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This Erratum includes corrections, revisions and/or additions to the Environmental Assessment (EA) for the upgrading of Illinois Route 13/Illinois Route 127 from two lanes to four lanes beginning at the Ava Road intersection north of Murphysboro in Jackson County and ending on Illinois 127 just north of Pinckneyville in Perry County, subsequent to the signed approval by the Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT) and the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) on September 14, 2007.

VOLUME I (DOCUMENTATION & APPENDICES)

1.0 PURPOSE OF AND NEED FOR ACTION

Page 1-4, Section 1.4.4 – Traffic Flow and Capacity Deficiencies – delete the first sentence and replace with the following language: “In general, the roadway in the rural portions of the project currently operates at Level of Service B. At, and north of, the Illinois 152 intersection, the roadway operates between Level of Service B and Level of Service C.”

2.0 AFFECTED ENVIRONMENT

Page 2-13, Section 2.2 – Agriculture – third paragraph, last sentence, delete the words “and landlocked parcels”.

Page 2-17, Section 2.6.2 – Threatened and Endangered Species – first paragraph, first sentence, third line, replace “(March 5, 2001 and July 20, 2006)” with “(March 5, 2001, July 20, 2006 and January 30, 2008)”.

Page 2-17, Section 2.6.2 – Threatened and Endangered Species – first paragraph, last sentence, replace “(See Appendix B.)” with “In January 2008, IDOT re-coordinated the project impacts with IDNR. IDNR concluded that this project does not have any additional resources than resulted from previous coordination and that those resources which occur in the project area have been avoided and no adverse impacts are likely. Consultation with IDNR was again closed on this project on February 1, 2008. (See Appendix B.)”

3.0 PROJECT ALTERNATIVES

Page 3-9, Section 3.3.4 – Pinckneyville Area Alternates Dismissed after Further Study – third paragraph, sixth sentence (next to the last), replace the section number “6.2.8” with the section number “5.2.8”.

Page 3-16, Section 3.5.2 – Pinckneyville Area, Modified West Bypass – second paragraph, second sentence, replace “30” with “29”.

Page 3-16, Section 3.5.2 – Pinckneyville Area, Modified West Bypass – third paragraph, last sentence, replace the section number “6.2.8” with the section number “5.2.8”.

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4.0 ENVIRONMENTAL CONSEQUENCES

Page 4-1, Section 4.1.1 – Community Characteristics and Cohesion – fifth paragraph, last sentence, replace “Six” with “Five”.

Page 4-2, Table 12 – Costs and Impacts – All Alternates – Section 1W, Project Costs – Construction (\$ million) column, replace the dollar amount “29.5” with the dollar amount “29.6”.

Page 4-2, Table 12, Section 1W, Total Cost (\$ million) column, replace the dollar amount “36.0” with the dollar amount “36.1”.

Page 4-2, Table 12, Section 2B, Project Costs – Construction (\$ million) column, replace the dollar amount “14.0” with the dollar amount “14.1”.

Page 4-2, Table 12, Section 2B, Total Cost (\$ million) column, replace the dollar amount “15.9” with the dollar amount “16.0”.

Page 4-2, Table 12, Section 3W, Project Costs – Construction (\$ million) column, replace the dollar amount “13.0” with the dollar amount “13.1”.

Page 4-2, Table 12, Section 3W, Total Cost (\$ million) column, replace the dollar amount “15.7” with the dollar amount “15.8”.

Page 4-2, Table 12, Section 4B – Highway Alternate, Project Costs – Construction (\$ million) column, replace the dollar amount “29.0” with the dollar amount “29.2”.

Page 4-2, Table 12, Section 4B – Highway Alternate, Total Cost (\$ million) column, replace the dollar amount “31.8” with the dollar amount “32.0”.

Page 4-2, Table 12, Section 5A, Project Costs – Construction (\$ million) column, replace the dollar amount “14.4” with the dollar amount “16.7”.

Page 4-2, Table 12, Section 5A, Total Cost (\$ million) column, replace the dollar amount “16.9” with the dollar amount “19.2”.

Page 4-2, Table 12, Section 6W, Project Costs – Construction (\$ million) column, replace the dollar amount “7.7” with the dollar amount “4.4”.

Page 4-2, Table 12, Section 6W, Total Cost (\$ million) column, replace the dollar amount “8.7” with the dollar amount “5.4”.

Page 4-2, Table 12, Modified West Bypass Section, Project Costs – Construction (\$ million) column, replace the dollar amount “66.8” with the dollar amount “70.8”.

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Page 4-2, Table 12, Modified West Bypass Section, Total Cost (\$ million) column, replace the dollar amount “82.1” with the dollar amount “86.1”.

Page 4-2, Table 12, Preferred Alternatives Totals Section, Project Costs – Construction (\$ million) column, replace the dollar amount “175.4” with the dollar amount “178.9”.

Page 4-2, Table 12, Preferred Alternatives Totals Section, Total Cost (\$ million), replace the dollar amount “208.2” with the dollar amount “211.7”.

Page 4-2, Table 12, Modified West Bypass Section, Potential Displacements – Residential column, replace “30” with “29”.

Page 4-2, Table 12, Preferred Alternatives Totals Section, Potential Displacements – Residential column, replace “53” with “52”.

Page 4-9, Section 4.1.5 – Changes in Travel Patterns – change section heading to “Changes in Travel Patterns and Levels of Service”.

Page 4-9, Section 4.1.5 – Changes in Travel Patterns – second paragraph, second sentence, replace the number “Ten” with the number “Seven”.

Page 4-9, Section 4.1.5 – Changes in Travel Patterns – fourth paragraph, second sentence, replace the number “1,830” with “5,710”.

Page 4-10, Section 4.1.5 – Changes in Travel Patterns – first paragraph, first sentence, replace “7.9%” with “7.4%”.

Page 4-10, Table 13 – Road Closures – delete the row containing the description of Bigham Road.

Page 4-10, Table 13, delete the row containing the description of Palm Tree Road.

Page 4-10, Table 13, delete the row containing the description of Pine Cone Road.

Page 4-10, Table 13, 3rd column (Continuity of Access), 11th row (Ballpark Road/Tiger Road), replaced “Fairgrounds Road” with “Fairground Road”.

Page 4-11, Section 4.1.5 – Changes in Travel Patterns – first paragraph, first sentence, replace the number “11,200” with “11,210”.

Page 4-11, Section 4.1.5 – Changes in Travel Patterns – first paragraph, second sentence, replace “7.4%” with “7.9%”.

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Page 4-11, Section 4.1.5 – Changes in Travel Patterns – add the following language and table to the end of this section.

“**Table 13A** shows traffic volumes and Levels of Service (LOS) for: a) existing conditions and b) projected conditions in the design year (2030) with and without the preferred alternative in place.”

Table 13A				
Average Daily Traffic Volumes/Levels of Service (LOS)				
Preferred Alternative				
Project Section	Existing (LOS)	2030 Projected (LOS)		
		No-Action		Build
1W @ IL 4	3,500 (B)	6,130 (B/C)	6,130 (A)	
2B @ Elkhville Road	3,380 (B)	5,280 (B/C)	5,280* (A)	
3W	3,525 (B)	6,500 (B/C)	6,500 (A)	
4B	3,525 (B)	6,500 (B/C)	6,500 (A)	
5A @ IL 152	6,310 (B/C)	12,470 (D)	12,470 (A)	
6W	7,475 (B/C)	12,980 (D)	12,980 (A)	
Modified West Bypass @ IL 154 (Pinckneyville)	N/A	N/A	6,120* (A)	

* Bypass Alignment

Existing IL 13/127 Through-Town (Pinckneyville)	8,640 (F)	13,490 (F)	7,370 (F)	
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Note: LOS F is due to intersection spacing and geometric restrictions associated with the Pinckneyville Square.

Page 4-12, Section 4.1.6 – Relocations (Business, Residential and Agricultural) and Right-of-Way Acquisition – Residential Relocations – first paragraph, first sentence, replace “50” with “49”, replace “53” with “52” and replace “12” with “11”.

Page 4-13, Table 15 – Properties with Displaced Residences - Number of Residential Properties column, \$100,000 - \$109,999 row, replace “10” with “9”.

Page 4-13, Table 15, Number of Residential Properties column, Total row, replace “50” with “49”.

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Page 4-15, Section 4.1.7 – Economics – last paragraph, second sentence, replace the number “1,830” with “5,710”.

Page 4-15, Section 4.1.7 – Economics – last paragraph, third sentence, replace the number “11,700” with “11,210”.

Page 4-19, Section 4.1.9 – Growth and Economic Development – second paragraph, first sentence, second line, replace the section number “6.2.7” with the section number “5.2.7”.

Page 4-19, Section 4.1.9 – Growth and Economic Development – second paragraph, first sentence, fourth line, replace the section number “6.2.4” with the section number “5.2.4”.

Page 4-19, Section 4.1.9 – Growth and Economic Development – second paragraph, first sentence, fifth line, replace the section number “6.2.5” with the section number “5.2.5”.

Page 4-19, Section 4.1.9 – Growth and Economic Development – second paragraph, first sentence, sixth line, replace the section number “6.2.8” with the section number “5.2.8”.

Page 4-38, 4.7.2 – Threatened and Endangered Species – Illinois-Listed Species – third paragraph, replace the last two sentences with “Consultation with IDNR was closed on July 20, 2006. In January 2008, IDOT re-coordinated the project impacts with IDNR. IDNR concluded that this project does not have any additional resources than resulted from previous coordination and that those resources which occur in the project area have been avoided and no adverse impacts are likely. Consultation with IDNR was again closed on this project on February 1, 2008. (See Appendix B.)”

Page 4-39, Section 4.8.1. – Construction Impacts to Surface Waters – first paragraph, first sentence, first line, replace “nine” with “eight”.

Page 4-39, Section 4.8.1. – Construction Impacts to Surface Waters – delete item number 9 from the list of proposed bridge structures.

Page 4-39, Section 4.8.1. – Construction Impacts to Surface Waters – second full paragraph, first sentence, first line, last word, replace “National” with “Nationwide”.

Page 4-56, Section 4.15 – Environmental Commitments – add the following bullet item to the end of section:

- In accord with the comments received from the National Park Service on the replacement/addition of structures over the Nationwide Rivers Inventory-listed Beaucoup Creek, IDOT will comply with the following recommendation and will incorporate them into the final design plans and specifications.
 - Design access and staging areas to minimize disturbances to the bed and banks of the river.
 - To the extent practicable, utilize the same alignment for the replacement bridge in order to reduce tree removal and other impacts in the riparian zone, and to limit

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- additional intrusion into the scenic viewshed. Placement of the piers outside the river channel is recommended.
- Trees and other woody vegetation existing along the riverbank should not be removed unless absolutely necessary. Any vegetation removed should be replaced with the same or similar native species.
 - Integrate a bank stabilization system that includes native vegetative plantings rather than hardened systems such as riprap to the extent practicable. As a suggestion, native fieldstone should be used, covered with topsoil above the ordinary high watermark, and planted with native vegetation where practicable (excluding areas under the bridge deck).
 - Erosion control plans should be designed to incorporate measures to minimize short-term and long-term sedimentation impacts. All erosion control devices that are installed should be monitored on a regular basis throughout the duration of the project.
 - During bridge removal, all efforts should be in place to minimize impacts to water quality and habitats at the site and downstream of the site. Shrouds, tarps or other catchment devices should be utilized to minimize debris entering the river. Equipment should be inspected for fluid leaks.
 - Minimize impacts to the river bottom if removal of existing piers and/or construction of new piers in the river channel is necessary – operating equipment from the banks is preferred. If causeways or work pads is necessary, in-stream flows should be maintained.
 - Any fill placed above the ordinary high water level should be stabilized as soon as possible.
 - Bridge design should include the use of earthtone colors (concrete tinting, paints) to minimize visual intrusion.
 - All traces of construction materials and equipment should be removed from the project site upon project completion.

Page 4-56, Section 4.15 – Environmental Commitments – add the following bullet item to the end of section:

- Three years prior to the construction of the project, the District shall notify the Environment Section of the Bureau of Design and Environment, so coordination with resource agencies can be reinitiated and wetland delineations and other surveys updated as necessary.

5.0 COMMENTS AND COORDINATION

Page 5-5, Section 5.2.6 – Citizen Correspondence – third paragraph, last sentence, replace the section number “6.2.8” with the section number “5.2.8”.

Page 5-6, Section 5.2.8 – Pinckneyville Area Citizens Advisory Council – first paragraph, last sentence, replace the section number “6.2.7” with the section number “5.2.7”.

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Page 5-6, Section 5.2.8 – Pinckneyville Area Citizens Advisory Council – first paragraph, last sentence, bold entire sentence.

Page 5-6, Section 5.2.8 – Pinckneyville Area Citizens Advisory Council – second paragraph, second sentence, replace the section number “6.2.6” with the section number “5.2.6”.

Page 5-10 – add new subsection heading at the end of **Section 5.2 – Public Involvement** and include the following language:

5.2.9 Public Hearing

A Public Hearing was held on October 11, 2007 from 4 pm to 7 pm at the Pinckneyville Junior High School gymnasium in Pinckneyville, and covered the following five subjects: 1) the Illinois Department of Transportation’s (IDOT) preferred alternative for upgrading Illinois Routes 13 and 127 from two to four lanes between Murphysboro and Pinckneyville; 2) the road closures associated with the proposed project; 3) the effect the project would have on the Pinckneyville-Du Quoin Airport; 4) the effect the project would have on Pyramid State Park; and 5) IDOT’s proposed Corridor Protection Map for the project’s bypass of Pinckneyville. This hearing presented the pertinent engineering, environmental and socio-economic aspects of the proposed improvement, including the results of the project’s Environmental Assessment; and provided an opportunity to obtain feedback from the public concerning these matters. The Environmental Assessment also was available for review prior to the hearing beginning September 20th, 2007 on the IDOT website, at four area libraries and at the IDOT District 9 Office in Carbondale. The hearing site was accessible to individuals with disabilities and special assistance was offered to anyone who provided advanced notice.

The advertisement for the public hearing was published in the Pinckneyville Democrat and the Southern Illinoisan on September 20, 2007 and again on October 4, 2007 and in the Du-Quoin Evening Call on September 21, 2007 and again on October 4, 2007. The event was published on IDOT’s website and press releases were sent out to media outlets across southern Illinois. Individual invitation letters were mailed to various media outlets and affected property owners along the entire length of the project. Additional invitation letters were sent to the property owners affected by the corridor protection plan. A project newsletter announcing the public hearing was mailed to the approximately 2,000 individuals included in the project’s mailing list.

An open-house format was utilized for the public hearing. The open-house format offered the public an opportunity to meet with representatives of IDOT, at a time and place which is reasonably convenient, to discuss the project. Handouts were provided to attendees as they entered the gymnasium. Throughout the open-house session, appropriate members of IDOT and its consultant staff were available to discuss the project with the public and answer questions. Project staff were stationed at map displays and exhibits which depicted the alternates considered, the preferred alternative and its impacts, the corridor around Pinckneyville to be protected, road closures and Airport impacts. A Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) representative also was present.

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Approximately 342 individuals attended the public hearing. An opportunity was provided for attendees to submit written and oral comments at the public hearing. No oral comments were offered by the public at the hearing. Twenty written comments and seven e-mail comments were received within the allotted comment period. The comment period was lengthened by seven days from October 26, 2007 to November 2, 2007 to accommodate requests for an extension of the comment period. Comments received were considered and addressed by IDOT and FHWA. All questions and requests for information were responded to by IDOT and its consultant. For more information on the public hearing, please refer to the “Illinois 13/127 (F.A.P.) Public Hearing Document” dated September, 2008.

The public comments and IDOT’s responses are summarized below and are categorized by commonly occurring themes. In some cases the comment provided below has been paraphrased to address an issue raised by multiple commenters.

General

Comment 1 – Is this project ever going to happen? When can we expect IDOT to begin buying right of way?

Response 1 - This proposed project is not included in the Illinois Department of Transportation’s current Multi-Year Statewide Transportation Improvement Program. This means that since there is no current funding to further implement the project, the timing for constructing any portion of it is unknown.

Comment 2 – We request an extension of the comment period, which is presently only 15 days – from October 11th through October 26th. This is an inadequate amount of time for the public to digest and reflect on so much information. We request that the comment period be extended by 30 days to November 26th, 2007.

Response 2 - The minimum public comment period required for an Environmental Assessment (EA) is 30 days. For this project the EA was made available on September 20th, 2007 via public hearing notices published in the Southern Illinoisan and the Pinckneyville Democrat, which began the public comment period. Additional notices were published in the Du Quoin Evening Call on September 21st, and on October 4th notices were published in the Southern Illinoisan, the Pinckneyville Democrat and the Du Quoin Evening Call. Additionally, a project newsletter announcing the public availability of the EA was sent out to approximately 2,000 individuals, businesses and organizations prior to publishing the public notices.

The close of the public comment period was identified as October 26th, 2007, which exceeded the minimum 30-day public comment period required by federal regulations. Several organizations requested an extension and the public comment period was extended to November 2nd, 2007. IDOT has met and exceeded the public comment period requirements set forth in the federal regulations.

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Comment 3 – Request that an Environmental Impact Study (EIS) be required before this project is approved.

Response 3 – The Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT) will submit all public comments received during the public comment period and IDOT’s responses to those comments to the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and request a Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI). FHWA will review this information and make a determination if a FONSI is appropriate or if an EIS must be prepared.

Need for Proposed Project

Comment 1 – Wouldn’t it be better to maintain and improve the roads you’ve already built?

Response 1 - This proposed project would utilize and improve the existing two lanes between Murphysboro and Pinckneyville except for the area around Pinckneyville and Vergennes. In these two communities, residents expressed a preference for a bypass rather than utilizing the existing road through their towns.

Comment 2 – IDOT has not adequately established a need for this project. The main objective stated in the Environmental Assessment is to route traffic around Pinckneyville. Routing traffic around Pinckneyville would require only a bypass of Pinckneyville and does not require four lanes of traffic south of Pinckneyville. The amount of traffic on this segment of Rt. 127 does not justify the 23 miles of expressway. The time saved does not justify the cost.

Response 2 – The need for this project is clearly stated in the purpose and need statement and is based on several factors that make the current transportation system inadequate. Those factors include: system continuity and regional access, existing roadway deficiencies, traffic safety, traffic flow and capacity deficiencies, and regional economic development.

While the reduction of traffic congestion around the square in Pinckneyville was identified as a need for this project, bypasses were not the only options considered. Several through-town alternates also were studied in detail. Each of the alternates studied had to address the purpose of and need for the project. If an alternate did not adequately address the purpose and need, it was dismissed from further consideration.

In addition, the purpose and need statement does not identify capacity deficiencies as a need in the rural areas of the project. The need to upgrade Illinois 13/127 throughout the rural portions of the project stems from the need to address all the other project needs described above, including traffic safety. (There have been 14 fatalities in the rural areas of the project between 1996 and 2005.)

System Continuity and Regional Access

Comment 1 – Why doesn’t the study extend all the way to I-64? Why does the project stop at Pinckneyville?

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Response 1 - The current study was mandated and funded as part of the Transportation Efficiency Act for the 21st Century (TEA-21), a federal act, which stated the limits of the study would be from Murphysboro to Pinckneyville. Improving Illinois Route 127 from Pinckneyville to Nashville to connect with I-64 would require an engineering and environmental study similar to the one that has been done between Murphysboro and Pinckneyville.

Comment 2 – This project is really part of a larger project at least from Murphysboro to I-64. There seemed to be three segments to this overall project: 1) the junction of Route 13 and Route 127 in Murphysboro to north of Murphysboro, 2) north of Murphysboro to north of Pinckneyville and 3) north of Pinckneyville to I-64. It seems that the third segment (Pinckneyville to I-64) has been temporarily dropped. This segmentation strategy serves to make it seem that the impact and cost of the project is less than it really is if one considers the whole project from Murphysboro to I-64. This tactic has been judged illegal in court cases. Moreover, if the segment from Pinckneyville to I-64 is not built, then the project segment is really a “road to nowhere”.

Response 2 – The Murphysboro to Pinckneyville project termini are appropriate and logical given the legislative mandate for this project. (See Section 1.2 – History and Legislation of the Environmental Assessment.) It has independent utility in that it is not dependent on, nor does it restrict the consideration of other reasonably foreseeable highway improvements in the area. The proposed improvement can function effectively, handling traffic flows efficiently and safely between Illinois Routes 13, 127 and 149 in Murphysboro and Illinois Routes 13, 127 and 154 in Pinckneyville, and does not force additional roadway improvements.

Comment 3 – Consider upgrading Illinois 154 and Illinois 3 west to the St. Louis area.

Response 3 – The study and consideration of upgrading Illinois 154 and Illinois 3 between Pinckneyville and Metro East St. Louis is not within the scope of the study undertaken for this Illinois 13/127 project. This study and its scope were mandated by federal legislation. Utilizing Illinois 154 and Illinois 3 through Red Bud and Waterloo is an issue that would need to be addressed at state and federal policy-making levels to determine the viability of such an undertaking.

Traffic Safety

Comment 1 – Concern regarding the safety of children boarding school buses along the proposed frontage road north of Pinckneyville.

Response 1 - School district administrators were contacted about this proposed improvement and potential road closures. No safety concerns regarding the transport of students on school buses were identified. With the proposed improvement in place, the safe pickup and delivery of students along the proposed portion of roadway should improve since the amount of traffic on the proposed frontage road will be reduced due to it becoming a local road rather than a highway.

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Project Alternatives

Build Alternates

Comment 1 – Why bypass Pinckneyville on the west? The through-town alternates seem to be better options at least from a cost perspective.

Response 1 – Besides studying a bypass west of Pinckneyville, several through-town options and two bypasses east of Pinckneyville also were studied. Both bypasses east of Pinckneyville impacted the Beaucoup Creek floodplain, numerous wetlands, and two threatened and endangered species to the extent that approval from the natural resource agencies and the Federal Highway Administration could not be obtained. In addition to these natural resource concerns, the fact that commercial and residential development would not be allowed in the floodplain makes both bypasses less attractive for economic growth.

Several through-town alternates were investigated by the Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT). All but two of these alternates (Locust Street-Walnut Street Couple and 5-Lane Main Street) were eliminated from further study based on engineering factors, environmental impacts, project costs, and public comments.

The Locust Street-Walnut Street Couple and the Five-Lane Main Street option were both studied in detail. The Five-Lane Main Street alignment would have required the removal of the courthouse and would have otherwise adversely impact some of the buildings on the square. The Locust Street/Walnut Street couple would avoid the town square and was pursued by IDOT as a viable option for the proposed improvement, since it was one of the least expensive of the alternate alignments in the Pinckneyville area. However, public opposition to this alternate led the Pinckneyville City Council to pass a resolution opposing the couple.

The primary disadvantages of the through-town options voiced by Pinckneyville area residents included:

- ✓ Loss of on-street parking
- ✓ Residential and commercial displacements
- ✓ Divided neighborhoods
- ✓ Pedestrian and vehicle safety
- ✓ Noise levels
- ✓ Loss of small-town ambiance
- ✓ Adverse effects on other historic structures
- ✓ Adverse effects on hospital and emergency services

Because of the obstacles to the through-town options, IDOT facilitated the formation of the Pinckneyville Area Citizens Advisory Council to obtain further input from local citizens. The Council, made up of representatives from agriculture, business, community affairs, economic development, ecological resources, government and emergency services, historical resources and local and regional planning, conducted in-depth analyses of alternate alignments in and around Pinckneyville. The representatives of each interest group were selected by appropriate local agencies/groups.

During the evaluation of alternates by the Pinckneyville Area Citizens Advisory Council, the State Historic Preservation Agency confirmed that the town square was eligible for inclusion on

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the National Register of Historic Places, thus eliminating any alternate that would adversely impact the town square, including the 5-Lane Main Street Alternate. For these reasons, only one through-town alternate (Locust-Walnut Couple) was found to be viable, although both through-town alternates were assessed by the Pinckneyville Area Citizens Advisory Council.

In October, 2004, the Council presented its findings to IDOT and the public recommending a western bypass of Pinckneyville. IDOT agreed with the Council's recommendation and selected a western bypass of Pinckneyville as its preferred alternative. This preferred alternative was presented to the public at IDOT's public hearing on October 11, 2007.

Comment 2 – Instead of upgrading Illinois 13/127 to an expressway, well-placed passing lanes could be utilized to facilitate the movement of traffic.

Response 2 – Upgrading Illinois 13/127 through spot improvements (i.e., passing lanes, roundabouts, a bypass of Pinckneyville, etc.) would not adequately address the identified purpose of and need for this project.

To adequately address the project's purpose and need, the proposed project would need to help close the gap in the system of four-lane freeways and expressways between St. Louis and southern Illinois and provide adequate transportation system support for existing and future economic growth in the project area as well as southern Illinois in general. In addition, expressways are among the safest and most efficient of highway types. Traffic traveling along Illinois 13 and Illinois 127 throughout the proposed project would encounter no stop signs or traffic signals, greatly improving traffic safety and streamlining the flow of traffic.

Comment 3 - Making the [Pinckneyville] town square into a one-way roundabout would cost less and solve many of the existing problems while preserving vital traffic flow through the downtown area upon which many local businesses depend.

Response 3 - Because of the operational characteristics of a roundabout, Illinois 154 traffic from the east (including large trucks) would be required to drive along the east, north and west legs of the downtown square to continue west on Illinois 154, rather than continuing straight ahead as it does today. This would make traffic flow around the square worse than it is today due to the introduction of additional turning movements in this congested area. Because of the restriction on where traffic can enter the roundabout, the large turning pathways of large trucks, the removal of all parking around the square and the continuous flow of traffic, pedestrian movements and access to the courthouse and businesses around the square would be problematic.

Comment 4 – We favor the development of a light railway from Marion to East Metro area of St. Louis, and we think that climbing oil prices, dwindling supplies of oil, and environmental concerns suggest strongly that rail-based mass transit is the wisest long-term investment for southern Illinois.

Response 4 - Light rail from Marion to the East Metro area of St. Louis does not address the purpose of and need for this project. Light rail does not address the existing roadway

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deficiencies identified nor does it address safety concerns or traffic flow and capacity deficiencies in Pinckneyville. While light rail offers a means of transporting individuals, it does not address the larger need of providing an adequate transportation system for moving material, equipment and goods into the region to support and promote future economic growth and development.

Environmental Consequences

Public Facilities and Services

Comment 1 – Please respect the Trail of Tears State Forest and the Shawnee National Forest.

Response 1 - This proposed project will not impact the Trail of Tears State Forest or the Shawnee National Forest.

Changes in Travel Patterns

Comment 1 – The closure of both Palm Tree Road and Shady Oak Road removes direct access to farmland and timber.

Response 1 – The Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT) has evaluated different possibilities to provide access to these properties and decided to relocate the entrance to Palm Tree Road approximately ¼ mile east of its present location by constructing a connector to existing Palm Tree Road instead of closing the road. This would provide the access desired while maintaining IDOT expressway policy and intersection spacing. With an intersection at County Highway 18, the current intersection at Palm Tree Road cannot remain open if this proposed project is constructed.

Relocations

Comment 1 – The idea of taking the assisted living facility in Pinckneyville and displacing the people who live and work there is a shame and disgrace.

Response 1 – The Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT) appreciates the concern about the taking of the 41-person supportive-living facility in Pinckneyville, Manor at Mason Woods. While this facility will be taken, IDOT is committed to relocating the residents of the facility as soon as funding to construct the project becomes available. Coordination with the facility's owner has already begun. IDOT plans to participate in providing a new facility in the area prior to moving the residents. The supportive-living facility residents will not be housed in temporary facilities.

Property Values

Comment 1 – What will happen to the property values of the homes along the proposed frontage road north of Pinckneyville?

Response 1 - Typically, property values near intersections and interchanges tend to increase due to the potential for commercial development. In general, however, the increase or decrease in

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property values for properties such as the homes along the proposed frontage road is dependent, in large part, on the vitality of the local community. As a community becomes more attractive, because of job opportunities or other reasons, the price of property tends to rise.

Economics

Comment 1 – The bypass of Pinckneyville will be very likely to damage that town’s precarious economic health.

Response 1 - Based on the project studies and documented research on bypasses in neighboring states, the Illinois Department of Transportation has determined that the bypass of Pinckneyville should not damage the long-term economic health of the city and actually increases the probability that the bypass will facilitate economic growth and development in the community. It is possible that the chain businesses may relocate; however, most local businesses are not dependent on impulse purchases made by through-travelers. The local businesses that reside downtown are destination businesses and would have no reason to move.

In addition, the cumulative impact of several local and regional issues prompted community leaders to develop a strategic plan for Pinckneyville. A planning committee of Pinckneyville residents joined with the Chamber of Commerce to identify various issues affecting Pinckneyville. In their deliberations, the group looked at factors that impact current businesses and those that would attract new business. Input from Pinckneyville residents was solicited to develop a vision for Pinckneyville that would maintain those characteristics that make Pinckneyville attractive today while taking steps to assure a more prosperous future. The vision and the specific steps to help achieve this vision are described in Pinckneyville: A Vision for a More Happy & Prosperous Future, issued in April, 2007.

The vision statement identified several needs within the community that should be addressed to avoid problems in the future. They include:

- 1) reducing traffic congestion in downtown Pinckneyville (i.e., around the square); and
- 2) upgrading the highway system in and around Pinckneyville to accommodate increased traffic volumes due to the convergence of three state routes in Pinckneyville as well as the city’s location along the major travel corridors between the St. Louis area and Carbondale.

These needs mirror the findings of the Pinckneyville Area Citizen Advisory Council that was convened in 2004 to assess the proposed improvement to Illinois Routes 13 and 127 in the Pinckneyville area. The Council, which included representatives from agriculture, business, community affairs, ecological resources, economic development, government and emergency services, historical resources, and local and regional planning, also felt that the proposed highway improvement would help stimulate the local economy.

With the recent closing of several major employers in the Pinckneyville area, the City is actively seeking ways to provide for economic development opportunities within Pinckneyville. They

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view the bypass of Pinckneyville positively and feel that it will help in their efforts to attract new businesses to the area.

Comment 2 – Some effort should be made to revitalize Vergennes instead of bypassing it.

Response 2 – Throughout this project’s development, the Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT) has worked with the communities that would be impacted to determine what type of project alternative would best suit their long-term needs. The decision to bypass Vergennes was not made lightly or without input from the Village. The Village even passed a resolution supporting the project.

The Village of Vergennes Board of Trustees requested that IDOT consider bypassing their community. The Trustees felt that taking any of the businesses through Vergennes, especially the only grocery store/service station would not be desirable. Although this grocery store/service station has since closed in March 2006, the Village has been seeking new ownership for this business and still feels that it would not be desirable to take this property. In addition, public concerns were voiced about pedestrian and traffic safety issues associated with widening the existing roadway through Vergennes. As a result, IDOT agreed to bypass the community.

Noise Abatement

Comment 1 – Will a noise buffer be provided for homes along the proposed frontage road north of Pinckneyville?

Response 1 – A noise study was conducted for this project. Existing noise levels were measured and projected noise levels were calculated to identify potential problems for residents who live near the proposed improvement. With the proposed improvement in place, the highway noise levels along the proposed frontage road would not approach, meet or exceed FHWA’s Noise Abatement Criteria (NAC). The reason for this is that the proposed highway alignment would be shifted to the east of existing Illinois 127, away from the homes along the proposed frontage road. Any potential growth in traffic volumes will be counterbalanced by this greater distance. Consequently, since projected noise levels will not approach, meet or exceed the NAC, noise abatement is not needed.

Natural Resources

Comment 1 – The field studies conducted were only cursory and not extensive enough to satisfactorily determine the impacts on the rare species of fauna and flora that are either verifiably present or likely to occur in the project area. As a result, the commitments made in the “Environmental Commitments” section of the Environmental Assessment are inadequate to fully ensure the protection of the rare species within the project corridor.

Response 1 – A thorough assessment of the plant communities and rare plants and animals was conducted for this project by the Illinois Natural History Survey (INHS). The field studies/surveys performed were neither cursory nor arbitrary in nature. They were built upon historical information contained in the Illinois Department of Natural Resources’ (IDNR) Natural Heritage Database and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service’s (USFWS) North Central

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Region Redbook. These databases contain decades of information gathered on threatened and endangered species throughout Illinois.

The INHS reviewed this information and conducted searches of the scientific literature and their own historical records on those species that occur or could occur in the project area. The INHS field studies and surveys are intended to confirm what is known about the project area and/or to note changes in the status of rare species in the area. When compared to the proposed project's area of potential effects, INHS reports are an appropriate level of information for the project circumstances. Any perceived lack of data is not from lack of study. Rather, there is no historical data, nor any previous or current survey information that suggests there are any occurrences of rare species of flora or fauna within the project corridor that would be impacted by the proposed project.

All of the information gathered from the databases, literature searches and field surveys, including INHS's findings, are reviewed by IDNR and USFWS, the agencies responsible for protecting our natural resources. After these reviews, each agency decides whether the project will adversely affect any rare species of flora and/or fauna and what types of commitments need to be included in the environmental document to ensure that the Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT) is adequately protecting these natural resources. The project cannot proceed without the approval of both agencies. These coordination procedures are formalized by agreements between IDOT and the resource agencies.

Both IDNR and USFWS have reviewed the natural resource information gathered for this project and required several commitments that have been incorporated into the Environmental Assessment. Both agencies have deemed the studies and the subsequent commitments made sufficient to determine that the project is not likely to adversely affect any state or federally-listed threatened or endangered species.

Comment 2 – *The field data is, at this point, over five years old and no longer scientifically reliable. Five years is long enough for an ecosystem to change in many ways.*

Response 2 – The Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT) recognizes that the field studies were completed over five years ago. Because this is an issue that often occurs with studies and reports that span a number of years, IDOT has developed procedures with natural resource agencies to ensure that field surveys and studies are revisited prior to construction activities. In January 2008, IDOT re-coordinated the project impacts with the Illinois Department of Natural Resources (IDNR). IDNR concluded that this project does not have any additional resources than resulted from previous coordination and that those resources which occur in the project area have been avoided and no adverse impacts are likely. Consultation with IDNR was again closed on this project on February 1, 2008. This authorization is valid for two years.

In light of this comment, the following language will be added as a bullet item to Section 4.15 – Environmental Commitments of the Environmental Assessment.

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“Three years prior to the construction of the project, the District shall notify the Environmental Section of the Bureau of Design and Environment, so coordination with the Resource Agencies can be reinitiated and wetland delineations and other surveys updated as necessary.”

Comment 3 – By softening the curve at Buffalo Curve to meet IDOT policy, the roadway creates maximum disturbance at the most sensitive location on the entire route.

Response 3 – It is necessary to flatten Buffalo Curve to meet state and federal policy and to make a safer roadway. The flattening of this curve does not create maximum disturbance at the most sensitive area, however. The most sensitive area along the entire preferred alignment is not immediately adjacent to Buffalo Curve, but rather farther west near and along Beaucoup Creek. The flattening of Buffalo Curve will not encroach on Beaucoup Creek. Much of the area impacted by the flattening of Buffalo Curve has been previously converted to agricultural uses and does not retain many of the natural qualities associated with wetlands and high quality natural areas. Flattening the curve will require a new structure over Youngs Creek and the taking of 2.84 acres from three small wetlands. These takings will be mitigated for at the Sugar Camp Creek mitigation bank as described in Section 4.10.1 of the Environmental Assessment. However, unlike Beaucoup Creek, Youngs Creek does not possess a high quality natural vegetative corridor.

Comment 4 – The “Environmental Commitments” section of the Environmental Assessment makes no mention of the creation of 50-100 foot buffer strips to connect existing forest fragments during road construction for transit of affected animals as required by the USFWS letter dated January 9, 2004. A more thorough study would determine whether or not it is appropriate for IDOT to ignore the USFWS requirement of a buffer strip.

Response 4 – The Environmental Commitments section of the Environmental Assessment (EA) did not mention the creation of a “50-100 foot buffer strip” [detailed in the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) letter dated January 9, 2004 (See Appendix B, pages 50-54)] because that requirement was not related to the rice rat but rather specifically associated with previous wetland mitigation site designs. Subsequent to the USFWS letter, the Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT) established a 105-acre wetland mitigation bank at Sugar Camp Creek in Franklin County. In accordance with Section 404 of the Clean Water Act administered by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, wetland impacts associated with this project occur within the approved service area of the Sugar Camp Creek wetland mitigation bank and will be mitigated for at this bank. Therefore, IDOT did not ignore the buffer strip recommendation; rather it was no longer applicable to the project and, as a result, was not included in the Environmental Commitments section of the EA.

Comment 5 – Further study is needed to determine the effects the proposed project would have on the movement of fauna along the crucial corridor associated with Beaucoup Creek and its tributaries as well as determine the effects of the project on Beaucoup Creek and the flora and fauna that the creek supports.

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Response 5 - Because the proposed improvement would provide no new access to tracts of undeveloped land within the Beaucoup Creek corridor and because the two crossing of Beaucoup Creek would remain at their current locations, the wildlife value of the creek should suffer no harmful effects. The new structures would provide openings at least as large as existing ones, allowing for the continued movement of fauna along the creek's riparian corridor.

The National Park Service (NPS), the body responsible for administering the Nationwide Rivers Inventory (NRI), reviewed the project information provided by the Illinois Department of Transportation and provided ten recommendations to avoid/reduce impacts to the river and surrounding ecosystems. The NPS concluded that as long as these recommendations are considered and incorporated to the extent practicable, and the scope of the project does not change, then the proposed action would not adversely affect the NRI status of Beaucoup Creek and no further coordination is required.

In addition, both the Illinois Department of Natural Resources and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service have reviewed the natural resource information gathered for this project, including information gathered on the ecosystems associated with Beaucoup Creek. Both agencies have deemed the studies and the subsequent commitments made sufficient to determine that the project is not likely to adversely affect Beaucoup Creek or the flora and fauna that it supports including any state or federally-listed threatened or endangered species, thus precluding the need for further studies.

Federally-Listed Species

Comment 1 – The federally-endangered Indiana bat has been documented in the area and has a hibernation location five miles from the project. More study is needed to better assess the presence or absence of maternal dens in the project area during the spring/summer maternal denning season, and to better establish where the suitable habitat lies.

Response 1 – Both the Illinois Natural History Survey (INHS) and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) identified a winter hibernaculum in Jackson County, however, both agree that the hibernaculum is more than 5 miles from the proposed project corridor as cited by the USFWS in its correspondence with the Illinois Department of Transportation. The INHS states in its mammal survey that the hibernaculum is located in the southwest corner of the county and that there are no caves or mines in the project corridor that could be used for hibernation.

The INHS and the USFWS also agree that the potential exists for roosting habitat for the Indiana bat to occur in the vicinity of the project corridor during the summer, along Beaucoup Creek near the existing Illinois 13/127 crossing (Perry County) and in the extensive wooded corridor east of Pinckneyville. While maternity colonies could be present within this summer roosting habitat, mist net surveys of the project corridor conducted by the INHS captured no Indiana bats (male or female). Historical records dating back almost 30 years indicate that this bat species has been collected in both Jackson and Perry Counties, although not within the project corridor. Since the project will require the removal of trees and since there is no information that would suggest the trees to be cleared would not provide potentially suitable habitat for Indiana bat summer roosting, the USFWS asked that a tree-clearing restriction be included in the Environmental

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Commitments section of the Environmental Assessment. This restriction is a precautionary measure and not an acknowledgement that the project will impact the Indiana bat.

The USFWS states in its January 9, 2004 correspondence that if this restriction is incorporated into the environmental commitments for the project, the Service would concur that the proposed project is not likely to adversely affect any known federally-listed threatened and endangered species and as a result, precludes the need for further action on this project as required under Section 7 of the Endangered Species Act of 1973, as amended. Therefore, it was the USFWS, the body responsible for administering the Endangered Species Act, who determined that the project, as currently envisioned, adequately protects the Indiana bat and its habitat and that further study is not required.

Illinois-Listed Species

Comment 1 – *More study is needed to determine the impacts to the state-listed threatened and endangered species that either occur or have the potential to occur within the project corridor.*

Response 1 – The Illinois Natural History Survey (INHS) reviewed and gathered information from databases, literature searches and conducted field surveys of those species that occur or could occur within the project area. This information, along with the INHS's findings, was provided to the Illinois Department of Natural Resources (IDNR), the body responsible for administering the Illinois Endangered Species Protection Act. IDNR reviewed the information provided by the INHS and determined that: 1) the proposed action would not adversely affect any state-threatened or endangered species, and 2) further study is not required for any of the identified species. In January 2008, the Illinois Department of Transportation re-coordinated the project impacts with IDNR. IDNR concluded that this project does not have any additional resources than resulted from previous coordination and that those resources which occur in the project area have been avoided and no adverse impacts are likely. Consultation with IDNR was again closed on this project on February 1, 2008.

Comment 2 – *The field studies conducted were not sufficient in length to adequately determine the presence of the state-threatened golden mouse within the project area and nothing was said in the Environmental Assessment about whether traps suitable for golden mice were even used in the field study.*

Response 2 – The Illinois Natural History Survey (INHS) states that the mouse has been trapped in Jackson County, although not within the project corridor. The occurrence of the golden mouse in Perry County detailed in the Illinois Natural Heritage Database (INHD) and referred to in the Illinois Department of Transportation's Biological Resource Review Memorandum dated December 8, 2003 is based on historical references. The only other historical reference to the golden mouse in Perry County is from 1969. In addition, as part of a study conducted to determine the distribution and relative abundance of the golden mouse in Illinois; extensive trapping was done at Pyramid State Park in 1985. No golden mice were trapped during this study. Thus, the status of the golden mouse in Perry County is uncertain.

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Since the INHD details an occurrence of the golden mouse within the project area, the Illinois Department of Natural Resources (IDNR) requested a survey of the golden mouse and its associated habitat. As part of this survey, the INHS identified several wooded areas containing entanglements of vines that represented potential golden mouse habitat in the project corridor. Traplines were established in these areas using Sherman live traps (8 x 9 x 23 cm) placed at approximately 10-meter intervals along the lines. The traps were placed on the ground as well as above ground on logs, in clumps of vines, or on tree branches. The INHS trapped for a total of 534 trap-nights. No golden mice were trapped during the survey despite the presence of apparently suitable habitat at the trap sites. Furthermore, the INHS noted that in 1991, staff searched five areas of suitable habitat along Illinois 13/127 between Vergennes and Pinckneyville for golden mouse nests, but none were found. Therefore, it was the conclusion of the INHS that it is unlikely that this species occurs in the project area.

Comment 3 – The field studies conducted were not sufficient to determine that the state-threatened rice rat is a transient or migrant species within the corridor and that the proposed alternative would not pose a threat to the rice rat.

Response 3 – A single, juvenile female state-threatened rice rat was trapped by the Illinois Natural History Survey during a 534 trap-nights survey in the project area. This individual was trapped in the area north of the Illinois 13/127 crossing of Beaucoup Creek in Perry County and represents the first record of the species in Perry County. No other rice rats were trapped in the project area. Because the individual captured was a juvenile and not a breeding animal, it was assumed to be a transient. It is likely that this individual uses Beaucoup Creek to move up and down the riparian corridor in this area.

Because the proposed improvement would utilize the current Beaucoup Creek crossing location and would provide an opening at least as large as the existing one, the movement of the rice rat and other fauna along the creek's riparian corridor can continue unimpeded. Because no channel changes are planned, only minor and temporary disturbances would occur.

Comment 4 – Further study is needed to establish what species of state-endangered night-heron was seen in the vicinity of the project area, whether the night-heron is nesting in the vicinity and if nesting habitat is affected by the project.

Response 4 – On June 20, 2001, an unknown species of night-heron was briefly observed perched in a tree on the north side of Illinois 13/127 in the area just west of Buffalo Curve during the second of two bird censuses by the Illinois Natural History Survey (INHS). Because the night-heron was observed for only a few seconds as it flew from the tree, INHS ornithologists were unable to definitively determine whether the night-heron observed was a yellow-crowned night-heron or a black-crowned night-heron. Both species are considered state-endangered in Illinois. Attempts to locate the night-heron again were made later during this second bird census and during an investigational trip to the area several weeks after the second census, but both were unsuccessful. No nests were recorded within the project corridor during either census or the subsequent investigation of the general area around Buffalo Curve.

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The black-crowned night-heron usually occurs in Illinois from early April to late October. It is a fairly common migrant but an uncommon summer or winter resident. The INHS statewide breeding accounts identify only four sizable nesting colonies of the black-crowned night-heron remaining in Illinois. No known nesting sites are located in Jackson or Perry Counties. The yellow-crowned night-heron usually occurs in Illinois from mid-April to late August. It is a fairly common migrant and summer resident in southern Illinois. However, the INHS states that this species seldom nests in Illinois and no nesting sites have been recorded in Jackson or Perry Counties.

Both species of night-heron are known to forage in ponds. Since the habitat north of the Buffalo Curve area contains strip-mine ponds, it is likely that this area may serve as a foraging area. This area is outside the project corridor.

Comment 5 – The Illinois Natural History Survey scientists believe that state-threatened red-shouldered hawks use the project area around Buffalo Curve as breeding habitat. Further study is needed to determine what effect the proposed alternative would have on the population of red-shouldered hawks in the area.

Response 5 - When this project began in the fall of 2000, the red-shouldered hawk (*Buteo lineatus*) was listed on the Illinois Endangered and Threatened Species List as an Illinois threatened species. However, when the Illinois Endangered Species Protection Board reviewed the list in 2004, it delisted the red-shouldered hawk because it has been found to be more common than previously known, has nearly saturated the available habitat in southern Illinois and is now known to be more widely distributed in the state (not just restricted to floodplains). It is for this reason that the narrative of the Environmental Assessment does not include a discussion of the potential impacts the project would have on the red-shouldered hawk and its habitat.

The red-shouldered hawk was heard calling and later observed by Illinois Natural History Survey (INHS) ornithologists, not in the area of Buffalo Curve, but in the area east of Pinckneyville, just south of Illinois 154 in the bottomland forest along Beaucoup Creek. The INHS bird survey results make no other mention of hearing and/or observing the hawk at any other location within the project corridor. The Preferred Alternative lies on the opposite side of Pinckneyville from where the hawk was observed and would not impact the red-shouldered hawk or its habitat, regardless of its status on the Illinois Endangered and Threatened Species List.

Comment 6 – The state-endangered Arkansas sedge has been documented in the project area. A more thorough survey is needed to determine whether or not other colonies exist in or adjacent to the project area and what effect the preferred alternative would have on such colonies.

Response 6 - The state-threatened Arkansas sedge was recently discovered in Illinois in 1992 in Saline County and, until recently, had been observed only in that county. In 2001 the Illinois Natural History Survey (INHS) conducted a thorough botanical survey of the project corridor, during which they identified two clumps of the sedge at the edge of the Illinois 13/127 right-of-

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way near the Jackson County crossing of Beaucoup Creek. The INHS conducted two additional botanical surveys in 2001, in association with the project's wetland surveys, but found no additional specimens.

According to the Illinois Department of Transportation Biological Resource Review Memorandum dated December 8, 2003, the Arkansas sedge identified by the INHS is located outside of the construction limits of the proposed project and would not be impacted by the Preferred Alternative. However, as a precaution, the area containing the plants will be marked as a "no intrusion area" in the design plans and will be fenced off during construction. In addition, three years prior to construction of the project, coordination with the resource agencies will be reinitiated and the surveys updated to ensure that there have been no major changes in the ecosystems found within the project area and that the proposed project does not adversely affect any threatened and endangered species.

Water Quality/Resources

Comment 1 – The “Environmental Commitments” section of the Environmental Assessment does not include the list of precautions required by the National Park Service for construction in and around Beaucoup Creek, a Nationwide Rivers Inventory listed river.

Response 1 – The Illinois Department of Transportation will add a commitment that lists the ten measures to avoid/reduce impacts on Beaucoup Creek identified by the NPS. This addition will be incorporated into the Environmental Assessment (EA) Errata – a document that includes corrections, revisions, and/or additions to the EA. While the ten measures to avoid/reduce impacts on Beaucoup Creek were not included in the Environmental Commitments section of the EA, they were addressed in the last two full sentences of the second paragraph of Section 4.8.1 – Water Quality/Resources (page 4-39).

Comment 2 – In regards to Beaucoup Creek, thought should be given to applying for inclusion in the National Wild and Scenic River System.

Response 2 – The inclusion of a river in the National Wild and Scenic Rivers System (National System) is an issue that would need to be addressed at state and/or federal policy-making levels. To nominate a river to the National System, it must either be:

- 1) authorized for inclusion by an Act of Congress, or
- 2) must first be designated as a wild, scenic or recreational river by or pursuant to an act of the legislature of the State through which it flows and found by the Secretary of the Interior, upon application of the Governor of the State concerned, to meet the criteria established in the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act and such criteria supplementary thereto as the Secretary prescribes.

Comment 3 – IDOT has interpreted Beaucoup Creek’s eligibility to the Nationwide Rivers Inventory to apply mainly to “scenic” considerations, but Beaucoup Creek may be more than simply scenic. The project has dismissed the wildlife values of such a stream without adequately assessing these values.

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Response 3 - In order to be listed on the Nationwide Rivers Inventory (NRI), a river must be free-flowing and possess one or more Outstandingly Remarkable Values (ORVs) (i.e., scenery, recreation, geology, fish, wildlife, prehistory, history, cultural or other values). The determination that a river area contains ORVs is a professional judgment on the part of the NPS interdisciplinary study team (IDT), based on objective, scientific analysis. The first edition of the NRI was completed in August 1982 and included the segment of Beaucoup Creek from its confluence with the Big Muddy River to its Illinois 13/127 crossing. The NPS, not the Illinois Department of Transportation, determined that this portion of Beaucoup Creek was eligible based on its ORV for scenery. Suggested changes to a river segment's eligibility (i.e., addition of an ORV) should be directed to the NPS.

Wetlands

Comment 1 – Respect the wetlands in the area when contemplating upgrading Illinois 13/127.

Response 1 – The Environmental Assessment conducted of the project corridor identified 249 jurisdictional wetlands, totaling approximately 586 acres. Every effort was made to first avoid taking wetlands and then to minimize the impacts to those wetlands that could not be avoided. To minimize wetland impacts, roadway design elements such as making the roadway side slopes as steep as practicable were utilized. The proposed project would entail small wetland impacts totaling approximately 16 acres. These wetland impacts will be mitigated in a wetland bank area to be developed in the watershed of the Big Muddy River where this proposed project is located.

Comments and Coordination

Pinckneyville Area Citizens Advisory Council

Comment 1 – The committee that was selected by the various groups in Pinckneyville was against the through-town option. There was only one person on the committee who supported the through-town option, so, the only question on the table for them was which bypass would be acceptable to the group. There was no downtown business representative from the retail community and that killed the through-town option from the outset.

Response 1 – Although the Locust-Walnut Couple had some support among Advisory Council members in the beginning, initial sentiment waned as more information emerged and impacts were evaluated.

The representatives of each interest group (i.e., agriculture, business, etc.) were selected by appropriate local agencies/groups. In the case of the Business Interest Group, the Pinckneyville Chamber of Commerce designated two representatives, one for the downtown businesses and one for the other Pinckneyville area businesses. These representatives made sure that the interests of all businesses, including those of retail business in downtown, were heard and taken into consideration when developing criteria against which the highway alternates were evaluated. In addition, other Council members were vitally interested in the continued success of downtown businesses, recognizing the need for tax revenues for the community.

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The West Bypass was not considered the best alternate by all of the interest groups. For example, the Agriculture and Ecological Resources Interest Groups ranked the through-town alternates higher than the bypass alternates. However, when Council members were asked to step out of their roles as special interest group representatives and into the role of citizens representing the community as a whole, the clear winner was the West Bypass.

APPENDIX B

Include the attached responses from IDNR regarding re-coordination efforts undertaken by IDOT in January 2008.

VOLUME II (EXHIBITS)

Exhibit 4 – Existing Land Use, Sheet 19, - replaced the “Shady Oaks Road” label with “Shady Oak Road”.

Exhibit 20 – Environmental Consequences of Preferred Alternative, Sheet 8 – replaced the “Parrish Road” label running east/west with a “Private Road” label.

Exhibit 20, Sheet 16, removed the “Access Closed to IL 13/127” label and the red arrow pointing to Bigham Road and revised access control.

Exhibit 20, Sheet 20, removed the “Access Closed to IL 13/127” label and the red arrow pointing to Palm Tree Road and revised access control.

Exhibit 20, Sheet 22, replaced the “Shady Oaks Road” label with “Shady Oak Road”.

Exhibit 20, Sheet 23, removed the “Access Closed to IL 152” label and the red arrow pointing to Pine Cone Road and revised access control.

Exhibit 20, Sheet 25, replaced the “Linderwood Road” label with “Lindenwood Road”.

Exhibit 20, Sheet 32, removed the bridge symbols from the Opossum Creek crossing. It has been determined that a box culvert will adequately handle drainage from the Creek.

Exhibit 20, Sheet 33, removed two “X”s from the Isaac’s property (located on the east side of Existing Illinois 13/127) – one from the residence and one from a shed/out building.

Exhibit 21 – Road Closures, Sheet 1 – removed the red dot from Bigham Road and unhighlight the “BIGHAM RD.” label.

Exhibit 21 – Road Closures, Sheet 2 – removed the red dot from Bigham Road and unhighlight the “BIGHAM RD.” label.

Exhibit 21 – Road Closures, Sheet 2 – removed the red dot from Palm Tree Road and unhighlight the “PALM TREE RD.” label.

Exhibit 21 – Road Closures, Sheet 2 – removed the red dot from Pine Cone Road and unhighlight the “PINE CONE RD.” label.

Appendix B Additions



Illinois Department of Transportation

2300 South Dirksen Parkway / Springfield, Illinois / 62764

January 24, 2008

Mr. Steve Hamer
Impact Analysis Section
Illinois Department of Natural Resources
One Natural Resources Way
Springfield, Illinois 62702-1271

Subject: IL 13/127 (FAP 42)
North of Murphysboro to North of Pinckneyville
Job No. P-99-100-00 (Seq. #9666)
Jackson and Perry County

Dear Mr. Hamer:

This project was previously coordinated with your office on December 8, 2003. At that time the District proposed to mitigate the wetland impacts on-site and a preliminary mitigation plan was included for your review and approval.

The District has revised the wetland impacts for the preferred alignment (see attached memo dated August 20, 2007). Mitigation for the 15.85 acres of impact has been proposed to occur at the Sugar Camp Creek Wetland Mitigation Bank Site in Franklin County. The appropriate off-site, in-basin ratios have been applied requiring 62.01 acres of mitigation. This project is being processed as a Standard Review Action.

In accordance with IDOT Wetlands Action Plan, we are requesting your written concurrence of the impacts and proposed mitigation at the Sugar Camp Creek Mitigation Bank Site.

If you have any questions, please contact Barb Traeger at 785-0202.

Sincerely,

Eric E. Harm, P.E.
Interim Engineer of Design and Environment

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Barbara H. Stevens".

By: Barbara H. Stevens
Chief of Environment

Enclosure



Illinois Department of Transportation

Memorandum

To: Eric Harm Attn: Tom Brooks
From: Julie Klamm
Subject: * Updated Wetland Impact Evaluation
Date: August 20, 2007

* FAP 42 (IL 13/127)
North of Murphysboro to North of Pinckneyville
Jackson & Perry Counties
PMA Sequence # 9666 Addendum E

The following is a revised listing of the wetland impacts for the Preferred Alignment (utilizing the Modified West Bypass of Pinckneyville) for the above listed project based on current cross sections and projected construction limits:

Wetland Site No.	Acres Impacted	On-Site Replacement Ratio	On-Site Replacement Acreage	Off-Site Replacement Ratio	Off-Site Replacement Acreage
1	0.18	1.5 : 1	0.27	2.0 : 1	0.36
2	1.07	5.5 : 1	5.89	5.5 : 1	5.89
6	1.45	2.5 : 1	3.62	4.0 : 1	5.80
10	0.48	1.5 : 1	0.72	2.0 : 1	0.96
11	0.48	1.5 : 1	0.72	2.0 : 1	0.96
13	0.48	1.5 : 1	0.72	2.0 : 1	0.96
15	0.90	5.5 : 1	4.95	5.5 : 1	4.95
17	0.70	5.5 : 1	3.85	5.5 : 1	3.85
19A&B	0.71	2.5 : 1	1.77	4.0 : 1	2.84
20	0.03	1.5 : 1	0.05	2.0 : 1	0.06
23	2.10	2.5 : 1	5.25	4.0 : 1	8.40
29	0.29	1.5 : 1	0.44	2.0 : 1	0.58
29R	1.64	2.5 : 1	4.10	4.0 : 1	6.56
30	0.90	2.5 : 1	2.25	4.0 : 1	3.60
31	1.85	2.5 : 1	4.62	4.0 : 1	7.40
36	1.83	2.5 : 1	4.57	4.0 : 1	7.32
42	0.37	1.5 : 1	0.56	2.0 : 1	0.74
50	0.08	1.5 : 1	0.12	2.0 : 1	0.16
52	0.31	1.5 : 1	0.47	2.0 : 1	0.62
TOTALS:	15.85		44.94		62.01

Note: Areas requiring 5.5 : 1 replacement ratios are all due to FQI values exceeding 20. No Threatened or endangered species or their habitat are impacted by the preferred alternative.

This information has been obtained from the Wetland Survey Report provided by the consultant for this project. The report is a compilation of the information received in the environmental survey process. The actual wetland impacts listed above pertain to the Preferred Alternate only. If there are any questions or comments, please call Julie Klamm at (618) 351-5286 or e-mail at Julie.Klamm@illinois.gov



Illinois Department of Natural Resources

One Natural Resources Way • Springfield, Illinois 62702-1271
<http://dnr.state.il.us>

Rod R. Blagojevich, Governor

Sam Flood, Acting Director

February 1, 2008

Mr. Tom Brooks
Bureau of Design & Environment
Illinois Department of Transportation
2300 South Dirksen Parkway
Springfield, Illinois 62674

RE: IL 13/127 Upgrade 4 lanes
Murphysboro to Pinckneyville
Seq. No. 9666

ATTN: Barb Traeger

Dear Mr. Brooks:

This letter is in response to the above referenced project that was screened through the Illinois Department of Natural Resources Eco-CAT review tool.

The following numbers are the IDNR EcoCat numbers that were submitted for this project. They are 0808637, 0808640, 0808644, 0808648, 0808650 and 0808653.

Based on the results of further review, this project does not have any additional resources than resulted from previous coordination. Those resources which occur in the project area have been avoided and no adverse impacts are likely, therefore consultation is closed on this project

If you have any questions on the above, please contact me at 217-785-4862.

Sincerely,

Steve Hamer
Transportation Review Program
Division of Environment and Ecosystems



To: Pat Malone
AM

Illinois Department of Transportation

2300 South Dirksen Parkway / Springfield, Illinois / 62764

January 24, 2008

Mr. Steve Hamer
Impact Analysis Section
Illinois Department of Natural Resources
One Natural Resources Way
Springfield, Illinois 62702-1271

CONCUR
DEPARTMENT OF
NATURAL RESOURCES
By *Pat Malone* 4-29-08
Division of Impact Analysis
ORIDOC P
for IWRH

Subject: IL 13/127 (FAP 42)
North of Murphysboro to North of Pinckneyville
Job No. P-99-100-00 (Seq. #9666)
Jackson and Perry County

Dear Mr. Hamer:

This project was previously coordinated with your office on December 8, 2003. At that time the District proposed to mitigate the wetland impacts on-site and a preliminary mitigation plan was included for your review and approval.

The District has revised the wetland impacts for the preferred alignment (see attached memo dated August 20, 2007). Mitigation for the 15.85 acres of impact has been proposed to occur at the Sugar Camp Creek Wetland Mitigation Bank Site in Franklin County. The appropriate off-site, in-basin ratios have been applied requiring 62.01 acres of mitigation. This project is being processed as a Standard Review Action.

In accordance with IDOT Wetlands Action Plan, we are requesting your written concurrence of the impacts and proposed mitigation at the Sugar Camp Creek Mitigation Bank Site.

If you have any questions, please contact Barb Traeger at 785-0202.

Sincerely,

Eric E. Harm, P.E.
Interim Engineer of Design and Environment

Barbara H. Stevens

By: Barbara H. Stevens
Chief of Environment

Enclosure

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