



**Meeting
Notes**

Attendees: Ray Faucher MaineDOT
Judy Lindsey MaineDOT
David Gardner, MaineDOT
Deane VanDusen, MaineDOT
Ben Condon, Maine DOT
Mark Hasselmann FHWA
Jay Clement, USACE
Wende Mahaney, USFWS
Steve Timpano, MDIFW
Art Spiess, MHPC
Jesse Damon, MaineDEP
Raquel Goodrich, MNAP
Paul Lariviere, Maine Tomorrow
Lisa Standley, VHB
Michael Paiewonsky, VHB
Mike Servetas, VHB
Others

Date/Time: 12 March 2007

Project No.: 06520.02

Place: MaineDOT

Re: Interagency Meeting

Notes taken by: M. Paiewonsky, L. Standley, J. Lindsey

Ray Faucher introduced the meeting, stating that this would kick off the next phase of the ACTS, which would focus on the Corps' "Highway Methodology" process and getting to concurrence on a LEDPA before proceeding into the FEIS.

After Ray Faucher's introduction, L. Standley gave a brief PowerPoint presentation on the history and current status of the ACTS. She described the project history, the development of four north-south corridors, the Proposed Action, and, for Segment 4 (Caribou Bypass) and Segment 7 (Presque Isle Bypass), the primary questions that came out of the SDEIS (See attached PowerPoint presentation for questions.). The current phase of the study will work to address these questions. She also presented proposed revisions to the ACOE Basic Project Purpose statements for Segment 4 and Segment 7 that emphasize the relationship of these segments to the overall north-south corridors, and establish measurable criteria for determining the extent to which an alignment option would satisfy the Corps Basic Project Purpose. These revised statements will be sent to the Corps for concurrence. L. Standley concluded by summarizing the additional resource identification work that had been done since the SDEIS, and noted that the VHB team is currently working on developing new alignment options in response to agency comments.

The VHB team then invited the agencies to gather around a large-scale map of the Segment 7 corridor, showing updated resource information and SDEIS alignment options. L. Standley explained the rationale for the location of these alignment options, particularly that they needed to be east of

(and not fragment) the residential development of Presque Isle, which reaches its easterly extent along Academy Street extending east to Centerline Road. She invited the resource agencies to comment, and to propose additional alignment options that they would like to see considered.

Discussion Points

➤ Modified Project Purpose

- W. Mahaney asked J. Clement how the revised Purpose statements, and specific objectives, related to the overall project purpose. She noted that she was pleased to see that the revised statement referred to the overall north-south corridors.
- J. Clement noted that Presque Isle is the most significant bottleneck in Aroostook County and that the purpose should state that this is in Presque Isle. He felt that the revised statement was sufficiently broad. He also asked whether alignment options could be eliminated because they only partially met the objectives.
- M. Hasselmann asked if the NEPA purpose would need to be revised. L. Standley responded that modifying the purpose statement is consistent with NEPA, and could be done in the FEIS, if required.

➤ Segment 7 Alignment Options

- The group discussed criteria used to lay out the alignment options. R. Faucher noted that one of the criteria was to avoid really valuable farmland, particularly the large field on the corner of Centerline and Easton Roads (the Lovely Farm). Greg Smith, a large-scale local farmer, has identified this parcel as his best producing farm of his entire operation and probably the best farmland in the Study Area.
- J. Clement asked if there was any difference in the level of archaeological impact between the alignments.
- A. Spiess noted that archaeological investigations have been done only for Option 2. He also indicated that the only areas of high archaeological sensitivity are potentially along the Aroostook River, in the area of the proposed bridge crossings.
- R. Goodrich asked how Rare Species were identified and if there were any on the alignments. Lisa stated that MNAP polygon data was shown on the figures and when a preferred alternative was identified further field analysis may be required
- M. Servetas discussed proposed modifications to the Centerline Road alignment option, including design modifications to avoid the hill at the south end (swinging around to the east versus a 30- to 60-foot cut at the top to satisfy geometric criteria). He also discussed several proposed shorter bypass options that would depart Route 1 near the RR crossing and swing east to Centerline Road. He noted that truck climbing lanes are not feasible at the hill. Two historic properties would be impacted by the proposed alignment.
- J. Clement asked if the significant cuts could be avoided by constructing truck lanes and if trucks lanes could be mitigation for the 60-foot cuts.
- S. Timpano asked what the highest travel time difference was between the alignments and access to and from in-town Presque Isle. L. Standley stated the difference is about five minutes from north to south and there was no time difference from in-town to the bypass. She explained that the Main St. businesses were concerned about the distance from the bypass to in-town, the further out from town the bypass is located the less likely travelers will stop at in-town businesses.
- J. Clement stated that the Corps believes that Centerline Road is a feasible option. He questioned why it needs to be limited access, rather than just an improved two-lane road.

- J. Clement noted that he understood EPA's desire to look at a shorter bypass was to look at a bypass that extended from Route 163 /167to Route 1 north of Presque Isle.
- J. Clement stated the Centerline Road analysis must be "substantially realistically discussed in EIS". The goal of controlled access is good for reducing Secondary and Cumulative impacts. A Centerline Road Upgrade would be a substantial impact to the area. He stated that a "naïve person" would believe that any improvement would be a plus and would substantially meet the Basic Project Purpose and not be counter- active to the Needs. The reality in Presque Isle and Aroostook County traffic is that any improvement would be an improvement to what is available now. He indicated that the EIS needs to focus on "what is required" to address the purpose and need, rather than the 'pie in the sky' desires".
- J. Clement stated the proposed schedule is realistic for moving ACTS forward, but everyone needs to be at the table.
- J. Clement stated a Preferred Alternative may have to incur impacts that would not normally be approved.
- J. Clement stated he did not see any value of the agencies adding alternatives to the mapping, MaineDOT is the expert and they look for them to proposed alternatives.
- J. Clement stated that any resources not now shown on the figures must be added for the alternative review. L. Standley pointed out that the mapping shows wetlands, hydric soils, historic resources, archaeological sites, rare species, buildings, and farmland.

Next Steps

- The ACTS will be on the agenda for the April Interagency Meeting.
- VHB will present new alignment option concepts for Segment 7 and Segment 4
- MaineDOT will distribute the proposed revised Basic Project Purpose for both Segments 4 & 7 for agency review and concurrence.
- Additional archaeological review may be required for Segment 7, Options
- MaineDOT will refine alternatives and options, as needed to supplement the Phase I package submission and prepare permit application.