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CHAPTER 4 – AFFECTED ENVIRONMENT

4.1 Introduction

Minor editorial changes have been made to this section since the publication of the Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS). “Survey study area” was added to **Table 4-1** to describe the area used for the Business Survey.

The purpose of **Chapter 4, Affected Environment**, is to give a general overview of the existing social, economic, and natural characteristics of the I-69 Section 6 project area. This general overview is intended to provide the context for the impacts described in **Chapter 5, Environmental Consequences**. Information presented in this chapter was derived from a number of sources including field surveys, public and agency input, literature reviews, and existing geographic information system (GIS) data. Throughout this EIS, analyses have focused within specific geographic areas, called study areas, appropriate for analysis of each type of potential impact. **Table 4.1-1** briefly describes each of these study areas and the resources or disciplines in which they are used.

Within **Chapter 4, Affected Environment**, and **Chapter 5, Environmental Consequences**, the socioeconomic study area, as defined in **Table 4.1-1**, is used for the analysis of all social and economic impacts unless otherwise noted. Most natural resources are described and impacts analyzed within the field survey study area. These resources are described and were field verified in that portion of the corridor which is crossed by or is within approximately 50 feet of one or more of the alternatives.

Some resources are analyzed within the wider corridor. In such cases (e.g., core forest impacts) the resources extend outside of the field survey study area. The areas of potential effect for above-ground and archaeological resources are determined based upon federal regulations governing the analysis of impacts to cultural resources. The indirect impact study area and geographic scope are determined based upon federal regulations governing the analysis of indirect and cumulative impacts.



Table 4.1-1: Definition of Study Areas

Name	Definition	Applicable Disciplines
Purpose and Need Study Area	Four-county area including Morgan, Johnson, Hendricks, and Marion counties (see Section 2.3).	Needs Assessment, Project Performance Measures, Energy Impact Analysis
Socioeconomic Study Area	The set of all census tract block groups that are either impacted by one of the I-69 Section 6 alternatives or are included within the approved I-69 Section 6 corridor from Tier 1 (see Figure 4.2-1). Some data sets are not available at block group level, and in such cases the representative census tract, county, and/or traffic analysis zones (TAZ) were used.	Socioeconomic Data
Corridor	The Section 6 portion of the I-69 corridor is generally 2,000 feet in width other than two locations as approved in the Tier 1 Record of Decision (ROD) (see Figure 1-3). There are two locations in Morgan County (at Indian Creek and at Stotts Creek) where the Section 6 portion of the I-69 corridor narrows.	Natural Resources
Field Survey Study Area	The field survey study area is a boundary that includes all alternative right of way footprints plus an approximate 50-foot buffer from these alternatives. The field survey study area is the area investigated for natural resources such as wetlands, streams, forests, and wildlife habitat.	Natural Resources
Area of Potential Effects (APE) - Above-ground	The APE is defined as an area centered on existing SR 37 and is generally not less than 4,000 feet wide in the vicinity of the alternative mainlines. It is generally at least 1,000 feet from local access roads and I-465. In some areas, the APE expands to incorporate any potential physical, temporary, and long-term visual or audible impacts or alterations to aboveground National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) potentially eligible resources. The APE was also expanded to incorporate potential interchanges, grade separations, and intersection improvements (see Section 5.13.2.2).	Aboveground Historic and Cultural Resources
Area of Potential Effects (APE) - Archaeological	For archaeological resources, the APE is defined through consultation with the Indiana Department of Natural Resources-State Historic Preservation Officer (IDNR-SHPO) as the right of way for the preferred alternative (see Section 5.14.2.2).	Archaeological Resources
Indirect Impact Study Area	The traffic analysis zones (TAZs) associated with the I-69 Section 6 geographic scope in Morgan, Johnson, Hendricks, and Marion counties projected to have additional growth in population and/or employment associated with Section 6 of I-69 (see Section 5.24.3 and Figures 5.24-3 and 5.24.4).	Indirect Impacts
Geographic Scope	Traffic analysis zones in Morgan, Johnson, Hendricks, and Marion counties (see Section 5.24.3).	Cumulative Impacts



Name	Definition	Applicable Disciplines
Survey Study Area	One-mile buffer either side of the existing SR 37 center line. Business and religious organizations within the survey study area were contacted and requested to complete the Business Survey (See Appendix A).	Business Needs and Religious Organizations Survey

The following topics are discussed in this chapter. If relevant, the corresponding study area(s) are shown in parentheses:

- **Section 4.2 – Human Environment** (community impact assessment) describes the social, economic, and physical characteristics within the I-69 Section 6 study area as well as the agricultural amenities (socioeconomic study area).
- **Section 4.3 – Natural Environment** describes the geology, water resources, and ecosystems within I-69 Section 6 field survey study area (field survey study area, corridor).
- **Section 4.4 – Cultural Resources** describes the various historical and archaeological resources in the I-69 Section 6 area of potential effects (APE-archaeology and APE-aboveground).
- **Section 4.5 – Hazardous Materials** identifies known hazardous materials data collected from the governmental resources and field surveys (corridor).
- **Section 4.6 – Air Quality** describes the general conditions of the existing air quality and identifies areas of nonattainment and maintenance. There is not a single “study area” for analyses of air quality attainment. Individual counties, groups of counties, and (in some cases) individual townships can be determined to be areas of nonattainment.
- **Section 4.7 – Highway Noise** characterizes the current highway noise environment within the study area and identifies areas that already experience noise levels that exceed FHWA and INDOT standards (corridor).