

## CHAPTER VII

# Agency and Public Comments/Responses

### A. Public Hearing

This section describes the comments that were received at the December 2, 2004 open house public hearing held at the Concordia Community Center in Concordia, Missouri for the EA as well as other public and agency comments that were received for SIU 2.

In general, various individuals were concerned about fair compensation, increased noise associated with the new facility and the size and scope of the frontage roads. Some of the comment forms referenced various final design issues such as minor changes in the configuration of the frontage roads. Individuals were also interested to know when the frontage roads would be constructed.

More specifically, written comments were received about the configuration of various interchanges as described below.

#### Route M/O

COMMENT: One written comment questioned the location of a potential wetland in the southeast quadrant of this interchange as described on page II-8 of the DEA. In addition, this commenter expressed concern about devaluing the 6.6 acre commercial tract by providing no access to the property for use or maintenance.

RESPONSE: The National Wetland Inventory (NWI) map as shown in Figure III-6A, DEA, does indicate the presence of two areas in the southeast quadrant identified as Palustrine Unconsolidated Bottom – Intermittently/Temporarily flooded (PUBGh). These areas were intentionally avoided during the preliminary design process. However during the subsequent wetland delineation, it was determined that these two areas are not jurisdictional. If the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers agrees with this determination and issues the Section 404 Permit, the configuration of the outer road could be moved approximately 200 feet back to the standard configuration during the final design process. In response to the devaluing of property, MoDOT would not land lock private property. The configuration of the frontage roads would be more specifically evaluated during the final design process

COMMENT: The same commenter expressed concern about a lake in the northeast quadrant of this interchange and the potential impact to the lake associated with construction of the frontage road.

RESPONSE: MoDOT recognizes the location of this lake and would attempt to avoid it during the final design process. If the lake can be avoided, best management practices and proper controls would be installed to ensure that the quality of the lake is not impacted during construction. These control measures are described in Section E. 3 of Chapter IV of the DEA. If the lake cannot be avoided, MoDOT would coordinate with the

landowner regarding any property impact as described in Section A of Chapter IV of the DEA.

#### Route T – Aullville

COMMENT: One written comment made note of a cattle underpass at this location. The commenter noted that the cattle underpass would need to be extended due to the widening of the mainline.

RESPONSE: The Environmental Assessment recognizes the presence of the cattle underpass at this location. During the final design process, MoDOT would coordinate with the landowner at this location to determine the future status of this structure.

#### Route 13 Higginsville

COMMENT: One comment received through the court reporter at the Public Hearing indicated that the City of Higginsville has completed a new comprehensive plan. The commenter noted that the Higginsville Comprehensive Plan does consider the development of land at this interchange.

RESPONSE: A copy of the Higginsville Comprehensive Plan has been obtained by the study team and was evaluated as part of this Final EA. The proposed improvements at the I-70/Route 13 interchange are compatible with the future land use plans of the City of Higginsville.

#### U.S. Route 65

COMMENT: One written comment received for this interchange indicated a preference for a non-controlled access design. The commenter indicated a preference for a diamond that had enough space to accommodate the future addition of loop ramps, or a partial cloverleaf design leaving two of the current loop ramps in place.

RESPONSE: A non-controlled access design for this interchange was evaluated during the course of the EA process. However, based on a detailed evaluation of the future traffic scenarios and cost, the standard diamond interchange was determined to be the most effective configuration at this location. MoDOT would retain ownership of the current right of way at this location should the future addition of loop ramps become necessary or deemed appropriate.

#### Route 135/41

COMMENT: Six comment forms were received for this interchange. All of the comment forms used the same form letter that included several concerns about the Preferred Alternative at this location relative to the Lakeview Subdivision. The Lakeview Subdivision is located outside of the northeast quadrant of this interchange. In general, residents of the Lakeview Subdivision expressed concern about traffic, noise, safety, visibility, potential impacts to common “green areas” and decreasing home values. More specifically, the residents of Lakeview expressed concerned about connecting the frontage road into the subdivision, pollution impacts to the two neighborhood lakes resulting from construction and potential impacts to the dam of the ten acre lake by bringing the frontage road closer to this area.

RESPONSE: The intent of the conceptual design of this interchange was not to bring frontage road traffic into or through the Lakeview Subdivision. When the interchange was designed, an access point, off of the northeast quadrant frontage road to the dead end of Lakeview Court Drive, was designed to provide access for these residents. However, if this access point is not desired, it would not be incorporated into the final design for this interchange.

Impacts to the dam and the lake would be avoided. As described in Section E. 3 of Chapter IV of the DEA, silt and sediment controls and best management practices would be implemented during construction to avoid impacts to surface water bodies. MoDOT construction practices are regulated by the U.S. EPA and the Missouri Department of Natural Resources under the National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permit as identified in Appendix G of the DEA. Specific controls and mitigation measures are discussed in Section E of Chapter IV of the DEA. The details of the engineering design, best management practices, silt and sedimentation controls will be determined during the final design process.

In response to comments about the subdivisions adjoining “green area”, this area is currently an agricultural field that remains in private ownership. Currently, there are no zoning or land classifications that preserve this land as a designated, “green area”. Commercial development in this area could also potentially negatively affect the subdivisions adjoining “green area”.

## **B. Agency Comments**

The Missouri Department of Natural Resources (MDNR) was the only agency to provide comments on the DEA. The MDNR letter included two main comments. The MDNR suggested that the EA note the potential for geologic structures in this area including caves and coal mines. In addition, the MDNR suggested that the EA address the issue of seismicity.

In response to the MDNR, the following wording is hereby incorporated into the Final EA. No known caves or coal mines were identified within SIU 2. Mississippian limestone is present in the eastern portion of SIU 2 and it is possible that previously unknown geologic features such as caves and karst may be present in the vicinity of the project area. Limited coal deposits were identified in the vicinity of the project area, however; there are no known mines located along the SIU 2 corridor. The potential for small unknown mines does exist in the vicinity of the project area.

The USGS Seismic Hazard Map for the State of Missouri indicates that the project is in an area with a low potential for earthquakes and it is not anticipated that earthquakes present a significant impact to the proposed project. In addition, seismic issues will be taken into consideration during the final design process.

STATE OF MISSOURI      Bob Holden, Governor • Stephen M. Mahford, Director  
**DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES**

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DEC 10 2004

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Mr. Kevin Keith  
Chief Engineer  
Missouri Department of Transportation  
P.O. Box 270  
Jefferson City, MO 65102

Re: Draft Environmental Assessment, Interstate 70 Corridor, Odessa to Boonville,  
Missouri, Second Tier Section 2

Dear Messrs. Neumann and Keith:

Thank you for the opportunity to review and respond to the Draft Environmental Assessment (DEA) for the Interstate 70 Second Tier study for Section 2. The department's comments on this DEA are provided below. We ask that these comments be addressed as part of our comments on the DEA.

Over the past five years, the Department of Natural Resources, the Missouri Department of Transportation and other agencies have worked closely to develop the least environmentally damaging plans for expansion of I-70. The result has been an environmental document that has adequately addressed environmental impacts associated with the project. The majority of the department's program staff have determined that the environmental issues of interest to their program for Section 2 have been adequately addressed by the DEA.

The department's Geological Survey and Resource Assessment Division (GSRAD) suggested the following issues be addressed prior finalization of this Assessment. The EA should note that there is the potential for geologic structures in this area. The reason for the current limited number of documented structures is due to the lack of detailed geologic mapping in this area. In areas where detailed mapping is complete, previously unmapped structures are usually noted. Therefore, the potential for previously unmapped structures needs to be considered for this area.

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Page III-34 states that no karst features are present in the Section 2 study area. While caves are not currently known within the margins of the study area, the presence of Mississippian limestones indicates the potential for previously unknown karst features to be encountered. This possibility should be considered as project planners begin the design phase of the project.

The DEA does not mention whether mines were identified in the study area, although the document does reference the existence of coal. With the presence of coal in the area, there is potential for small undermined areas to be encountered during construction. The coal geologist with GSRAD, David C. Smith, indicates that there are, at a minimum, 5000 coal mines in the state that are not in GSRAD's databases. The potential for areas undermined by coal mining must be considered.

The DEA does not mention seismicity. While this region has lower potential for damage due to seismic activity, this issue should still be addressed.

We appreciate the opportunity to provide comments on this transportation project. We ask that these comments be included as part of the Final EA, in order to better formalize the comment process. If you have any questions or need clarification, please contact me or Ms. Jane Beetem, phone number 573-522-2401. Her address for correspondence is Department of Natural Resources, P.O. Box 176, Jefferson City, MO 65102. Thank you.

Sincerely,

DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES



Stephen Mahfood  
Director

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