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WELCOME



Final Environmental Impact Statement

What is NEPA?

The National Environmental Policy Act of 1970 requires the preparation of an environmental analysis for federal actions or undertakings using federal funds.

NEPA Requirements:

NEPA requires the federal government to use all practicable means to create and maintain conditions under which man and nature can exist in productive harmony. NEPA requires federal agencies to incorporate environmental considerations in their planning and decision-making through a systematic interdisciplinary approach. Specifically, all federal agencies are to prepare detailed statements (Environmental Impact Statements) assessing the environmental impact of and alternatives to major federal actions significantly affecting the environment. NEPA-related hearings or public meetings are required. The lead agencies must also consider all comments from the public and other parties received during the formal comment period.

What is an EIS?

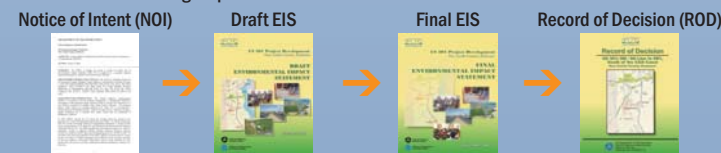
An Environmental Impact Statement is an assessment of the environmental impacts of various alternatives to a project. An EIS is required by the federal government under NEPA for certain federal actions that could have a significant impact on the natural, socioeconomic, or cultural environment.

An EIS is a full disclosure document that details the process through which a transportation project was developed and includes the following important sections:

- Purpose and Need
- Alternatives (Including No-Build)
- Affected Environment
- Environmental Consequences
- Comments and Coordination

The EIS Process:

The EIS process includes the following steps:



Current NEPA/EIS Status:

- The Notice of Intent (NOI) is published in the Federal Register by the lead Federal agency and signals the initiation of the process. The NOI for the US 301 EIS was published on February 3, 2005 in the Federal Register.
- The Draft EIS was circulated in November 2006
- Public Workshop sessions were held in June, September, and December 2005 and in February and April 2006
- Public Hearing sessions were conducted on January 8 and 9, 2007.
- The Final EIS, dated November 2007, was circulated on December 14, 2007.
- The Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) approved the Record of Decision (ROD) on April 30, 2008.
- FHWA authorized Right-of-Way Acquisition in June 2008 and Final Design in September 2008 for the US 301 Project.

Resource Agency Coordination

What is NEPA?

DelDOT continues to work with the Environmental Resource and Regulatory Agencies on refining the Selected Alternative in a continuing effort to avoid and minimize project impacts, where practicable. Working sessions and field reviews are being and will continue to be conducted during the design and construction phases of the project.

- The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers:
 - ▶ Regulates environmental protection, navigation, flood control, disaster response, and military construction.
 - ▶ Works toward a national goal of "no net loss of wetlands". The Corps works to restore existing wetlands, or to create new ones.
 - ▶ Issues permit for the discharge of dredged or fill material into navigable waters at specified disposal sites.
 - ▶ Makes decisions on whether to grant, deny or set conditions on permits to construct in wetlands. The Corps is required to consider "all factors in the public interest," including economic development and environmental protection
- The **Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)** develops and enforces regulations that protect human health and the environment.
- The **U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service** works to conserve, protect and enhance fish, wildlife, plants, and their habitats
- The **Delaware Department of Natural Resources and Environmental Control (DNREC)** protects and manages Delaware's vital natural resources and habitats, protects public health and safety, and provides quality outdoor recreation.
- The **State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO)** works to protect and preserve Delaware's cultural resources. They are concerned about effects to Delaware's historic and archaeological resources.
- The **Delaware Department of Agriculture** works to sustain and promote the viability of food, fiber, and agricultural industries in Delaware. In part, this is accomplished by working to preserve and protect farmland through the Farmland Preservation Program, agricultural districts and easements.

Cost Estimates and Funding Options

- The current cost estimate, developed in 2007 for the Selected Alternative, Green North + Spur Road, is \$704 million (inflated \$'s)
- The project goal has been, and continues to be, to fund the US 301 project primarily with bonds supported by US 301 toll revenues, thus attempting to minimize the project's impact on the State Transportation Trust Fund (TTF) and the Statewide Transportation Program.
- In November 2007, DelDOT prepared a Financial Analysis that supported this approach and concluded that toll revenue bonds were a feasible funding option.
 - ▶ The Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) conducted an independent review of DelDOT's Cost Estimates and Financial Analysis, and determined that the estimates, analysis and results were reasonable.
- Economic conditions have changed dramatically in the last year, thus DelDOT is in the process of updating all project cost estimates and will subsequently be updating the Financial Analysis of funding options for the new US 301 Project. Based on the potential refinements to the project that have been developed over the past year, it is anticipated that the estimated project cost will increase.
- The updated Cost Estimates and Financial Analysis will include:
 - ▶ DelDOT's recommendations for the project, after considering comments from the Public Workshop on the Spur Road Alternatives, Spur Road Study Options, and Potential Refinements to New US 301
 - ▶ Anticipated Bond Market conditions, etc.