

PUBLIC NOTICE and OPPORTUNITY FOR COMMENT PROPOSED *DE MINIMIS* SECTION 4(F) FINDING

Des. No. 2000761 - SR 550 over Maria Creek, Knox County, Indiana

The Indiana Department of Transportation (INDOT) and Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) intend to proceed with a bridge rehabilitation project involving the SR 550 bridge over Maria Creek in Knox County, Indiana. The project will have both federal and state funding. This project is located on SR 550, approximately 1.08 miles east of US 41, in a rural portion of Knox County, Indiana

As part of the environmental evaluation of the community and natural resource impacts of the proposed project, any potential recreation areas must be identified and evaluated for protection under Section 4(f) of the Department of Transportation Act of 1966, 49 USC 303(c). As a publicly-owned park, Emison Mill Park is considered to be a Section 4(f) resource.

Emison Mill Park is located on SR 550 between the towns of Emison and Bruceville in Knox County. As the design for the SR 550 bridge rehabilitation project has progressed, INDOT has determined there will be property acquisition from the park. This consists of re-acquisition of apparent existing right-of-way and new right-of-way. Apparent existing right-of-way is land which appears to be right-of-way but INDOT cannot confirm ownership. In this case, this would consist of the shoulder, guardrail and roadway side slope and ditch. There is approximately 0.11 acre of apparent existing right-of-way that will be re-acquired from the park. Additionally, 0.03 acre of new right-of-way will be acquired from the park property between the existing parking lot and the roadway. None of the area to be re-acquired or acquired is currently in recreational use, rather it is the grassed area and ditch between the parking lot and the roadway. Access to the park will not be impacted by the project.

The acquisition of property from the park is anticipated to be a *de minimis* impact. A *de minimis* impact is one that, after taking into account any measure to minimize harm (such as avoidance, minimization, mitigation or enhancement measures), the project will not adversely affect the activities, features, or attributes qualifying a park, recreation area, or refuge for protection under Section 4(f). A *de minimis* impact determination requires public involvement and concurrence from the official with jurisdiction. In this case, the official with jurisdiction is Knox County Parks and Recreation Superintendent.

Information on this proposed action and its impacts, avoidance, minimization, mitigation or enhancement measures is available by contacting Chris Meador, HNTB Corporation, via telephone, email, or letter at cmeador@hntb.com, 317-917-5338, or 111 Monument Circle, Suite 1200, Indianapolis, IN 46204 or Troy Arnold, INDOT Project Manager, at tarnold1@indot.in.gov or 812-895-7348, or INDOT Vincennes District, 3650 South U.S. Highway 41, Vincennes, IN 47591. Comments must be submitted on or before September 10, 2021. Comments will become part of the official record and will be considered when making future project related decisions.