request that a complete inventory and assessment of hazardous waste sites be completed.	HW-2		
RD-12	Who will represent Livingston, Iberville, and Ascension as the project moves forward?	The Capital Area Expressway Authority (CAEA) is currently set up to operate with the remaining members of the organization (EBR Parish President, WBR Parish President, Secretary of DOTD). As stated in the Tier 1 EIS Executive Summary, "Prior to construction of any portion of the project, the CAEA will be reconstituted to include a minimum of one member from each political subdivision included in the route of the Loop."	Davison (Neighbors In Action form letter), Evans (Neighbors In Action form letter), V.Johnson (Neighbors In Action form letter), Killebrew (Neighbors In Action form letter), Pittman, Womack,	
RD-13	Request for financial information regarding monies spent on the project and request this information be posted for the public.	See FN-1 and FN-5	Lillard, Zeller	
RD-14	Information should be posted on a website designed for addressing concerns.	The Baton Rouge Loop project has a dedicated website (www.brloop.com) that contains information related to many of the questions that are being raised by concerned individuals. The website also contains each report published to date for this project.	J. Gee	
RD-15	Request for formal assessment of environmental impact for the Baton Rouge Loop.	Based on requirements established by NEPA, the Tier 1 & subsequent Tier 2 EIS documents will provide a complete environmental assessment for the Baton Rouge Loop project.	Pestoff	
THREATENED AND ENDANGERED SPECIES				
TE-1	Concerned for rare habitat species (i.e.. red-cockaded Woodpecker and Louisiana Black Bear) within Livingston Parish	Threatened & Endangered species have been identified and are documented in Section 3.14 of the Tier 1 EIS document. Once a final corridor & route are selected, the Tier 2 EIS phase will address whether these resources are impacted or not.	C.Baker, F.Baker	
TE-2	There are bald eagles in the location of the proposed bridge on the north end of the loop.	See TE-1	A.Wilkinson	

Baton Rouge Loop Tier 1 EIS

Project No. 07-PR-MS-0002

S.P.No. 700-96-0011

F.A.P. No. STP-9609(504)



**Table 7.2b
Summary of Other DEIS Comments and Responses**

Revised: 3/6/2014

NEW ID	Issue	Response	Commenters	Oral Commenters
TOLL OPERATIONS				
TOL-1	Concerned private investors will make profit on the toll road and/or taxpayers will need to cover the gap funding.	<i>As stated in Appendix G under the "Financing" Section of the Tier 1 EIS document, there are methods in place to cover the anticipated gap funding required for the Baton Rouge Loop Project.</i>	Avant, Babcock (CHILP), J.Baker, Bolen, Church, Davison (Neighbors In Action form letter), Denham, Evans, Evans (Neighbors In Action form letter), Font, Gee, Harbin, S.Hoge, Johnson, V.Johnson (Neighbors In Action form letter), Killebrew (Neighbors In Action form letter), Koranek, J.Landry, 2012 Livingston Parish Council, 2011 Livingston Parish Council, Livingston Parish & City of Central Legislative Delegation, Manning, Maust, E.McGaha, T.McGaha, M.McKnight, McMorris, W.Messina, M./J.Morgan, Mustachia, Norred, Parent, E.Smiley, R.Smiley, B.Smith, Thacker, L.Walker, E.Watts, M.Watts, R.Watts, Welch, A.Wilkinson, Wilsey, Zeller	
TOL-2	Concerned a toll will be a burden on self, trucks, employees or students	<i>The Baton Rouge Loop would be an option for users in the region who do not wish to use the existing interstates and roads. Each motorist will have the choice when traveling through the region. Section 3.8 (Toll Economic Impacts) of the Tier 1 EIS discusses this in more detail. Additional analysis will be provided in Tier 2 EIS on toll impacts to local users.</i>	Baker, Bolen, P. Chemin, Church, Daigle, Duplessis, Dyess, Font, Harbin, S.Hill, Krake, J.Lambert, J.Landry, K.Landry, B.Lane, Livingston School Board, E.McGaha, Meaux, W.Messina, Mustachia, Orges, Paxton, Peevey, Perkins, B.Salario, E.Smiley, Spaulding, A.Stewart, Thacker, E.Watts, M.Watts, Webb, K.White, Wilsey, M.Window, Zeller	Duplessis, Tate,
TOL-3	Concerned the private investors will prohibit local and state entities from building competitive roadways near the loop, thus prohibiting growth.	<i>It is uncertain how the project will be managed but whether it is through a public-private-partnership agreement or a public toll agency, the local and state entities will have the same opportunities to develop roadways just as they currently have.</i>	J.Baker, Davison, V. Johnson, C. Killebrew, 2012 Livingston Parish Council, Maust, Mustachia, Norred, Parent, E.Smiley, R.Smiley, B.Smith	
TOL-4	Concerned a foreign country/company will own and operate the roadway	<i>At this time, it is uncertain how the proposed project will be financed (Private-Public-Partnership or traditional toll methods) and therefore, it is not known if a foreign investor will be involved with the project in the future. Either way, the roadway itself will be under the ownership of the state of Louisiana. If a private investor is involved, they lease the project from the state to maintain and operate a particular portion of road for a duration to be determined through negotiations.</i>	Brady et al, Cutrer, Denham, Gee, S.Johnston, S.Laporte, E.McGaha, W.Messina, M.J.Morgan, Provost, R. Smiley, B.Smith, Stansell, Starns, Thacker, Webb	
TOL-5	How will tolls be collected? Will electrical devices charge for using cross streets?	<i>As stated in Section 2.8 of the Tier 1 EIS document, it is assumed that an Electronic Toll Collection (ETC) only option would be provided from the beginning of toll operation. This is also referred to as Open Road Tolling, which is the collection of tolls on toll roads without the use of tollbooths, which will help in the saving of travel time along the Loop route. Local roads that cross beneath/over the proposed loop route will not be charged by the ETC devices.</i>	Cutrer, Davison (Neighbors In Action form letter), Evans (Neighbors In Action form letter), V.Johnson (Neighbors In Action form letter), Killebrew (Neighbors In Action form letter),	
TOL-6	Who will potentially collect the tolls?	<i>See TOL-4 and TOL-5.</i>	Cutrer, Koranek, E.McGaha, M./J.Morgan, R.Smiley	
TOL-7	Will the public be able to vote on decisions made regarding tolls and be informed of financials?	<i>The Capital Area Expressway Authority (CAEA) will ultimately make the decision on tolls based on the laws established in Louisiana for the collection of tolls on toll facilities.</i>	Cutrer, Davison (Neighbors In Action form letter), Evans (Neighbors In Action form letter), V.Johnson (Neighbors In Action form letter), Killebrew (Neighbors In Action form letter), E.Smiley, M.Window	
TOL-8	Entire North bypass is economically unfeasible	<i>Preliminary traffic and revenue projections from the Implementation Plan (See Appendix J of Tier 1 EIS) show that the northern unit has the most optimistic toll revenue opportunities due to the higher traffic projections estimated to use the proposed Baton Rouge compared to the existing interstates and local roads. More detailed traffic and revenue studies will be performed as part of the Tier 2 EIS process to inform leaders and potential investors of the potential toll funding scenarios.</i>	Fiero	
TOL-9	Since tolls will not pay for entire project who will cover the additional costs?	<i>See TOL-1</i>	Davison (Neighbors In Action form letter), Evans (Neighbors In Action form letter), Hay, V.Johnson (Neighbors In Action form letter), C. Killebrew (Neighbors In Action form letter), R. Smiley, B.Smith, G. White	
TOL-10	Concerned about private-public-partner logistics. Who will be the private investors?	<i>At this time, it is uncertain if a Private-Public-Partner (PPP) will be utilized to help finance the project or if the state tolling agency will be responsible. If the PPP model is used, a PPP firm will likely be selected through a competitive process after which lease terms, conditions and duration will be negotiated with the selected firm.</i>	Davison (Neighbors In Action form letter), Evans (Neighbors In Action form letter), V.Johnson (Neighbors In Action form letter), Killebrew (Neighbors In Action form letter), Morgan, Pittman, R. Smiley, L. Walker, M. Window	
TOL-11	Questions how the project can continue with loop segments in Parishes not fully represented on the Capital Area Expressway Authority (CAEA).	<i>At the time that a further work on any segment of the Baton Rouge Loop is pursued, including a Tier 2 level environmental analysis, it will be required to have representation from each jurisdiction impacted by the proposed project on the CAEA.</i>	Davison (Neighbors In Action form letter), Evans (Neighbors In Action form letter), Erdey, V.Johnson (Neighbors In Action form letter), Killebrew (Neighbors In Action form letter), McMorris, Richardson, M.White	
TOL-12	Will the public share any profits on the project?	<i>Details of any agreements between the Capital Area Expressway Authority (CAEA), Louisiana Department of Transportation and Development (LADOTD) or potential PPPs will be discussed in the Tier 2 phase of the project. Typically, profits from toll roads are used as investments towards future facilities that best serve the public and thus enhance ridership. Sometimes these can be seen as enhancements to existing intersections/interchanges with the existing toll facility or as new facility connections and spurs entirely. Regardless of the how the toll agency decides to spend investments, the toll agency must adhere to all state and federal guidelines established for public roadways.</i>	R.Smiley	

Baton Rouge Loop Tier 1 EIS

Project No. 07-PR-MS-0002

S.P.No. 700-96-0011

F.A.P. No. STP-9609(504)



**Table 7.2b
Summary of Other DEIS Comments and Responses**

Revised: 3/6/2014

NEW ID	Issue	Response	Commenters	Oral Commenters
TOL-13	Concerned potential investor will be more concerned about immediate profit and not long term future development	See ED-3	Davison (Neighbors In Action form letter), Evans (Neighbors In Action form letter), V.Johnson (Neighbors In Action form letter), Killebrew (Neighbors In Action form letter).	
TOL-14	How will tolls be determined?	See TOL-7. As stated in Section 2.8 of the Tier 1 EIS document, the assumed base year toll rate is \$0.15/mile.	Davison (Neighbors In Action form letter), Evans (Neighbors In Action form letter), V.Johnson (Neighbors In Action form letter), Killebrew (Neighbors In Action form letter), Mustachia	
TOL-15	If project does not produce the revenue projected, who will be responsible for covering the difference?	See TOL-1. The CAEA will have the option to investigate modifying tolls if revenue is not collected as anticipated.	Davison (Neighbors In Action form letter), Evans (Neighbors In Action form letter), Hay, V.Johnson (Neighbors In Action form letter), Killebrew (Neighbors In Action form letter), Krake, 2012 Livingston Parish Council, W. Messina	
TRANSIT				
TR-1	Suggest spending efforts on a transit system (urban services and surrounding parishes) or high speed rail to help reduce congestion	Improving the transit system in Baton Rouge is one component to improving the mobility in the region and reducing traffic congestion. The purpose and need of the proposed project, as stated in Chapter 1 of the Tier 1 EIS includes opportunities to expand roadway capacity, increase connectivity across the Mississippi River, and enhance regional roadway and transportation connectivity. An improved transit system may reduce traffic capacity on existing roadways to some degree but will not fulfill all other items identified in the project's purpose and need, therefore it has not been considered as a reasonable alternative.	Brady et al, Caillouet, P. Caillouet, Day, Haynes, Lynch, Ragland, E.Smiley, R.Smiley, Wilcher (Sierra).	
TR-2	The construction of the Loop would make it much more difficult to secure funding for mass transit.	Projects involving the study or implementation of mass transit would be funded through available & approved sources as it has in the past, regardless of how the proposed project progresses.	Day, Orr(LEAN), Wilcher (Sierra)	
WETLANDS				
WE-1	Concerned project will have negative impact on wetlands	See C/N-1	C.Baker, F.Baker, Font, Graham, Koranek, Maranto, A.Moore, G.Moore, R.Moore, M.J.Morgan, Neyrey, Pestoff, Ricks, R.Smiley, M.Taylor, E.Watts, M.Watts, Wilcher (Sierra Club), M.Window,	Hernandez,
WE-2	Inquiring about cost of mitigating wetlands	The cost of wetland mitigation has been factored into the preliminary cost estimates as shown in Appendix B of the Tier 1 EIS document.	F.Baker	
WE-3	Is wetland mitigation land available in the hydrologic area of corridors impacted by wetlands?	Based on a preliminary assessment of wetland mitigations, it is anticipated that there will be sufficient hydrologic areas available in the region for wetland mitigation. More detailed analysis will be performed during the Tier 2 EIS phase when more defined routes/alternatives are studied within the Selected Corridor Alternative (as identified within the Tier 1 Record of Decision) with a specified right of way.	Davison, V. Johnson, C. Killebrew, Livingston Parish & City of Central Legislative Delegation	
WATER RESOURCES				
WR-1	Project is in the watershed of the Amite River thus demanding care in maintaining good water quality	As stated in Section 3.10 of the Tier 1 EIS document, it is not possible to determine the concise floodplain impacts as specific alignment are not developed. This will be further investigated in the Tier 2 phase of the project. Is floodplain and watershed considered same thing?	F.Baker	
WR-2	Concerned project will cause drainage issues and more studies may be warranted	Drainage considerations will be addressed during the Tier 2 EIS phase and construction plan development.	F.Baker, Duplessis, Koranek, Maust, Neyrey, Zeller	
WR-3	Amite River channel mis-marked in one place	Comment noted. Consideration for waterbodies such as the Amite River has been given consideration as noted in Sections 3.10 and 3.13.	Fiero	
WR-4	Project will cause properties to be in flood zones that were not before.	Flood zones are determined by FEMA. During the design & construction phase, drainage analysis criteria requires the proposed conditions to be equivalent or better than existing conditions.	Zeller,	



Environmental Section

PO Box 94245 | Baton Rouge, LA 70804-9245
Phone: 225-242-4502

Bobby Jindal, Governor
Sherri H. LeBas, P.E., Secretary

October 29, 2015

State Project No. H.005201.2 (legacy 700-96-0011)

F.A.P. No. H005201 (legacy STP-9609(504))

Baton Rouge Loop EIS Tier I

West Baton Rouge, East Baton Rouge, Ascension, Iberville, and Livingston Parishes

Mr. Charles Bolinger
Division Administrator
Federal Highway Administration (FHWA)
5304 Flanders Drive, Suite A
Baton Rouge, LA 70808

Subject: Reevaluation of DEIS

Dear Mr. Bolinger:

The DEIS for the captioned project was approved by your office on October 5, 2011. It has been more than three years since the approval of the DEIS. The Tier 1 DEIS evaluated potential corridors using the best available GIS data supplemented by various means such as information from agencies, input from public, modeling, research, and limited field investigations. There are no substantial changes that would require supplementing the Tier I DEIS. The development of the Tier I FEIS has taken into consideration updates of data. We expect the FEIS to be available for publication in November 2015.

One major ongoing activity since the publication of the DEIS is DOTD's current feasibility study for improvements to I10 through Baton Rouge. DOTD is studying ways to alleviate traffic congestion and improve safety on I-10 from LA 415 to Essen Lane. This study started subsequent to the DEIS. It is important to note that the I10 traffic study showed that no one solution will provide all of the traffic relief needed for the region and that improvements to I10 are required regardless. Therefore, the ongoing study does not conflict with the captioned project. Any decisions regarding the fate of I10 that come about due to DOTD's current study will be taken into consideration in the Tier II EIS documents when developed.

Two other non-DOTD sponsored initiatives currently being explored are the BUMP and Westside Expressway. In December 2014, the Louisiana Transportation Authority (LTA) received an unsolicited proposal for a public-private partnership (PPP) involving upgrading portions of US 61 (Airline Hwy) and US 190 into an interstate-type freeway with tolls in mind. This proposal is referred to as the Baton Rouge Urban Mobility Plan, BUMP. The LTA had DOTD investigate the technical and revenue feasibility of this proposal. The LTA on October 20, 2015, voted to not pursue the PPP, but urged DOTD to continue studying the feasibility of the project, though no funding has been identified to pursue the study. The Second initiative, Westside Expressway, is being sponsored by Iberville and Ascension Parishes. The Parishes hired a consultant to do a high level feasibility study for a new freeway from I-10 in West Baton Rouge Parish that would traverse in a southerly direction through West Baton Rouge Parish into Iberville Parish and cross the Mississippi River possibly in Ascension Parish to connect to LA 30. DOTD expects the Parishes to share their study with DOTD once it is completed. Any decisions regarding either of the above initiatives will also be taken into consideration in the Tier II EIS documents when developed.

Reevaluation of Tier I DEIS H.005201

10/29/15

Page 2 of 2

DOTD concludes that a supplemental Tier I DEIS is not needed and respectfully requests your concurrence. Please advise if you have any questions. I can be reached by phone at (225) 242-4501.

Sincerely,



Noel Ardoin

Environmental Engineer Administrator

na

pc: CAEA through their consultant HNTB

REVIEWED AND RECOMMENDED FOR
APPROVAL *[Signature]*
DATE 11-12-15

APPROVED
Carl M. Highsmith
CARL M. HIGHSMITH
PROJECT DELIVERY TEAM LEADER
FEDERAL HIGHWAY ADMINISTRATION
DATE 11-19-15

ORIGINAL TRANSCRIPT

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BATON ROUGE LOOP PUBLIC HEARING
HELD AT PECAN GROVE PRIMARY SCHOOL,
GONZALES, LOUISIANA
ON THE 6TH DAY OF DECEMBER, 2011
COMMENCING AT 5:00

ORIGINAL TRANSCRIPT

REPORTED BY: REBECCA T. FUSSELL, CCR



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RAY E. HALL:

I am against the Loop for down in this section. I'm not against the whole Loop. All right? But down here, we have I-10, and we have 61 going to Baton Rouge. That's what people here use basically.

We have to listen to semi trucks constantly day and night going down the interstate. To add a Loop will add more noise to the area, mess up the residential areas that are trying to pass the Loop through when they go around Lamar Dixon. That is going to be prime residential areas that they will be going over and messing up the residents.

And also, the pictures that they show for the Loop doesn't show the semis, and the semis, when they go down the highways, make all the racket. I live a mile from the interstate, and I hear it day and night.

Like I said, I'm not against the whole Loop. They do need a Loop on the other side of Baton Rouge to keep some of the traffic out of Baton Rouge, especially the semis because they are cutting across country, and then they would go down I-12.

OP-5

NOI-1

RB-1



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1 Now, as far as semis going to New
 2 Orleans, if they finish 49, they can go around
 3 that way going to New Orleans. Or if they finish
 4 the evacuation route even over around
 5 Donaldsonville and Highway 90, they can go that
 6 route to New Orleans without having a Loop on this
 7 side of the river in Ascension Parish.

CIR-6

8 At the present time, the present
 9 people living here that live in homes should not
 10 have to put up with any additional noise from
 11 trucks and traffic due to an added Loop through
 12 Ascension Parish.

NOI-1

13 MR. ROBERT NICKENS:

14 Obviously, I'm adamantly opposed to
 15 the Loop coming through Ascension Parish. This is
 16 an East Baton Rouge Parish problem, and it has
 17 been for years. And their leaders lacked the
 18 foresight to develop a Loop back when the property
 19 was available.

OP-2

20 I lived in Baton Rouge and was there
 21 when the initial interstate was opened. And back
 22 then, all that property along by Manchac was
 23 undeveloped. People would have given right-of-way
 24 just to have access to their property. They
 25 lacked the foresight to do it. It was available.

AL-10

OP-13



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1 Now they want to come stick the
 2 Loop through the middle of Ascension Parish, which
 3 the reason I left Baton Rouge is to get out of the
 4 traffic congestion and everything else into a
 5 rural area where we live now. Now, somebody wants
 6 to try to stick an interstate loop right through
 7 the middle of my property, family property, and
 8 it's not right.

HE-1

RB-3

9 If you need a Loop, go stick it in
 10 Baton Rouge, north or by Manchac. I don't really
 11 care. Get a bulldozer, push down subdivisions.
 12 Do whatever you got to do. Keep it out of
 13 Ascension.

14 MS. JOANN EISWIRTH:

15 My husband and I moved here about
 16 three years ago to get away from the traffic in
 17 Baton Rouge. We lived on Old Hammond Highway with
 18 the noise factor, the congestion. It was awful.
 19 So we came out here to escape the noise, the
 20 traffic congestion and everything that goes with
 21 Baton Rouge.

HE-1

22 We love it out here. We absolutely
 23 love the rural setting. We love the quietness.
 24 We can go out on our back porch and not hear
 25 traffic. And the Loop will pass within probably



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1 about a mile of our house. I don't want the
 2 noise. I don't want the noise. I don't want the
 3 just -- we are not happy about it. We are not
 4 happy at all.

NOI-1

5 What I have learned of the
 6 community since moving here, there are a lot of
 7 generations of families that have been on their
 8 properties for years. And this will be real
 9 disruptive to a lot of families.

RB-1

10 I think it will destroy the
 11 character of the community, and I think you will
 12 find that most people in Ascension Parish are not
 13 going to go for this Loop coming through our
 14 parish.

HE-1

15 MR. JOHN EISWIRTH:

16 The reason why we are having to
 17 deal with this now is because of poor planning
 18 back in the '60's. When they brought the
 19 interstate through Baton Rouge, the first sections
 20 built were used locally. And they intended on
 21 having people come down to increase the commerce
 22 in Baton Rouge, if anybody cares about getting off
 23 the interstate to buy something.

OP-13

24 So at that time it would have been
 25 easier to build it around Baton Rouge, but they



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1 chose to bring it through. Now they are having to
2 plan to try to weave something through a lot of
3 places that are inhabited that weren't at the
4 time.

5 Another reason that we are having
6 to deal with this problem is because in Baton
7 Rouge, they did not take care of the school system
8 that they had. They let the schools go to where
9 people started moving out of Baton Rouge into the
10 outlying areas to get where there were stronger
11 schools. That is the reason for the traffic
12 congestion that we have today.

13 MS. LYNN HALL:

14 My little story, I don't think this
15 is a problem for Ascension. It's Baton Rouge that
16 has the trouble with the traffic. We have none.
17 As far as the trucks and all of that, we don't
18 want to hear it. We moved here in '79, and when
19 my husband's company that transferred him up here
20 went out of business, my husband drove
21 two-and-a-half hours back to New Orleans to work,
22 just not to move back to the chaos. They bring
23 something like this in here, we are going to be
24 back in chaos.

25 We are already retired. We put all

NR

AL-10

NOI-1



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1 of our money into our home and our land, and they
 2 come and want to give you two cents for your land.
 3 It's absolutely ridiculous when you can't go to
 4 work anymore and you're on Social Security. It
 5 will destroy our comfort, our quiet, tranquility
 6 and peace, besides our property values.

RB-3
 RB-2
 HE-1
 RB-4

7 I also have four acres in St. Amant
 8 on Robert Junior Road, and that is in the middle
 9 of this green section, and that would totally wipe
 10 that out. And those four acres are worth about
 11 \$30,000.00 an acre. They will most probably give
 12 me \$2,000.00 an acre. They say they pay, but they
 13 don't tell anybody what they pay. And it's not
 14 what you would sell it for or not what you paid
 15 for it.

16 I am definitely opposed to this. I
 17 feel like let Baton Rouge handle their own
 18 problems. We have enough problems with getting
 19 the parish to just keep up our roads without
 20 having to fight more roads and speedways.

OP-2
 PS-4

21 MR. R.W. AMOS:

22 I have been watching the news,
 23 although it's been a long time, and it appears
 24 that they have done a very good job of choosing
 25 all the alternatives that are workable. And I



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1 would very much like to see the project succeed,
 2 primarily because of the traffic problems in Baton
 3 Rouge at rush hour morning and night.

4 The interstate has become the main
 5 thoroughfare for Baton Rouge traffic, and there is
 6 cross-country traffic on that road as well. And
 7 there is no choice, no alternatives. We don't
 8 have alternatives in Baton Rouge to go across the
 9 city. The interstate is the only thing we have.
 10 If you try to take any other routes, the traffic
 11 congestion is furious. It's powerful.

12 The problem I see is that the longer we
 13 wait, the more difficult it becomes to make a
 14 decision. And so if they don't hurry up, we are
 15 overdue on this project by 20 years probably. We
 16 should have had this a long time ago. I think
 17 there would be a lot fewer accidents on I-12 and
 18 I-10 in the Baton Rouge area if we had these
 19 routes in already, if we had the Loop in already.

20 MR. JOHN SAVOY:

21 This is a personal feeling to start
 22 out with about the Loop. Laura and I have lost a
 23 16-year-old daughter. We have lost a 22-year-old
 24 grandson. And taking this property away from us,
 25 I guess will hurt us as badly, the same as it

OP-1
 PN-1

OP-13
 PN-3

RB-3



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1 would for losing a daughter and a grandson who I
2 loved dearly, who we loved dearly.

3 MS. LAURA SAVOY:

4 This property has been in the Savoy
5 family for over 150 years.

6 MR. JOHN SAVOY:

7 Seven generations have lived there.

8 MS. LAURA SAVOY:

9 Seven generations have lived there.
10 The Loop would actually go over several of
11 our children's homes, and it would ruin a
12 whole community of Savoys back there because
13 of our eight families that live back there,
14 and they are all -- all this land was
15 inherited by the same people, by the Savoys.

16 MR. JOHN SAVOY:

17 Actually, my great-grandpa was a
18 Begary. He came directly from France. He
19 was a stowaway on a ship in New Orleans. He
20 worked his way down to Sorrento. And he was
21 15 years old when he got to New Orleans. I'm
22 assuming he was somewhere around 18 or
23 something when he met his wife. He married a
24 Porrier. My Grandfather Savoy married his
25 daughter. So the Begary was a squatter on

RB-3



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1 the property. So he was the beginning of it.

2 And in 1901 after he got old, my
3 grandfather told him one day, he said, "You
4 better go file homestead on this property.
5 Somebody is going take it out from you."

6 He said, "You go file it. I don't
7 want it. I have no need for it anymore. I'm
8 an old man."

9 And McKinley was the president.
10 That was in 1901. McKinley was the
11 president.

12 So what I'm saying is this property
13 means a lot to me. And I feel that it's my
14 duty to fight for this property and not let
15 someone take it away from me.

16 MS. LAURA SAVOY:

17 Take it from my children's
18 heritage. This property would also go
19 through a Methodist church and a cemetery
20 that has been there for over 150 years. How
21 can they do that? How can they move a
22 cemetery?

23 MR. JOHN SAVOY:

24 Now, the solution in my opinion
25 would be to widen Highway 30 and also Airline

PS-3

AL-1



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Highway, even if they needed to put another structure over the existing roadway right now.

MS. LAURA SAVOY:

So it goes to say that we oppose this Loop very much. There is no one in our community that would be for this Loop because it would destroy the old part of St. Amant, which was Acy at one time. And it would ruin this community because it would go over the whole community.

MR. JOHN SAVOY:

In my lifetime, I lived on Highway 22 when it was a gravel road, where communities had about ten families that lived in about a ten-mile radius. There weren't any more than about ten families. So, you know, we come from all -- so many coming down that many years, you just know so many people and their families.

MS. LAURA SAVOY:

In the community. History.

MR. JOHN SAVOY:

I can't think right now.

MS. LAURA SAVOY:

OP-2
HE-1



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I cannot see why they would put a Loop coming as far as down into Ascension Parish, which to go back -- for people to go back to Baton Rouge.

MR. JOHN SAVOY:

Incidentally, the area we are speaking of is E-2.

MS. LAURA SAVOY:

Or E-3.

MR. JOHN SAVOY:

Well, E-2 is the property we are speaking of. E-2 and E-3.

MS. LAURA SAVOY:

I voice my opinion against the Loop.

MR. HAROLD MAGEE:

The proposed B.R. Loop is an expensive, unnecessary boondoggle project. In the late '50's to mid '60's, the Baton Rouge community opposed the construction of I-10 looping around Baton Rouge. They wanted to force east/west traffic through the heart of Baton Rouge for commerce purposes.

Baton Rouge is a dying city, resulting from high crime and failing public

OP-2

OP-2

PS-1



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1 schools. In 20 years, the only employers in Baton
 2 Rouge will be state offices, the Exxon Refinery
 3 and LSU.

4 A plug should have been pulled on
 5 the proposed Loop project when three of the five
 6 affected parish presidents withdrew their support
 7 for the project.

8 The consulting contract, which
 9 expires the spring of 2012, should not be renewed.
 10 Seven million dollars spent on the Louisiana Cargo
 11 Airport Proposal was totally wasted. And we need
 12 to hold the spending on the Loop boondoggle at the
 13 current 4.5 million appropriated since three of
 14 the affected parishes do not support the project.

15 There are alternatives for the
 16 mistake Baton Rouge made 40 years ago. And that
 17 is "A," a bypass on the west side of the
 18 Mississippi River diverting through traffic. That
 19 traffic, not originating or destined to Baton
 20 Rouge, divert down the west side of the river
 21 using existing bridges at Lutchter and Hahnville to
 22 connect with I-55 to I-12.

23 "B," construct an elevated
 24 expressway on top of the current I-10 from the
 25 Mississippi River Bridge to the I-10/I-12 split.

NEI-1

AL-9

AL-1



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1 Both of these proposals result in
 2 significantly less cost, faster construction time,
 3 less expropriation of private property and less
 4 wetlands mitigation.

5 The end.

6 MR. JERRY SADDEN:

7 I just want to be on the record
 8 being against the Loop. It's going to take our
 9 family property. And I don't think it will help
 10 our traffic any at all. Thank you.

11 MR. DOUGLAS HILLENSBECK:

12 I want to go on the record that I
 13 am definitely against the Loop coming through
 14 Ascension Parish, and I think there are other
 15 alternatives out there that would help Ascension
 16 Parish at a lot less of a cost.

17 One is widening Airline Highway
 18 from Baton Rouge to New Orleans. And another one
 19 is widening the interstate on both of these
 20 arteries. We have already got -- the State
 21 already owns the right-of-way that would allow for
 22 expansion.

23 And I just feel like the Loop is
 24 going to help Baton Rouge, but it's not going to
 25 help Ascension. And that's my feelings on it.

OP-2
 RB-3
 CIR-4

OP-5

AL-1



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1 And I am real disappointed that this keeps coming
 2 up. It seems like it's a bad dream or a nightmare
 3 that just won't go away.

4 MS. SONYA HERNANDEZ:

5 I just want to go on record of
 6 saying that I am opposed to, especially, the
 7 eastern Loop because I don't think that it's going
 8 to do anything for the existing traffic in the
 9 area, and I think it will have a big environmental
 10 impact, especially in this E-4, 5, 6, and 7 area,
 11 which is swamp land. And my family has lived on
 12 this property. It was homesteaded. And E-5 goes
 13 directly through it. And I am hoping that our
 14 comments help.

15 (Whereupon, the hearing was adjourned.)
 16
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OP-5

CIR-4

WE-1

RB-3



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That the testimony was reported by me in stenographic machine shorthand by Computer Aided Transcription, transcribed by me, and is a true and correct transcript to the best of my ability and understanding.

That I am not of counsel nor related to any person participating in this cause and am in no way interested in the outcome of this event.

This certification is valid only for a transcript accompanied by my original signature and original seal on this page.



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<p style="text-align: center;">A</p> <p>ability 16:10 absolutely 4:22 7:3 access 3:24 accidents 8:17 accompanied 16:16 acre 7:11,12 acres 7:7,10 Acy 11:9 adamantly 3:14 add 2:9,9 added 3:11 additional 3:10 adjourned 15:15 ago 4:16 8:16 13:16 Aided 16:8 Airline 10:25 14:17 Airport 13:11 allow 14:21 alternatives 7:25 8:7,8 13:15 14:15 Amant 7:7 11:8 AMOS 7:21 anybody 5:22 7:13 anymore 7:4 10:7 appears 7:23 appropriated 13:13 area 2:10 4:5 8:18 12:6 15:9 15:10 areas 2:10,13 6:10 arteries 14:20</p>	<p>Ascension 3:7 3:12,15 4:2,13 5:12 6:15 12:2 14:14,15,25 assuming 9:22 available 3:19 3:25 awful 4:18</p> <p style="text-align: center;">B</p> <p>B 13:23 back 3:18,21 4:24 5:18 6:21 6:22,24 9:12 9:13 12:3,4 bad 15:2 badly 8:25 basically 2:6 Baton 1:1 2:5,22 2:23 3:16,20 4:3,10,17,21 5:19,22,25 6:6 6:9,15 7:17 8:2 8:5,8,18 12:4 12:19,21,22,24 13:1,16,19 14:18,24 Begary 9:18,25 beginning 10:1 best 16:10 better 10:4 big 15:9 boondoggle 12:18 13:12 Bridge 13:25 bridges 13:21 bring 6:1,22 brought 5:18 build 5:25 built 5:20 bulldozer 4:11</p>	<p>business 6:20 buy 5:23 bypass 13:17 B.R 12:17</p> <p style="text-align: center;">C</p> <p>care 4:11 6:7 cares 5:22 Cargo 13:10 cause 16:13 CCR 1:16 cemetery 10:19 10:22 cents 7:2 CERTIFICA... 16:1 certification 16:15 Certified 16:3 certify 16:5 chaos 6:22,24 character 5:11 children's 9:11 10:17 choice 8:7 choosing 7:24 chose 6:1 church 10:19 city 8:9 12:24 come 4:1 5:21 7:2 11:18 comfort 7:5 coming 3:15 5:13 11:18 12:2 14:13 15:1 COMMENCI... 1:5 comments 15:14 commerce 5:21 12:23</p>	<p>communities 11:15 community 5:6 5:11 9:12 11:7 11:10,11,22 12:19 company 6:19 Computer 16:8 congestion 4:4 4:18,20 6:12 8:11 connect 13:22 constantly 2:8 construct 13:23 construction 12:20 14:2 consulting 13:8 contract 13:8 correct 16:10 cost 14:2,16 counsel 16:12 country 2:24 Court 16:3 crime 12:25 cross-country 8:6 CSR 16:24 current 13:13 13:24 cutting 2:24</p> <p style="text-align: center;">D</p> <p>daughter 8:23 9:1,25 day 1:4 2:8,19 10:3 deal 5:17 6:6 dearly 9:2,2 DECEMBER 1:4 decision 8:14</p>	<p>definitely 7:16 14:13 destined 13:19 destroy 5:10 7:5 11:8 develop 3:18 difficult 8:13 directly 9:18 15:13 disappointed 15:1 disruptive 5:9 divert 13:20 diverting 13:18 Dixon 2:12 dollars 13:10 Donaldsonville 3:5 DOUGLAS 14:11 dream 15:2 drove 6:20 due 3:11 duty 10:14 dying 12:24</p> <p style="text-align: center;">E</p> <p>E 2:1 easier 5:25 East 3:16 eastern 15:7 east/west 12:21 eight 9:13 EISWIRTH 4:14 5:15 elevated 13:23 employers 13:1 environmental 15:9 escape 4:19 especially 2:23</p>
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BATON ROUGE LOOP PUBLIC HEARING
HELD AT
BREC HEADQUARTERS
6201 FLORIDA BOULEVARD
BATON ROUGE, LOUISIANA
ON THE 5TH DAY OF DECEMBER, 2011
COMMENCING AT 5:00 P.M.

ORIGINAL TRANSCRIPT

REPORTED BY: ELICIA H. WOODWORTH, CCR



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WADE GILES:

First I have some questions: Will there be any kind of economic impact studies done, maybe for this project here? If the City of Central is desperately needing both the infrastructure and the economic development, so I would like to know if the State or if the Loop Commission -- I forget what the name of the organization -- if they are planning to do an economic impact study for all of the areas involved. And I think that when it gets to the alignment phase and the selection of the corridors, the City of Central definitely wants to make sure that they have their input, that we have a master plan in the City of Central and we want to make sure that it falls in line with our master plan.

ED-13

OP-24

EDWIN DEL VALLE:

My name is Edwin Del Valle. I'm a candidate for Councilman of the 6th District. My comments about the loop is this: Employment, I would like to see at least 60 percent of the local people get employed with this project. We got enough

ED-7



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1 engineers and people with experiences to be
2 able to do this job. Another thing I want
3 to see is the safety of the people doing the
4 job. How safe would it be, make sure they
5 have safety monitors and people monitoring
6 and checking on things to make sure there's
7 no -- none of my citizens getting hurt.

8 WILLIAM PEDNEAU:

9 I'm born and raised in Louisiana. I was
10 born in New Orleans and raised in Jefferson
11 Parish, finished LSU, went to work out of
12 state and lived 20 years out of the State of
13 Louisiana and came back 25 years ago. I
14 worked in Missouri, lived in Houston twice
15 and then Ohio, so I have a good fill of
16 experience with the interstates in Houston.
17 You know where I'm going. 1968, I was given
18 the job of managing a plant in Houston, and
19 when I got down there -- I was actually
20 living in Kansas City at the time. I got
21 down there, and we had a plant that was next
22 to a grassy field. We had 50 acres at this
23 plant that I managed, so I asked one of the
24 people, I said, "What is that grassy field
25 out there?" They said, "Oh, the new highway



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right-of-way for the new loop." They hadn't finished interstate 610 yet. They already owned all of the land for Beltway 8 at that time. It took them another 20-plus years to finish Beltway 8, but now they're building a third loop of around Houston. Are you aware of that? It's called the Grand Parkway, Texas 99. That's how far we're behind in Baton Rouge.

I want to commend Mayor Holden for being -- for his leadership in this area. I know he's had some resistance politically. The public, they don't want to give up their land. They don't want a loop coming around their property, but this is what we need in our city. And aside from the design concept, we need service roads on either side of the route all the way around it. Now, there may be some certain portions that they -- they can't put a service road on a bridge going across the Mississippi River, but in other areas, we need service roads. So when the loop is built, we need to make sure we have the land to build it or put service roads on either side of the loop so

OP-1

PN-1

AL-30



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that the public can have access to it, so the people who own the property can actually open businesses, have access to them and not have what we have now in Louisiana. They're called service roads and no business can butt up against them, so we need to have business access to these, I call them, service roads. Louisiana calls them frontage roads. But anyway, I appreciate the time, and thank you for letting me record this.

JASON ELLIS:

On a positive note, I believe that an extensive amount of planning was done and many corridors have been selected. I think the engineers have done an incredible job. One thing I would like to know is, residents of Central, and as a resident that lives near Magnolia Bridge, are there any traffic projections for the changes in traffic at the Magnolia Bridge crossing location? I would like to know if any traffic data was generated to show the traffic crossover from Magnolia Bridge to the loop.

I would also like to say that not all

CIR-20



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residents of Central are opposed to the loop. Many residents are in support of planning for future development in our area. We would like to come to the table with the rest of our region and collaborate on building a loop that can sustain traffic and be an asset to future generations in the Baton Rouge Metro area.

MR. SUDERNATH:

I think the Baton Rouge Loop is a fantastic proposal. If we need the City to grow, we need this transportation done ASAP. We cannot rely on one bridge over Mississippi. We need to have several more. And I've been after -- thinking of going after the Congressmen who represent Baton Rouge, supposed to be taking care of us, they should be addressing all of the semi accidents on 12 and 10, where we have massive wrecks, head-on collisions, they need to address those issues, and this loop is definitely going to be a deterrent for wrecks or to save more lives. I hope that the Advocate will take the positive side and support this project instead of saying,

ED-6

OP-24

OP-1

PN-7

PN-3



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"This member of this Parish did not agree to it" because they want to sell the newspaper, but that's not the way it should be.

Also, DOT should put pictures in their website of all of the major accidents that stopped traffic for three hours, six hours. We had two ladies killed each other or the mother and four children killed, all because of the bad traffic, and the Congress people are not addressing the issue here and want to go to Washington and talk, for what, I have no idea.

One of the basic lessons we learn in real estate is that properties around intersections are the ones that really appreciate the most. I have seen that in California, where I lived for 25 years, and I know for sure. Just look at Country Club of Louisiana, they put a sound wall, and it's exclusive. Those values are going up, and the access to 10 is just so close by. That should be proof for those people who think that a loop is going to depreciate, rather than appreciate, which is incorrect.

RB-7



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We are in for growth. We have seven billion people population right now, and we need more houses and more easy access.

WAYNE MILEY:

I hope it gets built.

OP-1



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STATE OF LOUISIANA:

This verification is valid only for a transcript accompanied by my original signature and original blue seal on this page;

I, Elicia H. Woodworth, Certified Court Reporter in and for the State of Louisiana, as the officer before whom this testimony was taken, do hereby certify that the witness, to whom oath was administered, after having been duly sworn by me upon authority of R.S. 37:2554 did testify as hereinbefore set forth in the foregoing pages;

That this testimony was reported by me in the stenotype reporting method, was prepared and transcribed by me or under my personal direction and supervision, and is a true and correct transcript to the best of my ability and understanding;

That I am not related to counsel or to the parties herein, nor am I otherwise interested in the outcome of this matter.

Baton Rouge, Louisiana, on this date _____.



Elicia H. Woodworth

Elicia H. Woodworth, CCR

Certificate No. 27014



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BATON ROUGE LOOP PUBLIC HEARING
HELD AT
ST. JOHN THE EVANGELIST HIGH SCHOOL
58645 SAINT CLEMENT AVENUE
PLAQUEMINE, LOUISIANA 70764
ON THE 6TH DAY OF DECEMBER, 2011
COMMENCING AT 5:00 P.M.

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REPORTED BY: ELICIA H. WOODWORTH, CCR



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GUSTAVE ANDREW MIRE, III:

I agree with it. I think the one coming through Iberville Parish is the way that would make it better than West Baton Rouge, because you already have three bridges up there -- already have two -- excuse me -- one right above. Without a doubt, it would be a benefit for Iberville Parish to have, and I don't know if any of y'all ever went to Baton Rouge on a weekday evening. I don't drink no more, but if I had to drive that traffic, I would start drinking again because it's an hour and a half to two hours to get across the bridge. If you don't leave here before 3:00, it's pitiful. So I think it's a great idea, and I would love to see it happen, Corridor S12.

MICHAEL DUPLESSIS:

The loop would be good for people on the West Bank side, mostly for the people that goes to Baton Rouge for work. If they do a separate crossing across -- another bridge across the river, that will come in good, an extra way to go across the river, and that depends on them putting a toll, depends on

OP-1

AL-3

PN-7



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how much the toll will be for us to go across. Is it going to be worth our while going across the toll or still keep going our normal, usual way? If they get the West Baton Rouge people, unless the toll price, so to say, to go across, it might be worth people's while to go ahead and use the extra bridge they're going to build, if they build one. That will be real great, and it will be much quicker for people to go to work, depending on going across the new bridge. And it would be better for people that go down to New Orleans, too, instead of having to go through all of these small towns to get to the interstate, where we can just hop on the loop and stay on the interstate all the way there, and that will be good for people on the West Bank side.

That's all I can say right now. I hope that everybody goes with it, because people on the West Bank side, I do believe they do need it. They do need another bridge to go across to the Baton Rouge area. Especially the people that go to work and the people that come over here to the plants. The

TOL-2

CIR-17

PN-7



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plant workers, they definitely need another bridge besides the Mississippi River Bridge, and that's all I got to say.

DEBORAH CONERLY:

My concern is how it would affect me as far as property and right-of-way, as well as access to crossing of the Mississippi River Bridge, so the location of the bridges are something I wanted to find out about. And the allocation of properties, how that would it affect me? And I want to bring this information back to my family for them to possibly share their concerns.

That's basically all the comments I have. This is good and was very informative, but I had seen where in prior meetings that there was a possibility that the right-of-way would come through right where I live, and so, you know, I had a concern about that.

RB-3
AL-25
CIR-1
RB-2



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STATE OF LOUISIANA:

This verification is valid only for a transcript accompanied by my original signature and original blue seal on this page;

I, Elicia H. Woodworth, Certified Court Reporter in and for the State of Louisiana, as the officer before whom this testimony was taken, do hereby certify that the witness, to whom oath was administered, after having been duly sworn by me upon authority of R.S. 37:2554 did testify as hereinbefore set forth in the foregoing pages;

That this testimony was reported by me in the stenotype reporting method, was prepared and transcribed by me or under my personal direction and supervision, and is a true and correct transcript to the best of my ability and understanding;

That I am not related to counsel or to the parties herein, nor am I otherwise interested in the outcome of this matter.

Baton Rouge, Louisiana, on this date _____.



Elicia H. Woodworth

Elicia H. Woodworth, CCR

Certificate No. 27014



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1 BATON ROUGE LOOP PUBLIC HEARING
2 HELD AT DENHAM SPRINGS HIGH SCHOOL JACKET GYM,
3 DENHAM SPRINGS, LOUISIANA
4 ON THE 7TH DAY OF DECEMBER, 2011
5 COMMENCING AT 5:00
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16 REPORTED BY: REBECCA T. FUSSELL, CCR
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MR. EARNEST ZELLER:

I'm opposed to the proposed location of the Loop due to the fact that it's going to take a lot of people's family property that has been in existence for years that people have worked hard for through the years to have something. And I don't see the Loop coming in and taking this away from people when there are other routes that could be taken that would affect a whole lot less people.

I feel like there has been a lot of money wasted on studies of the Loop that has not been justifiable. I feel there are other things that could be done to alleviate a lot of the traffic problems.

I think the money that has been used on the study of the Loop could probably have been used on some of the infrastructure of the highways, and we wouldn't have the traffic problem that we have. The Loop is a good idea, but I don't think it should come through and take people's property and affect as many people that it is affecting.

There are other routes that could be taken that would affect a whole lot less

RB-1

AL-1



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1 people. They could move it north in the
 2 Livingston/St. Helena line. There wouldn't be
 3 near as many people affected on the Loop. I think
 4 the study is involving a lot more money than it
 5 actually needs to be.

AL-22

6 And also, there is another route
 7 that could be taken. Why not go over the existing
 8 interstate? Houston and some of the other big
 9 cities have done this. The right-of-way is there.
 10 All that has to be done is the engineering on it.
 11 There wouldn't be any study that has to be done,
 12 other than maybe a structural study for a
 13 foundation and stuff.

AL-1

14 I will make further comments later.

15 MR. JIM BRUCE:

16 About four and a half years ago, my
 17 wife and I built our dream home on five-and-a-half
 18 acres of land. We spent almost half-a-million
 19 dollars on the property and the home thinking that
 20 this was going to be our last hoorah.

21 One of the routes, which is the
 22 N-10 route, basically goes right through our
 23 house. And what we are concerned about,
 24 obviously, is even if they don't directly buy our
 25 house at some value that I'm sure won't be what we

RB-3



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1 think it's worth, it's going to be close enough to
 2 where there is going to be just an enormous amount
 3 of noise involved.

4 In addition, there are some
 5 improvements that we want to make on the house and
 6 the property, but we are reluctant to do that, not
 7 knowing what the future holds. And I think the
 8 property taxes are based on an appraised value of
 9 the whole property. So if we choose not to make
 10 these improvements, then the property taxes won't
 11 increase, and that's less of an income for the
 12 parish itself.

13 So overall, obviously, most people
 14 think that this should have been done 20 or 25
 15 years ago when things weren't built up as much in
 16 this area. Therefore, they wouldn't be displacing
 17 so many people. But it is what it is today, and
 18 granted taking the shorter route may be the least
 19 expensive, but it's also the most populated route
 20 and one that would displace the most families.

21 MR. PAUL WESLEY:

22 There is no reason that they should
 23 run a Loop from East Baton Rouge Parish or Baton
 24 Rouge into Livingston Parish as long as that's a
 25 high-crime area over there. They need to take

RB-4

NOI-1

NR

OP-13

AL-5

PS-1



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1 care of the crime, prove over a long-term period
2 that they can take care of the crime. Then maybe
3 we can talk about a Loop. But running a Loop over
4 here from an out-of-control, high-crime area is
5 just putting our children and grandchildren and
6 our families in danger, and it should not be done.
7 No way.

8 MR. ALLEN WILLIAMS:

9 I'm a retired chemical engineer, a
10 lifelong car nut and a member of several honorary
11 organizations. I have been a long-time supporter
12 of a Loop in Baton Rouge.

13 If you look at two other cities in
14 Louisiana, Shreveport and Lake Charles, they both
15 have half loops that work very well for them. And
16 Baton Rouge needs the same kind of configuration
17 that is a half loop on the south. A north loop
18 will only enhance real estate of those owning
19 property along its route. It will give the
20 politicians an excuse to say in later years that
21 we tried something, and it didn't work. So we
22 must have not have needed one.

23 In light of some of the proposed
24 routes, including this north loop, if those go
25 forward, I cannot be a supporter because they are

OP-1

OP-15



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1 the product of NIMBIES, the not in my backyards.
2 And while a river crossing of the Mississippi
3 River will be expensive, it is needed in order to
4 provide the most workful, efficient and beneficial
5 Loop to Baton Rouge. Anybody who has been out on
6 I-10 this evening can testify to the need for a
7 Loop. But it has to be done smart, or it's not
8 worth doing.

9 That's it in summary. I could
10 expound, but that is it in summary. To do one
11 badly would be just stupid.

12 MR. GARY REYNERSON:

13 I think the Livingston Parish
14 proposed Loop is the wrong answer. It would
15 better serve downtown Baton Rouge. I think it has
16 to be in Livingston Parish from around I-12 over
17 to I-10. This would catch, and I don't know how
18 you would word it, the New Orleans traffic could
19 go east. New Orleans traffic could go west. You
20 don't have any traffic coming from the north side
21 in or out of Baton Rouge, just along east, west.
22 It would be better served making a Loop on the
23 southern end of it, both sides of I-10. That's
24 just my feelings about it.

25 MS. DIANE ZETTLEMOYER:

PN-7

OP-15

AL-22



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1 My name is Diane Zettlemyer. I
 2 live right across the street from the Live Oak
 3 ball field and the Baptist Church.

HE-1

4 If the Loop goes through there, it
 5 will ruin our community in Watson. And any other
 6 way will also because they are going through major
 7 areas where we have a high school. And it's going
 8 to ruin Watson. And we will have no place to go.

PS-5

9 I think it needs to go into St.
 10 Helena Parish. We will not use this toll road,
 11 and I doubt anybody else in our parish will
 12 either, just for the fact that we don't want it,
 13 and it's getting shoved down our throats.

AL-22

OP-6

14 MS. ASHLEY PRESTRIDGE:

15 I don't want a Loop. No Loop. If
 16 they took my house, I would have nowhere to go. I
 17 would have to uproot my children from their school
 18 and move them to a completely different school.
 19 If I wanted to move by a highway, I would have
 20 moved by one. I don't want one stuck there. And
 21 I moved to the country, and this would ruin it.

OP-2

RB-3

HE-1

22 MS. REBECCA ARNETT:

23 I am for the Loop.

OP-1

24 MR. MICHAEL ARMENTOR:

25 First of all, I would like to say



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1 we are totally against it, the Loop right now. I
 2 feel as though with all the infrastructure
 3 construction going on right now that this ought to
 4 be put on the back burner until this construction
 5 can settle, and we can actually see the impact of
 6 the new construction that is going on, see how it
 7 impacts traffic at that time. If this new work
 8 and construction still doesn't alleviate the
 9 congestion woes that we have, then maybe
 10 alternative methods of doing this can be brought
 11 up. Maybe the Loop, maybe looking into other
 12 methods.

OP-2

13 Right now I think at this time this
 14 needs to be put aside. Extending Hopper Road from
 15 Watson, from Watson into Central. That is, I
 16 believe, I think a current project that is already
 17 going on that they are designing. I think that
 18 will allow for some alleviation of some of the
 19 congestion. But for the most part, the work that
 20 is going on now, I think we need to see what
 21 happens to that, the actual construction.

AL-1

22 And that's it.

23 MR. CALVIN JONES:

24 I'm in opposition of the Loop. The
 25 reasoning, tearing down, tearing up a good

OP-2



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1 community system, subdivisions, primary homes. I
 2 feel that it would make slum districts out of good
 3 community settlements. The Watson area and Live
 4 Oak community has been a very good residential
 5 area for as long as I can remember, which is 76
 6 years ago.

7 There is no need that I feel right
 8 now that we need a Loop. If we want to build a
 9 Loop and do it right and do it justice, move 10 to
 10 15 miles north of Watson where there are no homes,
 11 where there is nothing but piney woods. Come
 12 across that area. It would make the Loop a little
 13 longer, but it would be a lot more sufficient, and
 14 buying property would be much, much, much less
 15 than coming through those subdivisions, tearing
 16 them down.

17 It would ruin a good school
 18 district. The primary pusher of this thing would
 19 like to tear up the Central District and the
 20 Watson and the Live Oak District. The Central
 21 District connects to the Watson District. If you
 22 cross the Amite River, Watson and Central. Watson
 23 wouldn't connect with Hooper Road right across the
 24 Amite River.

25 And I remember -- I don't need to go

RB-1

HE-1

OP-6

AL-35



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1 back this far, but I remember my father, the
2 police jury in Watson fighting for a bridge across
3 the Amite River joining Hopper Road and Watson.
4 This was in 1950. But they got shot down on that,
5 too. We did.

6 Otherwise, if they would have
7 joined that property then, our traffic situation
8 would have been much more alleviated today. It
9 wouldn't have been near as bad.

10 While they say they will give you
11 an appraisal value of your property now, if you
12 were uprooted, how could you go out and buy
13 another piece of property in the community for
14 what you have been paid? You could not, not
15 close.

16 Go 10, 12 miles north of Watson on
17 16. Go through St. Helena Parish where there are
18 no subdivisions, where there are absolutely,
19 probably nothing but piney woods. You can buy
20 that property for a 10th or a 20th of what you
21 would pay down in Watson. And it would be much
22 more cost effective to build an interstate through
23 piney woods than it would be to tear the
24 subdivisions, tear up communities. I like the
25 Loop.

RB-2



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1 MR. DAVID TATE:

2 My name is David Tate. And I am a
3 former school board member in District 2 in
4 Livingston Parish, which includes the Live Oak
5 School District in the Watson community. And in
6 that area, there are two corridors proposed. In
7 fact, there are three; N-12, N-11 and N-10. We
8 have grown tremendously in the last few years, and
9 our school is just busting at the seams.

10 And as a school board member, two
11 to three years ago, I went out, and I looked
12 within a three- to four-mile radius within the
13 Watson community to try to find land where we
14 could build a brand new high school to accommodate
15 the growth that had happened in our community.
16 And the only place that I found that anybody was
17 willing to sell to us out of only about three or
18 four possibilities of land is right in the middle
19 of where N-11 is proposed.

20 We bought approximately 38 acres
21 of land, and we were able to do that because two
22 different families that had the school at heart
23 were willing to sell me their family property in
24 order to build a nice school for our community.
25 They were lifelong residents of the Watson

PS-3



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1 community. And they wanted a nice school built
 2 there. Instead of saving their land and building
 3 a subdivision or giving it to their children, they
 4 were willing to sell it to build a nice school on.
 5 So I bought that approximately 38 acres, and right
 6 now the brand new Live Oak High School is being
 7 built on Highway 16 right where the N-11 corridor
 8 is proposed.

9 And if it were to come through that
 10 area, it would either take the high school and
 11 there is no more land within several miles of
 12 Watson that we could buy to build a new high
 13 school on. Or if they built it right next to our
 14 school, the on and off ramps getting on and off of
 15 this proposed highway would just cause chaos or
 16 traffic congestion of students driving to and from
 17 school, school buses getting in and out of school,
 18 parents coming in and dropping their children off,
 19 people getting on and off of the highway and,
 20 plus, the noise factor that it would cause so
 21 close to our school with big trucks passing by.

22 So I am totally opposed to North 11
 23 that would take our brand new Live Oak High School
 24 that is currently being built and plans to open in
 25 the fall of 2012.

CIR-1

PS-2

NOI-1



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1 The next corridor right north of
2 there is N-12, and the people of that community
3 have over the past 25, 30 years built a tremendous
4 sports complex there where the high school
5 baseball and softball teams use those facilities
6 for their ball games, and the community uses it
7 for their recreational ballgames for football,
8 soccer, for little league baseball, softball,
9 girls softball. Those are all of the recreational
10 things that go on in the community, and that is
11 the focal point of our community recreational
12 wise.

13 And right across from the road on
14 the opposite side of Highway 16 from the
15 recreational complex is Riverside Baptist Church.
16 And so whether it went right through the ball
17 fields or whether it went just so many feet north
18 or south of it, again, the on and off ramp,
19 traffic that it would cause with parents bringing
20 their little children from the ages of four and
21 five on up to ages 16 and 17 throughout the summer
22 and all that, it's just too much of a danger of
23 congested traffic in that area. Plus, it would
24 take away the ball fields. And again, there is no
25 more land in our area that can be bought to build

PS-3

CIR-9



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1 recreational facilities on like we have.

2 So North 11 and North 12 will help
3 destroy the school system and the recreational
4 system that we worked for for years to put in
5 place. So I'm just opposed to the Loop in those
6 areas because it's going to take so much away from
7 our community that we stand for and we support up
8 there.

9 If there were bunches of land
10 within a mile area there that we could go and
11 rebuild the new high school and recreational
12 facilities, that would be one thing. But there's
13 not. There is nowhere else for us to go there in
14 that area to buy more land to build those things.

15 So we are going to have all of this
16 taken away from us and have to move way away from
17 the center of our community to build things, a new
18 high school and new recreational facilities if
19 this Loop comes through those two areas, North 11
20 and North 12.

21 So if I complain, I should have a
22 solution. And what I would propose doing is take
23 Highway 190, and where it's a two-lane highway
24 coming, through Livingston Parish, and where it's
25 four lanes through part of Baton Rouge Parish, add

AL-32

AL-1



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1 another one or two lanes in each direction to the
2 already existing Highway 190 and do the same for
3 Interstate 12. Add one or two more lanes to
4 Interstate 12 throughout the Baton Rouge area.

5 Since a new bridge has to be built
6 on this Loop project, build a new bridge next to
7 the existing bridge of the interstate crossing
8 from east into West Baton Rouge Parish.

9 And if we had to put a toll lane, I
10 would be in favor of paying for a toll along the
11 existing highway where we wouldn't be taking
12 anymore people's land. But I'm not going to pay a
13 toll to use the Loop where it would take all this
14 land north of the interstate and going through
15 people's property and take away the schools and
16 our recreational facilities for our community.

17 I would be willing to pay some
18 increased taxes to expand the Interstate 12 and
19 Highway 190, but I won't pay a toll to use that
20 Loop up there. So that's where I stand.

21 Another proposal that I see would
22 benefit alleviating traffic through the Livingston
23 Parish and Baton Rouge area would be instead of
24 building a Loop starting in Walker and coming up
25 north and going through Livingston Parish, so much

TOL-2

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commercial traffic coming from Mississippi and Tennessee in the north coming through Livingston and Baton Rouge on Interstate 12. That could be diverted into a new interstate just north of I-12 there, parallel to I-12, say maybe 20 miles north of it. And it would help St. Helena Parish who needs commercial development.

(Whereupon, the hearing was adjourned.)

ED-8



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CERTIFICATE OF REPORTER

I, Rebecca T. Fussell, Certified Court Reporter, in and for the State of Louisiana, do hereby certify that the proceedings were hereinafter set forth in the foregoing pages;

That the testimony was reported by me in stenographic machine shorthand by Computer Aided Transcription, transcribed by me, and is a true and correct transcript to the best of my ability and understanding.

That I am not of counsel nor related to any person participating in this cause and am in no way interested in the outcome of this event.

This certification is valid only for a transcript accompanied by my original signature and original seal on this page.



REBECCA T. FUSSELL, CSR



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<p style="text-align: center;">A</p> <p>ability 18:10 able 11:21 absolutely 10:18 accommodate 11:14 accompanied 18:16 acres 3:18 11:20 12:5 actual 8:21 add 14:25 15:3 addition 4:4 adjourned 17:8 affect 2:9,22,25 ages 13:20,21 ago 3:16 4:15 9:6 11:11 Aided 18:8 ALLEN 5:8 alleviate 2:14 8:8 alleviated 10:8 alleviating 15:22 alleviation 8:18 allow 8:18 alternative 8:10 Amite 9:22,24 10:3 amount 4:2 answer 6:14 anybody 6:5 7:11 11:16 anymore 15:12 appraisal 10:11 appraised 4:8 approximately 11:20 12:5 area 4:16,25 5:4 9:3,5,12 11:6 12:10 13:23,25</p>	<p>14:10,14 15:4 15:23 areas 7:7 14:6 14:19 ARMENTOR 7:24 ARNETT 7:22 ASHLEY 7:14 aside 8:14</p> <p style="text-align: center;">B</p> <p>back 8:4 10:1 backyards 6:1 bad 10:9 badly 6:11 ball 7:3 13:6,16 13:24 ballgames 13:7 Baptist 7:3 13:15 baseball 13:5,8 based 4:8 basically 3:22 Baton 1:1 4:23 4:23 5:12,16 6:5,15,21 14:25 15:4,8 15:23 16:2,5 16:22,24 17:3 believe 8:16 beneficial 6:4 benefit 15:22 best 18:10 better 6:15,22 big 3:8 12:21 board 11:3,10 bought 11:20 12:5 13:25 brand 11:14 12:6,23 bridge 10:2 15:5</p>	<p>15:6,7 bring 16:10,22 bringing 13:19 16:11 brought 8:10 BRUCE 3:15 build 9:8 10:22 11:14,24 12:4 12:12 13:25 14:14,17 15:6 16:15 building 12:2 15:24 built 3:17 4:15 12:1,7,13,24 13:3 15:5 16:8 bunches 14:9 burner 8:4 buses 12:17 busting 11:9 buy 3:24 10:12 10:19 12:12 14:14 buying 9:14</p> <p style="text-align: center;">C</p> <p>CALVIN 8:23 car 5:10 care 5:1,2 catch 6:17 cause 12:15,20 13:19 18:13 CCR 1:16 center 14:17 Central 8:15 9:19,20,22 CERTIFICA... 18:1 certification 18:15 Certified 18:3</p>	<p>certify 18:5 chaos 12:15 Charles 5:14 chemical 5:9 children 5:5 7:17 12:3,18 13:20 choose 4:9 Church 7:3 13:15 cities 3:9 5:13 close 4:1 10:15 12:21 come 2:21 9:11 12:9 comes 14:19 coming 2:7 6:20 9:15 12:18 14:24 15:24 16:3,4,19 17:1 17:2 COMMENCI... 1:5 comments 3:14 commercial 16:13,17 17:1 17:7 communities 10:24 community 7:5 9:1,3,4 10:13 11:5,13,15,24 12:1 13:2,6,10 13:11 14:7,17 15:16 complain 14:21 completely 7:18 complex 13:4,15 Computer 18:8 concerned 3:23 configuration</p>	<p>5:16 congested 13:23 congestion 8:9 8:19 12:16 connect 9:23 connects 9:21 construction 8:3 8:4,6,8,21 correct 18:10 corridor 12:7 13:1 corridors 11:6 cost 10:22 counsel 18:12 country 7:21 Court 18:3 crime 5:1,2 cross 9:22 16:22 16:23 crossing 6:2 15:7 CSR 18:23 current 8:16 currently 12:24</p> <p style="text-align: center;">D</p> <p>danger 5:6 13:22 David 11:1,2 DAY 1:4 DECEMBER 1:4 DENHAM 1:2,3 designing 8:17 destroy 14:3 development 16:13,17 17:7 Diane 6:25 7:1 different 7:18 11:22 direction 15:1</p>
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<p>directly 3:24 displace 4:20 displacing 4:16 district 9:18,19 9:20,21,21 11:3,5 districts 9:2 divert 16:18 diverted 17:4 doing 6:8 8:10 14:22 dollars 3:19 doubt 7:11 downtown 6:15 dream 3:17 driving 12:16 dropping 12:18 due 2:3</p> <hr/> <p style="text-align: center;">E</p> <p>EARNEST 2:1 east 4:23 6:19,21 15:8 effective 10:22 efficient 6:4 either 7:12 12:10 eliminate 16:25 engineer 5:9 engineering 3:10 enhance 5:18 enormous 4:2 estate 5:18 evening 6:6 event 18:14 excuse 5:20 existence 2:5 existing 3:7 15:2 15:7,11 expand 15:18</p>	<p>expensive 4:19 6:3 expound 6:10 Extending 8:14</p> <hr/> <p style="text-align: center;">F</p> <p>facilities 13:5 14:1,12,18 15:16 fact 2:3 7:12 11:7 factor 12:20 fall 12:25 families 4:20 5:6 11:22 family 2:4 11:23 far 10:1 16:16 father 10:1 favor 15:10 feel 2:11,13 8:2 9:2,7 feelings 6:24 feet 13:17 field 7:3 fields 13:17,24 fighting 10:2 find 11:13 First 7:25 five 13:21 five-and-a-half 3:17 focal 13:11 football 13:7 foregoing 18:6 former 11:3 forth 18:6 forward 5:25 found 11:16 foundation 3:13 four 3:16 11:18 13:20 14:25</p>	<p>four-mile 11:12 further 3:14 Fussell 1:16 18:3,23 future 4:7</p> <hr/> <p style="text-align: center;">G</p> <p>games 13:6 GARY 6:12 getting 7:13 12:14,17,19 girls 13:9 give 5:19 10:10 giving 12:3 go 3:7 5:24 6:19 6:19 7:8,9,16 9:25 10:12,16 10:17 13:10 14:10,13 goes 3:22 7:4 16:17 going 2:4 3:20 4:1,2 7:6,7 8:3 8:6,17,20 14:6 14:15 15:12,14 15:25 16:1,2,5 good 2:20 8:25 9:2,4,17 grandchildren 5:5 granted 4:18 grown 11:8 growth 11:15 GYM 1:2</p> <hr/> <p style="text-align: center;">H</p> <p>half 3:16 5:15 5:17 half-a-million 3:18 Hammond 16:4 16:8,9,20,21</p>	<p>happened 11:15 happens 8:21 hard 2:6 hearing 1:1 17:8 heart 11:22 HELD 1:2 Helena 3:2 7:10 10:17 16:11,16 16:17,22 17:6 help 14:2 16:13 17:6 hereinafter 18:6 high 1:2 7:7 11:14 12:6,10 12:12,23 13:4 14:11,18 highway 7:19 12:7,15,19 13:14 14:23,23 15:2,11,19 16:9 highways 2:19 high-crime 4:25 5:4 holds 4:7 home 3:17,19 homes 9:1,10 honorary 5:10 Hooper 9:23 hoorah 3:20 Hopper 8:14 10:3 house 3:23,25 4:5 7:16 Houston 3:8</p> <hr/> <p style="text-align: center;">I</p> <p>idea 2:20 impact 8:5 impacts 8:7 improvements</p>	<p>4:5,10 includes 11:4 including 5:24 income 4:11 increase 4:11 increased 15:18 infrastructure 2:18 8:2 interested 18:14 interstate 3:8 10:22 15:3,4,7 15:14,18 16:3 16:11 17:3,4 involved 4:3 involving 3:4 I-10 6:6,17,23 I-12 6:16 16:9 16:11 17:4,5 I-55 16:10</p> <hr/> <p style="text-align: center;">J</p> <p>JACKET 1:2 JIM 3:15 joined 10:7 joining 10:3 JONES 8:23 jury 10:2 justice 9:9 justifiable 2:13</p> <hr/> <p style="text-align: center;">K</p> <p>kind 5:16 know 6:17 knowing 4:7</p> <hr/> <p style="text-align: center;">L</p> <p>Lake 5:14 land 3:18 11:13 11:18,21 12:2 12:11 13:25 14:9,14 15:12 15:14</p>
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BATON ROUGE LOOP PUBLIC HEARING
HELD AT
PORT ALLEN COMMUNITY CENTER
749 JEFFERSON AVENUE
PORT ALLEN, LOUISIANA 70767
ON THE 7TH DAY OF DECEMBER, 2011
COMMENCING AT 5:00 P.M.

REPORTED BY: ELICIA H. WOODWORTH, CCR



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JOHN TILTON:

I would like to see the corridor narrowed down to its intended width. Taking a mile right-of-way for a corridor leaves little for and individual to do as far as developing his property. If they intend to take the whole mile, let him know. If they intend to take 400 feet, let him know which 400 feet so he'll know what to do with the rest of his property. This has been up in the air for three years. The bridge should be put in a lower part of West Baton Rouge, that way, if the Intercoastal stops up, they will not have as long a distance to travel to get across the bridge than if it was put in the lower part of Iberville Parish.

Thank you.

CHARLES BLAIR:

I mean, basically I think the North route. I mean, it's pretty well a given in West Baton Rouge Parish. You know, I don't really have a preference for, you know, where it goes through the Central area. I think it's up to the people on that side of the river to decide what would be the better

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AL-3

1 route to get back to I-12; but on the South
2 side, I would prefer to see the bridge all
3 the way the further South route, all the way
4 through Iberville Parish, to be best for
5 Iberville Parish and for us to tie back into
6 I-10, because all of the routes anyway, as
7 soon as they cross over, they're going to
8 head South anyway. And the way Baton Rouge
9 and Gonzales has grown toward Prairieville,
10 so many people, it would take so much
11 congestion off LA 1 through West Baton Rouge
12 Parish and relieve a lot of the pressure on
13 the bridge and the Intercoastal Bridge that
14 way and the plants and all of that. I just
15 think that would be the best for us. And
16 whether we even need that section from I-10
17 back to I-12, I don't know that we really
18 even need that part of the loop, but I guess
19 if you lived out in that area, some of those
20 people would think that's necessary. But
21 for traffic going through, if they were
22 going straight East, they would take the
23 North route, or if they were taking a route
24 heading toward New Orleans, they would take
25 the South route to South Baton Rouge.



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Really that's my only preference. You know, I just think that's the best routes for West Baton Rouge Parish. I think with the two bridges we already -- well, we would have a third bridge, you know, with the North loop, and Iberville Parish being one of the largest parishes of the State and don't even have a bridge to connect their parishes, it's kind of a travesty that they build a bridge in New Roads that would probably utilize a third of the traffic than a bridge South would provide.

That's my opinion.

TIM HARRIS:

My main comment is, a loop is 25 or 30 years out-of-date. Too much infrastructure just about to get something that massive around our town. They should have done this, like I said, 30 years ago. We need a bridge. That bridge in St. Francisville, if our politicians would have been on their toes and would have really took business at heart, they would have seen we don't have anything up there. Let's use that money to build here. We need to connect, if

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anything, LA 1 to LA 30, four-lane LA 30 into a limited access, couple of overpasses will take you right back into 10 and spread out from there. You go back into Baton Rouge, and people from Baton Rouge can get across, but we need a bridge here between West Baton Rouge line, probably into Iberville. That's the easiest route. That's my opinion.

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All of this loop is just -- I'll never see it. I'm too old, and I think they're going to have to broaden it out a lot bigger than that for my kids. Why can't they have I-10 crossing the bridge, tie into 110 and not have a two-lane? It's the only place in the United States that models down into one lane of traffic, and that is a headache. Everybody knows that. You have got to fix that.

HARLAN TRUXILLO:

Leave 415, cross Intercoastal Canal, extend highway back of Brusly, back of Addis through Plaquemine, that would be West of present highway, and connect to Sunshine Bridge past White Castle. That would be it.

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That could be done in my lifetime, and if they started tomorrow, it could be done in a couple of years, I would say, whereas, if they wait and do another study or two, in my lifetime, if I live to be 100, I would never see any kind of relief at all. This actually isn't part of it, but it would be a relief now that people could see.

P.S.: This is my study, and I would be glad to accept a steak dinner if they used my plan. In other words, that's all it would cost them compared to thousands.

JOHN LAMBERSON:

If you just bypassed the New Orleans traffic from coming through Baton Rouge, it would drop traffic down dramatically. It would take all of them extra cars off that highway right there.

HARLAN TRUXILLO:

Anything coming West would turn on that instead of going through congestion of Baton Rouge. It would actually relieve traffic in Baton Rouge. It would also be -- there's only one bridge across that Intercoastal, and if something happened to that, it would

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be a catastrophe for this area. I couldn't get to Port Allen from my house. And it's something they've been needing and it would actually show the people that they are doing something to relieve congestion and just study after study after study could have built a bridge across the Mississippi River.

JACKIE B. MOUTON:

My name is Jackie Mouton. I believe that this loop needs to be done. It's a positive thing for the parish. I feel that -- I've been to every meeting that they've had. I think it's time to stop having studies and proceed with the building of this loop.

Thank you very much.

THOMAS ZITO:

I think the first thing they need to do, they can do it quicker and it would be a separate thing, would be to raise up East Washington Street exit and let it merge into Dalrymple. They already have the right-of-way, they just have to drive the pilings and elevate the thing and then let the people that normally get off on

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1 Washington and let them get off at Dalrymple
2 or let them come up Dalrymple. Then you
3 could put at least two more lanes, maybe
4 even three, maybe one emergency and two
5 regular lanes to alleviate the traffic
6 coming West going eastbound, coming from the
7 West on eastbound, because that's a
8 nightmare with the bridge. You know, having
9 this exit just going down the Washington
10 Street exit, that's really a bad design
11 first of all, and you have people coming
12 from two lanes over or three lanes over just
13 barrelling across. I mean, a lot of times,
14 they don't even put a blinker on. They just
15 come across and get off, you know. I've
16 seen several wrecks like that; but if they
17 would just start with that, because this is
18 going to take, I'm sure, five or six years
19 to develop here. But in the meantime, for
20 the short run, like I'm telling you, they
21 already have the right-of-way, all they
22 have to do is elevate from Washington Street
23 to Dalrymple. And they could probably put
24 in two or maybe even three lanes, allowing
25 one lane to be an emergency lane for



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emergency vehicles for when they do have a pileup there, and that would help a lot of people coming from the West or from the South getting on the bridge and going into tying into I-10/I-12 corridor, like they say.

And that's what I would like to see, the first thing, and as far as the loop, we definitely need a loop. There's no doubt in my mind that we need a loop in Baton Rouge, because there's hard traffic. There's nothing but hard traffic. These are people that are probably going to stop further down the interstate to get gas and maybe a snack or something or a facility stop, bathroom facility, and then they're going to go straight on through. They don't want to go through -- they're not going to stop in Baton Rouge, you know, and I'll give you an example of that. I travel I-10 quite a bit going West, and on the elevator, what I call it, over the Atchafalaya Basin, I count just the trucks, and it's at various times. Sometimes I cross at 5:00 a.m. in the morning, sometimes it's 10 o'clock during

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1 the day, and then coming back at 5:00. It's
2 only about a 20-minute ride over that span,
3 20, 22 minutes or whatever it is. I counted
4 150 18-wheelers in that period of time
5 coming East from the West, you know,
6 going -- all of those trucks have to cross
7 over the I-10 bridge, and they're all going
8 toward the Washington Street exit. And all
9 of them slow the traffic down very, very,
10 very slowly. And by elevating the
11 Washington Street bridge, it would alleviate
12 all of that, and that's what they need to
13 do. That's the quickest thing to do and
14 probably the less costly, because they
15 already should have the right-of-way
16 underneath.

17 Now, as far as the loop, I don't know
18 how they're going to pacify all of these
19 people. They're just going to have to get a
20 good, clear path and just do what they have
21 to do, just as long as they pay the people
22 what their property is worth. I mean,
23 nobody ever likes to leave their home or
24 likes to leave property, but in order for
25 this to be accessible to commercialism, in

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1 other words, business, people -- let's face
2 it, I mean, you're not going to travel to a
3 destination if you're going to vacation if
4 you're going to stay in traffic for six or
5 seven hours. You're going to go where you
6 can get around, and so if we want Louisiana
7 to grow, especially if we want East Baton
8 Rouge and the surrounding parishes to grow
9 more than what they are, we have to get
10 traffic in and out of it, and we have to
11 distinguish the normal traffic from everyday
12 residents and commercial businesses from
13 hard traffic, you know, 18 wheelers and
14 people just traveling. They're not going to
15 Baton Rouge. They may go on to New Orleans.
16 They may go on to Biloxi, Gulfport and
17 Florida through here, but they're not coming
18 to Baton Rouge. That's hard traffic. I see
19 it every day. I see it in more than one
20 community, you know, and some people have
21 done things to make this accessible. Get
22 them out of the every day people that's got
23 to work for a living, you know, and that's
24 how I see it.

25 Thank you.

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This verification is valid only for a transcript accompanied by my original signature and original blue seal on this page;

I, Elicia H. Woodworth, Certified Court Reporter in and for the State of Louisiana, as the officer before whom this testimony was taken, do hereby certify that the witness, to whom oath was administered, after having been duly sworn by me upon authority of R.S. 37:2554 did testify as hereinbefore set forth in the foregoing pages;

That this testimony was reported by me in the stenotype reporting method, was prepared and transcribed by me or under my personal direction and supervision, and is a true and correct transcript to the best of my ability and understanding;

That I am not related to counsel or to the parties herein, nor am I otherwise interested in the outcome of this matter.

Baton Rouge, Louisiana, on this date _____.



Elicia H. Woodworth

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Certificate No. 27014



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<p>relieve 3:12 6:22 7:5 reported 1:16 12:12 Reporter 12:5 reporting 12:13 residents 11:12 rest 2:10 ride 10:2 right 5:3 6:18 right-of-way 2:4 7:23 8:21 10:15 river 2:25 7:7 Roads 4:10 Rouge 1:6 2:12 2:21 3:8,11,25 4:3 5:5,5,7 6:15,22,23 9:10,19 11:8 11:15,18 12:20 route 2:20 3:1,3 3:23,23,25 5:8 routes 3:6 4:2 run 8:20 R.S 12:9</p> <hr/> <p style="text-align: center;">S</p> <p>seal 12:4 section 3:16 see 2:2 3:2 5:11 6:6,8 9:7 11:18 11:19,24 seen 4:23 8:16 separate 7:20 set 12:10 seven 11:5 short 8:20 show 7:4 side 2:24 3:2 signature 12:3</p>	<p>six 8:18 11:4 slow 10:9 slowly 10:10 snack 9:14 soon 3:7 South 3:1,3,8,25 3:25 4:12 9:4 span 10:2 spread 5:3 St 4:20 start 8:17 started 6:2 State 4:7 12:1,6 States 5:16 stay 11:4 steak 6:10 stenotype 12:13 stop 7:13 9:13 9:15,18 stops 2:13 straight 3:22 9:17 Street 7:21 8:10 8:22 10:8,11 studies 7:14 study 6:4,9 7:6,6 7:6 Sunshine 5:24 supervision 12:14 sure 8:18 surrounding 11:8 sworn 12:9</p> <hr/> <p style="text-align: center;">T</p> <p>take 2:7,8 3:10 3:22,24 5:3 6:17 8:18 taken 12:7 telling 8:20</p>	<p>testify 12:10 testimony 12:7 12:12 Thank 2:17 7:16 11:25 thing 7:11,18,20 7:24 9:8 10:13 things 11:21 think 2:19,24 3:15,20 4:2,3 5:11 7:13,18 third 4:5,11 THOMAS 7:17 thousands 6:12 three 2:11 8:4 8:12,24 tie 3:5 5:14 TILTON 2:1 TIM 4:14 time 7:13 10:4 times 8:13 9:23 toes 4:22 tomorrow 6:2 town 4:18 traffic 3:21 4:11 5:17 6:15,16 6:22 8:5 9:11 9:12 10:9 11:4 11:10,11,13,18 transcribed 12:13 transcript 12:2 12:15 travel 2:14 9:20 11:2 traveling 11:14 travesty 4:9 trucks 9:23 10:6 true 12:15 TRUXILLO 5:20 6:19</p>	<p>turn 6:20 two 4:4 6:4 8:3,4 8:12,24 two-lane 5:15 tying 9:5</p> <hr/> <p style="text-align: center;">U</p> <p>underneath 10:16 understanding 12:16 United 5:16 use 4:24 utilize 4:11</p> <hr/> <p style="text-align: center;">V</p> <p>vacation 11:3 valid 12:2 various 9:23 vehicles 9:1 verification 12:2</p> <hr/> <p style="text-align: center;">W</p> <p>wait 6:4 want 9:17 11:6,7 Washington 7:21 8:1,9,22 10:8,11 way 2:13 3:3,3,8 3:14 West 2:12,21 3:11 4:3 5:7,23 6:20 8:6,7 9:3 9:21 10:5 wheelers 11:13 White 5:25 width 2:3 witness 12:8 Woodworth 1:16 12:5,23 words 6:11 11:1 work 11:23</p>	<p>worth 10:22 wrecks 8:16</p> <hr/> <p style="text-align: center;">Y</p> <p>years 2:11 4:16 4:19 6:3 8:18</p> <hr/> <p style="text-align: center;">Z</p> <p>ZITO 7:17</p> <hr/> <p style="text-align: center;">1</p> <p>1 3:11 5:1 10 5:3 9:25 100 6:5 110 5:14 150 10:4 18 11:13 18-wheelers 10:4</p> <hr/> <p style="text-align: center;">2</p> <p>20 10:3 20-minute 10:2 2011 1:11 22 10:3 25 4:15 27014 12:24</p> <hr/> <p style="text-align: center;">3</p> <p>30 4:15,19 5:1,1 37:2554 12:9</p> <hr/> <p style="text-align: center;">4</p> <p>400 2:8,9 415 5:21</p> <hr/> <p style="text-align: center;">5</p> <p>5:00 1:12 9:24 10:1</p> <hr/> <p style="text-align: center;">7</p> <p>7TH 1:11 70767 1:10</p>
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