



INDIANA DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
PUBLIC HEARING
I-69 Evansville to Indianapolis, Indiana
Tier 2 Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS)

Section 2: Oakland City to Washington
(SR 64 near Oakland City to US 50 east of Washington)
March 19, 2009
5:00 PM – 9:00 PM

Pike Central High School, 1810 East State Route 56, Petersburg, Indiana

PUBLIC HEARING INFORMATION PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The purposes of this public hearing are to present the Draft Environmental Impact Statement for the above-referenced project and to obtain public input. Your comments are encouraged and may be submitted in any of the following ways:

- Complete the comment sheet provided.
- Mail comments (using the comment sheet provided or any format of your choice) to:
 Mr. Joseph Leindecker
 Section 2 Project Manager
 P.O. Box 8464
 Evansville, IN 47716
- Provide comments through the project website at www.i69indyevn.org.
- Have your statements recorded by the court recorder this evening at the hearing.

The comment period continues until June 8, 2009. All comments received during this time (including those received tonight) will be given equal consideration.

This Tier 2 Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) has been prepared by the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and the Indiana Department of Transportation (INDOT) for Section 2 of the proposed I-69 Evansville to Indianapolis project. The DEIS recommends a preferred alternative. Upon completion of the Tier 2 study, the Tier 2 Record of Decision (ROD) will be issued specifying the final Tier 2 alignment for this section.

The approximately 29-mile-long, 2,000-foot-wide Section 2 corridor approved in Tier 1 was divided into nine subsections for the development and evaluation

- **Approximately 350-foot-wide right-of-way (will vary depending on alignment and terrain).**
- **4-lane roadway—two 12-foot-wide lanes in each direction.**
- **A depressed median with paved inside shoulders.**
- **11-foot-wide outside shoulders (10 feet paved).**
- **Four interchanges - at SR 61/56 (Petersburg), in North Pike County, in South Daviess County and at US 50 (Washington).**
- **25 overpasses and underpasses to maintain the connectivity of the county road system (includes portions of the four interchanges).**
- **Wildlife corridors at the crossings of Patoka River, Flat Creek, the East Fork of the White River, and the tributary of Jackson Pond. Additional structures – either bridges or large culverts - that will allow wildlife crossings will be provided at Prides Creek, Mud Creek, and Veale Creek.**



of alternatives (see Alternatives Considered). These alternatives were evaluated and a single preferred alternative was ultimately recommended. Design features proposed for Section 2 are shown in the box on page 1.

ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED

Preliminary Screening

After reviewing preliminary input from both the general public and the Community Advisory Committee (CAC), and environmental review agency comments, two alternatives (designated as Alternatives 1 and 2) were selected for presentation at a public information meeting on February 2, 2005. Design refinements followed, which focused on minimizing environmental impacts. These resulted in the consideration of two revised alternatives and 13 different interchange locations/concepts. The resulting Alternatives A and B were presented and discussed at a CAC meeting on August 4, 2005, and subsequently at a public information meeting on August 9, 2005. These alternatives were divided into nine subsections for detailed study and evaluation and are described below.

MAINLINE ALTERNATIVE SUBSECTIONS

The subsection boundaries were selected at major natural barriers, such as the major river crossings--the Patoka River and the East Fork of the White River (which also are county boundary lines). The subsection boundaries were also designated at points where Alternatives A and B intersect in order to be able to connect either Alternative A or B in one subsection with either Alternative A or B in the adjacent subsection.

- **Subsection 1** – The southernmost subsection begins just north of SR 64, which is the northern terminus of the Section 1 Project, and proceeds in a northeasterly direction to the Patoka River and the Gibson/Pike County line. Through the Patoka River National Wildlife Refuge, the corridor narrows to 420 feet. This narrowed corridor, approved in Tier 1, was designated in cooperation with the United States Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) and other agencies to minimize impacts to the Refuge and the Patoka Bottoms area.
- **Subsection 2** - begins at the Patoka River and continues to the northeast to approximately 2,100 feet northeast of CR 125W in Pike County.

- **Subsection 3** -continues to run northeasterly to approximately 400 feet beyond the SR 356 crossing.
- **Subsection 4** - begins at the end of Subsection 3 and runs to the northeast to a point approximately 1,300 feet beyond the Mud Creek crossing.
- **Subsection 5** - continues to the northeast from the end of Subsection 4 and terminates at the East Fork of the White River, which is the Pike/Daviess County line.
- **Subsection 6** – begins at the East Fork of the White River and runs to the northeast to approximately 300 feet beyond the CR 450S crossing.
- **Subsection 7** - begins at the end of Subsection 6 and continues northeasterly to a point approximately 1,200 feet southwest of the intersection of CR 300S and Horrall Road.
- **Subsection 8** - begins at the end of Subsection 7 and continues to the northeast to a point approximately 200 feet beyond the SR 257 crossing.
- **Subsection 9** - The northernmost subsection begins at the end of Subsection 8 and continues to run to the north and terminates approximately 1,000 feet north of existing US 50. It includes the US 50 interchange. The Section 3 portion of I-69 begins at this point and continues to the north.

Allowing a choice of either Alternative A or Alternative B within each of the nine subsections provided a total of 512 unique end-to-end alternative combinations. By selecting the better of the two alignments within each subsection, it was possible to identify a preferred alternative superior to either Alternative A or Alternative B taken as a whole. The preferred alignment alternative in each subsection was determined based on key evaluation criteria, as summarized in the following paragraphs.

PREFERRED ALTERNATIVE ALIGNMENT

The identification of the preferred alternative followed a period of public and resource agency comments on alternatives, a detailed analysis of their ability to meet Purpose and Need, their potential impacts on the natural and human environment, and their costs. Each of these are detailed in the DEIS.



Rationale for Selection of Preferred Alternative

The final alignment alternatives, A and B, consisted of alternatives within the nine sequential subsections of the Section 2 corridor. The preferred alternative has impacts to certain resources (notably forest and streams) which actually are smaller than those for either Alternative A or Alternative B exclusively. The preferred alternative is shown on the large exhibit boards on display at this hearing, and in the DEIS document.

The rationale for the preference for a particular alternative within each subsection is summarized below:

<p>Subsection 1 – Preferred is Alternative A</p> <p>Requires one less residential relocation</p> <p>Has much smaller wetlands impact, and avoids a high-quality wetland at south end of subsection (by going slightly outside of the corridor)</p> <p>Has smaller forest impacts</p> <p>It is slightly further away (50 feet) from the Patoka Bridges Historic District</p>	<p>Subsection 2 – Preferred is Alternative A</p> <p>It has less impact on forests, and wetlands.</p> <p>It requires less right-of-way.</p>
<p>Subsection 3 – Preferred is Alternative A</p> <p>It requires fewer acres of right-of-way.</p> <p>It requires 11 fewer residential relocations, avoiding the residences at the Pride’s Creek residential area.</p> <p>It has significantly smaller forest impacts.</p>	<p>Subsection 4 – Preferred is Alternative A</p> <p>It requires fewer residential displacements.</p> <p>It avoids a good quality emergent and forested wetland complex and impacts fewer wetland acres.</p> <p>It has fewer impacts on forests.</p>
<p>Subsection 5 – Preferred is Alternative A</p> <p>It has fewer impacts on forests.</p> <p>It less adversely affects farming operations by paralleling property lines.</p> <p>Avoids more known archaeological sites.</p>	<p>Subsection 6 – Preferred is Alternative A</p> <p>It requires 6 fewer residential displacements.</p> <p>It has less impact on forests and farmland.</p> <p>Is \$6 to \$8 million less costly.</p>
<p>Subsection 7 – Preferred is Alternative B</p> <p>It has fewer impacts on forests.</p> <p>It does not impact the Bethel Methodist Church or cemetery.</p> <p>Allows CR 50W to remain open.</p>	<p>Subsection 8 – Preferred is Alternative A</p> <p>It requires fewer residential displacements.</p> <p>It avoids a natural spring and an associated emergent and forested wetland complex.</p> <p>It has fewer wetlands impacts.</p>
<p>Subsection 9 – Preferred is Alternative A</p> <p>It impacts far fewer wetlands.</p> <p>It provides a preferable diamond interchange design at US 50.</p> <p>It has fewer impacts on forests.</p>	

Chapter 6 of the Section 2 DEIS, Comparison of Alternatives, describes in detail the rationale for the selection of the preferred alternative alignment



INTERCHANGE ALTERNATIVES

A total of thirteen conceptual interchange locations and concepts were initially considered within Section 2. These were ultimately screened to a final set of four interchange locations for detailed study, as discussed in Chapter 3, Alternatives, of the DEIS. These final four locations are at SR 61/56, North Pike County, South Daviess County, and US 50. Various combinations of some or all of these four locations, termed Interchange Scenarios, were evaluated, with particular emphasis on the local purpose and need goals of safety, truck traffic reduction on local roads, and congestion relief benefits provided by each scenario. These Scenarios were:

- **Scenario 2** – Two interchanges, at SR 61/56 and US 50
- **Scenario 3** – Three interchanges, at SR 61/56, US 50 and South Daviess County
- **Scenario 4** – Three interchanges, at SR 61/56, US 50 and North Pike County
- **Scenario 5** – Four interchanges, SR 61/56, US 50, North Pike County, and South Daviess County.

In all cases, the two scenarios providing three of the four interchanges performed better than the two-interchange scenario, while the scenario providing all four interchanges, Scenario 5, provided the greatest benefits relative to the local purpose and need.

Scenario 5 is the preferred interchange alternative.

The DEIS recommends that all four interchanges in Scenario 5 be constructed. However, in light of near-term budget constraints, the possibility of proceeding with the initial construction of I-69 to include only the two interchanges with the highest projected traffic volumes – at SR 61/56 in Petersburg and at US 50 in Washington - is being considered. The North Pike and South Daviess interchanges and their associated access roads could be phased for construction at a later date as additional funding became available. Note that all impact quantifications presented in the DEIS include the impacts associated with all four of the interchanges. The project costs associated with the North Pike interchange are estimated at \$16.9 to \$18.7 million in Year 2010 dollars. The project costs associated with the South Daviess interchange are estimated to be \$12.4 to \$14.5 million. These estimates of costs include construction, design, and construction inspection. (To preserve the right-of-way needed for these interchanges, the required right-of-way would be acquired at the time of initial construction of the highway.)

SUMMARY OF KEY IMPACTS

The key impacts for the Preferred Alternative, including all four interchanges, are listed in Table 6-14 in Chapter 6 of the DEIS and summarized below. Chapter 6 also provides tables that present, in detail, the potential impacts associated with the Preferred Alternative in comparison with the other build alternatives.

The Preferred Alternative presented in the DEIS includes the provision of local access roads at all known properties that would otherwise be landlocked by the new highway. Both the costs and impacts of all of these local access roads are included in the DEIS cost and impact totals. During final design, a cost-effectiveness evaluation of each of the local access roads will be conducted. Some access roads may not be constructed; but rather the landlocked parcel may be purchased if the cost of the access road would exceed the value of the property to be served. Final decisions on each of the local access roads will not be made until the final design process.

Where the Preferred Alternative passes through the Patoka River National Wildlife Refuge, it will also pass within about 240 feet of the Patoka Bridges Historic District. This Historic District, which consists of two metal bridges dating from 1884 and



Table 1: Impact Summary, Section 2 Summary of Key Impacts

Impact Category	Preferred Alternative
Length (in miles)	28.7
Estimated Total Cost Range (Year 2010 dollars, in millions) – Does not include mitigation costs	\$454.4 - \$552.9
Relocations and Land Use Impacts	
Approximate Right-of-Way to be Acquired (in acres)	1,824
Number of Parcels Partially or Completely Taken	498
Residential Relocations	53
Commercial Relocations	1
Church Relocations	1
Other Structures (barns, garages, sheds, etc.)	105
Farmland Required (in acres)	1,195
Local Roads System	
Public Road Crossings of I-69 (overpasses or underpasses)	25
Public Road Closures	12
Natural Resources	
Floodplain (in acres)	196
Open Water Impacts - Ponds and Lakes (in acres)	3.8
Wetlands (in acres), including Forested Wetlands	27.5
Upland Forest Taken (in acres)	213
Core Forest Reduction (in acres) ¹	60.8
Other	
Historic Properties Adversely Affected	1
Hazardous Materials (Potential Sites)	None
<p>¹ Core Forest is forested land which is at least 100 meters from the edge of the forest tract; Core Forest Reduction represents the number of acres of forest which will no longer be at least 100 meters from the forest edge. Typically, the trees that were classified as core forest remain, but those that are left within 100 meters of the new highway will be classified as edge forests rather than core.</p>	

1924 and the portion of County Road 300 West between them, is listed on the National Register of Historic Places. The Preferred Alternative for I-69 will not physically impact these historic properties in any way, but will create a visual impact for visitors to the District that is considered to be an adverse effect.

COST ANALYSIS

Detailed preliminary project cost estimates were prepared for both Alternative A and Alternative B. Table 2, on the following page, provides the cost estimate ranges for Alternatives A and B as compared to the Preferred Alternative. Chapter 6.2.2, Comparison of Costs, provides more detailed information in each of the nine subsections. All costs in the table below include all four recommended interchanges.

A range of design criteria are being considered for Section 2. The principal variable is the highway median width, which may be from 60 to 84 feet. The cost ranges shown in Table 2 on the following page reflect application of this range of design criteria.



Table 2: Impact Summary, Section 2 Cost Analysis

Cost Estimates (in millions of Year 2010 Dollars)

	Alternative A	Alternative B	Preferred
Construction	\$387.2 - \$478.9	\$387.7 - \$472.5	\$385.0 - \$474.6
Design/Engineering	\$18.7 - \$21.7	\$18.6 - \$21.4	\$18.5 - \$21.5
Administration	\$28.4 - \$34.2	\$28.4 - \$33.8	\$28.2 - \$33.9
Right-of-Way	\$18.4	\$19.2	\$18.2
Utility Relocation	\$4.6	\$4.9	\$4.6
Estimated Total	\$457.1 - \$557.9	\$458.7 - \$551.7	\$454.4 - \$552.9

Note: Totals may not add due to rounding.

MITIGATION MEASURES

Environmental agencies and the public were instrumental in providing assistance to avoid and minimize impacts upon both the human and natural environment, and have helped develop many of the mitigation commitments made in Tier 1. These commitments have been retained and more have been added. The Section 2 major mitigation initiatives are shown on Table 3, which appears as Table S.8-1 in the DEIS.

Table 3: Impact Summary, Section 2 Mitigation Measures

Major Initiatives	Description
Context Sensitive Solutions (CSS)/ Community Advisory Committees	CSS is a collaborative, interdisciplinary approach that involves all stakeholders to develop a transportation facility that fits its physical setting and preserves scenic, aesthetic, historic, and environmental resources, while maintaining safety and mobility. CSS is an approach that considers the total context within which a transportation improvement project will exist, which has been implemented through Tier 1 and Tier 2 EIS development and will continue through subsequent design.
Indiana Bat Hibernacula	INDOT and FHWA will attempt to purchase and protect hibernacula (winter habitat) for the Indiana bat.
Wetland Mitigation	INDOT and FHWA will replace wetlands impacted by the Preferred Alternative in accordance with INDOT's Wetlands MOU. Sites have been secured and mitigation construction is underway for some sections in advance of highway construction.
Forest Mitigation	INDOT and FHWA will mitigate upland forest impacted by the Preferred Alternative at a ratio of 3:1. Multiple sites have been secured for this mitigation effort.
I-69 Community Planning Program	INDOT and FHWA have developed a program that establishes a regional strategy for managing growth.
Geographic Information System (GIS)	INDOT and FHWA have developed and are maintaining a statewide GIS Atlas with over 170 different layers. This Atlas is available on the Indiana Map website (http://www.in.gov/igic/projects/indianamap/index.html).



Major Initiatives	Description
Update County Historic Surveys	INDOT and FHWA will provide financial and technical assistance to IDNR to support the completion of field surveys and publication of County Interim Reports.
Biological Surveys on Wildlife and Plants	INDOT has worked with resource agencies to conduct biological surveys for threatened and endangered species. Follow-up surveys for the Indiana bat were initiated for Section 1 prior to and during construction. The same will apply for all sections including Section 2.
Bridging of Floodplains	INDOT and FHWA will bridge the Patoka River and Flat Creek floodplains. This has been incorporated into the Section 2 alternatives.
Distance Learning	INDOT and FHWA will continue to support distance learning opportunities for students in Southwest Indiana as part of the public outreach for transportation projects.

REMAINING STEPS

DEIS Review Period. The DEIS has been published and is available for public comment through June 8, 2009. FHWA and INDOT will consider all comments received during this comment period and will prepare responses to all substantive comments received and incorporate them into the Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS).

FEIS Issuance. After review of comments on this DEIS, it will be revised as necessary. Coordination with federal and state environmental review agencies will be an important part of this review process. It is anticipated that a FEIS will be issued by the end of 2009.

Record of Decision (ROD). No sooner than 30 days after the Notice of Availability of the FEIS in the Federal Register, FHWA intends to issue a Tier 2 Record of Decision (ROD) for Section 2. It is anticipated that this will occur during early 2010. The ROD will document the decision reached by FHWA at the conclusion of the Tier 2 NEPA process in Section 2. Issuance of the Tier 2 ROD will allow FHWA and INDOT to proceed with federally-funded final design and land purchases, and will allow INDOT to proceed with construction in Section 2 of I-69 once all necessary permits have been obtained.

