



## **Public Notice – I-70 Missouri River Bridge at Rocheport**

**Boone County** – On May 18, 2020, MoDOT completed a National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) re-evaluation of the 2005 Second Tier Final Environmental Assessment (EA), Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI), and Final Section 4(f) Evaluation of Section of Independent Utility 3 for the replacement of I-70 Missouri River Bridge near Rocheport, MO. Since that time, design has progressed, resulting in some minor changes to the project and anticipated impacts. These changes are as follows.

### **Study Area**

As previously documented, the study area for the NEPA re-evaluation measures 300 feet on either side of the existing MoDOT right-of-way (R/W) and encompasses both a north alignment alternative and a south alignment alternative, carried forward from the original study. Due to additional design details, the NEPA study area has been adjusted to extend approximately 200 feet beyond the previous boundary in a small section, adding approximately 5 acres to the study area on the west side of the Missouri River. This adjustment is needed to accommodate a guide bank extension that was not included during the re-evaluation effort.

### **Wetland Impacts**

Completion of this project will require a temporary access road and staging areas. These areas were not known at the time of the NEPA re-evaluation, but as design has progressed concepts for these features have been developed within the 300-foot NEPA boundary. It is expected that the temporary access roads and staging areas will be in place for an approximate three-year construction period, from 2021 to the end of 2024. All temporary access roads and staging areas will be within the 300-foot NEPA boundary and will be removed at the completion of the project to return these areas to pre-construction conditions, to the greatest extent practicable. Section 404 permitting for wetland impacts is currently in progress, and as before, avoidance and minimization efforts during the final design phase of the project may reduce the total impacts.

### **Section 6(f) – Taylor’s Landing Access**

Section 6(f), the Land and Water Conservation Fund Act, was enacted to preserve, develop, and assure accessibility to outdoor recreation resources by, in part, providing funds to the states in planning, acquisition, and development of needed land and water areas and facilities. Taylor’s Landing Access, owned by the Missouri Department of Conservation (MDC), is a 9.59-acre property located north of the existing Rocheport bridge, adjacent to MoDOT R/W and was purchased with Section 6(f) Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) monies. Following

completion of the NEPA re-evaluation, updated survey data illustrated that the boundary of the Taylor's Landing Access property abuts the MoDOT R/W. Based on preliminary roadway and bridge layouts, a small portion of the Taylor's Landing Access property will be needed, regardless of final roadway and bridge layouts. Approximately 1.16 acres, 12% of the 9.59-acre parcel, will likely be needed for the I-70 Rocheport Bridge project, on the south edge of the property. This 1.16-acre area is wooded, often flooded, and furthest from the closed boat ramp. The remaining 8.43 acres will still be a viable outdoor recreation unit that will still be accessible to the public as it is today via the Missouri River. MoDOT has been coordinating with the MDC, the Missouri Department of Natural Resources (MDNR), and the National Park Service (NPS) regarding the partial conversion of this property. In order to compensate for the permanent loss of 1.16 acre from Taylor's Landing Access, MoDOT will acquire 1.16 acre of property that offers similar recreational opportunities for transfer to MDC. That effort is in progress.

#### **Section 4(f)**

Section 4(f) of the U.S. Department of Transportation Act of 1966 (49 USC 303) protects publicly owned parks, recreation areas, wildlife refuges, waterfowl refuges, and significant historic and archeological resources. Since the NEPA re-evaluation impacts to two Section 4(f) properties – Taylor's Landing Access and Big Muddy National Fish and Wildlife Refuge Overton Bottoms North and South Units – has changed.

**Taylor's Landing Access:** Previously, no permanent impacts to Taylor's Landing Access were anticipated, but now a small portion of the Taylor's Landing property will be needed and permanent impacts for bridge pier placement will occur. As noted, the 1.16-acre area is often flooded, and furthest from the closed boat ramp, and the remaining 8.52 acres will still be a viable outdoor recreation unit that will still be accessible to the public as it is today via the Missouri River.

In compliance with Section 4(f) and its implementing regulations codified at 23 CFR Part 774, the FHWA in cooperation with MoDOT provides public notice of its proposal to retain the Section 4(f) *de minimis* effect determination on Taylor's Landing Access; and to provide the opportunity for public review and comment of this proposed determination.

#### **Big Muddy National Fish and Wildlife Refuge Overton Bottoms North and South Units:**

Previously, impacts to Big Muddy National Fish and Wildlife Refuge (NFWR) Overton Bottoms North and South units included permanent fill for additional lanes and portions of the resource around the bridge would be temporarily closed during bridge construction. Additional design completed since the NEPA re-evaluation includes extension of an existing guide bank that is located within Big Muddy NFWR Overton Bottoms North Unit. It is anticipated that the existing guide bank will need to be extended further into the Overton Bottoms North Unit to protect a new abutment structure. The land use within this extended area includes the scour hole located in Overton Bottoms North Unit. There are no environmentally sensitive resources within the expanded boundary, including historic or archaeological resources and protected species habitat.

In compliance with Section 4(f) and its implementing regulations codified at 23 CFR Part 774, the FHWA in cooperation with MoDOT provides public notice of its proposal to retain the Section 4(f) *de minimis* effect determination on Big Muddy National Fish and Wildlife Refuge Overton

Bottoms North and South Units; and to provide the opportunity for public review and comment of this proposed determination.

Previously completed documents, including the NEPA Re-Evaluation, may be reviewed by going to the project website: <http://www.improvei70.org>

Individuals and organizations wishing to comment on the aforementioned project updates and/or regarding the revised *de minimis* impact to Taylor's Landing Access may submit them to MoDOT's Central District in the following ways:

- Website: [www.modot.org/modot-central-district](http://www.modot.org/modot-central-district)
- E-mail: [brandi.baldwin@modot.mo.gov](mailto:brandi.baldwin@modot.mo.gov)
- Facebook: [www.facebook.com/MoDOTCentral](http://www.facebook.com/MoDOTCentral)
- Twitter: [www.twitter.com/MoDOT\\_Central](http://www.twitter.com/MoDOT_Central)
- Phone: (888) 275-6636

Comments will be taken until Monday March 8, 2021.

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For more information, call MoDOT in Jefferson City at 888-275-6636 or visiting [www.modot.org/modot-central-district](http://www.modot.org/modot-central-district)

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