

FHWA-MO-DEIS -08-01
Route 63, Osage, Maries, and Phelps Counties, Missouri
South of Route 50 to South of Maries/Phelps County Line
Route 63 Road Relocation and Improvements
Job Number J5P0950

Draft Environmental Impact Statement

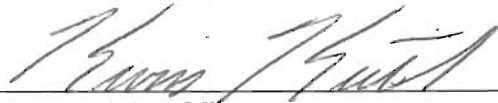
Submitted Pursuant to
42 USC 4332(2)(c) and 49 U.S.C. 303
by the

U.S. Department of Transportation
Federal Highway Administration and the
Missouri Department of Transportation

In Cooperation with
U. S. Army Corps of Engineers

12/19/08

Date of Approval



For MoDOT

CHIEF ENGINEER

Title

12-19-08

Date of Approval



For FHWA

Div. Administrator

Title

The following persons may be contacted for additional information about this document:

Mr. Allen Masuda
Division Administrator
FHWA Division Office
3220 West Edgewood, Suite H.
Jefferson City, MO 65109
(573) 636-7104

Mr. Kevin Keith
Chief Engineer
MoDOT
PO Box 270
Jefferson City, MO 65102
(573) 751-4622

The proposed action provides for the improvement of Route 63 to correct roadway deficiencies, reduce congestion, and provide continuity along the Route 63 corridor on the existing roadway and on new location. The Route 63 improvement is planned as a four-lane divided highway with 65 mph design speed.

Comments on this document should be directed to the individuals listed above by: **March 2, 2009**



Executive Summary

Summary

The purpose of this project is to correct deficiencies on existing Route 63, to ease congestion throughout the entire route, especially in the small communities of Westphalia, Freeburg, Vienna, and Vichy, and to provide four-lane design continuity along the Route 63 corridor. Both north and south of the study the existing roadway is a four-lane divided highway. There are portions of the existing roadway that have a total crash rate higher than the statewide average. The route also carries a substantial volume of truck traffic and it will be necessary to keep the existing road open to traffic during the construction phase of the project. Relocating and improving the existing route will improve safety and increase operating efficiencies leading to a reduction in traffic congestion and pollution. There are no areas of controversy and the only unresolved issue is the disposition of the existing route if Route 63 is built on new location.

The study area is located in central Missouri and crosses Osage, Maries, and Phelps Counties. The study begins approximately 0.75 miles south of the current Route 50/Route 63 interchange in Osage County, where Route 63 changes from four lanes to two lanes. The study extends south through Osage and Maries Counties and ends in Phelps County, just north of Rolla, where the current facility changes from a two-lane roadway to a four-lane divided highway. The study, along the existing roadway, is approximately 47 miles in length.

The proposed action will improve Route 63 to correct roadway deficiencies on new location and to improve existing Route 63 in various locations. The Route 63 improvement is planned as a four-lane divided highway with 65 mph design speed.

Reasonable alternatives considered include a “No-Build” alternative, upgrading the existing facility, and various “build” alternatives using a combination of sections that include some on new locations and others along the existing facility. These alternative sections are shown in Appendix C and discussed in Chapter 2 of this document. The reasonable alternatives were then compared on an entire corridor basis and labeled as the Preferred Alternative, Alternative 1 and Alternative 2. These are shown in Appendices H and I and also discussed in Chapter 2 of this document. Mass transit facilities, such as commuter bus, subway, and light rail service currently do not exist within the corridor and are not considered to be viable alternatives for consideration.

The main areas of consideration associated with this study are: 1) right of way acquisitions, 2) total cost, 3) safety and number of vehicle access points, 4) relocations, 5) community impacts, and 6) impacts to the natural environment. As depicted on the Summary of Potential Environmental Impacts table, and as is often the case for large highway projects, there is no alternative that stands out as clearly being the best for most of the environmental impacts. In the case of the proposed alternatives for Route 63, the Preferred Alternative impacts are not always the least,

nor does it have the greatest number of impacts when compared to the other two build alternatives. To get a clearer picture of which alternative would be identified as the preferred, the study team compared the alternatives by looking at how many of the considerations had the least and most negative impacts and how well the alternative met the purpose and need of the project.

Using the total costs as the only cost category, since other categories of cost are only subsets of the total, the study team found the following general trend for impacts: Alternatives 1 and 2 did not stand out as having many more negative impacts than the other, but had considerably more than the Preferred Alternative.

The project needs are improve safety, improve traffic flow, and improve corridor continuity. All of the build alternatives meet the purpose and need for this project to some degree and they also improve traffic flow at similar levels. All build alternatives also improve the corridor continuity, since they would provide a four-lane divided highway connecting similar highway segments, except for the section through Vichy for the Preferred Alternative and Alternative 2. Where Alternative 2 falters is in meeting the need to improve safety as well as the Preferred Alternative or Alternative 1. Alternative 2 has the highest number of vehicle access points, which is a contributor to unsafe conditions.

So even though Alternative 2 has the least negative impacts for the most categories, it has a higher number of negative impacts for other categories and does not meet the need for improved safety as well as the Preferred Alternative. Alternative 1 also had a higher number of negative impacts than the Preferred Alternative and is the most expensive. Because of the factors of negative impacts for Alternatives 1 and 2 and its ability to best meet the project's purpose and need, the Preferred Alternative became the recommended alternative.

All of the alternatives will require new bridge crossings over the Maries and Gasconade Rivers. A Preferred Alternative has been identified, but the final selection of an alternative will not be made until the Record of Decision has been signed and approved.

Summary of Potential Environmental Impacts*				
	No-Build Alternative	Preferred Alternative	Alternative 1	Alternative 2
Engineering				
New Alignment Length (miles)	47.0	44.6	45.6	44
Traffic Flow (Travel Time in minutes)	48.5	41.7	42.0	41.7
Access Points (#)	538	166	143	189
Bridges (#)	0	2	3	2
Costs				
Construction (millions \$)	0	136.9	182.8	129.1
Right of way (millions \$)	0	29	28.4	37.3
Stream mitigation (millions \$)	0	13	10	10
Total Costs (millions \$)	0	179	221	176
Right of Way Impacts				
Parcels Impacted (#)	0	306	298	320
Residential Relocations (#)	0	27	28	38
Commercial Relocations (#)	0	15	2	33
Right of Way – New (acres)	0	2,796	2,961	2,468
Right of Way – Existing (acres)	0	226	194	292
Environmental Impacts				
Potential Section 4(f) Parklands (#)	0	3	2	3
Wetlands (acres)	0	33.54	32.80	28.15
Creek/Stream/River Crossings (#)	0	70	79	66
Stream length impact (feet)	0	64,811	54,831	51,389
Farmland	0			
Open Area (acres)	0	1,432	1,533	1,317
Forested Area (acres)	0	1,475	1,686	1,402
Floodplain (acres)	0	174.8	100.8	149.8
Threatened & Endangered Species	0	yes	yes	yes
Hazardous Waste Location (#)	0	11	5	21
Airports (#)	0	1	1	1
Cultural Resource Impacts				
Cemeteries (#)	0	0	0	1
Potential Historic/4(f) Properties (#)	0	7	7	9

*These figures are based on preliminary data.