

# ENVIRONMENTAL EVALUATION OF FACILITIES DEVELOPMENT ACTIONS

Wisconsin Department of Transportation

## Basic Sheet 1

<b>Project ID</b> 1195-00-02	<b>Project Termini</b> From: Town of Spooner, WIS 70 To: Town of Trego, Schnagel Road	<b>Funding Sources - Check all that apply</b> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Federal <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> State <input type="checkbox"/> Local								
<b>Route Designation</b> (if applicable) US 53 National Highway System (NHS) Route <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<b>Nearest Community</b>  Town of Brooklyn, Town of Spooner, Town of Trego, and the City of Spooner	<b>Estimated Project Cost</b> \$36.28 million (2012 dollars) <b>Real Estate Acquisition Portion of Estimated Cost</b> \$1.4 million (2012 dollars)								
<b>Project Name</b>  US 53 Corridor Preservation Project										
<b>County</b> Washburn	<b>Section-Township-Range</b> T.39 N. R. 12 W., T. 40 N. R. 12 W. and T. 41 N. R. 12 W.	<b>Right-of-way Acquisition</b>								
<b>Bridge Number(s), if applicable</b> No proposed modifications to existing bridges	<b>Scheduled start date:</b> Operational Planning Meeting (OPM): October 11, 2007. Construction is not programmed at this time.	<table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <thead> <tr> <th></th> <th style="text-align: center;">Acres</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Fee</td> <td style="text-align: center;">134.8 (Proposed mapped R/W)</td> </tr> <tr> <td>TLE</td> <td style="text-align: center;">2.2</td> </tr> <tr> <td>PLE</td> <td style="text-align: center;">1.0</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>		Acres	Fee	134.8 (Proposed mapped R/W)	TLE	2.2	PLE	1.0
	Acres									
Fee	134.8 (Proposed mapped R/W)									
TLE	2.2									
PLE	1.0									

Functional Classification of Existing Route	Urban	Rural
Freeway/Expressway	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Principal Arterial	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Minor Arterial	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Major Collector		<input type="checkbox"/>
Minor Collector		<input type="checkbox"/>
Collector	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Local	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
No Functional Class	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

WisDOT Project Classification	Acres
Resurfacing	<input type="checkbox"/>
Pavement Replacement	<input type="checkbox"/>
Reconditioning	<input type="checkbox"/>
Expansion	<input type="checkbox"/>
Bridge Rehabilitation	<input type="checkbox"/>
Bridge Replacement	<input type="checkbox"/>
A "Majors" Project	<input type="checkbox"/>
SHRM	<input type="checkbox"/>
Preventive Maintenance	<input type="checkbox"/>
Safety	<input type="checkbox"/>
Corridor Preservation	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

FHWA Categorical Exclusion, Type 2c

FHWA Environmental Assessment. No significant Impacts Indicated by Initial Assessment.

*[Signature]* 10/7/2013 Project Manager (Signature) (Company/Org.) (Date) (Title)
*[Signature]* 10/07/2013 (Signature) (Date) (Title)

(Director, Bureau of Technical Services)

(Signature) (Company/Org.) (Date) (Title)

*[Signature]* 10/7/2013 Project Manager (Signature) (Date) (Title)

PETER M

Digitaly signed by PETER M GARCIA

DN: c=US, o=U.S. Government,

ou=DOT FHWA, ou=Madison WI,

cn=PETER M GARCIA

Region  Aeronautics  Rails & Harbors

FHWA  FAA  FTA  FRA

GARCIA

After reviewing public comments and coordinating with other agencies, it is determined that this action: Date: 2014.01.17 16:44:00 -06'00'

A) Will not significantly affect the quality of the human environment. This document is a:  
 Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI)

B) Has potential to significantly affect the quality of the human environment  
 Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) Required

(Signature) (Company/Org.) (Date) (Title)

(Signature) (Date) (Title)

(Signature) (Company/Org.) (Date) (Title)

(Director, Bureau of Technical Services)

(Signature) (Date) (Title)

(Signature) (Date) (Title)

Region  Aeronautics  Rails & Harbors

FHWA  FAA  FTA  FRA

## Basic Sheet 2

### 1. Purpose and need of proposed action:

The purpose of this study, consistent with Wisconsin State Statute 84.295 (10)(a)<sup>1</sup> (Wis. Stats. 84.295), is to preserve right-of-way in the corridor for 9.5 miles between WIS 70 and 0.75 miles north of Schnagel Road in Washburn County (Project Location Map, Exhibit 1). This action would result in an official map under Wis. Stats. 84.295, which allows the Department of Transportation (WisDOT) to more adequately serve the present and anticipated future needs of highway travel in the corridor and prevent conflicting and costly economic development on lands needed for future highway right-of-way. At a minimum, any future actions resulting from this study would require additional environmental evaluation and documentation, as specified in Wisconsin Administrative Code Trans 400<sup>2</sup>.

Wis. Stats. 84.295 gives WisDOT the ability of officially map future right-of-way prior to the scheduling of a construction project. Wis. Stats. 84.295 also gives WisDOT the ability to purchase officially mapped land in advanced of a scheduled construction project. The remainder of this Environmental Assessment (EA) will be written as if the proposed action is the actual construction of the proposed improvements.

The Proposed Action does not include programming of construction funds. Improvements would be funded and constructed incrementally as safety/operational issues occur over time and funding permits. The Proposed Action includes a long-term highway access plan at key intersections in order to address three needs:

- Long-term highway planning and corridor preservation
- Emerging operational and existing safety concerns
- Land use/transportation planning and coordination

#### ***Long-term highway planning and corridor preservation***

US 53 is on the National Highway System (NHS). As part of the NHS US 53 not only links west central Wisconsin to the Twin Ports metropolitan area of Duluth, Minnesota and Superior, Wisconsin, but also links the Interstate System to the Strategic Highway Network (STRAHNET) corridors in northern Minnesota. STRAHNET is a network of highways which are important to the United States' strategic defense policy and provide defense access, continuity and emergency capabilities for defense purposes. US 53 is the only facility on the western side of the state that provides four-lane access to northern Wisconsin. As such, it is a priority transportation corridor for WisDOT. The Twin Ports are located approximately 60 miles north of the project area along US 53 and together are considered the largest freshwater port in the world. US 53 provides a critical link to the Twin Ports and the area's multimodal distribution network.

The Wisconsin Department of Transportation (WisDOT) classifies US 53 as a principal arterial highway with the primary purpose of providing interstate and interregional mobility. WisDOT's *Connections 2030 Long-Range Multimodal Transportation Plan* also designates US 53 as a backbone route (see Exhibit 2). This plan includes a network of existing and improved roadways that consists of a backbone network and connector highways. The backbone network consists of divided highways that connect each region of the state and major economic centers. The connector highways tie economic and tourism centers to that backbone.

US 53 is an extremely important expressway facility in helping to support the tourism economy of northern Wisconsin. The US 63 expressway runs concurrently with US 53 between Spooner and Trego until it splits from US 53 in Trego to serve visitors to Cable and Hayward – both extremely popular year-round tourist destinations.

For decades, US 53 has been seen as the key high-speed, high-volume transportation connector between the entire northwest portion of Wisconsin and the other major metropolitan areas of the state. Traffic has continued to grow at a steady rate on US 53 due to increases in tourism, expanding commerce using this route as a critical link, and modest population increases in the corridor communities. Traffic volumes are projected to continue to increase as tourism, commerce, and population expand along this section of US 53.

The mobility role of arterials is preserved by having limited and well managed access points along the route. Developing a plan to limit closely spaced access points along the highway preserves the investment the public has already made in this facility and insures that the best access solutions have not been precluded by earlier

<sup>1</sup> Wisconsin State Statute 84.295 (10)(a). <https://docs.legis.wisconsin.gov/statutes/statutes/84/295>

<sup>2</sup> Wisconsin Administrative Code, Trans 400. [https://docs.legis.wisconsin.gov/code/admin\\_code/trans/400](https://docs.legis.wisconsin.gov/code/admin_code/trans/400)

development decisions. By planning ahead, lands needed for local roads and grade separation structures (interchanges and overpasses) can be preserved. Through the implementation of Wis. Stats. 84.295(10), the Proposed Action would help protect and preserve US 53 through a proactive and comprehensive corridor management approach, rather than through a reactive and piecemeal approach.

Current access along US 53 includes interchange ramps at WIS 70, 21 road intersections, and 16 driveways.

**Emerging operational and safety concerns**

Operational and safety needs for US 53 can be tied to existing and future traffic, the type, density, and location of land use along the corridor, and the number and severity of crashes. In 2011, traffic volumes along US 53 north of County E and south of US 63 intersection were 10,650 AADT<sup>3</sup>. Future traffic volumes are anticipated to increase to 12,250 by the year 2021 and 13,800 by the year 2031. Three intersecting roads with the highest existing and projected AADT are County E, US 63, and County A. The side road, County E, had an AADT of 1,600 in 2011 and is projected to increase by 200 every ten years.

**Side Road 2011 AADT and Forecasted AADT**

	2011	2021	2031	2041
<b>County E</b>	1,600	1,800	2,000	2,200
<b>US 63</b>	3,900	4,750	5,600	6,400
<b>County A</b>	800	900	1,000	1,100

As traffic volumes increase along this predominantly rural expressway facility, the ability to access or cross US 53 from connecting roads will likely become more difficult because the frequency and duration of gaps in US 53 traffic will decrease. At-grade intersections are already providing challenges and conflicts as drivers are forced to take greater risks to access the highway from side roads and driveways.

There is a direct relationship between increased traffic volumes and vehicle conflicts when direct access exists on a facility. These conflicts increase on four-lane, divided facilities such as US 53 when mainline traffic reaches 10,000 ADT<sup>4</sup> and side road volumes reach 1,000 ADT. Crash statistics on US 53 show that this section of US 53 has a slightly higher crash rate than the statewide average.

**Crash Rates 2007-2011  
US 53 Project Section Compared to Statewide Average**

	US 53 Project Section	Statewide Average
<b>Overall Crash Rate (excludes deer)</b>	75 per HMVMT*	70 per HMVMT
<b>Crash Rate with Fatality</b>	0.8 per HMVMT	1.3 per HMVMT

\*Hundred Million Vehicle Miles of Travel (HMVMT)

**Local land use/transportation planning and coordination**

Land use changes in the area are contributing to increases in traffic on US 53. Conversely, the presence of a four-lane highway can affect development patterns. Identifying future changes in access can help communities insure that development plans are compatible with the planned transportation system. A principal benefit of the planning process is to provide certainty to land owners and local communities as to the location of access in the future and the right-of-way that would be needed for changes to the highway system.

<sup>3</sup> Traffic counts are reported as the number of vehicles expected to pass a given location on an average day of the year. This value is called the "annual average daily traffic" or AADT and are represented on traffic count or traffic volume maps. The AADT is based on a short-term traffic count, usually 48 hours, taken at the location. - <http://www.dot.wisconsin.gov/travel/counts/>

<sup>4</sup> ADT is the average 24 hour volume, being the total volume during a stated period divided by the number of days in that period. - <http://mutcd.fhwa.dot.gov/pdfs/2009/mutcd2009edition.pdf> (page 11)

## 2. Summary of alternatives considered and if they are not proposed for adoption, why not:

Basic Sheet 5 provides an impacts analysis table of the alternatives considered.

### **No Build Alternative**

The No Build Alternative would not include improvements or alterations to the existing corridor. This alternative would not adequately address safety and operational issues at intersections along the US 53 corridor.

The No Build Alternative does not support the function of a *Connections 2030* backbone route to provide safe and efficient regional mobility and economic vitality. For this reason, the No Build Alternative does not fulfill the project purpose and need.

### **Build Alternatives**

The corridor project is divided into the Spooner Area and the Trego Area. The Spooner Area begins at WIS 70 and continues to Schaub Road/Dilly Lake Road. The Trego Area begins at Schaub Road/Dilly Lake Road and continues to 0.75 miles north of Schnagel Road. The Spooner Area has three build alternatives while the Trego Area has four build alternatives. The alternatives and options are described below:

See Basic Sheet 5 for a comparison summary of the effects of the No Build Alternative and the four Build Alternatives.

All the Build Alternatives, including the Preferred Alternative, are shown in Exhibits 3A, 3B, 3C, and 4.

## **SPOONER AREA** – Exhibit 3A

### **Alternative S1 – Overpass at County H:**

This alternative includes the following alterations in the project area:

- Overpass at County H
- Closed access resulting in cul-de-sacs at: Ojibwa Road, Bittersweet Road, Little Valley Road and County A
- Redesigned partial cloverleaf interchange at US 53/63 in Spooner (same as S2 and S3)
- Local road connection between Bittersweet Drive and County H (same as S2 and S3)
- Local road extending south from Schaub Road (same as S2 and S3)
- Existing at-grade access would remain at Schaub Road/Dilly Lake Road (same as S2 and S3)
- Four driveways relocated/removed (same as S2 and S3)
- Construction and real estate cost is estimated at 11.3 million dollars (2012 dollars)
- Zero acres of wetlands converted to R/W
- 18.6 acres of upland habitat converted to R/W
- 27.2 acres of other area converted to R/W
- 45.8 acres of total area converted to R/W
- Two housing units and one commercial unit would be relocated/acquired

Alternative S1 is not proposed for adoption because of unfavorable public input related to lack of overpass locations and increased agricultural impacts. Because Alternative S1 decreases access and crossings to US 53/63, this alternative would likely cause indirection and funneling to the County H overpass while limiting circulation on local roads.

### **Alternative S2 – Overpasses at Ojibwa Rd. and County A:**

This alternative includes the following alterations in the project area:

- Two overpasses at realigned County A/Little Valley Rd. (One overpass spanning the Wild River State Trail and Wisconsin Great Northern Railroad and a second overpass spanning US 53/63)
- Overpass at Ojibwa Road
- Closed access resulting in cul-de-sacs at: Bittersweet Road, County H and Little Valley Road
- Redesigned partial cloverleaf interchange at US 53/63 in Spooner (same as S1 and S3)
- Local road connection between Bittersweet Drive and County H (same as S1 and S3)
- Local road extending south from Schaub Road (same as S1 and S3)
- Existing at-grade access would remain at Schaub Road/Dilly Lake Road (same as S1 and S3)

- o Four driveways relocated/removed (same as S1 and S3)
- o Construction and real estate cost is estimated at 15.6 million dollars (2012 dollars)
- o 0.9 acres of wetlands converted to R/W, 0.6 acres of wetlands filled
- o 21.2 acres of upland habitat converted to R/W
- o 35.4 acres of other area converted to R/W
- o 57.5 acres of total area converted to R/W
- o Two housing units and one commercial unit would be relocated/acquired

Alternative S2 is not proposed for adoption because of unfavorable public input related to overpass locations, increased wetland impacts associated with an overpass at County A, and increased cost. Closed access at County H would likely cause significant indirection.

**Alternative S3 – Overpasses at Ojibwa Rd. and County H:**  
**PREFERRED ALTERNATIVE (See Exhibits 3A, 3C, and 4)**

This alternative is a hybrid of Alternatives S1 and S2:

- o Overpass at County H
- o Overpass at Ojibwa Road
- o Closed access resulting in cul-de-sacs at: Bittersweet Road, County A and Little Valley Road
- o Redesigned partial cloverleaf interchange at US 53/63 in Spooner (same as S1 and S2)
- o Local road connection between Bittersweet Drive and County H (same as S1 and S2)
- o Local road extending south from Schaub Road (same as S1 and S2)
- o Existing at-grade access would remain at Schaub Road/Dilly Lake Road (same as S1 and S2)
- o Four driveways relocated/removed (same as S1 and S2)
- o Construction and real estate cost is estimated at 19 million dollars (2012 dollars)
- o Zero acres of wetlands converted to R/W
- o 30.1 acres of upland habitat converted to R/W
- o 25.6 acres of other area converted to R/W
- o 55.7 acres of total area converted to R/W
- o Two housing units and one commercial unit would be relocated/acquired

Preferred Alternative S3 is proposed for adoption because of no wetland impacts and favorable public input related to overpass locations. The proposed overpass locations help facilitate the land use planning of the area while improving future circulation and access. Alternative S1 was the Preferred Alternative early in the public involvement process but lacked the grade separated crossing at Ojibwa Road. Information gathered at the Public Information Meetings reinforced Alternative S3 as the alternative offering the best circulation because it also includes the grade separated crossing at Ojibwa Road.

**TREGO AREA – Exhibit 3B**

**Alternative N1 – Diamond interchange at US 53/63:**

This alternative includes the following alterations in the project area:

- o Diamond interchange at US 53/63 on existing alignment
- o Local road connection from Dilly Lake Road to County E with bridge over Potato Creek (same configuration as N2 and N3)
- o Existing at-grade intersections to US 53 would remain at Dilly Lake Road, River Road, Whalen Lake Road, Barrett Road and Schnagel Road. (same as N2, N3, and N4)
- o An interchange in Trego at US 53/63 on existing alignment (same as N2 and N3)
- o Namekagon River bridge widening (same as N2 and N3)
- o Access to US 53 closed at Schleife Road, 1<sup>st</sup> Street, Stub Road, Mackey Road, County E, Oak Hill Road, Wood Drive, US 63, O'Brien Road, Snowmobile Road, Ross Road, and River Road. (same as N2 and N3)
- o Cul-de-sacs at Schleife Road, O'Brien Road and Ross Road. (same as N2 and N3)
- o Local road connection from County E to Leisch Road. (same as N2 and N3)
- o Local road connection from Service Road to 1<sup>st</sup> Street. (same as N2 and N3)
- o Local road connection from Log Cabin Drive to 1<sup>st</sup> Street. (same as N2 and N3)
- o Existing at-grade intersections would remain at Dilly Lake Road, Whalen Lake Road, Barrett

- Road and Schnagel Road. (same as N2 and N3)
- Three driveways relocated/removed (same as N2, N3, and N4)
- Construction and real estate cost is estimated at 14.2 million dollars (2012 dollars)
- 0.9 acres of wetlands converted to R/W, 0.5 acres of wetlands filled
- 21.2 acres of upland habitat converted to R/W
- 34.8 acres of other area converted to R/W
- 56.9 acres of total area converted to R/W
- Five housing units and eight commercial units would be relocated/acquired

Alternative N1 is not proposed for adoption because of public input, environmental consequences of widening the federally designated Wild and Scenic Namekagon River Bridge and the acquisition/relocation of eight commercial businesses.

### **Alternative N2 – Partial cloverleaf/diamond interchange at US 53/63:**

This alternative includes the following alterations in the project area:

- Partial cloverleaf/diamond interchange at US 53/63 on existing alignment
- Local road connection from Dilly Lake Road to County E with bridge over Potato Creek (same configuration as N1 and N3)
- Existing at-grade intersections to US 53 would remain at Dilly Lake Road, River Road, Whalen Lake Road, Barrett Road and Schnagel Road. (same as N1, N3, and N4)
- An interchange in Trego at US 53/63 on existing alignment (same as N2 and N3)
- Namekagon River bridge widening (same as N1 and N3)
- Access to US 53 closed at Schleife Road, 1<sup>st</sup> Street, Stub Road, Mackey Road, County E, Oak Hill Road, Wood Drive, US 63, O'Brien Road, Snowmobile Road, Ross Road, and River Road. (same as N1 and N3)
- Cul-de-sacs at Schleife Road, O'Brien Road and Ross Road. (same as N1 and N3)
- Local road connection from County E to Leisch Road. (same as N1 and N3)
- Local road connection from Service Road to 1<sup>st</sup> Street. (same as N1 and N3)
- Local road connection from Log Cabin Drive to 1<sup>st</sup> Street. (same as N1 and N3)
- Existing at-grade intersections would remain at Dilly Lake Road, Whalen Lake Road, Barrett Road and Schnagel Road. (same as N1 and N3)
- Three driveways relocated/removed (same as N1, N3, and N4)
- Construction and real estate cost is estimated at 14.7 million dollars (2012 dollars)
- 0.9 acres of wetlands converted to R/W, 0.5 acres of wetlands filled
- 24.7 acres of upland habitat converted to R/W
- 39 acres of other area converted to R/W
- 64.6 acres of total area converted to R/W
- Six housing units and seven commercial units would be relocated/acquired

Alternative N2 is not proposed for adoption because of public input, environmental consequences of widening the federally designated Wild and Scenic Namekagon River Bridge and the acquisition/relocation of seven commercial businesses.

### **Alternative N3 – Single point interchange at US 53/US 63:**

This alternative includes the following alterations in the project area:

- Single point interchange at US 53/63 on existing alignment
- Local road connection from Dilly Lake Road to County E with bridge over Potato Creek (same configuration as N1 and N2)
- Existing at-grade intersections to US 53 would remain at Dilly Lake Road, River Road, Whalen Lake Road, Barrett Road and Schnagel Road. (same as N1, N2, and N4)
- An interchange in Trego at US 53/63 on existing alignment (same as N1 and N2)
- Namekagon River bridge widening (same as N1 and N2)
- Access to US 53 closed at Schleife Road, 1<sup>st</sup> Street, Stub Road, Mackey Road, County E, Oak Hill Road, Wood Drive, US 63, O'Brien Road, Snowmobile Road, Ross Road, and River Road. (same as N1 and N2)
- Cul-de-sacs at Schleife Road, O'Brien Road and Ross Road. (same as N1 and N2)
- Local road connection from County E to Leisch Road. (same as N1 and N2)
- Local road connection from Service Road to 1<sup>st</sup> Street. (same as N1 and N2)

- Local road connection from Log Cabin Drive to 1<sup>st</sup> Street. (same as N1 and N2)
- Existing at-grade intersections would remain at Dilly Lake Road, Whalen Lake Road, Barrett Road and Schnagel Road. (same as N1 and N2)
- Three driveways relocated/removed (same as N1, N2, and N4)
- Construction and real estate cost is estimated at 19.4 million dollars (2012 dollars)
- 0.9 acres of wetlands converted to R/W, 0.5 acres of wetlands filled
- 19.1 acres of upland habitat converted to R/W
- 32.1 acres of other area converted to R/W
- 52.1 acres of total area converted to R/W
- One housing unit and six commercial units would be relocated/acquired

Alternative N3 is not proposed for adoption because of public input, environmental consequences of widening the federally designated Wild and Scenic Namekagon River Bridge and the acquisition/relocation of six commercial businesses.

**Alternative N4 – Partial cloverleaf interchange realigned south of County E:**  
**PREFERRED ALTERNATIVE (See Exhibits 3B, 3C, and 4)**

This alternative includes the following alterations in the project area:

- Partial cloverleaf interchange south of County E
- Relocation of US 63 to connect to the new interchange
- Access to US 53 closed at: Schleife Road, 1<sup>st</sup> Street, Stub Road, Mackey Road, County E, Oak Hill Road, Wood Drive, US 63, O'Brien Road, Snowmobile Road and Ross Road
- Cul-de-sacs at Schleife Road, O'Brien Road and Ross Road
- Local road connection from new interchange to County E
- New Wild River State Trail overpass approximately 100 feet south of existing overpass location
- Unlike alternatives N1, N2 and N3, alternative N4 offers access at River Road; eliminating the need to extend the local roadway to Whalen Lake Road
- Local road connection from Dilly Lake Road to County E with bridge over Potato Creek
- Existing at-grade intersections to US 53 would remain at Dilly Lake Road, River Road, Whalen Lake Road, Barrett Road and Schnagel Road. (same as N1, N2, and N3)
- Three driveways relocated/removed (same as N1, N2, and N3)
- Construction and real estate cost is estimated at 17.3 million dollars (2012 dollars)
- 0.9 acres of wetlands converted to R/W, 0.5 acres of wetlands filled
- 32.5 acres of upland habitat converted to R/W
- 45.7 acres of other area converted to R/W
- 79.1 acres of total area converted to R/W
- Five housing units and one commercial unit would be relocated/acquired

Preferred Alternative N4 is proposed for adoption because of favorable public input, avoidance of impacts to the federally designated Wild and Scenic Namekagon River Bridge, and the reduced number of commercial business acquisitions/relocations (1) compared to the other alternatives. Other intersection configurations were considered at the location of Preferred Alternative N4 but were dismissed early in the process due to the increased social, environmental, and economic impacts.

Multiple options were considered for local road connections between O'Brien Road and River Road. O'Brien Road to Ross Road had three options west of US 53 and two options east of US 53. Ross Road to River Road had two options west of US 53 and one option east of US 53. Some of these options were discarded early in the process due to unfavorable public input. The preferred options were selected because of favorable public input, use of existing private road, maintenance of straight town roads, and minimal impacts to existing residential and commercial properties. The options are described below:

**West Side of US 53**

Preferred

- O'Brien Road to Ross Road (Option 2)
- Ross Road to River Road (Option 1)

Options

- O'Brien Road to Ross Road (Option 1, and Option 3)

- Ross Road to River Road (Option 2)

**East Side of US 53**

Preferred

- Trego Park Road to Whalen Lake Road (Option 1)

Option

- Trego Park Road to Ross Road (Option 2)

### **3. Description of Proposed Action (attach project location map and other appropriate graphics):**

The Proposed Action consists of a plan and follow-up actions for improving US 53 between WIS 70 in Spooner to 0.75 miles north of Schnagel Road in Trego. (See Exhibit 4, Preferred Alternative Detail). The proposed improvements would be officially mapped under the process established in Wis. Stats. 84.295(10) to help preserve right-of-way for future transportation needs. This EA is being completed for the purpose of preserving and officially mapping future right of way. Due to the long-term nature of any future potential design and/or construction, additional environmental approvals and/or EA updates would be required when warranted and as funding becomes available.

For purposes of this EA, direct impacts were calculated as if the Proposed Action would be constructed, not just officially mapped. The mapping and expressway designation actions do not have direct effects. However, they could have indirect effects, which are discussed in the Pre-Screening Analysis for Indirect and Cumulative Effects Analysis. (See Appendix A). The Proposed Action does not include immediate programming of construction funds but is designed in such a way to allow incremental construction and funding over time. The long-term vision and management strategy used by this Proposed Action allows incremental improvements and funding strategies to ultimately achieve the comprehensive system goal of improving the expressway facility.

US 63 would be relocated on to new alignment, starting at the interchange and heading northeast, reconnecting with existing US 63 east of Trego and west of the National Park Service property. The approximately 0.5 mile segment of existing US 63 in Trego would be jurisdictionally transferred to the Town of Trego.

Existing intersections at Bittersweet Road, Little Valley Road, County A, O'Brien Road, and Ross Road would be reconstructed as cul-de-sacs in order to reduce conflict points by limiting access to US 53. One interchange would be constructed south of County E in the Town of Trego. Two overpasses would be constructed at Ojibwa Rd. and County H, both in the Town of Spooner. Two grade separated crossings to accommodate the Wild Rivers State Trail would also be constructed: one in the Town of Spooner and the other in the Town of Trego. In addition, several sections of the existing local roadway system would be reconstructed or altered to insure internal local road system continuity and access to the expressway.

A total of seven (7) residences and two (2) commercial buildings would be acquired. A total of seven (7) driveways would be closed and relocated to control access as a result from implementing the Proposed Action.

### **4. In general terms, briefly discuss the construction and operational energy requirements and conservation potential of the various alternatives under consideration. Indicate whether the savings in operational energy are greater than the energy required to construct the facility:**

#### No Build Alternative

This alternative would require minimal construction energy (minor improvements and maintenance). Because the existing at-grade intersections would remain with this alternative, traffic operational characteristics would likely erode over time as volumes increase and gaps in traffic decrease. The erosion in operational characteristics would likely be due to increased cross traffic conflicts. Operational characteristics could include congestion and/or rapid acceleration/deceleration of traffic resulting in a higher consumption of energy.

#### Proposed Action (Preferred Alternative)

The Preferred Alternative would require the consumption of a large amount of energy during construction. However, the Preferred Alternative would remove many of the existing at-grade intersections and greatly reduce the potential for conflicts with cross traffic. The result would be greater operational efficiency and lower energy needs over the No Build Alternative.

Energy requirements for the construction of the Preferred Alternative would be greater than those required for the No Build Alternative. However, the No Build Alternative would result in the use of an inefficient transportation system, leading to more congestion, loss of travelers' time, higher consumption of energy, and increased crashes and safety issues. Over the design life of the facility, savings in operational energy would be greater than the energy required to construct the facility and thus in the long-term would result in net savings in energy usage.

The energy requirements and conservation potential of all of the action alternatives considered are essentially the same – any differences among them would be negligible.

## 5. Describe existing land use (attach land use maps, if available):

See Exhibit 5 for existing land use maps for the Towns of Spooner and Trego.

### a. Land use of properties that adjoin the project:

The 9.5-mile corridor extends from the City of Spooner to Schnagel Road in the Town of Trego in Washburn County. The corridor passes through the Town of Spooner and the Town of Trego. Existing land uses surrounding the US 53 corridor include rural wooded uplands and wetlands, agriculture, low density residential, and limited commercial/industrial development. The Town of Trego has an area with higher density residential and commercial uses in the vicinity of the Namekagon River (see Exhibit 1, Project Location Map).

#### Residential

The majority of residential land uses can be classified as widely distributed, low density uses with on-site septic systems typical of wooded and agricultural areas. Higher concentrations of residential development include recreational homes located in neighborhoods along US 63, County H, O'Brien Road, Ross Road and Snowmobile Road in the Town of Trego.

#### Commercial/Industrial

Commercial and industrial land uses can be found along US 53 near the City of Spooner, and in the Town of Trego. Within the Town of Trego services include, a travel center, banks, rentals, cabinet manufacturing, home manufacturing, flooring, gas stations and restaurants. The town hall building, churches, and the US Post Office also reside within the project limits.

#### Agricultural/Forestry

Agricultural land accounts for 20 percent of land in Washburn County. Agricultural activities are located both east and west of US 53 and includes The Spooner Agricultural Research Station – the nation's leader in dairy sheep research.

The Washburn County Forest is a "working" forest. The forest is managed jointly between the County Forest and the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources. Management is based on an allowable harvest of 3,150 acres of management per year. Annually, the County Forest conducts this management in aspen, pine, northern hardwood, red oak, and other types. The Washburn County Forestry Committee offers approximately 45 timber sales per year.

Land used for timber production by private companies is located within Washburn County. The Lyme St. Croix Timber Company uses 1,826 acres for timber production. The Plum Creek Company is one of the largest land owners in the county. They use approximately 722 acres for timber production. Mihalko Land uses approximately 160 acres for timber production.

#### Parks and Recreation

Trego Lake County Park is located on the east side of US 53 in the Town of Trego. The park features a campground and picnic area (see Exhibit 4, Map 9 of 11).

The Namekagon River, part of the St. Croix National Wild and Scenic Riverway, provides opportunities for canoeing, boating, camping, fishing, rock climbing, and hiking along its scenic shores. A National Park Service (NPS) facility is located on US 63 south of Trego (see Exhibit 4, Map 8 of 11).

Local recreational trails in the project area are used for motorized and non-motorized activity use and include:

- Trego Lake Trail – Three loops totaling 3.6 miles. All non-motorized activities allowed on trail.
- Trego Nature Trail – A three-mile loop that starts by the Namekagon River Bridge on US 63. All non-motorized activities allowed on trail.
- Wild Rivers State Trail – This 94-mile state managed rails-to-trails facility is open to hiking, mountain biking, ATV's and snowmobile use and connects Rice Lake to Solon Springs. The trail can be accessed in Spooner, Trego and various other locations paralleling US 53. Motorized and non-motorized activities are allowed on the trail.
- Washburn County has over 250 miles of state-funded groomed trails maintained by the Rolling Hills

Snowmobile/ATV Club and Minong/Wascott Area Trail Club. Motorized and non-motorized activities are allowed on the trail.

The Department of Transportation Act (DOT Act) of 1966 included a special provision - Section 4(f) - which regulates the use of land from publicly owned parks, recreational areas, wildlife and waterfowl refuges, or public and private historical sites. Per FHWA, the Wild Rivers State Trail property is designated as an active rail line and the bike trail is considered a temporary recreational use. Thus, Section 4(f) regulations do not apply. (See <http://www.environment.fhwa.dot.gov/4f/4fpolicy.asp> for a copy of the 4(f) policy paper drafted in 2012.)

**b. Land use surrounding project area:**

The land uses surrounding the project area are similar to that of the immediate area. Land uses vary among agriculture, residential, and recreational land uses. Residential uses include pockets of small neighborhoods as well as widely dispersed farmsteads and other rural residential land uses.

Urban areas surrounding the project limits include the City of Spooner located at the south end of the project area which is a regional employment and retail hub with some commercial and industrial development.

**6. Briefly identify adopted local or regional plans for the project area and zoning regulations. Discuss whether the proposed action is compatible with the plan or zoning:**

US 53 is identified as a backbone route in the WisDOT *Connections 2030* plan (see Exhibit 2). Backbone routes are recognized for their importance to the state's transportation infrastructure and economic vitality, and are high priority corridors for determining improvement needs and maintaining safe and efficient travel on the statewide transportation system.

The US 53 Corridor Preservation Project is compatible with county and local goals of providing a safe and efficient transportation system. The Proposed Action (Preferred Alternative) is consistent with (and/or does not conflict with) the following plans and land use controls/regulations for the communities within the project area. This conclusion was based on research of the following available plans:

<b><i>Plan/Ordinance Name</i></b>	<b><i>Agency/Year</i></b>
City of Spooner Comprehensive Plan <a href="http://www.co.washburn.wi.us/countyinfo/comprehensiveplanning/cityof/spooner/">http://www.co.washburn.wi.us/countyinfo/comprehensiveplanning/cityof/spooner/</a>	Northwest Regional Planning Commission/2006
Town of Trego Land Use Plan <a href="http://www.co.washburn.wi.us/countyinfo/comprehensiveplanning/townof/trego/">http://www.co.washburn.wi.us/countyinfo/comprehensiveplanning/townof/trego/</a>	Northwest Regional Planning Commission /2004
Washburn County Comprehensive Plan <a href="http://www.co.washburn.wi.us/countyinfo/comprehensiveplanning/">http://www.co.washburn.wi.us/countyinfo/comprehensiveplanning/</a>	Northwest Regional Planning Commission /2005
Washburn County Zoning Ordinances <a href="http://www.co.washburn.wi.us/departments/zoning/">http://www.co.washburn.wi.us/departments/zoning/</a>	Washburn County/2005

**7. Describe how the project development process complied with Executive Order 12898 on Environmental Justice. If populations of any group covered by EO 12898 are present in the project area, complete Factor Sheet B-4, Environmental Justice:**

<b>How was information obtained about the presence of populations covered by EO 12898?</b>	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Windshield Survey	Official Plan
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> US Census Data (See Factor Sheet B1 for census data)	Survey Questionnaire
Real Estate Company	WisDOT Real Estate
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Public Information Meeting	Local Government
Human Resources Agency Identify agency Identify plan, approval authority and date of approval	
Other (Identify)	

a. No - Populations covered by EO 12898 are not present in project area.

b.  Yes - Populations covered by EO 12898 are present. Factor Sheet B-4 must be completed.

**8. Indicate whether individuals covered by Title VI of the 1964 Civil Rights Act, the Americans with Disabilities Act or the Age Discrimination Act were identified:** *Title VI prohibits discrimination on the basis of race, color, or country of origin.*

a.  No - Individuals covered by the above laws were not identified.

b.  Yes - Individuals covered by the above laws were identified.

Civil Rights issues were not identified.

Civil Rights issues were identified. Explain:

**9. Briefly summarize public involvement methods:**

The involvement effort included public information meetings (PIM) and local official meetings (LOM). In addition to letters mailed to property owners along the corridor, information pertaining to meetings was also released to area newspapers. Three public information meetings were held for the project. The first meeting was to identify local needs from members of the community. The second meeting was to gather public input on the range of alternatives developed for the project. The third meeting presented the Preferred Alternative. Meetings were also held with the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (WDNR) and the National Park Service (NPS). A list of all meetings is listed below:

**a. Meetings**

Date	Meeting Sponsor (WisDOT, RPC, MPO, etc.)	Type of Meeting (PIM, Public Hearings, etc.)	Location	Approx. # Attendees
10/11/07	WisDOT	PIM	Spooner Agricultural Research Station	40
10/11/07	WisDOT	LOM	Spooner Agricultural Research Station	17
11/12/07	WisDOT	Progress Meeting	WisDOT – Eau Claire	10
10/21/08	WisDOT	LOM & Emergency Medical Service (EMS) Meeting	Town of Trego Town Hall	17
11/13/08	WisDOT	PIM	Spooner Agricultural Research Station	40
02/13/09	WisDOT	NPS Meeting	St. Croix Falls, NPS	4
05/07/09	WisDOT	NPS Meeting	Trego, NPS	5
05/29/09	WisDOT	DNR Meeting	Spooner DNR Office	5
03/22/10	WisDOT	NPS Meeting	St. Croix Falls, NPS	6
11/3/11	WisDOT	PIM	Spooner Agricultural Research Station	26
11/3/11	WisDOT	LOM	Spooner Agricultural Research Station	6

**b. Other methods, describe:**

None

**c. Identify groups that participated in the public involvement process. Include any organizations and special interest groups:**

None identified

**d. Indicate plans for additional public involvement, if applicable:**

Additional public meetings will be held at the time of design at some unspecified date in the future.

**10. Briefly summarize the results of public involvement:**

**a. Describe the issues, if any, identified by individuals or groups during the public involvement process:**

- County H near Spooner will likely see future development
- Access to Trego business needs to continue with an interchange
- Desire to keep the interchange away from Namekagon River
- Alternatives N1, N2 and N3 all have considerable impacts to Trego businesses
- Individual landowner prefers County A access to US 53/63 instead of County H

**b. Briefly describe how the issues identified above were addressed:**

- County H will connect to US 53/63 on the west end
- Relocated partial cloverleaf interchange design in Trego provides access to businesses
- Relocated partial cloverleaf interchange design in Trego does not impact the Namekagon River
- Alternative N4 has been identified as the Preferred Alternative, thereby minimizing impacts to Trego businesses
- Individual landowner was notified that overall public support and the need to reduce misdirection called for access at County H. Conceptual plans that were not carried forward as an alternative included access to US 53/63 from County A. The at-grade access was not within current design standards for access spacing.

**11. Local/regional government coordination:**

**a. Identify units of government contacted and provide the date coordination was initiated:**

Unit of Government	Coordination	Coordination Initiation Date	Coordination Completion Date	Comments
MPO, RPC, City, County, Village, Town, etc.	Correspondence Attached Y/N			
City of Spooner	Scoping letter sent; no response received	September 2007	Ongoing	The City of Spooner was invited to provide initial comments as well as attend all local official and public meetings.
Town of Spooner	Scoping letter sent; no response received	September 2007	Ongoing	The Town of Spooner was invited to provide initial comments as well as attend all local official and public meetings.
Town of Trego	Scoping letter sent; no response received	September 2007	Ongoing	The Town of Trego was invited to provide initial comments as well as attend all local official and public meetings.
Town of Brooklyn	Scoping letter sent; no response received	September 2007	Ongoing	The Town of Brooklyn was invited to provide initial comments as well as attend all local official and public meetings.
Washburn County	Scoping letter sent; no response received	September 2007	Ongoing	Washburn County agencies were invited to provide initial comments as well as attend all local official and public meetings.
Northwest Regional Planning Commission (NWRPC)	Scoping letter sent; no response received	September 2007	Ongoing	The NWRPC was invited to provide initial comments as well as attend all local official and public meetings.
West Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission (WCWRPC)	Scoping letter sent; no response received	September 2007	Ongoing	The WCWRPC was invited to provide initial comments as well as attend all local official and public meetings.

**b. Describe the issues, if any, identified by units of government during the public involvement process:**

National Park Service (NPS) was concerned about impacts to the Namekagon River and the NPS property near the River. Alternatives N1, N2 and N3 had impacts to the river but not the NPS property.

**c. Briefly describe how the issues identified above were addressed:**

Alternative N4 has been identified as the Preferred Alternative. This alternative does not impact the Namekagon River or the NPS property.

**d. Indicate any unresolved issues or ongoing discussion: None**

**Basic Sheet 3**

**Coordination**

See Appendix B for the initial agency and Tribal coordination letters sent out in the initial scoping process.

<b>INTERNAL WisDOT</b>	<b>Coordination Required?</b>	<b>Correspondence Attached?</b> Y = Yes N = No	<b>Comments</b> Explain or give results. If no correspondence is attached to this document, indicate when coordination with the agency was initiated and, if available, when coordination was completed. If coordination is not required, state why.
Bureau of Aeronautics	N	Y	<p>Project is located within 4 miles (6.44 km) of the Nest of Eagles Public Airport. However, the Nest of Eagles Airport is not a State Airport System Plan airport and, as such, is not afforded the level of review needed for BOA to meet the requirements of FAA's Advisory Circular 150/5200-33B: Hazardous Wildlife Attractants at or near Airports.</p> <p>Because the airport is privately owned, coordination was not required for this project.</p> <p><i>See Appendix C1</i></p>
Bureau of Rails & Harbors	Y	Y	<p>The Wisconsin Great Northern Railroad runs from Spooner to Hayward. A short section of this route is operated by Canadian National. To avoid impacts to the railroad, a retaining wall would be built as part of the Proposed Action.</p> <p>The Wild Rivers State Trail is a Rails-to-Trails route that travels along the length of US 53. This route is mostly owned by WisDOT and can be converted to an active rail line at any time.</p>
Regional Real Estate Section	Y	N	<p>Coordination occurred throughout the Conceptual Stage Relocation Plan process. An in-depth and up-to-date analysis of the residential relocations would be completed closer to design/construction.</p>
<b>STATE AGENCY</b>	<b>Coordination Required?</b> Y = Yes N = No	<b>Correspondence Attached?</b> Y = Yes N = No	
Agriculture (DATCP)	Y	Y	<p>Opportunity for review and comment was extended to DATCP as part of the formal scoping process. DATCP indicated that an Agricultural Impact Statement would not be required at this time. An Agricultural Impact Notice (AIN) was submitted to DATCP. Additional future coordination would occur closer to design/construction.</p> <p><i>See Appendix C2</i></p>

Natural Resources (WDNR)	Y	Y	The WDNR was invited to provide comments as well as attend all agency, local official and public meetings. A coordination meeting with the WDNR was held on May 25, 2009. WDNR provided comments regarding the project on the following dates: 12/20/07, 9/9/08, and 12/5/11.  WDNR requests a grade separated crossing of the Wild River Trail be constructed. This would protect the integrity of the federally granted right-of-way and avoid impacts to specific plant populations.  <i>See Appendix C3</i>
State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO)	Y	Y	The Wisconsin State Historical Society and the Washburn County Historical Society have both been invited and involved throughout the environmental documentation process.  <i>See Appendix D</i>
State Patrol, Northwest Region	N	Y	The State Patrol was invited to provide initial comments as well as attend all local official and public meetings.
<b>FEDERAL AGENCY</b>	<b>Coordination Required? Y =Yes N =No</b>	<b>Correspondence Attached? Y = Yes N = No</b>	
Advisory Council on Hist.Pres. (ACHP)	N	N	No coordination needed
Corps of Engineers (COE)	Y	Y	The COE would provide review or comment upon receiving a jurisdictional determination request and/or permit application.  <i>See Appendix C4</i>
Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)	N	N	EPA did not request coordination with this project.
National Park Service (NPS)	Y	Y	The NPS manages the St. Croix National Scenic Riverway which includes the Namekagon River. Three of the alternatives indicate a change in the US 53 crossing of the Namekagon River. Three meetings were conducted with NPS to discuss initial designs that would have had possible impacts to the visitor center/maintenance building. The Preferred Alternative was adjusted and does not affect the NPS property or the Namekagon River.  <i>See Appendix C5</i>
Nat. Resource Cons. Service (NRCS)	Y	Y	The NRCS was invited to the agency scoping meeting. Agency officials were invited to provide comments throughout all phases of the project. Form AD-1006 was submitted to NRCS. Because total site assessment points are less than 60, NRCS is not required to provide farmland rating information.  <i>See Appendix C6</i>
US Coast Guard (USCG)	N	N	No coordination needed

Fish & Wildlife Serv. (FWS)	Y	Y	<p>The FWS has identified federally listed species, wetlands, fish, and wildlife that could be potentially affected by the Proposed Action. Future coordination would occur closer to design/construction to determine the presence of these species and habitats, the effect of the Proposed Action, and appropriate actions to be taken. If wetland disturbance or loss cannot be avoided, a wetland mitigation plan would be developed based on current regulations at that time.</p> <p><i>See Appendix C7</i></p>
Other(Identify) Federal Highway Administration (FHWA)	Y	N	<p>FHWA was coordinated with in regards to the Wild Rivers Trail located within the US 53 corridor. The trail is designated an active rail line and is considered a temporary recreational use. WisDOT owns the trail and the WDNR is currently temporarily using this.</p> <p>See <a href="http://www.environment.fhwa.dot.gov/4f/4fpolicy.asp">http://www.environment.fhwa.dot.gov/4f/4fpolicy.asp</a> for the FHWA 4(f) Policy Paper.</p>
American Indian Tribes	Y	Y	<p>The following tribes and the Great Lakes Inter-Tribal Council (GLITC) were notified, and requested further coordination in the event that discoveries are made prior to, and during construction.</p> <p><i>See Appendix B</i></p>

**Basic Sheet 4  
Environmental Factors Matrix**

FACTORS	EFFECTS				Comments
	Adverse	Benefit	None Identified	Factor Sheet Attached	
<p>Note: Comments should be of a summary nature and should not extensively duplicate information contained in an attached factor sheet. If an "adverse" effect is permanent, a factor sheet must be attached. If an "adverse" effect is temporary, it must be explained on this sheet under "comments". If "None Identified" is indicated, explain why.</p>					
<b>A. ECONOMIC FACTORS</b>					
A-1 General Economics	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<p>The Proposed Action would ensure the economic viability of the area by promoting safe and efficient transportation, both on US 53 and the local and county road system, provide safe and efficient transport of goods on a major arterial facility (US 53), use economic resources that could not be used in other ways, and temporarily disrupt traffic patterns in area of construction.</p>
A-2 Business	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<p>Based on traffic volumes and areas of development, the area of greatest development potential is in the Town of Trego, specifically at/near where US 53 and US 63 diverge. The interchange construction would lead to the acquisition and removal of two commercial properties. Alternate access to surrounding businesses would be provided and temporary indirection is anticipated to be minor. Visibility from the highway of the existing businesses would be retained.</p> <p>Conversion of the existing US 53 and local road intersections to overpasses and cul-de-sacs could reduce the likelihood of transportation dependent commercial land uses from locating along US 53 and competing with existing agricultural activities currently taking place in this area.</p>
A-3 Agriculture	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<p>The Preferred Alternative would require the acquisition of 9.8 acres of land from 3 farms.</p> <p>The interchange near County E in Trego and overpass at County H would provide greater safety for farm operators crossing US 53 with farm equipment. No Agricultural Impact Statement is needed at this time. Additional future coordination with DATCP would occur closer to design/construction.</p> <p><i>See Appendix E</i></p>
<b>B. SOCIAL/CULTURAL FACTORS</b>					
B-1 Community or Residential	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<p>The Proposed Action would support local land use plans of communities along US 53, have a minor effect on the character and traffic patterns of some county and local roadways, balance indirection from access changes with additional safe crossings of US 53 for the provision of emergency response services, cause minor changes for other transportation modes such as bicycle and snowmobile by changing the locations at which US 53 could be crossed, and require the acquisition of seven (7) private residences.</p> <p><i>See Appendix F</i></p>

B-2 Indirect Effects	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	See <i>Indirect and Cumulative Effects Analysis, Appendix A</i>
B-3 Cumulative Effects	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	See <i>Indirect and Cumulative Effects Analysis, Appendix A</i>
B-4 Environmental Justice	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<p>According to 2010 Census data, 12.1 percent of Washburn County is below the poverty level. The State of Wisconsin has a rate of 12 percent. The Proposed Action would provide safer crossings of US 53 and US 63 for the community of Trego.</p> <p>Neither minority nor low-income populations would receive disproportionately high or adverse impacts as a result of the Proposed Action.</p>
B-5 Historic Resources	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<p>The State Bank of Trego at W5630 Oakhill Road (AHI #18083, WB-4/11) has been deemed eligible for the NRHP under Criterion A. The site will not be directly affected by the Proposed Action. The SHPO signed the Section 106 on June 19, 2012.</p> <p>See <i>Appendix D</i></p>
B-6 Archaeological Sites	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<p>No archaeological sites will be directly affected by the Proposed Action. Site BWB-0025, Riverside Cemetery, has the potential for unmarked graves within the fenced site location. The Proposed Action avoids impacts to property and fenced area of the cemetery. The SHPO signed the Section 106 on June 19, 2012.</p> <p>See <i>Appendix D</i></p>
B-7 Tribal Issues	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	None identified.
B-8 Section 4(f) and 6(f) or Other Unique Areas	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	The National Park Service (NPS) land located adjacent to the Namekagon River. Neither the NPS land nor the Namekagon River will be directly affected by the Proposed Action.
B-9 Aesthetics	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<p>The landscape in the project area comprises gently rolling land, some forested areas, and low-lying wetlands along stream banks. Other elements in the viewshed include scattered site housing, highway-oriented commercial development concentrated near existing interchanges and medium to low density urban development near the Town of Trego.</p> <p>The proposed improvements are not expected to substantially affect the aesthetics of the environment.</p>
<b>C. NATURAL SYSTEM FACTORS</b>					
C-1 Wetlands	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<p>Shallow open water communities, deep marshes, shallow marshes, and bogs are found throughout the project corridor.</p> <p>Approximately 0.9 acres of wetland would be converted to right of way and 0.5 acres of wetlands would be filled. Wetlands would be delineated closer to design/construction to determine the exact amount and location of wetlands impacted by the Proposed Action. Following the determination, a wetland mitigation plan would be developed to address the following items:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The impacted wetland acreage by wetland type</li> <li>• The plan for on-site restoration and anticipated compensation acreage</li> </ul>

					<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The proposal for debiting the remaining compensation acreage to a WisDOT Wetland Mitigation Bank</li> </ul>
C-2 Rivers, Streams and Floodplains	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	The current alignment of US 53 travels over the Yellow River, Potato Creek and the Namekagon River. The Proposed Action will require a new crossing of Potato Creek. This could potentially be a box culvert or a bridge. Through coordination with the WDNR and landowners, the Potato Creek bridge will include the ATV/snowmobile trail crossing. The coordination efforts also helped the Proposed Action completely avoid the Namekagon River.
C-3 Lakes or Other Open Water	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Spooner Lake, Little Spooner Lake and Whalen Lake are located within the 1-mile buffer of the project, but will not be affected.
C-4 Groundwater, Wells, and Springs	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Any wells located on relocated properties would be surveyed closer to design/construction. The Spooner Waterworks currently has a wellhead protection plan in place for two wells. The protection areas are two miles west of the US 53/WIS 70 interchange – outside the project area.
C-5 Upland Wildlife and Habitat	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Wildlife associated with the project corridors land types include a variety of game and non-game species of birds, mammals, fish, reptiles and amphibians that typically live in Washburn County.  The Proposed Action would degrade small areas of habitat throughout the project area. The overall effect of the eventual implementation of the Proposed Action is expected to be minor.
C-6 Coastal Zones	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	N/A
C-7 Threatened and Endangered Species	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	An endangered and threatened species evaluation would be conducted closer to design/construction.  If Bog Bluegrass plants are impacted by construction activities, coordination with the Bureau of Endangered Resources would be necessary.
<b>D. PHYSICAL FACTORS</b>					
D-1 Air Quality	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	The project is exempt from permit requirements under Wisconsin Administrative Code – Chapter NR 411. No substantial impacts to air quality are expected.
D-2 Construction Stage Sound Quality	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	To reduce the potential impact of construction noise, the special provisions for this project would require that motorized equipment shall be operated in compliance with all applicable local, state, and federal laws and regulations relating to noise levels.
D-3 Traffic Noise	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Both existing and future noise levels were predicted primarily through modeling. Existing noise levels in the areas of new roads was measured in the field. Noise levels on US 53 in its current location will decrease as traffic moves to the relocated roadway.
D-4 Hazardous Substances or Contamination	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	A phase 1 report has been completed. A total of six potential hazardous materials sites were identified during the Phase 1 hazardous materials assessment (HMA). Three sites are recommended for a Phase 2 or 2.5 analyses.
D-5 Stormwater	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	A Stormwater Management Plan would be developed and incorporated into the project's design to reduce or minimize runoff effects to surrounding waters from construction of the Proposed Action.

D-6 Erosion Control	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<p>Construction site erosion and sediment control would be part of the project's design and construction as set forth in TRANS 401 Wis. Adm. Code and the WisDOT/WDNR Cooperative Agreement. An Erosion Control Implementation Plan (EICP) would be prepared by the contractor and approved by WisDOT prior to construction. WDNR would be given an opportunity to review the EICP and provide comments. Standard WisDOT erosion control methods would be used during construction as per WisDOT Standards Specifications for highway and structure construction. Temporary and permanent erosion control methods would include minimizing the amount of land exposed at one time, erosion bales, temporary seeding, silt fencing, erosion mats, rip-rap (side channel and backwater complex), seeding and mulching, temporary sediment traps, dust abatement, and grass-line conveyance (parallel to flow). Additionally, WDNR would be coordinated with in order to ensure adequate vegetative cover is maintained on approach slopes.</p>
<b>E. OTHER FACTORS</b>					
E-1 Recreational Trail	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<p>The Wild Rivers State Trail provides opportunities for activities such as ATV riding, snowmobiling and hiking. There is a parking lot and access point in Trego. This trail is federally granted right-of-way and a part of the Rails to Trails Program and is not classified as a 4(f) resource. Access to this trailhead will change with implementation of the Preferred Alternative.</p> <p>See <a href="http://www.environment.fhwa.dot.gov/4f/4fpolicy.asp">http://www.environment.fhwa.dot.gov/4f/4fpolicy.asp</a> for a copy of the 4(f) policy paper drafted in 2012.</p>
E-2	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		

**Basic Sheet 5  
Alternatives Comparison Matrix**

(All estimates, including costs, are based on conditions described in this document at the time of preparation. Additional agency or public involvement may change these estimates in the future.)

ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUE	UNIT MEASURE	SPOONER AREA - ALTERNATIVES			
		No Build	S1	S2	S3 (Preferred Alternative)
Project Length	Miles	0	4.5	4.5	4.5
<b>Preliminary Cost Estimate</b>					
Construction	Million \$	0	10.9	15.2	18.6
Real Estate	Million \$	0	0.4	0.4	0.4
Total	Million \$	0	11.3	15.6	19.0
<b>Land Conversions</b>					
Wetland Area Converted to ROW	Acres	0	0	0.9	0
Upland Habitat Area Converted to ROW	Acres	0	18.6	21.2	30.1
Other Area Converted to ROW	Acres	0	27.2	35.4	25.6
Total Area Converted to ROW	Acres	0	45.8	57.5	55.7
<b>Real Estate</b>					
Number of Farms Affected	Number	0	0	1	1
Total Area Required From Farm Operations	Acres	0	0	2.6	2.6
AIS Required	Yes/No	No	Possibly in future	Possibly in future	Possibly in future
Farmland Rating	Score	N/A	56	59	59
Total Buildings Required	Number	0	10	10	10
Housing Units Required	Number	0	2	2	2
Commercial Units Required	Number	0	1	1	1
Other Buildings or Structures Required	Number (Type)	0	3 Sheds	3 Sheds	3 Sheds
<b>Environmental Issues</b>					
Indirect Effects	Yes/No	No	No	No	No
Cumulative Effects	Yes/No	No	No	No	No
Environmental Justice Populations	Yes/No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Historic Properties	Number	N/A	0	0	0
Archeological Sites	Number	N/A	0	0	0
106 MOA Required	Yes/No	No	No	No	No
4(f) Evaluation Required	Yes/No	No	No	No	No
Flood Plain	Yes/No	No	No	No	No
Total Wetlands Filled	Acres	0	0	0.6	0
Stream Crossings	Number	N/A	0	0	0
Endangered Species	Yes/No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Air Quality Permit Required	Yes/No	No	No	No	No
Design Year Noise Sensitive Receptors		N/A	Not Modeled	Not Modeled	0
Contaminated Sites	Number	N/A	0	0	0

**Basic Sheet 5  
Alternatives Comparison Matrix**

(All estimates, including costs, are based on conditions described in this document at the time of preparation. Additional agency or public involvement may change these estimates in the future.)

ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUE	UNIT MEASURE	TREGO AREA - ALTERNATIVES				
		No Build	N1	N2	N3	N4 (Preferred Alt.)
Project Length	Miles	0	5	5	5	5
<b>Preliminary Cost Estimate</b>						
Construction	Million \$	0	12.7	13.1	18.6	16.3
Real Estate	Million \$	0	1.6	1.7	0.7	1.0
Total	Million \$	0	14.2	14.7	19.4	17.3
<b>Land Conversions</b>						
Wetland Area Converted to ROW	Acres	0	0.9	0.9	0.9	0.9
Upland Habitat Area Converted to ROW	Acres	0	21.2	24.7	19.1	32.5
Other Area Converted to ROW	Acres	0	34.8	39	32.1	45.7
Total Area Converted to ROW	Acres	0	56.9	64.6	52.1	79.1
<b>Real Estate</b>						
Number of Farms Affected	Number	0	2	2	2	2
Total Area Required From Farm Operations	Acres	0	7.2	7.2	7.2	7.2
AIS Required	Yes/No	No	Possibly in future	Possibly in future	Possibly in future	Possibly in future
Farmland Rating	Score	N/A	48	48	48	52
Total Buildings Required	Number	0	17	18	5	8
Housing Units Required	Number	0	5	6	1	5
Commercial Units Required	Number	0	8	7	6	1
Other Buildings or Structures Required	Number (Type)	0	8	9	3	2
<b>Environmental Issues</b>						
Indirect Effects	Yes/No	No	No	No	No	No
Cumulative Effects	Yes/No	No	No	No	No	No
Environmental Justice Populations	Yes/No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Historic Properties	Number	0	0	0	0	0
Archeological Sites	Number	0	0	0	0	0
106 MOA Required	Yes/No	No	No	No	No	No
4(f) Evaluation Required	Yes/No	No	No	No	No	No
Flood Plain	Yes/No	No	No	No	No	No
Total Wetlands Filled	Acres	0	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.5
Stream Crossings	Number	N/A	2	2	2	1
Endangered Species	Yes/No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Air Quality Permit Required	Yes/No	No	No	No	No	No
Design Year Noise Sensitive Receptors		N/A	Not Modeled	Not Modeled	Not Modeled	1 Impacted
Contaminated Sites	Number	N/A	6	6	6	6

**Basic Sheet 5  
Alternatives Comparison Matrix**

(All estimates, including costs, are based on conditions described in this document at the time of preparation. Additional agency or public involvement may change these estimates in the future.)

ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUE	UNIT MEASURE	PREFERRED ALTERNATIVE (N4 & S3)			
		No Build	N4 (Preferred Alt.)	S3 (Preferred Alt.)	Total of N4 and S3
Project Length	Miles	0	5	4.5	9.5
<b>Preliminary Cost Estimate</b>					
Construction	Million \$	0	16.3	18.6	34.9
Real Estate	Million \$	0	1.0	0.4	1.4
Total	Million \$	0	17.3	19.0	36.3
<b>Land Conversions</b>					
Wetland Area Converted to ROW	Acres	0	0.9	0	0.9
Upland Habitat Area Converted to ROW	Acres	0	32.5	30.1	62.6
Other Area Converted to ROW	Acres	0	45.7	25.6	71.3
Total Area Converted to ROW	Acres	0	79.1	55.7	134.8
<b>Real Estate</b>					
Number of Farms Affected	Number	0	1	1	2
Total Area Required From Farm Operations	Acres	0	7.2	2.6	9.8
AIS Required	Yes/No	No	Possibly in future	Possibly in future	Possibly in future
Farmland Rating	Score	N/A	52	59	54
Total Buildings Required	Number	0	8	10	18
Housing Units Required	Number	0	5	2	7
Commercial Units Required	Number	0	1	1	2
Other Buildings or Structures Required	Number (Type)	0	2 Sheds	3 Sheds	5
<b>Environmental Issues</b>					
Indirect Effects	Yes/No	No	No	No	No
Cumulative Effects	Yes/No	No	No	No	No
Environmental Justice Populations	Yes/No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Historic Properties	Number	No	0	0	0
Archeological Sites	Number	No	0	1	1
106 MOA Required	Yes/No	No	No	No	No
4(f) Evaluation Required	Yes/No	No	No	No	No
Flood Plain	Yes/No	No	No	No	No
Total Wetlands Filled	Acres	0	0.5	0	0.5
Stream Crossings	Number	N/A	1	0	1
Endangered Species	Yes/No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Air Quality Permit Required	Yes/No	No	No	No	No
Design Year Noise Sensitive Receptors		N/A	1 Impacted	0	1 Impacted
Contaminated Sites	Number	N/A	6	0	6



**Basic Sheet 6  
Traffic Summary Matrix**

	<b>TREGO AREA ALTERNATIVES</b>			
	1	2	3	4
<b>TRAFFIC VOLUMES</b>				
Existing ADT Yr. 2011	10,650	10,650	10,650	10,650
Const. Yr. ADT Yr. 2021	12,250	12,250	12,250	12,250
Const. Plus 10 Yr. ADT Yr. 2031	13,800	13,800	13,800	13,800
Design Yr. ADT Yr. 2041	15,400	15,400	15,400	15,400
DHV Yr. 2041	1,080	1,080	1,080	1,080
<b>TRAFFIC FACTORS</b>				
K <sub>[100]</sub> (%)	11.5	11.5	11.5	11.5
D (%)	61/39	61/39	61/39	61/39
Design Year T (% of ADT)	8.6	8.6	8.6	8.6
T (% of DHV)	8.1	8.1	8.1	8.1
Level of Service (LOS)	A	A	A	A
<b>SPEEDS</b>				
Existing Posted	65	65	65	65
Future Posted	65	65	65	65
Design Year Project Design Speed	70	70	70	70
<b>OTHER (Specify)</b>				
P (% of ADT)	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
K (% OF ADT)	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

ADT = Average Daily Traffic DHV = Design Hourly Volume

K<sub>[30/100/200]</sub> : K<sub>30</sub> = Interstate, K<sub>100</sub> = Rural, K<sub>200</sub> = Urban, % = ADT in DHV

D = % DHV in predominate direction of travel T = Trucks P = % ADT in peak hour

K<sub>8</sub> = % ADT occurring in the average of the 8 highest consecutive hours of traffic on an average day. (Only required when a carbon monoxide analysis must be performed per Wisconsin Administrative Code - Chapter NR 411.)

**Basic Sheet 7**  
**EIS Significance Criteria**

When the significance of impact of a transportation project proposal is uncertain, an environmental assessment (ES) is prepared to assist in making this determination. If it is found that significant impact(s) will result, the preparation of an environmental impact statement (EIS) should commence immediately. Indicate whether the issue listed below is a concern for the proposed action or alternative. If the issue is a concern, explain how it is to be addressed or where it is addressed in this environmental document.

**1) Will the proposed action stimulate substantial indirect environmental effects?**

- No  
 Yes – Explain or indicate where addressed.

**2) Will the proposed action contribute to cumulative effects of repeated actions?**

- No  
 Yes – Explain or indicate where addressed.

**3) Will the creation of a new environmental effect result from this proposed action?**

- No  
 Yes – Explain or indicate where addressed.

**4) Will the proposed action impact geographically scarce resources?**

- No  
 Yes – Explain or indicate where addressed.

**5) Will the proposed action have a precedent-setting nature?**

- No  
 Yes – Explain or indicate where addressed.

**6) Is the degree of controversy associated with the proposed action high?**

- No  
 Yes – Explain or indicate where addressed.

**7) Will the proposed action be in conflict with official agency plans or local, state, or national policies, including conflicts resulting from potential effects of transportation on land use and land use on transportation demand?**

- No  
 Yes – Explain or indicate where addressed.

**Basic Sheet 8  
Environmental Commitments**

Identify and describe any commitments made to protect the environment. Indicate when the commitment should be implemented and who in WisDOT will have jurisdiction to assure fulfillment for each commitment. Note if the commitment will be recorded in the plans, "special provisions", "notes to construction" or some other written format. Note if the commitment is mandated by law, and therefore legally binding.

Commitments on Basic Sheet 8 supplement environmental commitments incorporated in WisDOT's Standard Specifications for Highway and Bridge Construction.

ATTACH A COPY OF THIS PAGE TO THE DESIGN STUDY REPORT AND THE PS&E SUBMITTAL PACKAGE

<b>Factors</b>	<b>Commitments</b>
<b>A-1 General Economics</b>	No commitments needed
<b>A-2 Business</b>	Two commercial real estate relocations were identified. A Conceptual Stage Relocation Plan is included in Appendix F. An in-depth and up-to-date analysis of the residential relocations would be completed closer to design/construction. This commitment will be incorporated into the plans and special provisions by the designer, implemented in the field by the contractor, and overseen by WisDOT's construction engineer.
<b>A-3 Agriculture</b>	<p>When this project moves into design/construction, DATCP would be notified. If more than five acres of property would be acquired from any agricultural operation, an Agricultural Impact Statement must be prepared. If five acres or less is involved, DATCP has discretion whether to prepare an AIS. WisDOT cannot begin negotiation with a property owner until 30 days after the AIS has been published, if an AIS will be prepared for the project.</p> <p>The NRCS CPA-106 form would be re-evaluated closer to design/construction. Farmland owners and operators would be given advanced notice of acquisition and construction schedules by the department's construction engineer so that farm activities can be adjusted accordingly. To the extent feasible, the timing of the acquisition and construction will be coordinated with them to minimize crop damage and disruption of farm operations.</p>
<b>B-1 Community or Residential</b>	Seven residential real estate relocations were identified. A Conceptual Stage Relocation Plan is included in Appendix F. An in-depth and up-to-date analysis of the residential relocations would be completed closer to design/construction by the designer.
<b>B-2 Indirect Effects</b>	No commitments needed
<b>B-3 Cumulative Effects</b>	No commitments needed
<b>B-4 Environmental Justice</b>	The demographic makeup of the area would be re-evaluated closer to design/construction by the designer.
<b>B-5 Historic Resources</b>	No commitments needed
<b>B-6 Archaeological Sites</b>	<p>No commitments needed</p> <p>No archaeological sites will be directly affected by the Proposed Action. Site BWB-0025, Riverside Cemetery, has the potential for unmarked graves within the fenced site location. The Proposed Action avoids impacts to property and fenced area of the cemetery. The SHPO signed the Section 106 on June 19, 2012.</p>
<b>B-7 Tribal Issues</b>	The tribes will be contacted as appropriate if any archeological sites or resources are identified at any stage in the process, including construction.
<b>B-8 Section 4(f) and 6(f) or Other Unique Areas</b>	No commitments needed
<b>B-9 Aesthetics</b>	No commitments needed

<p><b>C-1 Wetlands</b></p>	<p>The potential for on-site wetland mitigation exists where small sections of the existing frontage road would be removed/relocated and where design/construction would acquire small areas of right-of-way. WisDOT would explore the potential for on-site wetland mitigation at the locations closer to design/construction of the Proposed Action. Section 10 and Section 404 coordination would need to occur with COE before construction. Section 7 coordination with USFW would need to occur before construction. Consultation with WDNR would occur during both the design and construction phases of the project to avoid, minimize and mitigate effects.</p> <p>Efforts must be made to move the new town road from Schaub Road west to avoid any wetland filling or impacts to the unnamed tributary to Little Mackey Creek. A vegetative buffer should be in place between the fill slope and the delineated boundary of the wetland.</p> <p>Any structure over Potato Creek must be designed to not impede the stream flow and the natural movement of aquatic life. A hydraulic and hydrologic analysis for the crossing and new structure would need to be conducted.</p> <p>At the time of design and prior to construction, additional efforts would be made to avoid and minimize potential affects to wetlands – when final impacts are known.</p> <p>These commitments will be incorporated into the design plans and special provisions by the designer, implemented in the field by the contractor, and overseen by the department’s construction engineer. Coordination with the WDNR and COE will continue throughout the design process.</p>
<p><b>C-2 Rivers, Streams &amp; Floodplains</b></p>	<p>An endangered and threatened species evaluation would be done at the time of implementation. If these are found, consultation with WDNR and USFWS would occur during both the design and construction phases of the project to avoid, minimize and mitigate effects to state listed species. A 100 year flood hydraulic analysis may be conducted to determine the effects of the Proposed Action on flood stage elevations. During the design stage, WisDOT will work with WDNR to determine the appropriate time period for limiting work in or near streams/lakes to avoid impacts to nests and fish.</p> <p>These commitments will be incorporated into the design plans and special provisions by the designer, implemented in the field by the contractor, and overseen by the department’s construction engineer. Coordination with the WDNR and COE will continue throughout the design process.</p>
<p><b>C-3 Lakes or other Open Water</b></p>	<p>No commitments needed</p>
<p><b>C-4 Groundwater, Wells and springs</b></p>	<p>Wells located on relocated properties would be surveyed closer to design/construction.</p>
<p><b>C-5 Upland Wildlife and Habitat</b></p>	<p>No commitments needed</p>
<p><b>C-6 Coastal Zones</b></p>	<p>No commitments needed</p>

<b>C-7 Threatened and Endangered Species</b>	<p>Bald Eagles nest in large Aspen or white pine trees with a diameter larger than 12 inches. The area will be surveyed for nests and these types of trees if/when any trees are cleared from the property.</p> <p>The WDNR and USFW both note that an endangered and threatened species evaluation would likely be required at the time any improvements are implemented in the future. In accordance with the Federal Highway Administration and the Endangered Species Act of 1973, a determination would be made closer to design/construction as to whether the selected project alternative may affect any federal listed or endangered species, and what actions would be taken to minimize impacts.</p> <p>These commitments will be incorporated into the design plans and special provisions by the designer, implemented in the field by the contractor, and overseen by the department's construction engineer. Coordination with the WDNR and COE will continue throughout the design process.</p>
<b>D-1 Air Quality</b>	No commitments needed
<b>D-2 Construction Stage Sound Quality</b>	<p>Check all that apply:</p> <p>X WisDOT Standard Specification 107.8(6) and 108.7.1 will apply.</p> <p>_ (box) Special construction stage noise abatement measures will be required. Describe:</p>
<b>D-3 Traffic Noise</b>	No commitments needed
<b>D-4 Hazardous Substances or Contamination</b>	A review of the Phase 1 investigation would occur closer to design/construction. Phase 2 or 2.5 subsurface investigations would be performed closer to design/construction for property acquisition on three sites identified in the Phase 1 Hazardous Materials Assessment (HMA).
<b>D-5 Stormwater</b>	WisDOT would be required to develop and submit a stormwater management plan that addresses the applicable post-construction performance standards of TRANS 401.
<b>D-6 Erosion Control</b>	Construction site erosion and sediment control would be part of the project's design and construction as set forth in TRANS 401 Wis. Adm. Code and the WisDOT/WDNR Cooperative Agreement. An Erosion Control Implementation Plan (EICP) would be prepared by the contractor and approved by WDNR prior to construction.
<b>E Other</b>	The WDNR requests that old roadbeds be completely removed and restored to original topography. If opportunities for wetland restoration exist in roadbed removal areas they should be pursued.

# GENERAL ECONOMICS EVALUATION

## Factor Sheet A-1

Alternative Trego Area, Alternative N4 Spooner Area, Alternative S3	Total Length of Center Line of Existing Roadway 9.5 Miles Length of This Alternative 9.5 Miles
Preferred <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> None Identified	

**1. Briefly describe the existing economic characteristics of the area around the project:**

Economic Activity	Description
a. Agriculture	<p>Agriculture is an important economic force in Washburn County. It includes hundreds of family-owned farms, related businesses and industries that provide equipment, services and other products farmers need to process, market and deliver food and other products to consumers.</p> <p>As of 2005, agriculture provided 974 jobs (approximately 12 percent) for Washburn County residents and accounted for nearly \$173 million (approximately 30 percent) in economic activity. Animal agriculture includes beef animals, dairy cows, sheep, horses, turkey, deer and pheasants. Major crops include corn, soybeans, cranberries, and potatoes.</p> <p>In the county there were 471 farms on 105,432 acres of land. Farmland covered 20 percent of Washburn County in 2002 compared to the state of Wisconsin as a whole which had 38 percent of land in farms statewide for the same year. The market value of agricultural products sold by Washburn County producers totaled \$17 million.</p>
b. Retail business	Retail business exists in the Town of Trego.
c. Wholesale business	Not prevalent in the project area
d. Heavy industry	Not prevalent in the project area
e. Light industry	Not prevalent in the project area
f. Tourism	The Namekagon River and the Wild River State Trail in Trego are the main tourism drivers of the area that accommodate canoeing, kayaking, fishing, biking, camping, hiking and snowmobiling.
g. Recreation	Washburn County has almost 200 miles of state-funded trails; including the Wild Rivers State Trail (WRST). This 104-mile trail, following a former railroad corridor, travels through Douglas, Washburn and Barron counties in northwest Wisconsin. Camping, canoeing, hiking, snowmobiling are located along the Namekagon River in the Town of Trego. Spooner Golf Club is located in the southeast quadrant of the proposed US53/63 interchange, north of County H.
h. Forestry	Tri-State Lumber & Land, Inc. is currently located along US 53 in the Town of Trego. The company specializes in forestry, logging and millwork.

**2. Discuss the economic advantages and disadvantages of the proposed action and whether advantages would outweigh disadvantages. Indicate how the project would affect the characteristics described in item 1 above:**

The Proposed Action would have numerous economic benefits over the existing conditions:

- Assist in ensuring the economic viability of the region by promoting safe and efficient travel on the US highway system.
- Promote the efficient transportation of raw materials, goods, and services between markets.
- Provide safe and efficient access to the Town of Trego and surrounding areas.
- Accommodate the current and planned economic growth/development for the area.
- Assist in ensuring safe and efficient access of police, fire, and emergency services to the area.
- Provide safe access to businesses and commercial operations along US 53.

The Proposed Action's disadvantages include:

- Require the relocation of some current private access to US 53 causing slight indirection for vehicles accessing some of the property along the corridor.
- Require relocation of two commercial businesses to accommodate local connections, interchange and grade separation footprints in two locations.
- Increased travel time to/from some locations along the US 53 corridor.
- Require a major capital investment by WisDOT that could not be expended elsewhere.
- Cause temporary disruptions during construction.

**3. What effect will the proposed action have on the potential for economic development in the project area?**

**The proposed project will have no effect on economic development.**

**The proposed project will have an effect on economic development.**

Increase, describe:

The Proposed Action is consistent with the goals of local land use plans and development trends in the area. The Proposed Action will support planned economic development in the area and would likely have a very small overall effect on economic development in the area.

Changes in access along the US 53 corridor may initially influence the location of certain types of development such as highway-oriented businesses. These businesses would likely avoid locations which eventually would not provide direct access to US 53 (See Appendix A). Existing businesses and commercial operations in the project area would benefit from safe access to/from their operations. The separation of traffic destined to local commercial areas from regional traffic would improve mobility and circulation for customers destined to these locations.

# BUSINESS EVALUATION

## Factor Sheet A-2

Alternative Trego Area, Alternative N4 Spoooner Area, Alternative S3	Total Length of Center Line of Existing Roadway 9.5 Miles Length of This Alternative 9.5 Miles
Preferred <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> None identified	

**1. Is a Conceptual Stage Relocation Plan attached to this document?**

- Yes, see Appendix F  
 No - (Explain) \_\_\_\_\_

**2. Describe the economic development or existing business areas affected by the proposed action:**

The Proposed Action will be constructed incrementally over time as funds become available. The likely first step would be the construction of an interchange at US 53/63 in the Town of Trego. Based on traffic volumes and areas of development, the area of greatest developmental potential is in the Town of Trego, specifically at/near where US 53 and 63 diverge. This phasing of the plan will allow communities and property owners to make long-term planning decisions that are compatible with the future plans for the highway. Steps that would be taken include the construction of new local roads and removal of some driveways having direct access to US 53 would be made to assure safety throughout the entire corridor.

The interchange construction would lead to the acquisition and relocation of two commercial properties. Alternate access to surrounding businesses would be provided and temporary indirection is anticipated to be minor. Visibility from the highway of the existing businesses would be retained.

**3. Identify and discuss existing modes of transportation and their traffic within the economic development or existing business area:**

The primary mode of transportation within the economic development area includes automobiles and truck traffic. Bicycle, pedestrian and ATV traffic is also present to some degree in the Town of Trego, with snowmobile access available during winter months.

**4. Identify and discuss effects on the economic development potential and existing businesses that are dependent upon the transportation facility for continued economic viability:**

- The proposed project will have no effect on a transportation-dependent business or industry.  
 The proposed action may change the conditions for a business that is dependent upon the transportation facility. Identify effects, including effects which may occur during construction.

Changes in access at the North US 53/63 intersection could affect traffic traveling to the strip mall and various other businesses on Leisch Road. Instead of two access roads, alternative access would be provided via the interchange south of County E. Indirection is anticipated to be minor, and would likely not discourage potential customers from traveling to these destinations.

Three highway-oriented businesses, two restaurants, and one gas station, currently are accessed at County E. Exit signage is currently provided on US 53/63 for these businesses and would likely remain unchanged in appearance. Access to these businesses would be via the new interchange south of County E.

**5. Describe both beneficial and adverse effects on:**

- A. The existing business area affected by the proposed action. Include any factors identified by business people that they feel are important or controversial.

The Proposed Action is likely to support the existing and planned land uses along the US 53 corridor. The primary planned land use along US 53 is agricultural. Conversion of existing US 53 and local road intersections to overpasses and cul-de-sacs could reduce the likelihood of transportation oriented commercial land uses from locating along US 53 and competing with existing agricultural activities currently taking place in this area. The Proposed Action is consistent with planned land uses for the areas where such plans exist.

- B. The existing employees in businesses affected by the proposal. Include, as appropriate, a discussion of effects on minority populations or low-income populations.

The Proposed Action would benefit employees by providing a safer, more efficient transportation system for travel to/from their place of employment.

**6. Estimated number of businesses and jobs that would be created or displaced because of the project:**

Business/Job Type	Businesses			Jobs	
	Created*	Displaced	Value	Created	Displaced
Retail		1		Unknown	2
Service		1		Unknown	2
Wholesale					
Manufacturing					
Other (List)					

\*It is not possible to speculate on the possible number of jobs that would be created as a result of this project.

**7. Are any owners or employees of created or displaced businesses elderly, disabled, low-income or members of a minority group?**

Specific owner contact would occur at the design/construction stage of project.

- No  
 Yes – If yes, complete Factor Sheet B-4, Environmental Justice Evaluation.

**8. Is Special Relocation Assistance Needed?**

- No  
 Yes – Describe special relocation needs.

**9. Identify all sources of information used to obtain data in item 8:**

- WisDOT Real Estate Conceptual Stage Relocation Plan     Multiple Listing Service (MLS)  
 Newspaper listing(s)     Other - Identify: Washburn County Land Records

**10. Describe the business relocation potential in the community:**

- A. Total number of available business buildings in the community. 6
- B. Number of available and comparable business buildings by type and price (Include business buildings in price ranges comparable to those being dislocated, if any).

Six (6) available and comparable type business buildings in the price range of \$94,000 - \$185,000

**11. Describe how relocation assistance will be provided in compliance with the WisDOT Relocation Manual or FHWA regulation 49 CFR Part 24. Check all that apply:**

- Business acquisitions and relocations will be completed in accordance with the “Uniform Relocation Assistance and Real Property Acquisition Policies Act of 1970 (Uniform Act), as amended.” In addition to providing for payment of “Just Compensation” for property acquired, additional benefits are available to eligible displaced persons forced to relocate from their business. Some available benefits include relocation advisory services, reimbursement of moving expenses, replacement of business payments. In compliance with State law, no person would be displaced unless a comparable replacement business would be provided.

Compensation is available to all displaced persons without discrimination. Before initiating property acquisition activities, property owners will be contacted and given an explanation of the details of the acquisition process and Wisconsin’s Eminent Domain Law under Section 32.05, Wisconsin Statutes. Any property to be acquired will be inspected by one or more professional appraisers. The property owner will be invited to accompany the appraiser

during the inspection to ensure the appraiser is informed of every aspect of the property. Property owners will be given the opportunity to obtain an appraisal by a qualified appraiser that will be considered by WisDOT in establishing just compensation. Reasonable cost of an owner's appraisal will be reimbursed to the owner if received within 60 days of initiation of negotiations. Based on the appraisal(s) made, the value of the property will be determined, and that amount offered to the owner.

Describe other relocation assistance requirements, not identified above.

**12. Identify any difficulties relocating a business displaced by the proposed action and describe any special services needed to remedy identified unusual conditions:**

None identified

**13. Describe any additional measures that will be used to minimize adverse effects or provide benefits to those relocated. Also discuss accommodations made to minimize adverse effects to businesses that may be affected by the project, but not relocated:**

None identified

**Factor Sheet A-3**

Alternative Trego Area, Alternative N4 Spooner Area, Alternative S3	Total Length of Center Line of Existing Roadway 9.5 miles Length of This Alternative 9.5 miles
---	---

Preferred  
 Yes    No    None identified

**1. Total acquisition interest, by type of agricultural land use:**

Type of Land Acquired From Farm Operations	Type of Acquisition (acres)		Total Area Acquired (acres)
	Fee Simple	Easement	
Crop land and pasture	3.8	0.0	3.8
Woodland	6.0	0.0	6.0
Land of undetermined or other use (e.g., wetlands, yards, roads, etc.)	0.0	0.0	0.0
<b>Totals</b>	9.8	0.0	9.8

**2. Indicate number of farm operations from which land will be acquired:**

Acreage to be Acquired	Number of Farm Operations
Less than 1 acre	0
1 acre to 5 acres	2
More than 5 acres	1

**3. Is land to be converted to highway use covered by the Farmland Protection Policy Act?**

- No This would be reevaluated when specific agricultural impacts are more fully developed, based on project design to be determined in a future design phase.
  - The land was purchased prior to August 6, 1984 for the purpose of conversion.
  - The acquisition does not directly or indirectly convert farmland.
  - The land is clearly not farmland
  - The land is already in, or committed to urban use or water storage.
- Yes (This determination is made by the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) via the completion of the Farmland Impact Conversion Rating Form, NRCS Form AD-1006)
  - The land is prime farmland which is not already committed to urban development or water storage.
  - The land is unique farmland.
  - The land is farmland which is of statewide or local importance as determined by the appropriate state or local government agency.

**4. Has the Farmland Impact Conversion Rating Form (AD-1006) been submitted to NRCS?**

- No - Explain.
- Yes
  - The Site Assessment Criteria Score (Part VI of the form) is less than 60 points for this project alternative. The Preferred Alternative received a score of 54. The NRCS CPA-106 form would be re-evaluated closer to design/construction.  
Date Form AD-1006 completed. 2/29/09
  - The Site Assessment Criteria Score is 60 points or greater.  
Date Form AD-1006 completed. \_\_\_\_\_

**5. Is an Agricultural Impact Statement (AIS) Required?**

- No
  - Eminent Domain will not be used for this acquisition
  - The project is a "Town Highway" project
  - The acquisition is less than 1 acre
  - The acquisition is 1-5 acres and DATCP chooses not to do an AIS.
  - Other. Describe: DATCP may choose to have an AIS completed closer to design/construction.

- Yes
  - Eminent Domain may be used for this acquisition.
  - The project is not a "Town Highway" project
  - The acquisition is 1-5 acres and DATCP chooses to do an AIS.
  - The acquisition is greater than 5 acres

**6. Is an Agricultural Impact Notice (AIN) Required?**

- No, the project is not a State Trunk Highway Project - AIN not required but complete questions 7-16.
- Yes, the project is a State Trunk Highway Project - AIN may be required.

Is the land acquired "non-significant"?

- Yes - (All must be checked) An AIN is not required but complete questions 7-16.
  - Less than 1 acre in size
  - Results in no severances
  - Does not significantly alter or restrict access
  - Does not involve moving or demolishing any improvements necessary to the operation of the farm
  - Does not involve a high value crop
- No
  - Acquisition 1 to 5 acres - **AIN required.** Complete Pages 1 and 2, Form DT1999, (Pages 1 and 2, Figure 1, Procedure 21-25-30.)
  - Acquisition over 5 acres - **AIN required.** Complete Pages 1, 3 and 4, Form DT1999. (Pages 1, 3 and 4, Figure 1, Procedure 21-25-30)

# COMMUNITY OR RESIDENTIAL EVALUATION

## Factor Sheet B-1

Alternative Spoooner Area, Alternative S3 Trego Area, Alternative N4	Total Length of Center Line of Existing Roadway 9.5 miles Length of This Alternative 9.5 miles
Preferred <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> None identified	

**1. Give a brief description of the community or neighborhood affected by the proposed action:**

Name of Community/Neighborhood <b>Washburn County</b>		
Incorporated <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No		
Total Population 15,911		
Demographic Characteristics		
	Census Year 2010	% of Population
	White	96.4
	Non White/Minority	3.6
	Age 65+	21.2
	Below poverty level	12.1*

Name of Community/Neighborhood <b>Census Tract 9505 – includes City and Town of Spooner</b>		
Incorporated <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No (Census tracts are not incorporated; however, some areas of this tract are incorporated.)		
Total Population 5,100		
Demographic Characteristics		
	Census Year 2010	% of Population
	White	95.1
	Non White/Minority	4.9
	Age 65+	22.2
	Below poverty level	14.5*

Name of Community/Neighborhood <b>Census Tract 9502 – includes Towns of Trego and Brooklyn</b>		
Incorporated <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No (Census tracts are not incorporated; however, some areas of this tract are incorporated.)		
Total Population 1,767		
Demographic Characteristics		
	Census Year 2010	% of Population
	White	95.6
	Non White/Minority	4.4
	Age 65+	19.6
	Below poverty level	10.7*

\*12 percent of Wisconsin's total population is below the poverty level.

**2. Identify and discuss existing modes of transportation and their importance within the community or Neighborhood:**

The primary mode of transportation within the community includes automobile and truck traffic. This traffic includes both local and regional trips on US 53 as well as county and local roadways. US 53 primarily serves local/regional trips for a variety of purposes, and recreational, business and long-haul truck trips for travelers from more distant locations. In 2011, traffic volumes along US 53 north of County E and south of US 63 intersection

were 10,650 AADT. Future traffic volumes are anticipated to increase to 12,250 by the year 2021 and 13,800 by the year 2031. Between US 63 and Schnagel Road, along US 53, volumes reached 4,600 in the year 2011, with volumes reaching anticipated levels of 5,600 by 2021 and 6,550 AADT in 2031.

Over 75% of commuters drove alone to work while 12% carpooled. Another four percent walked or bicycled. Approximately 57% have a commute to work of less than 19 minutes while 30% have a commute of 20 to 39 minutes. 13.5% of those living in Washburn County commute at least 40 minutes each way to work.

Wisconsin Great Northern Railroad (WGN) operates and serves the City of Spooner, traveling from the City of Spooner to Hayward Junction in Springbrook. The railroad runs a historic excursion train operating on approximately 20 miles of former Chicago & Northwestern track. Connections via Canadian National Railroad (CNR) exist at the termini of WGN. The CNR passes through Washburn County east of the project area and connects Superior, WI with Green Bay, WI and other rail junctions across the state. The nearest passenger rail services are available in Minneapolis-St. Paul through Amtrak.

No scheduled passenger flights are available to residents within Washburn County. The nearest airports providing regular scheduled passenger flights are located in Eau Claire (Wis.), Duluth (Minn.), and Minneapolis-St. Paul (Minn.). Shell Lake Municipal Airport is a basic utility airport located six (6) miles south of the City of Spooner, and Rice Lake Regional Airport is a Transport/Corporate airport providing commercial cargo service and located approximately nine miles southeast of the project area. Shell Lake serves roughly 34 flights a day, primarily consisting of local and recreational use. Rice Lake airport serves roughly 76 flights a day of which roughly 10% include air taxi services.

Bike facilities including the Wild Rivers State Trail exist near the project area. The Wild Rivers State Trail is a 40-mile rails-to-trails facility located between Rice Lake and Superior and roughly parallel to US 53. Both trails are open to snowmobile use during the winter season.

Several snowmobile trails are located within the project area with snowmobiling a major recreational activity in the area during winter months. Approximately 47 miles of trail are located in Washburn County with nearly 40 miles on the segment of the Wild Rivers Trail. Connections between local trails, Rice Lake, Haugen, and Spooner are provided via the Wild Rivers State Trail and the Tuscobia State Trail.

Washburn County is not served by public mass transit.

**3. Identify and discuss the probable changes resulting from the proposed action to the existing modes of transportation and their function within the community or neighborhood:**

The implementation of the Proposed Action would not be likely to cause changes in the mode of travel used. There would likely be some minor changes in automobile and truck traffic patterns on the local road system, and some added indirection and changes in travel times to and from some locations in the project area.

Trego area residents would continue to use the existing US 63 (which would be jurisdictionally transferred to Trego) to access US 63 northbound. Area residents traveling south on US 63 would have access via the new interchange.

Spooner area residents would continue to access US 53 at the WIS 70 interchange. New overpasses at County H and Ojibwa Rd. would provide cross highway travel and access to US 63.

**4. Briefly discuss the proposed action's direct and indirect effect(s) on existing and planned land use in the community or neighborhood:**

The project area is located in the City of Spooner and the Towns of Spooner and Trego in Washburn County (See Exhibit 1, Project Location Map). Existing land cover in the project corridor consists primarily of rural wooded, wetland, and agricultural uses. Area lakes support large numbers of recreational lakefront homes. Area housing densities reflect the use of on-site septic systems and wells in the unincorporated areas.

The City of Spooner will experience limited effects from the Proposed Action since no changes to US 53 occur in the city limits. All access to the City of Spooner would be via WIS 70 or US 63, not county roads.

**5. Address any changes to emergency or other public services during and after construction of the proposed project:**

Changes to emergency services include indirection (altered travel routes/distance) during construction, and after access changes have been completed. Additional safe crossings of US 53 balance the safety and efficiency of emergency service responses with the potential indirection caused by those access changes.

**6. Describe any physical or access changes that will result. This could include effects on lot frontages, side slopes or driveways (steeper or flatter), sidewalks, reduced terraces, tree removals, vision corners, etc.:**

The Proposed Action includes changes in direct access onto US 53 and US 63 for some existing intersections in the project area, including local roads, driveways and agricultural access. In a few locations, access to property will change to be located onto local roads that do not access US 53 or US 63. Because of the rural nature of the area, there are no sidewalks or terraces to be affected.

**7. Indicate whether a community/neighborhood facility will be affected by the proposed action and indicate what effect(s) this will have on the community/neighborhood:**

Community facilities are not affected by implementation of the Proposed Action.

**8. Identify and discuss factors that residents have indicated to be important or controversial:**

Public comments from area residents suggest that the Namekagon River is a valuable resource that they do not want to see impacted. The Preferred Alternative was developed so the river is not impacted.

Circulation around Spooner was an issue brought up early in the public involvement process. Adding an overpass at Ojibwa Rd. will provide the needed north/south movement between Spooner Lake residents and the City of Spooner.

**9. List any Community Sensitive Design considerations, such as design considerations and potential mitigation measures.**

None

**10. Indicate the number and type of any residential buildings that will be acquired because of the proposed action. If either item a) or b) is checked, items 11 through 18 do not need to be addressed or included in the environmental document. If item c) is checked, complete items 11 through 18 and attach the Conceptual Stage Relocation Plan to the environmental document:**

- a.  None identified.
- b.  No occupied residential building will be acquired as a result of this project. Provide number and description of non-occupied buildings to be acquired.
- c.  Occupied residential building(s) will be acquired. Provide number and description of buildings, e.g., single family homes, apartment buildings, condominiums, duplexes, etc.

**11. Anticipated number of households that will be relocated from the occupied residential buildings identified in item 10c, above:**

Total Number of Households to be Relocated. 7
--

(Note that this number may be greater than the number shown in 10c) above because an occupied apartment building may have many households.)

a. Number by Ownership

Number of Households Living in Owner Occupied Building 7	Number of Households Living in Rented Quarters 0
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b. Number of households to be relocated that have.

1 Bedroom 0	2 Bedroom 0	3 Bedroom 7	4 or More Bedrooms 0
----------------	----------------	----------------	-------------------------

c. Number of relocated households by type and price range of dwelling.

Number of Single Family Dwelling. - 7	Price Range - \$64,200 to \$161,300
Number of Multi-Family Dwellings - 0	Price Range
Number of Apartment - 0	Price Range

**12. Describe the relocation potential in the community:**

a. Number of Available Dwellings

1 Bedroom N/A	2 Bedrooms N/A	3 Bedrooms 28	4 or More Bedrooms N/A
------------------	-------------------	------------------	---------------------------

b. Number of Available and Comparable Dwellings by Location

28 properties within 54888 zip code within	within within
---	------------------

c. Number of Available and Comparable Dwellings by Type and Price. (Include dwellings in price ranges comparable to those being dislocated, if any.)

Single Family Dwellings 28	Price Range \$23,000 to \$200,000
Multi-Family Dwellings	
Apartments	

**13. Identify all the sources of information used to obtain the data in item 12:**

- WisDOT Real Estate Conceptual Stage Relocation Plan   
 Multiple Listing Service (MLS)  
 Newspaper Listing(s)   
 Other – Identify

**14. Indicate the number of households to be relocated that have the following special characteristics:**

None identified. An in-depth and up-to-date analysis of the residential relocations would be completed closer to design/construction.

Yes - \_\_\_\_\_ total households to be relocated. Complete table below

Special Characteristics	Number of Households with Individuals with Special Characteristics
Elderly	
Disabled	
Low income	
Minority	
Household of large family (5 or more)	
Not Known	
No special characteristics	

**15. Describe how relocation assistance will be provided in compliance with the WisDOT Relocation Manual or FHWA regulation 49 CFR Part 24:**

Residential acquisitions and relocations will be completed in accordance with the "Uniform Relocation Assistance and Real Property Acquisition Policies Act of 1970 (Uniform Act), as amended." In addition to providing for payment of "Just Compensation" for property acquired, additional benefits are available to eligible displaced persons required to relocate from their residence. Some available benefits include relocation advisory services, reimbursement of moving expenses, replacement housing payments, and down payment assistance. In compliance with State law, no person would be displaced unless a comparable replacement dwelling would be provided. Federal law also requires that decent, safe, and sanitary replacement dwelling must be made available before any residential displacement can occur.

Compensation is available to all displaced persons without discrimination. Before initiating property acquisition activities, property owners would be contacted and given an explanation of the details of the acquisition process and Wisconsin's Eminent Domain Law under Section 32.05, Wisconsin Statutes. Any property to be acquired would be inspected by one or more professional appraisers. The property owner would be invited to accompany the appraiser during the inspection to ensure the appraiser is informed of every aspect of the property. Property owners will be given the opportunity to obtain an appraisal by a qualified appraiser that will be considered by WisDOT in establishing just compensation. Based on the appraisal(s) made, the value of the property would be determined, and that amount offered to the owner.

Identify other relocation assistance requirements not identified above.

**16. Identify any difficulties or unusual conditions for relocating households displaced by the proposed action:**

None identified at this time. An in-depth and up-to-date analysis of the residential relocations would be completed closer to design/construction.

**17. Indicate whether Special Relocation Assistance Service will be needed. Describe any special services or housing programs needed to remedy identified difficulties or unusual conditions noted in item #14 above:**

None identified

Yes - Describe services that will be required

An in-depth and up-to-date analysis of the residential relocations would be completed closer to design/construction.

**18. Describe any additional measures that will be used to minimize adverse effects or provide benefits to those relocated, those remaining, or to community facilities affected:**

No additional measures are anticipated at this time.

# ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE EVALUATION

Wisconsin Department of Transportation

## Factor Sheet B-4

Alternative North Segment, Alternative N4 South Segment, Alternative S3	Total Length of Center Line of Existing Roadway 9.5 miles Length of This Alternative 9.5 miles
Preferred <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> None identified	

1. **Identify and give a brief description of the populations covered under Executive Order 12898 (EO 12898). Include the relative size of the populations and their pertinent demographic characteristics: (Check all that apply.)**

Population Groups	Low Income	Elderly	Disabled
<input type="checkbox"/> Black (having origins in any of the black racial groups of Africa) Describe:	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/> Hispanic (of Mexican, Puerto Rican, Cuban, Central or South American, or other Spanish culture or origin, regardless of race) Describe:	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/> Asian American (origins in any of the original peoples of the Far East, SE Asia, the Indian subcontinent, or the Pacific Islands) Describe:	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/> American Indian and Alaska Native (having origins in any of the original people of North American and who maintains cultural identification through tribal affiliation or community recognition) Describe:	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> White and any combination of the above. Describe: According to 2010 Census data, 12.1 percent of Washburn County is below the poverty level. The State of Wisconsin has a rate of 12 percent.	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/> Non-minority low-income population Describe:		Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>

2. **How was information on the proposed action communicated to populations covered by Executive Order 12898. Check all that apply:**

<input type="checkbox"/> Advertisements	<input type="checkbox"/> Brochures
<input type="checkbox"/> Newsletters	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Notices
<input type="checkbox"/> Utility Bill Inserts	<input type="checkbox"/> E-mails
<input type="checkbox"/> Public Service Announcements	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Direct Mailings
<input type="checkbox"/> Key Persons	<input type="checkbox"/> Other, identify _____

3. **How was input from populations covered by EO 12898 obtained? Check all that apply:**

<input type="checkbox"/> Mailed Surveys	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Targeted Small Group Information Meetings
<input type="checkbox"/> Door-to-door interviews	<input type="checkbox"/> Targeted Workshop/conferences
<input type="checkbox"/> Focus Group Research	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Public Meetings
<input type="checkbox"/> Public Hearings	<input type="checkbox"/> Key Person Interviews
<input type="checkbox"/> Other, identify _____	

4. **Indicate any special accommodations made to encourage participation from populations covered by EO 12898. Check all that apply:**

<input type="checkbox"/> Interpreters	<input type="checkbox"/> Listening Aids
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Accessibility for Elderly & Disabled	<input type="checkbox"/> Transportation Provided
<input type="checkbox"/> Child Care Provided	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Sign Language
<input type="checkbox"/> Other, _____	

5. **If there is a project advisory committee, identify and describe committee members from populations covered by EO 12898**

None identified  
 Yes - Check all that apply and describe below:
 

- Black
- Hispanic
- Asian-American
- American Indian or Alaska Native

White and any combination of the above

Non-minority low-income

Describe: \_\_\_\_\_

**6. As a result of public involvement and inter-agency coordination, identify and describe issues of concern or controversy to populations covered by EO 12898:**

*Economic Development and Business*

No issues of concern or controversy identified.

Yes - Issues of concern or controversy identified.

1. List effects on businesses and populations covered by EO 12898:

None identified.

Yes.

List and discuss - \_\_\_\_\_

Population Groups	Number of Businesses Created That Will:		Number of Businesses Displaced That:	
	Employ	Serve	Employ	Serve
Elderly				
Disabled				
Low income				
Minority				

2. List other effects.

None identified.

Yes

List and discuss - \_\_\_\_\_

*Agriculture*

No issues of concern or controversy identified.

Yes - Issues of concern or controversy identified.

1. List effects on agricultural operations owned by members of populations covered by EO 12898.

None identified.

Yes

List and discuss - \_\_\_\_\_

2. List effects on agricultural operations which employ members of populations covered by EO 12898, including migrant workers

None identified.

Yes

List and discuss - \_\_\_\_\_

3. List other effects on members of populations covered by EO 12898:

None identified.

Yes

List and discuss - \_\_\_\_\_

*Community/Residential*

No issues of concern or controversy identified.

Yes - Issues of concern or controversy identified.

List and discuss - \_\_\_\_\_

1. List relocation effects on households covered by EO 12898:

None identified.

Yes

List and discuss - \_\_\_\_\_

Population Groups	Number of Households Relocated
Elderly	
Disabled	
Low income	
Minority	

--	--

2. List other effects on members of populations covered by EO 12898.

- None identified.  
 Yes

List and discuss - \_\_\_\_\_

Other

- No issues of concern or controversy identified.  
 Issues of concern or controversy identified.

List and discuss - \_\_\_\_\_

**7. Indicate whether effects on populations covered by EO 12898 are beneficial or adverse:**

**A. Beneficial effects.**

- Describe effects on populations and discuss whether they are direct, indirect or cumulative. Include a discussion of any measures to enhance beneficial effects. Describe methods used to determine beneficial effects resulting from the proposed project. (If only beneficial effects, process is complete.)

The realignment of US 63 would not divide the community of Trego. The area would be improved with safer crossings of US 53 and US 63. The demographic makeup of the area would be re-evaluated closer to design/construction.

**B. Adverse effect.**

1. Adverse Effects are proportional or disproportionately low. Identified adverse effects are proportionate or disproportionately low to those experienced by the general population.

Describe effects on populations and discuss whether they are direct, indirect or cumulative. Describe methods used to determine adverse effects resulting from the proposed project. Include a discussion of any measures to avoid, minimize, or mitigate adverse effects. (If only beneficial or proportional or disproportionately low effects, process is complete.)

2. Adverse Effects are disproportionately high. A disproportionately high and adverse effect means an adverse effect that:
- a.) is predominately borne by populations covered by EO 12898; or
  - b.) will be suffered by populations covered by EO 12898 and is appreciably more severe or greater in magnitude than the adverse effect that will be suffered by population not covered by EO 12898.

Describe disproportionately high and adverse effects on populations covered by EO 12898 and discuss whether they are direct, indirect or cumulative. Describe methods used to determine adverse effects resulting from the proposed project. Include a discussion of any measures to avoid, minimize, or mitigate disproportionately high and adverse effects or enhance beneficial effects.

**8. Will the alternative be carried through final design even with disproportionately high and adverse effects on populations covered by EO 12898?**

- A.  No, the alternative will not be carried out because of disproportionately high and adverse effects on populations covered by EO 12898.

- 1.  Another alternative with less severe effects on populations covered by EO 12898 can meet the purpose and need of the proposed alternative and is practicable.
- 2.  Other.

Describe. \_\_\_\_\_

- B.  Yes, the alternative will be carried out with the mitigation of disproportionately high and adverse effects on populations covered by EO 12898.

- 1.  All disproportionate effects will be mitigated by the following measures.

**List and discuss measures:**

- 2.  The alternative will be carried through final design without fully mitigating disproportionately high and adverse effects. A substantial need for the alternative exists based on the overall public interest.

Alternatives that would have less adverse effects on populations covered by EO 12898 have either:

- a)  Adverse social, economic, environmental, or human health impacts that are more severe.
- b)  Would involve increased costs of an extraordinary magnitude.

# WETLANDS EVALUATION

## Factor Sheet C-1

Alternative Trego Area, Alternative N4 Spooner Area, Alternative S3	Total Length of Center Line of Existing Roadway 9.5 miles Length of This Alternative 9.5 miles
Preferred <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> None identified	

**1. Describe Wetlands:**

	Wetland 1	Wetland 2	Wetland 3
<b>Name (If known)</b>	Potato Creek		
<b>Location County</b>	Washburn		
<b>Location (Section-Township-Range)</b>	39N 12W 3		
<b>Location Map</b>	See Exhibit 4, Map 6		
<b>Wetland Type(s)<sup>1</sup></b>	SS		
<b>Total Wetland Loss</b>	0.9 acres total acquired 0.5 acres filled		
<b>Wetland is: (Check all that apply)<sup>2</sup></b>	Yes	No	
• Isolated from stream, lake or other surface water body		X	
• Not contiguous (in contact with) a stream, lake, or other water body, but within 5-year floodplain		X	
• If adjacent or contiguous, identify stream, lake or water body by Section-Township-Range	Potato Creek		

<sup>1</sup>Use wetland types as specified in the "WisDOT Wetland Mitigation Banking Technical Guideline, Table 3-C"

<sup>2</sup>If wetland is contiguous to a stream, complete Factor Sheet C-2, Rivers, Streams and Floodplains Impact Evaluation. If wetland is contiguous to a lake or other water body, complete Factor Sheet C-3, Lake or Water Body Impact Evaluation.

**2. Are any impacted wetlands considered "wetlands of special status" per WisDOT Wetland Mitigation Banking Technical Guideline, page 10?**

- No  
 Yes:  
 Advanced Identification Program (ADID) Wetlands  
 Other – Describe: \_\_\_\_\_

**3. Describe proposed work in the wetland(s), e.g., excavation, fill, marsh disposal, other:**

The Proposed Action would require work in wetlands in one area. The work would involve excavation, placement of fill, installation of culverts, grading, and drainage work. Work would also include changes to base course, concrete/asphaltic pavements, and adjustments to utilities.

An in depth analysis of wetland types and impacts should be completed closer to design/construction.

**4. List any observed or expected waterfowl and wildlife inhabiting or dependent upon the wetland:** (List should include both permanent, migratory and seasonal residents).

Expected wildlife and waterfowl in wetland areas near the Proposed Action include: white-tailed deer, cottontail

rabbits, ruffed grouse, pheasant, grey squirrel, fox squirrel, muskrat, beaver, mink, weasel, raccoon, skunk, fox, coyote, and woodcock. In addition, songbirds, badger, and woodchuck may also be present. The Round Pigtoe is a species of mussel that has been found in Potato Creek. This is a species of special concern in Wisconsin.

**5. Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) Wetland Policy:**

- Not Applicable - Explain
  
- Individual Wetland Finding Required - Summarize why there are no practicable alternatives to the use of the wetland.
  
- Statewide Wetland Finding: **NOTE: All three boxes below must be checked for the Statewide Wetland Finding to apply.**
  - Project is either a bridge replacement or other reconstruction within 0.3 mile of the existing location.
  - The project requires the use of 7.4 acres or less of wetlands.
  - The project has been coordinated with the DNR and there have been no significant concerns expressed over the proposed use of the wetlands.

**6. Erosion control or storm water management practices which will be used to protect the wetland are indicated on form: (Check all that apply)**

- Factor Sheet D-6, Erosion Control Impact Evaluation.
- Factor Sheet D-5, Stormwater Impact Evaluation.
- Neither Factor Sheet - Briefly describe measures to be used

**7. U S Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) Jurisdiction - Section 404 Permit (Clean Water Act)**

- Not Applicable - No fill to be placed in wetlands or wetlands are not under USACE jurisdiction.
- Applicable - Fill will be placed in wetlands under the jurisdiction of the USACE.  
Indicate area of wetlands filled: 0.5 acres  
Type of 404 permit anticipated:
  - Individual Section 404 Permit required.
  - General Permit (GP) or Letter Of Permission (LOP) required to satisfy Section 404 Compliance.  
Indicate which GP or LOP is required:
    - Non-Reporting GP
    - Provisional GP
    - Provisional LOP
    - Programmatic GP

Expiration date of 404 Permit, if known \_\_\_\_\_

**8. Section 10 Waters (Rivers and Harbors Act). For navigable waters of the United States (Section 10) indicate which 404 permit is required:**

- No Section 10 Waters.

Indicate whether Pre-Construction Notification (PCN) to the USACE is:

- Not applicable.
- Required: Submitted on: (Date)

Status of PCN

USACE has made the following determination on: (Date)

USACE is in the process of review, anticipated date of determination is: (Date)

**9. Wetland Avoidance and Impact Minimization: [Note: Required before compensation is acceptable]**

A. Wetland Avoidance:

1. Describe methods used to avoid the use of wetlands, such as using a lower level of improvement or placing the roadway on new location, etc.:

Alternative S2 impacted an additional 0.9 acres of wetlands from an overpass connection from County A to Little Valley Road. This alternative was not selected and the wetlands were thereby avoided.

The Proposed Action uses existing roadway alignments and road course for overpass crossings of US 53.

Use of existing alignments minimizes impacts to wetlands and streams located within the project area. In some cases, wetlands are located on both sides of the existing alignment. Moving local roads to new alignments could impact a greater amount of wetland (and other natural and cultural) resources than staying on the existing local roadway alignments.

In areas where frontage road alignments would need to be altered to accommodate the new local road design, alignments were designed in such a manner as to avoid wetlands to the greatest extent possible and still maintain a safe design. In addition, wetland impacts were minimized to the extent possible by using the minimum possible fill slopes (3:1 in the fill section) allowed by WisDOT design standards.

2. Indicate the total area of wetlands avoided:  
0.9 acres

B. Describe methods used to minimize the amount of wetlands affected:

1. Methods used to minimize the use of wetlands, such as a steepening of side slopes or use of retaining walls, equalizer pipes, upland disposal of hydric soils, etc.:

Wetland impacts were minimized to the extent possible by using the minimum possible slopes for overpasses allowed by WisDOT design standards.

Changes in the roadway alignment were made to avoid effects to Potato Creek. In this area, the snowmobile trail was used and the right of way was reduced in order to minimize impacts to wetlands. Creating a 90 degree intersection with the wetland complex also helped to minimize the effects. Early options included a more direct route crossing over potato creek which impacted an additional 1.1 acres of wetlands. The roadway was modified to have the least impact possible.

Early design of the local road access proposed extending from Schaub Road was along the property line but was moved west to its proposed location to minimize approximately 0.7 acres of wetland impacts.

In areas where new roads are needed for circulation, the placement was done in such a matter to avoid wetlands.

2. Indicate the total area of wetlands saved through minimization:  
1.8 acres

**10. Compensation for Unavoidable Wetland Loss:\*\***

According to Section 401 (b) (1), of the Clean Water Act, unavoidable wetland losses must be mitigated on-site, if possible. If no on-site opportunities exist, near/off-site wetland compensation sites must be considered. If neither exists, the losses may be debited to an existing wetland mitigation bank site. Compensation ratios are based on WisDOT Wetland Mitigation Banking Technical Guideline.

**\*\*TO BE DETERMINED AT A TIME CLOSER TO DESIGN/CONSTRUCTION.**

	Type	Acre(s) Loss	Ratio	Compensation Type and Acreage			
				On-site	Near/off site	Consolidation Site	Bank site
RPF(N)	Riparian wetland (wooded)						
RPF(D)	Degraded riparian wetland (wooded)						
RPE(N)	Riparian wetland (emergent)						
RPE(D)	Degraded riparian wetland (emergent)						
M(N)	Wet and sedge meadows, wet prairie, vernal pools, fens						
M(D)	Degraded meadow						
SM	Shallow marsh						
DM	Deep marsh						
AB(N)	Aquatic bed						

AB(D)	Degraded aquatic bed						
SS	Shrub Swamp, shrub carr, alder thicket						
WS(N)	Wooded swamp						
WS(D)	Degraded wooded swamp						
Bog	Open and forested bogs						

D = Degraded  
N = Non-degraded

**11. If on-site compensation is proposed, describe how a search for a compensation site was conducted:**

The WDNR provided a possible on-site restoration area located in the project area (see Appendix C3). However, the location is outside the right-of-way limits on privately owned land. WisDOT owned property near Potato Creek may be a viable location for wetland mitigation.

**12. Summarize the coordination with other agencies regarding the compensation for unavoidable wetland losses: Attach appropriate correspondence:**

The WDNR has provided comments regarding the project since the project initiation letter was sent in 2009. (See Appendix C3)

# RIVERS, STREAMS AND FLOODPLAINS EVALUATION

Wisconsin Department of Transportation

## Factor Sheet C-2

Alternative North Segment, Alternative N4 South Segment, Alternative S3	Total Length of Center Line of Existing Roadway 9.5 miles Length of This Alternative 9.5 miles
Preferred <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> None identified	

1. **Stream Name:** Potato Creek

2. **Stream Type: (Indicate Trout Stream Class, if known)**

- Unknown  
 Warm water  
 Cold water

If trout stream, identify trout stream classification: \_\_\_\_\_

Wild and Scenic River

3. **Size of Upstream Watershed Area: (Square miles or acres)**

Approximately 20,000 acres

4. **Stream flow characteristics:**

- Permanent Flow (year-round)  
 Temporary Flow (dry part of year)

5. **Stream Characteristics:**

A. **Substrate:**

- Sand
- Silt
- Clay
- Cobbles
- Other-describe: Gravel, rubble and boulder

B. **Average Water Depth:** Approximately 1-2 feet

C. **Vegetation in Stream**

- Absent  
 Present - If known describe: wild celery, arrowweed and watershield.

D. **Identify Aquatic Species Present:**

Mussels, northern pike, largemouth bass, panfish, white suckers and minnows

E. **If water quality data is available, include this information:**

N/A

F. **Is this river or stream on the WDNR's "Impaired Waters" list?**

- No  
 Yes - List: \_\_\_\_\_

6. **If bridge or box culvert replacement, are migratory bird nests present?**

- Not Applicable  
 None identified; A field review would take place at design, before construction.  
 Yes – Identify Bird Species present  
Estimated number of nests is:

7. **Is a Fish & Wildlife Depredation Permit required to remove swallow nests?**

- Not Applicable  
 Yes  
 No - Describe mitigation measures:

8. **Describe land adjacent to stream:**

The dominant land use within the project area and in the vicinity of Potato Creek is commercial. Wetlands immediately adjacent to Potato Creek streambed are identified as type SS. These wetlands near the stream edge

provide habitat for furbearers. Riparian wetlands exist in the project area along Potato Creek. This area has been determined to hold a high level of Bog Bluegrass, a plant that is threatened in Wisconsin. The Proposed Action includes a crossing of Potato Creek.

**9. Identify upstream or downstream dischargers or receivers (if any) within 0.8 kilometers (1/2 mile) of the project site:**

Potato Creek flows into Trego Lake and the Namekagon River.

**10. Describe proposed work in, over, or adjacent to stream. Indicate whether the work is within the 100-year floodplain and whether it is a crossing or a longitudinal encroachment:** [Note: Coast Guard must be notified when Section 10 waters are affected by a proposal. Also see Wetland Evaluation, Factor Sheet C-1, Question 8.]

The Proposed Action includes acquiring right-of-way for local road construction in the southwest quadrant of the US 63 and US 53 intersection. The Proposed Action would occur adjacent to, and over Potato Creek. Construction could include excavation and some fills, culverts, changes to subgrade, grade and drainage within wetland areas. Work would include changes to base course, concrete/asphaltic pavements, and adjustment to utilities. Details of the design including determination of whether a box culvert or bridge will be utilized for the town road crossing of Potato Creek would be determined during the design/construction phase with further consultation with the WDNR.

The Proposed Action is located in a 100-year floodplain.

**11. Discuss the effects of any backwater which would be created by the proposed action. Indicate whether the proposed activities would be in compliance with NR 116 by creating 0.01 ft. backwater or less:**

New construction would comply with the National Flood Insurance Program, NR 116 and Executive Order #73. New construction would be planned and constructed in such a way as to comply with local floodplain development plans.

**12. Describe and provide the results of coordination with any floodplain zoning authority:**

No coordination with any floodplain zoning authority has taken place. Flood Insurance Rate Maps (FIRM maps) provided by the Federal Emergency Management Agency were used in reference to the project area.

**13. Would the proposal or any changes in the design flood, or backwater cause any of the following impacts?**

- No impacts would occur.
- Significant interruption or termination of emergency vehicle service or a community's only evacuation route.
- Significant flooding with a potential for property loss and a hazard to life.
- Significant impacts on natural floodplain values such as flood storage, fish or wildlife habitat, open space, aesthetics, etc.

Minor impacts may occur and would be identified at a time closer to design/construction.

**14. Discuss existing or planned floodplain use and briefly summarize the project's effects on that use:**

The crossing over Potato Creek would be sized appropriately to avoid long-term or planned use of the Potato Creek's 100-year floodplain.

**15. Discuss probable direct impacts to water quality within the floodplain, both during and after construction. Include the probable effects on plants, animals, and fish inhabiting or dependent upon the stream:**

Impacts to water quality could occur during construction in the form of erosion from exposed grades and slopes. After establishment of permanent vegetation, the primary impact to water quality will come from storm water runoff from the pavement surface. Deicing agents used on the pavement surface could have an effect on the vegetation in the immediate vicinity of the pavement surface.

**16. Are measures proposed to enhance beneficial effects?**

- No
- Yes.

WisDOT, through TRANS 401 and Cooperative Agreement, would comply with the substantive permit requirements of Chapter 147 Wis. Stats. Wisconsin Pollutant Discharge Elimination System. Additionally, erosion control measures implemented during construction would conform to the standard specifications listed in

WisDOT's Standard Specifications for Road and Bridge Construction and the Wisconsin Storm Water Management Technical Standards.

Some of the construction Best Management Practices (BMP's) could include silt fence, bale checks, temporary sediment basins, rock construction driveways, inlet protection, and dust abatement. Grass swales, vegetated filter strips, buffer zones, and detention basins incorporating infiltration could be incorporated as BMP's into the design of the project to manage storm water runoff and maintain/improve water quality on a permanent basis. Salt resistant plants and vegetation could be used near the roadway alignment for final turf establishment but caution should be used to ensure those plants are not invasive species.

Specific measures also are discussed in Erosion Control and Stormwater Management Factor Sheets

**Factor Sheet C-5**

Alternative Trego Area, Alternative N4 Spooner Area, Alternative S3	Total Length of Center Line of Existing Roadway 9.5 miles Length of This Alternative 9.5 miles
Preferred <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> None Identified	

**1. Proposed Work in Upland Areas:**

A. Describe the nature of proposed work in the upland habitat area (e.g., grading, clearing, grubbing, etc.):

The Proposed Action includes the acquisition of right-of-way for local access roads, overpasses, and an interchange. The Proposed Action would require clearing vegetation, removal of top soil and grading in upland areas during construction and would require the permanent conversion of approximately 62.6 acres of uplands

**2. Vegetation/Habitat:**

A. Give a brief description of the upland habitat area. Include prominent plant community(ies) at the project site (list vegetation with a brief description of each community type if more than one present).

Broad-leaved deciduous forest, and grassland as well as mixed deciduous-coniferous forest are the dominate land cover within the project area. To a lesser degree, small pockets of shrub wetland and barren land can be found. The forested cover types are made up of a variety of size classes (regeneration, sapling-pole, and saw timber) and structure (canopy, layers, ground vegetation, dead and downed material, and inclusions). Forest cover types associated with project area include aspen, northern hardwoods, oak, swamp hardwoods, white and red pine, and spruce-fir.

B. Will the project result in changes in the vegetative cover of the roadside?

The Proposed Action would result in changes to the vegetative cover of the roadside throughout the entire length of the project area. Changes to the vegetative cover of the roadside would likely be concentrated in the areas were the proposed interchange, overpass and new local road connections would be implemented. The disturbed areas would be re-seeded after construction.

**3. Wildlife:**

A. Identify and describe any observed or expected wildlife associations with the plant community(ies) listed in question #1:

Wildlife associated with the project corridors land types include a variety of game and non-game species of birds, mammals, fish, reptiles and amphibians that typically live in Washburn County. Common types of wildlife include whitetail deer, wild turkeys, wolf, raccoon, squirrels, songbirds, waterfowl, and raptors. In addition, migrating birds use habitat in the corridor for food, shelter, and resting stops during seasonal migration.

B. Identify and describe any known wildlife or bird use areas or movement corridors that will be severed or affected by the proposed action:

Wildlife and waterfowl critical habitats and movement corridors were not identified in the project area through field reconnaissance and agency correspondence. Waterfowl habitat (wetlands) and upland wildlife habitat (forest patches and farmland are, however, present throughout the length of the corridor, with no definable areas of particular concentration. The Proposed Action will degrade small areas of habitat throughout the project area. The overall effect of the eventual implementation of the Proposed Action is expected to be minor.

C. Discuss other direct impacts on wildlife and estimate significance:

Direct impacts to wildlife in the form of habitat loss are expected to be minor. The degree of habitat loss would be greater in those areas where new facilities such as local roadways, overpasses, or the interchange are proposed

to be constructed.

No noteworthy wildlife movement corridors have been identified in the project area, which could be affected by the Proposed Action or that could benefit from wildlife protection design treatments. Wildlife movement takes place throughout the project corridor and will likely continue to do so once the Proposed Action is implemented. However, it should be recognized that transverse crossings of streams in the corridor will impact movement corridors for wildlife. This is also true for transverse crossings of wetlands. These areas are especially important to consider for amphibians, mussels and turtles. The Proposed Action has been designed to minimize impacts to wetlands, and care in design of the facilities will be important for the preservation of wildlife movement corridors.

D. Identify and discuss any probable indirect impacts on wildlife in the area expected due to the project:

It is possible that further habitat loss may occur with the construction of an interchange in Trego if the new interchange spurs commercial or residential development in the immediate vicinity. However, there is no reason to believe that the interchange itself would attract new development other than what might occur if the current intersections with US 53 remain as they are today.

E. Describe measures to avoid and/or minimize adverse effects or to enhance beneficial effects:

The Proposed Action was designed and routed to avoid and minimize impacts to upland habitats wherever feasible. As the improvements are implemented in the design/construction phase, right of way width for local roads and overpass and interchange designs may be optimized to minimize impacts to adjacent habitats.

Passive applications may benefit small animal movement across and through the corridor; these applications may include culverts and small underpasses adjacent to wetlands, lengthened stream crossing structures to ensure that stream bank is available for small animals to traverse the highway and local access roads, fine mesh fencing to direct animal movement to a safe areas or to deflect crossings, and other deflection treatments such as tree planting to divert waterfowl flight paths away from collision zones.

# THREATENED AND ENDANGERED SPECIES EVALUATION

Wisconsin Department of Transportation

## Factor Sheet C-7

Alternative Trego Area, Alternative N4 Spooner Area, Alternative S3	Total Length of Center Line of Existing Roadway 9.5 miles Length of This Alternative 9.5 miles
Preferred <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> None identified	

**1. Are there any known threatened or endangered species in the vicinity of the project?**

- None identified  
 Yes - Identify the species and indicate its status on Federal or State lists:

Species Common Name	Species Scientific Name	Federal Status	State Status	Affected by Project? Y/N
<b>Plants</b>				
Bog Bluegrass	<i>Poa paludigena</i>		Threatened	possible
Dream's Rockress	<i>Arabis missouriensis</i>		Special Concern	possible
Prairie Sagebrush	<i>Artemisis frigida</i>		Special Concern	possible
<b>Animals</b>				
Greater Redhorse	<i>Moxostoma valenciennesi</i>		Threatened	possible
Pygmy Snaketail	<i>Ophiogomphus howei</i>		Threatened	possible
Purple Wartyback	<i>Cyclonaias tuberculata</i>		Endangered	possible
Elktoe	<i>Alasmidonta marginata</i>		Special Concern	possible
Sand Snaketail	<i>Ophiogomphus smithi</i>		Special Concern	possible
Bald Eagle	<i>Haliaeetus leucocephalus</i>	Threatened	Special Concern	possible
<b>Other</b>				

**2. Explain How a Species Is or Is Not Affected by the Action:**

A detailed species survey would occur at time of design/construction. The study would continue to avoid, minimize, and mitigate effects to listed species.

- Species Not Affected:  
 Species Affected:

**3. Describe Coordination:**

U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service (USFWS):

- Has Section 7 coordination been completed?  
 No  
 Yes - Describe mitigation required to protect the federally listed endangered species:

Endangered species coordination with the USFWS has been ongoing and would continue to occur if a future proposed action is initiated within this proposed 84.295 Wis. Stats. preservation corridor.

Any future proposed action within the preservation corridor will require detailed study to determine the presence of endangered species that could be affected. A Biological Assessment will likely be initiated, should species identified in # 1 above and/or critical habitat be present in the area of influence of any proposed future action.

The Biological Assessment will be conducted to determine if the future proposed action is likely to adversely affect species or critical habitat. As may be determined by the Biological Assessment, a formal consultation would be initiated to determine appropriate mitigation measures for any endangered species impacted.

Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (WDNR)

- Has coordination with WDNR been completed?  
 No  
 Yes - Describe mitigation required to protect the state-listed species:

Endangered species coordination with the WDNR has been ongoing and would continue to occur if a future proposed action is initiated within this proposed 84.295 Wis. Stats. preservation corridor.

Any future proposed action within the preservation corridor will require detailed study to determine the presence of endangered species that could be affected. A Biological Assessment will likely be initiated, should species identified in # 1 above and/or critical habitat be present in the area of influence of any proposed future action.

The Biological Assessment will be conducted to determine if the future proposed action is likely to adversely affect species or critical habitat. As may be determined by the Biological Assessment, a formal consultation would be initiated to determine appropriate mitigation measures for any endangered species impacted.

Bog Bluegrass has been previously surveyed in the area of Potato Creek. It may be feasible to relocate the plants and monitor them if there is a large enough population. If there are Bog Bluegrass plots that would be impacted by construction activities, coordination with the Bureau of Endangered Resources (part of WDNR) would be necessary to complete the Incidental Take process.

The proposed structure over Potato Creek would be designed to not impede the stream flow and the natural movement of fish, mussels, animals and other aquatic life, and not increase the velocity of the stream. If spawning habitat for the listed fish species (Greater Redhorse, Pygmy Snaketail, and Purple Wartyback) occurs in the project area, time of year restrictions may be implemented to avoid effects to these species.

No known Bald Eagle nests are located in the study area at this time. The WDNR laid out the following steps to avoid impacts to Bald Eagles if they are present during any future proposed action within the preservation corridor.

1. The project area should be surveyed for large aspen or white pine trees (diameter of  $\geq 12$  inches) containing eagle nests before any trees are cleared from the property;
2. If a nest is found, avoid disturbances such as land clearing and tree removal within 330-feet of the nest year round;
3. Avoid nest disturbances within 330-660 feet during the February 15<sup>th</sup> to August 15<sup>th</sup> breeding and nesting season.
4. Bald Eagle roosts and feeding sites should be protected within 660 feet of a nest. If tree removal occurs, it is suggested that several super-canopy trees be left for future nest tree replacement;
5. Leave standing as many large dead trees as possible, especially trees with a diameter of  $\geq 12$  inches.

# CONSTRUCTION STAGE SOUND QUALITY EVALUATION

Wisconsin Department of Transportation

## Factor Sheet D-2

Alternative Trego Area, Alternative N4 Spooner Area, Alternative S3	Total Length of Center Line of Existing Roadway 9.5 miles Length of This Alternative 9.5 miles
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Preferred

Yes  No  None Identified

**1. Identify and describe residences, schools, libraries, or other noise sensitive areas near the proposed action and which will be in use during construction of the proposed action. Include the number of persons potentially affected:**

Some residential homes and/or property owners may be affected by noise during construction. Those homes in close proximity to the proposed new or modified intersections could expect to be those most affected.

**2. Describe the types of construction equipment to be used on the project. Discuss the expected severity of noise levels including the frequency and duration of any anticipated high noise levels:**

The noise generated by construction equipment will vary greatly, depending on equipment type/model/make, duration of operation and specific type of work effort. However, typical noise levels may occur in the 67 to 107 dBA range at a distance of 50 feet.

Figure 1 shows typical noise levels for a variety of construction equipment. Adverse effects related to construction noise are anticipated to be of a localized, temporary, and transient nature.

**3. Describe the construction stage noise abatement measures to minimize identified adverse noise effects.**

**Check all that apply:**

- WisDOT Standard Specifications 107.8(6) and 108.7.1 will apply.
- WisDOT Standard Specifications 107.8(6) and 108.7.1 will apply with the exception that the hours of operation requiring the engineer's written approval for operations will be changed to \_\_\_\_\_ P.M. until \_\_\_\_\_ A.M.
- WisDOT Standard Specifications 107.8(6) and 108.7.1 will apply with the exception that the hours of operation requiring the engineer's written approval for operations will be changed to \_\_\_\_\_ P.M. until \_\_\_\_\_ A.M.
- Special construction stage noise abatement measures will be required. Describe:

# TRAFFIC NOISE EVALUATION

## Factor Sheet D-3

Alternative Trego Area, Alternative N4 Spooner Area, Alternative S3	Total Length of Center Line of Existing Roadway 9.5 miles Length of This Alternative 9.5 miles
Preferred <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> None Identified	

### 1. Need for Noise Analysis:

Is the proposed action considered a Type I project? (A Type I project is defined as a project that involves construction of a roadway on new location or the physical alteration of an existing highway which substantially changes either the horizontal or vertical alignment or increases the number of through-traffic lanes).

- No – Complete only Factor Sheet D-2, Construction Stage Sound Quality Impact Evaluation.
- Yes – Complete Factor Sheet D-2, Construction Stage Sound Quality Impact Evaluation, and the rest of this sheet.

### 2. Traffic Data:

A. Indicate whether traffic volumes for sound prediction are different from the Design Hourly Volume (DHV) on Basic Sheet 6, Traffic Summary Matrix:

- No
- Yes – Indicate volumes and explain why they were used:

Automobiles	Veh/hr
Trucks	Veh/hr
Or Percentage (T)	%

B. Identify and describe the noise analysis technique or program used to identify existing and future sound levels: (See attached receptor location map as Exhibit 6).

Future noise levels were predicted primarily through modeling. Existing noise levels in the areas of new roads were measured in the field. Model used: FHWA Traffic Noise Model (TNM), Version 2.5, Serial # 66074

Four (4) receptors were placed in existing residential locations and one (1) receptor was placed in an existing commercial location.

C. Identify sensitive receptors, e.g., schools, libraries, hospitals, residences, etc. potentially affected by traffic sound: (See attached receptor location map – Exhibit 6).

Four (4) receptors were placed in existing residential locations and one (1) receptor was placed in an existing commercial location.

D. If this proposal is implemented will future sound levels produce a noise impact?

- No
- Yes - The impact will occur because:
  - The Noise Abatement Criteria (NAC) is approached (1 dBA less than the NAC) or exceeded.
  - Existing sound levels will increase by 15 dBA or more.

E. Will traffic noise abatement measures be implemented?

- Not applicable – Traffic noise impacts will not occur.
- No – Traffic noise abatement is not reasonable or feasible (explain why). In areas currently undeveloped, local units of government shall be notified of predicted sound levels for land use planning purposes. **A COPY OF THIS WRITTEN NOTIFICATION SHALL BE INCLUDED WITH THE FINAL ENVIRONMENTAL DOCUMENT.**
- Yes – Traffic noise abatement has been determined to be feasible and reasonable. Describe any traffic noise abatement measures which are proposed to be implemented. Explain how it will be determined whether or not those measures will be implemented:

As shown in the table below, TNM model predicted receptor 5 along US 53 would exceed the Noise Abatement Criteria (NAC) as specified in TRANS 405, Wisconsin Administrative Code. Due to the low density of residences in that portion of US 53 corridor and high cost of abatement, abatement for the receptor impacted by the proposed action would not be reasonable.

Receptor Location or Site Identification (See attached map)	Distance from C/L of Near Lane to Receptor in feet (ft.)	Number of Families or People Typical of this Receptor Site	Sound Level $L_{eq}$ <sup>5</sup> (dBA)			Impact Evaluation		
			Noise Abatement Criteria <sup>6</sup> (NAC)	Future Sound Level	Existing Sound Level	Difference in Future and Existing Sound Levels (Col. e minus Col. f)	Difference in Future Sound Levels and Noise Abatement Criteria (Col. e minus Col. d)	Impact <sup>7</sup> or No Impact
(a)	(b)	(c)	(d)	(e)	(f)	(g)	(h)	(i)
REC #1	130	1 family	67	50	50	0	-17	NI
REC #2*	90	3 people	72	60	59	1	-12	NI
REC #3	42	1 family	67	63	51	12	-4	NI
REC #4	75	1 family	67	57-8	56	2	-9	NI
REC #5	40	1 family	67	63	45	18	-4	I

\*Receptor located at commercial site

<sup>5</sup> Use whole numbers only.

<sup>6</sup> Insert the actual Noise Abatement Criteria from Wisconsin Administrative Code, Chapter Trans. 405.04, Table 1.

<sup>7</sup> An impact occurs when future sound levels exceed existing sound levels by 15 dB or more, or, future sound levels approach or exceed the Noise Abatement Criteria ("approach" is defined as 1 dB less than the Noise Abatement Criteria, therefore an impact occurs when Column (h) is -1 db or greater). I = Impact, N = No Impact.

# HAZARDOUS SUBSTANCES OR CONTAMINATION EVALUATION

Wisconsin Department of Transportation

## Factor Sheet D-4

Alternative Spoooner Area, Alternative S3 Trego Area, Alternative N4	Total Length of Center Line of Existing Roadway 9.5 miles Length of This Alternative 9.5 miles
Preferred <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> None Identified	

See Phase I Hazardous Materials Assessment in Appendix G

1. Briefly describe the results of the Phase 1 Hazardous Materials Assessment for this alternative. Do not use property identifiers (owner name, address or business name):

Site Reference #	Land Use of Concern (Past or Present)	Contaminants of Concern	Phase 1 Recommendations	Phase 2 Recommended?
				Y/N
1	Petroleum company	Leaded and unleaded gasoline, fuel oil	None	N
2	Service station	Leaded and unleaded gasoline, heating oil	Phase 2 recommended	Y
3	Petroleum company	Diesel, unleaded gas	None	N
4	Commercial storage	Unknown	Phase 2 recommended	Y
5	Commercial storage	Unknown	None	N
6	Former railroad	Creosote	Phase 2 recommended	Y

Attach additional sheets, if necessary

Additional comments: \_\_\_\_\_

2. Were any parcels not included in the Phase 1 assessment?

No

Yes - How many:

Why were they not reviewed?

3. Have Phase 2 or 2.5 Assessments been completed?

Phase 2 or 2.5 SI subsurface investigations would be completed closer to design/construction phase.

### Discuss the results:

Site Reference #	Phase 2/2.5 Recommendations	Remediation Recommended?		Is WisDOT a Responsible Party?	
		Yes	No	Yes	No

4. Describe the results of any additional investigations performed by WisDOT or others: (Include the number of sites investigated, the level of investigation and results for each site)

None

5. Describe proposed action to avoid hazardous materials contamination:

The Phase 1 should be reviewed closer to design/construction. Phase 2 or 2.5 subsurface investigations should be performed closer to the design/construction phase or property acquisition on three sites (reference #'s: 2, 4 and 6) identified in the Phase 1 Hazardous Materials Assessment (HMA). If contaminated soil is encountered during construction activities, it will need to be sampled and disposed of in accordance with applicable statutes and rules,

and may be considered a solid or hazardous waste.

**6. Describe the remediation and waste management practices to be included in the design for areas where contamination cannot be avoided (e.g., waste handling plan, remediation of contamination, design changes to minimize disturbances):**

WisDOT would work with all concerned parties to insure that any contamination would be resolved to the satisfaction of the WDNR and WisDOT ESS before acquisition of any questionable site, and before advertising the project for letting.

**7. List any parcels with known contamination, proposed for acquisition:**

None identified

**8. Bridge Projects Only: Has the structure been inspected for the presence of asbestos containing materials (ACMs)?**

No - Explain

Yes:

Were regulated ACMs identified?

No

Yes:

State the standard language to be incorporated in the special provisions of the project:

# STORMWATER EVALUATION

## Factor Sheet D-5

Alternative Trego Area, Alternative N4 Spoooner Area, Alternative S3	Total Length of Center Line of Existing Roadway 9.5 miles Length of This Alternative 9.5 miles
Preferred <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> None identified	

**1. Indicate whether the affected area may cause a discharge or will discharge to the waters of the state (Trans 401.03).**

Special consideration should be given to areas that are sensitive to water quality degradation. Provide specific recommendations on the level of protection needed.

- No water special natural resources are affected by the alternative.
- Yes - Water special natural resources exist in the project area.
  - River/stream
  - Wetland
  - Lake
  - Endangered species habitat
  - Other – Describe \_\_\_\_\_

**2. Indicate whether circumstances exist in the project vicinity that require additional or special consideration, such as an increase in peak flow, total suspended solids (TSS) or water volume.**

- No additional or special circumstances are present.
- Yes - Additional or special circumstances exist. Indicate all that are present.
  - Areas of groundwater discharge
  - Stream relocations
  - Long or steep cut or fill slopes
  - Cold water stream
  - Large quantity flows
  - Increased backwater
  - Other - Describe any unique, innovative, or atypical stormwater management measures to be used to manage additional or special circumstances. \_\_\_\_\_
  - Areas of groundwater recharge
  - Overland flow/runoff
  - High velocity flows
  - Impaired waterway
  - Exceptional/outstanding resource waters

**3. Describe the overall stormwater management strategy to minimize adverse effects and enhance beneficial effects.**

Coordination with WDNR would occur closer to design/construction for compliance with Trans 401 and the WisDOT/WDNR Cooperative Agreement.

Stormwater control methods may include but are not limited to:

- WisDOT would make every effort to design the interchange so that any runoff from the interchange would be contained within the interchange area through runoff basins and directed ditching.
- If feasible WisDOT could make design decisions which would allow the interchange to serve as a drainage, detention/retention and filter area for runoff from adjacent agricultural lands and roadway improvements and may improve the overall water quality reaching Potato Creek.

Final determination of these measures would be made closer to design and construction.

**4. Indicate how the stormwater management plan will be compatible with fulfilling Trans 401 requirements.**

- Stormwater issues would be addressed by the contractor and approved by WisDOT prior to construction; WDNR would be given the opportunity to review the ECIP and comment.
- Water quality certification from WDNR and applicable Army Corps of Engineer permits would be applied for as

applicable for discharge and fill into US inland waters.

**5. Identify the stormwater management measures to be utilized.**

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Swale treatment (parallel to flow)<br>Trans 401.106(10) | <input type="checkbox"/> In-line storm sewer treatment, such as catch basins,<br>non-mechanical treatment systems.    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Vegetated filter strips<br>(perpendicular to flow)                 | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Detention/retention basins – Trans 401.106(6)(3)                                  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Constructed storm water wetlands                                   | <input type="checkbox"/> Distancing outfalls from waterway edge   |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Buffer areas – Trans 401.106(6)                         | <input type="checkbox"/> Infiltration – Trans 401.106(5)  |
|   | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other – Final treatments would be determined closer to design and<br>construction |

Describe - \_\_\_\_\_

**6. Indicate whether any Drainage District may be affected by the project.**

- No - None identified  
 Yes
- Has initial coordination with a drainage board been completed?
- No - Explain \_\_\_\_\_  
 Yes - Discuss results \_\_\_\_\_

**7. Indicate whether the project is within WisDOT's Phase I or Phase II stormwater management areas.**

Note: See Procedure 20-30-1, Figure 1, Attachment A4, the Cooperative Agreement between WisDOT and WDNR. Contact Regional Stormwater/erosion Control Engineer if assistance is needed to complete the following:

- No - the project is outside of WisDOT's stormwater management area.  
 Yes - The project affects one of the following and is regulated by a WPDES stormwater discharge permit, issued by the WisDNR:
- A WisDOT storm sewer system, located within a municipality with a population greater than 100,000.
  - A WisDOT storm sewer system located within the area of a notified owner of a municipal separate storm sewer system.
  - An urbanized area, as defined by the U.S. Census Bureau, NR216.02(3).
  - A municipal separate storm sewer system serving a population less than 10,000.

**8. Has the effect on downstream properties been considered?**

- No  
 Yes - Coordination with the WDNR is in process.

**9. Are there any property acquisitions required for storm water management purposes?**

- No  
 Yes - Complete the following:
- Safety measures, such as fencing are not needed for potential conflicts with existing and expected surrounding land use.
  - Safety measures are needed for potential conflicts with existing and expected surrounding land use.  
Describe:

**Factor Sheet D-6**

Alternative Trego Area, Alternative N4 Spoooner Area, Alternative S3	Total Length of Center Line of Existing Roadway 9.5 miles Length of This Alternative 9.5 miles
Preferred <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> None identified	

**1. Give a brief description of existing and proposed slopes in the project area, both perpendicular and longitudinal to the project. Include both existing and proposed slope length, percent slope and soil types.**

The soil in the project area is comprised of 26 percent Menahga sand (0-6 percent slopes), 11 percent Graycalm-Menahga complex (0-6 percent slopes), 11 percent Spoonerhill/Stony-Cress complex (1-6 percent slopes), 8 percent Seelyville/Markey (0-6 percent slopes), and a mix of other soils each less than 6 percent.

The landscape in the project area comprises of gently rolling land, some forested areas, and low-lying wetlands along stream banks. Existing and proposed slopes vary by road classification type, traffic volume and vertical height of the roadway.

The proposed overpass and interchange would follow standard design criteria of 4:1 fill slopes within the clear zone and would be steepened beyond the clear zone as practical and permissible to minimize the effects on quality wetland, agricultural land, commercial and residential properties. Longitudinal slopes will vary from -6% to +6% dependant on local road locations. Overpass locations would be designed with the maximum longitudinal slopes permissible in order to minimize impacts to previously undisturbed sections of land, wetland and other natural resources. Generally, the steeper slopes adjacent to overpass structures follow design criteria of 2.5:1.

**2. Indicate all natural resources to be affected by the proposal that are sensitive to erosion, sedimentation, or waters of the state quality degradation and provide specific recommendations on the level of protection needed.**

- No - there are no sensitive resources affected by the proposal.
- Yes - Sensitive resources exist in or adjacent to the area affected by the project.
  - River/stream
  - Lake
  - Wetland
  - Endangered species habitat: Further investigation needed closer to design/construction.
  - Other - Describe \_\_\_\_\_

**3. Are there circumstances requiring additional or special consideration?**

- No - Additional or special circumstances are not present.
- Yes - Additional or special circumstances exist. Indicate all that are present.
  - Areas of groundwater discharge
  - Overland flow/runoff
  - Long or steep cut or fill slopes
  - Areas of groundwater recharge (fractured bedrock, wetlands, streams)
  - Other - Describe any unique or atypical erosion control measures to be used to manage additional or special circumstances \_\_\_\_\_

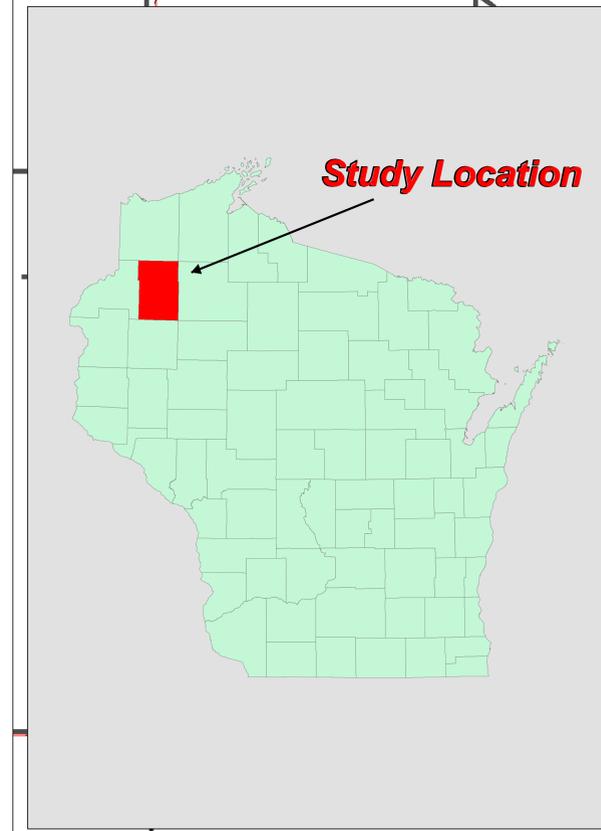
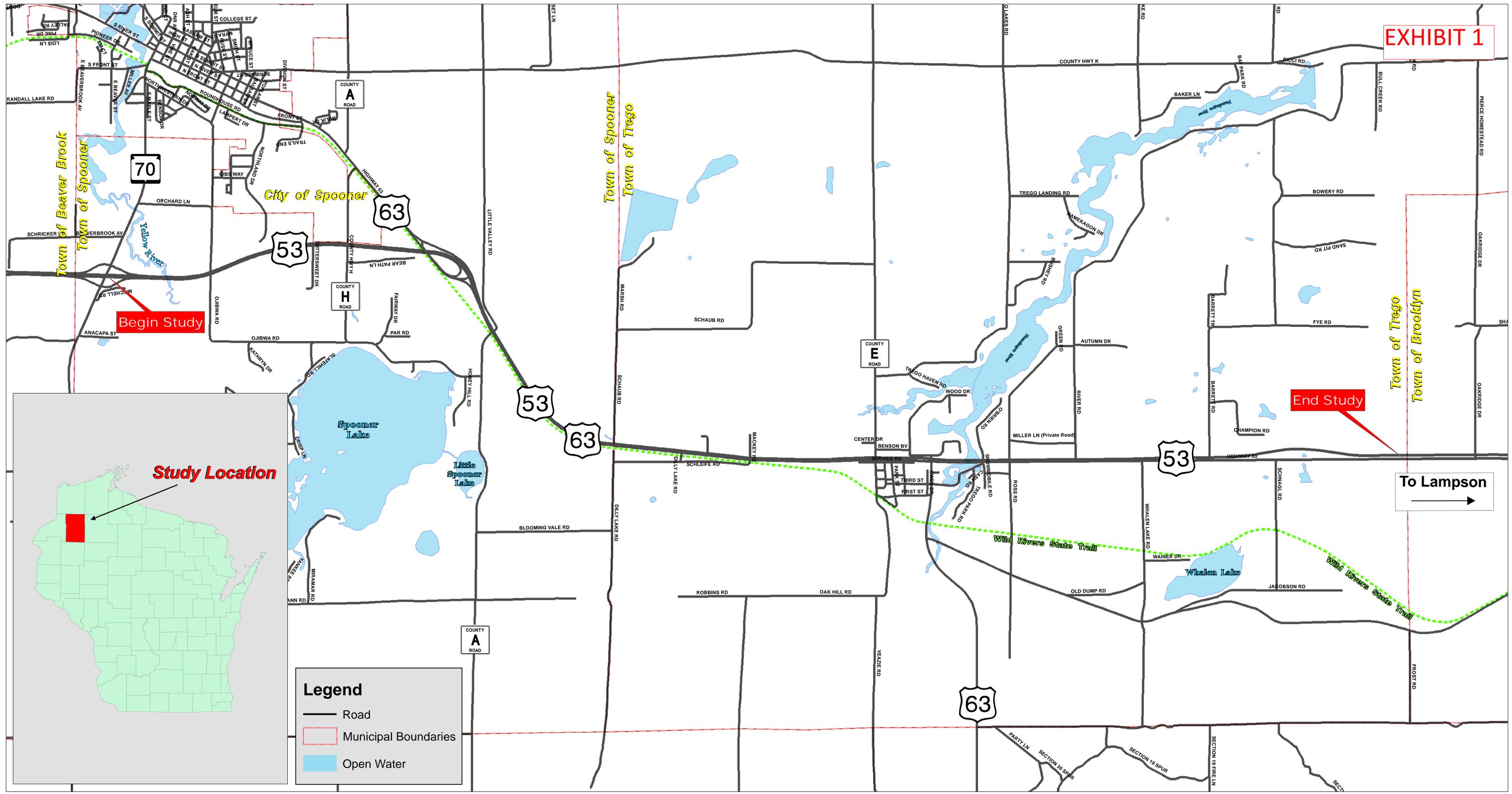
**4. Describe overall erosion control strategy to minimize adverse effects and/or enhance beneficial effects.**

- Temporary and permanent erosion control methods may include but are not limited to:
- Silt fence and/or silt screen at the toe of fill slopes to avoid accumulation in wetland or undisturbed areas.
  - Erosion mat for sheet flow conditions on long fill slopes adjacent to wetland areas.
  - Inlet protection measures at all crossing culvert and area drains as required.
  - Temporary ditch checks, erosion mat and rip rap would be used as appropriate for reducing particle transmission

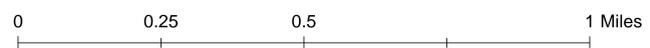
## List of Exhibits

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- Exhibit 1 – Project Location Map
- Exhibit 2 – Connections 2030 Plan Details
- Exhibit 3A – Spooner Alternatives
- Exhibit 3B – Trego Alternatives
- Exhibit 3C – Preferred Alternative
- Exhibit 4 – Preferred Alternative Detail
- Exhibit 5 – Existing Land Use Maps
- Exhibit 6 – Traffic Noise Receptor Map



Legend	
	Road
	Municipal Boundaries
	Open Water



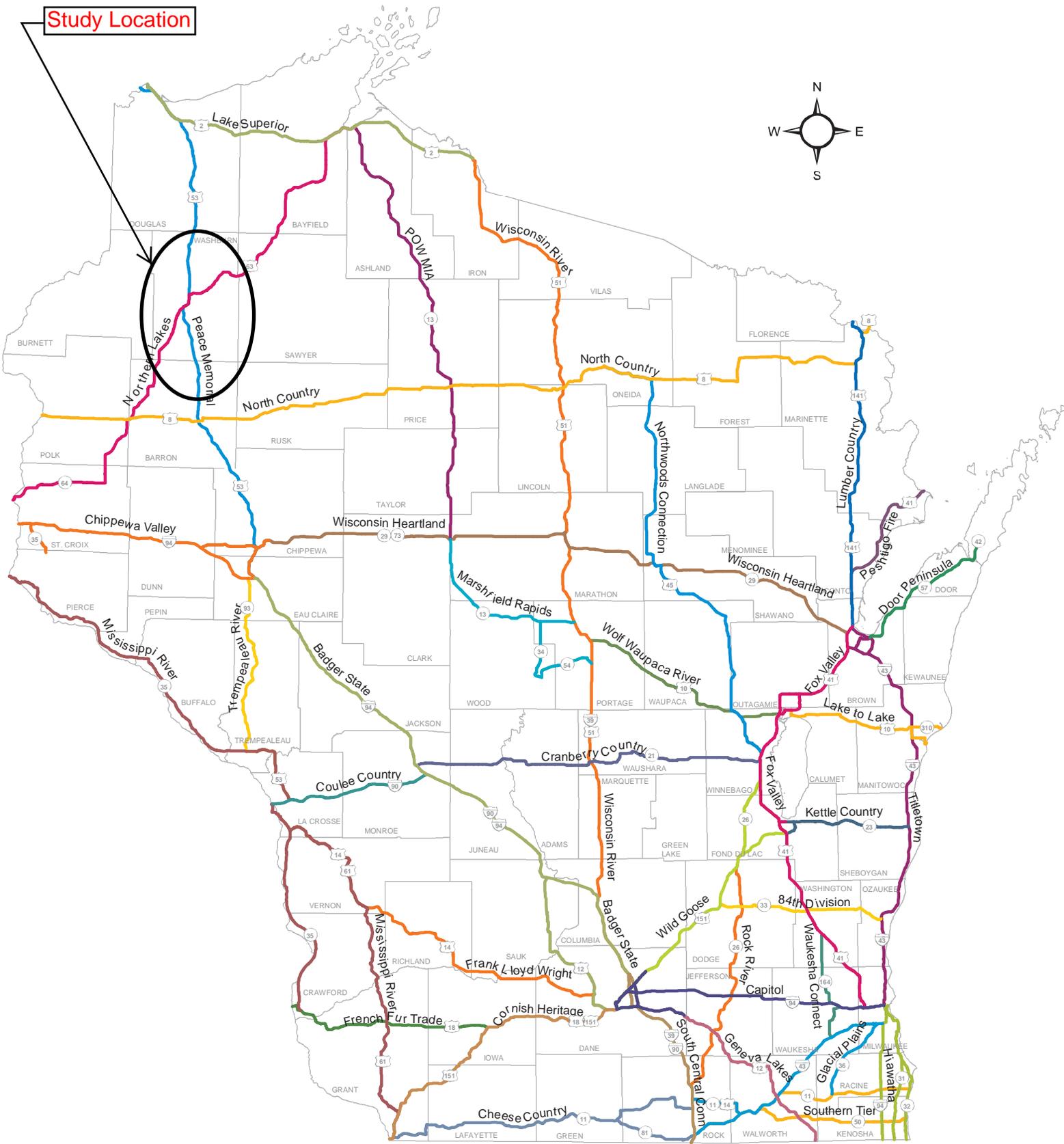
**US 53 PRESERVATION STUDY  
SPOONER TO LAMPSON  
WISDOT ID# 1195-00-02**

**EXHIBIT 1  
PROJECT LOCATION MAP**



# System-Level Priority Corridors

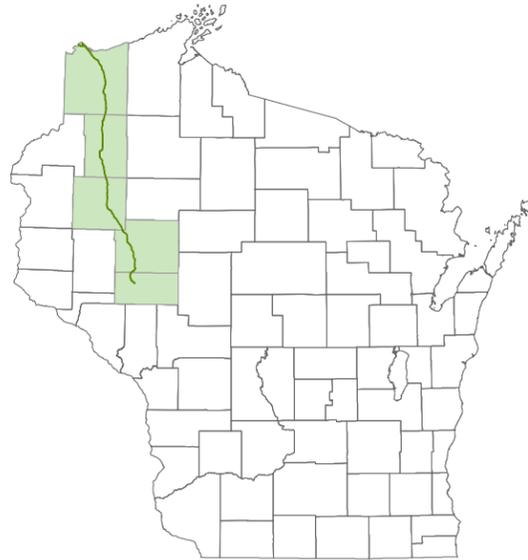
Study Location



# Peace Memorial Corridor – Chippewa Falls-Eau Claire to Duluth-Superior

## Corridor Overview

This 150-mile corridor is part of a major passenger and freight corridor that links southern Wisconsin and Chicago, IL to Duluth-Superior, northern Minnesota and much of western Canada. It contains major rail/water intermodal connections at the Twin Ports of Duluth-Superior. The corridor also provides critical economic links between population centers in southern Wisconsin and northern Illinois and the recreation and tourism areas of northwestern Wisconsin. The corridor is named after the Peace Memorial Highway (US 53 from La Crosse to Superior). It includes the urban and urbanizing areas of Chippewa Falls-Eau Claire, Rice Lake and Duluth-Superior. The corridor also serves the St. Croix Indian Reservation and the Lac Courte Oreilles Indian Reservation.



## Current Corridor Characteristics

- Airports:
  - › Air carrier (passenger) airport: Chippewa Valley Regional
  - › Transport/corporate airports: Rice Lake Regional-Carl's Field, Richard I. Bong (Superior)
  - › Basic utility airport: Chetek Municipal - Southworth, Barron Municipal, Cumberland Municipal, Shell Lake Municipal, Solon Springs Municipal
- Highways:
  - › Primary highway: US 53
  - › Corridors 2030 Backbone Route: US 53
  - › NHS intermodal terminals with local road connections: Port of Superior
  - › Completed passing lane corridors:
    - US 2 [County Rd U (Douglas Co) to WIS 13]
    - US 8 [US 63 N (Turtle Lake) to WIS 25 S (Barron)]
    - US 8 [County Rd W (Barron Co) to Cameron]
    - US 63 [US 8 to US 63/WIS 48 split (Cumberland)]
    - US 63 [County Road H (Barron Co) to Barron/Washburn county line]
    - US 63 (US 53 to Hayward)
- Public Transit:
  - › Bus systems: Eau Claire, Rice Lake, Rusk County Transit, Sawyer County Transit, Superior
  - › Shared-ride taxi: Chippewa Falls
  - › Specialized transit: Available in all counties; level of service depends on location
- Fixed Guideway Transit: None in this corridor
- Rail Freight: Freight rail service exists
- Intercity Passenger Rail: None in this corridor
- Intercity Bus: Connections in Eau Claire to intercity bus services to Minneapolis/St. Paul, MN and Chicago, IL
- Ports and Harbors: Superior, Cornucopia
- Ferry: None in this corridor
- Bicycle/Pedestrian:
  - › Major trails: Ice Age Trail (pedestrian only), Old Abe State Trail, Tuscobia State Trail, Wild Rivers State Trail, North Country State Trail (pedestrian only), Tri-County Recreational Trail, Osaugie Trail
  - › Accommodations, linkages and accessibility along and across some facilities

## Future Corridor Vision

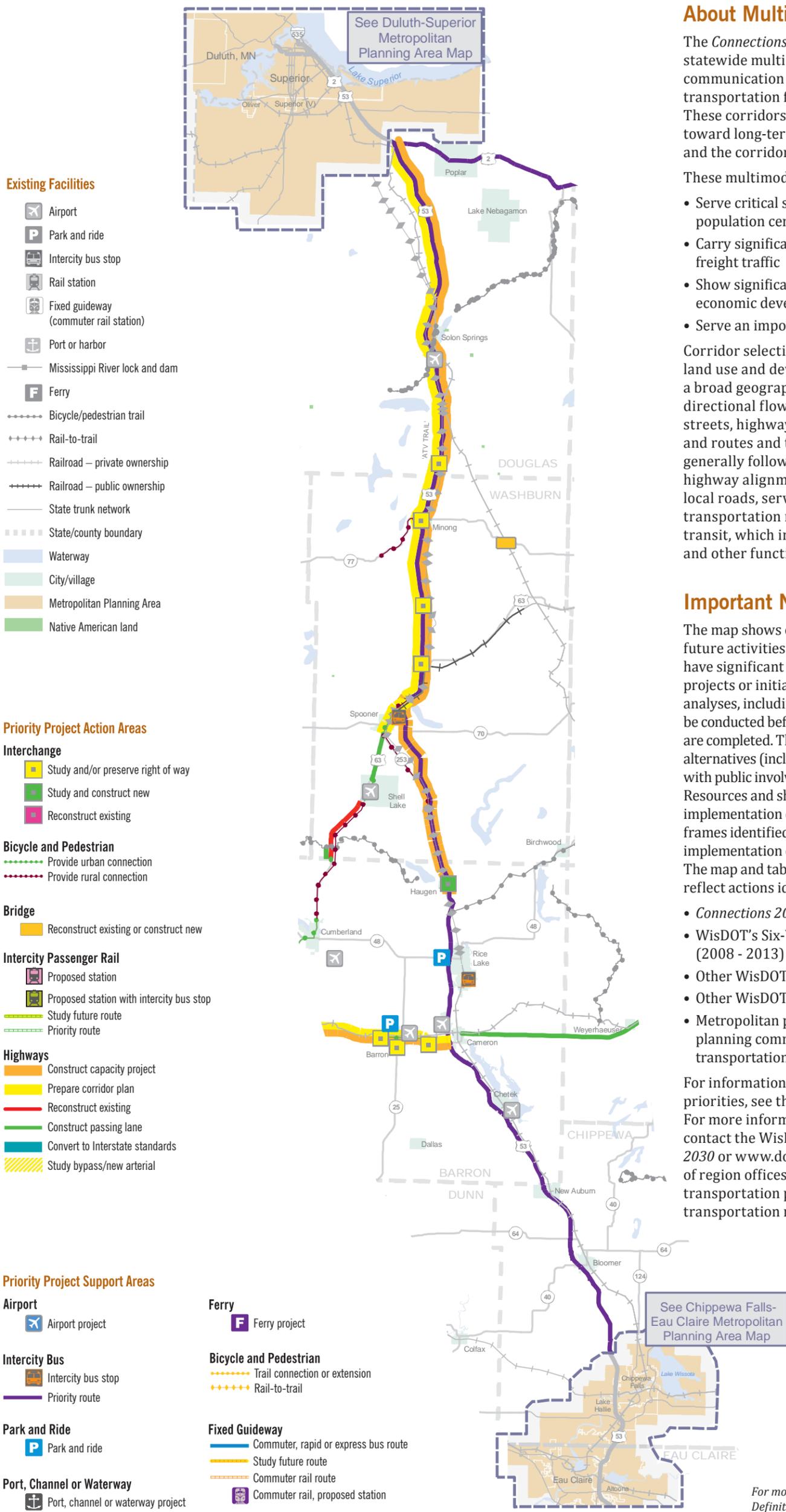
- Airports: Continued service, increased direct service and infrastructure projects to support business airplane-capable airports
- Highways: Maximize preservation and maintenance of infrastructure and continued user efficiency and mobility, including improved traffic movement, along US 53 by implementing:
  - › State Access Management Plan vision; Tier 1
  - › Candidate expressway upgrades and/or the potential conversion of expressway-to-freeway corridor (US 53)
- Public Transit: Increased regional coordination and continued service
- Fixed Guideway Transit: None in this corridor
- Rail Freight: Continued freight rail service and corridor preservation
- Intercity Passenger Rail:
  - › New service:
    - Potential new service: St. Paul, MN – Madison – Milwaukee – Chicago, IL, via Eau Claire
    - All new intercity passenger rail services will operate within existing corridors
- Intercity Bus:
  - › Continued existing services
  - › New service:
    - Phase 1: Between Eau Claire and Duluth/Superior, with a stop in Chippewa Falls; and between Minneapolis/St. Paul, MN and Green Bay, with stops in Chippewa Falls and Eau Claire
    - Phase 2: Between Eau Claire and Tomah passenger rail station
- Ports and Harbors: Continued service, preservation, maintenance and infrastructure improvements (Superior, Cornucopia)
- Ferry: None in this corridor
- Bicycle/Pedestrian: Continued and enhanced accommodations, linkages and accessibility along and across facilities

	Year 2007	Year 2030
<b>County populations</b>		
Douglas	44,096	47,063
Washburn	17,403	18,013
Barron	47,551	50,174
Chippewa	61,604	65,723
Eau Claire	98,000	117,253
<b>Population age 65 and older</b>	36,064	69,391
<b>Enplanements</b>		
Chippewa Valley Regional Airport	22,832	44,000
<b>Average annual daily traffic along US 53</b>	4,300-7,500	7,000-14,000
<b>Truck volume along</b>		
South of US 63	Medium	High
North of US 63	Medium	Medium

Refer to the "Corridor Map - Data Definitions and Sources" for more information.



# Peace Memorial Corridor – Chippewa Falls-Eau Claire to Duluth-Superior



## About Multimodal Corridors

The *Connections 2030* planning process identified statewide multimodal, intercity corridors as visual communication tools to view existing conditions, transportation features and future recommendations. These corridors collectively represent a starting point toward long-term implementation of *Connections 2030* and the corridor management process.

These multimodal corridors:

- Serve critical sectors of the economy or major population centers
- Carry significant travel activity for passenger and/or freight traffic
- Show significant growth in travel or economic development
- Serve an important role for other transportation modes

Corridor selection was also influenced by local land use and development plans. Each corridor is a broad geographical band that follows a general directional flow connecting trips that may include streets, highways, rail, pedestrian, bicycle facilities and routes and transit route alignments. A corridor generally follows the directional flow of a state highway alignment. It includes parallel state and local roads, service roads and facilities for other transportation modes, such as rail, pedestrian, and transit, which influence the mobility, capacity, safety and other functional elements of the corridor.

## Important Notes about What is Depicted

The map shows currently programmed and proposed future activities (as of December 31, 2007) that have significant impacts on the corridor. Not all projects or initiatives are mapped, and additional analyses, including an environmental document, will be conducted before any of the projects or activities are completed. These analyses may include studying alternatives (including a no build/no change alternative) with public involvement opportunities as appropriate. Resources and shifting priorities may impact WisDOT's implementation of any proposed activity within the time frames identified. WisDOT will remain flexible in the implementation of *Connections 2030* recommendations. The map and table activities on the following page reflect actions identified in:

- *Connections 2030* policies
- WisDOT's Six-Year Highway Improvement Program (2008 - 2013)
- Other WisDOT program data
- Other WisDOT plans and studies
- Metropolitan planning organizations' (MPOs), regional planning commissions' (RPCs) and tribal long-range transportation plans

For information on funding and implementation priorities, see those *Connections 2030* chapters. For more information on transportation projects, contact the WisDOT Region Office (see *Connections 2030* or [www.dot.wisconsin.gov/projects/](http://www.dot.wisconsin.gov/projects/) for a map of region offices). MPO, RPC and tribal long-range transportation plans offer recommendations on all transportation modes within their boundaries.

For more information, refer to the Corridor Map Legend Definitions document at [www.wiconnections2030.gov](http://www.wiconnections2030.gov).

# Peace Memorial Corridor – Chippewa Falls-Eau Claire to Duluth-Superior

**Current and Proposed Future Activities** These activities may not occur in the time frame identified due to budget constraints, changing conditions or shifting priorities. Refer to the “Important Notes about What is Depicted” for more information or contact the WisDOT Region Office.

## Short-Term (2008 – 2013)

US 53	Prepare corridor plan from Spooner north municipal limits to Solon Springs north municipal limits, and from Solon Springs north municipal limits to US 2
US 53	Construct new interchange at County Rd V (Barron Co) and US 53
US 63	Reconstruct from Barron/Washburn county line to Shell Lake municipal limits
Intercity Bus	Support new intercity bus service between Eau Claire and Superior with stops in Chippewa Falls, Rice Lake and Spooner

## Mid-Term (2014 – 2019)

WIS 77	Replace bridge over Soo Line (Washburn Co) if supported by environmental document
Bicycle/Pedestrian	Provide urban and rural accommodations along US 63 from County Rd G (Barron Co) to County Rd B (Shell Lake); and from WIS 253 (Spooner) to WIS 53 South (Washburn Co)
Bicycle/Pedestrian	Provide urban accommodations along US 8 from 13th St (Barron) to County Rd W (Rusk Co)
Bicycle/Pedestrian	Provide urban and rural accommodations along WIS 77 from US 53 (Minong) to County Rd K (Washburn Co)
Park & Ride	Support proposed park and ride construction near the intersection of US 53 and WIS 48 if supported by environmental document

## Long Term (2020 – 2030)

US 53	Construct candidate expressway upgrades and/or convert to freeway from 26th Ave (Town of Oak Grove near Haugen) to US 2 if supported by environmental document
US 63	Prepare corridor plan from Spooner south municipal limits to US 53
Park & Ride	Support proposed park and ride construction near the intersection of US 8 and WIS 25 if supported by environmental document

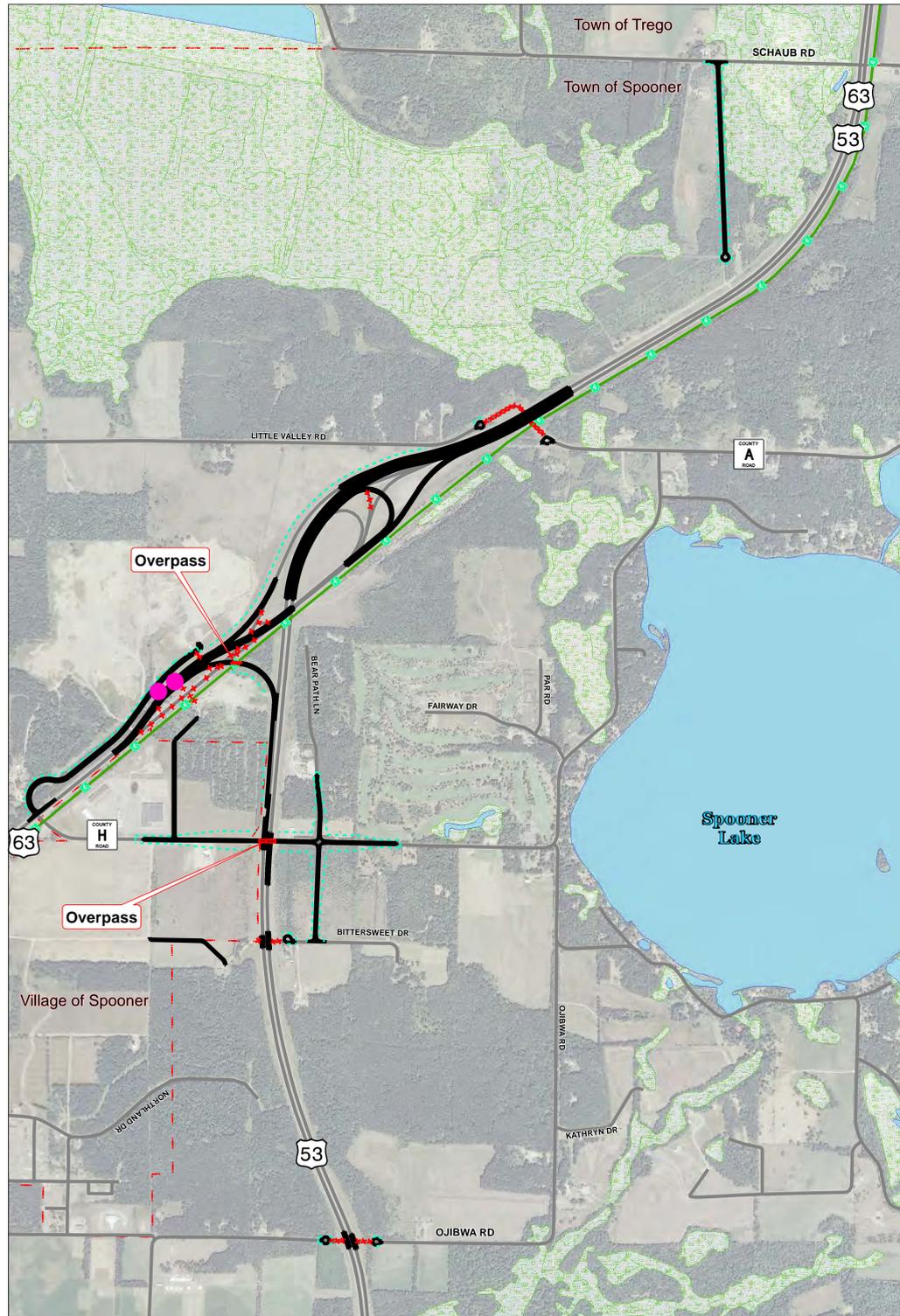
## Entire Planning Period

US 8	Construct candidate passing lanes from County Rd SS (Barron Co) to WIS 27 if supported by environmental document
US 8	Complete corridor plan from WIS 35 North to US 53 and study interchanges at County Rd T (Barron Co) and US 8; County O (Barron Co) and US 8; and WIS 25 and US 8. Implement plan/study results, which may include preserving right-of-way, and adding lanes and/or capacity if supported by environmental document and process leading to candidate Major project enumeration
US 53	Study interchanges and/or preserve right-of-way at US 63N (Trego) and US 53; WIS 77 (Minong) and US 53; County Rd F (Washburn Co) and US 53; and County Rd T (Douglas Co) and US 53 if supported by environmental document
US 63	Construct candidate passing lanes from 30th Ave (Barron Co) to Brick Yard Rd (Washburn Co); and from Shell Lake municipal limits to WIS 253 if supported by environmental document
Airports	Support continued preservation, maintenance and infrastructure projects at <i>State Airport System Plan</i> airports
Bicycle/Pedestrian	Support accommodations and linkages to create a connected network that provides accessibility along and across facilities
Intercity Bus	Work with local governments to provide service between Superior and Ironwood, MI, with stops in Ashland, Brule, and Iron River
Intercity Passenger Rail	Work with the Office of the Commissioner of Railroads to preserve intercity passenger rail corridors by discouraging new at-grade crossings of the corridors
Local Roads	Support continued preservation, maintenance and infrastructure projects
Park & Ride	Support continued preservation and maintenance
Park & Ride	Support expansion of existing park and ride facilities, if needed and if supported by environmental document
Port/Harbor	Support channel preservation, maintenance and infrastructure projects at Cornucopia
Public Transit	Support regional service expansion for Rice Lake and Rusk County Transit
Public Transit	Support continued service and vehicle replacement for Rice Lake and Rusk County Transit
Public Transit	Work with counties and transit service providers to coordinate and expand rural transit service
Rail Freight	Support preservation of existing freight services and corridors
Soo Locks	Support continued coordination, maintenance and preservation
Specialized Transit	Support continued service and encourage improved service coordination
State Highways	Construct grade separations at rail crossings if supported by environmental document
State Highways	Preserve and maintain infrastructure
State Highways	Improve traffic movement with traffic operations infrastructure strategies

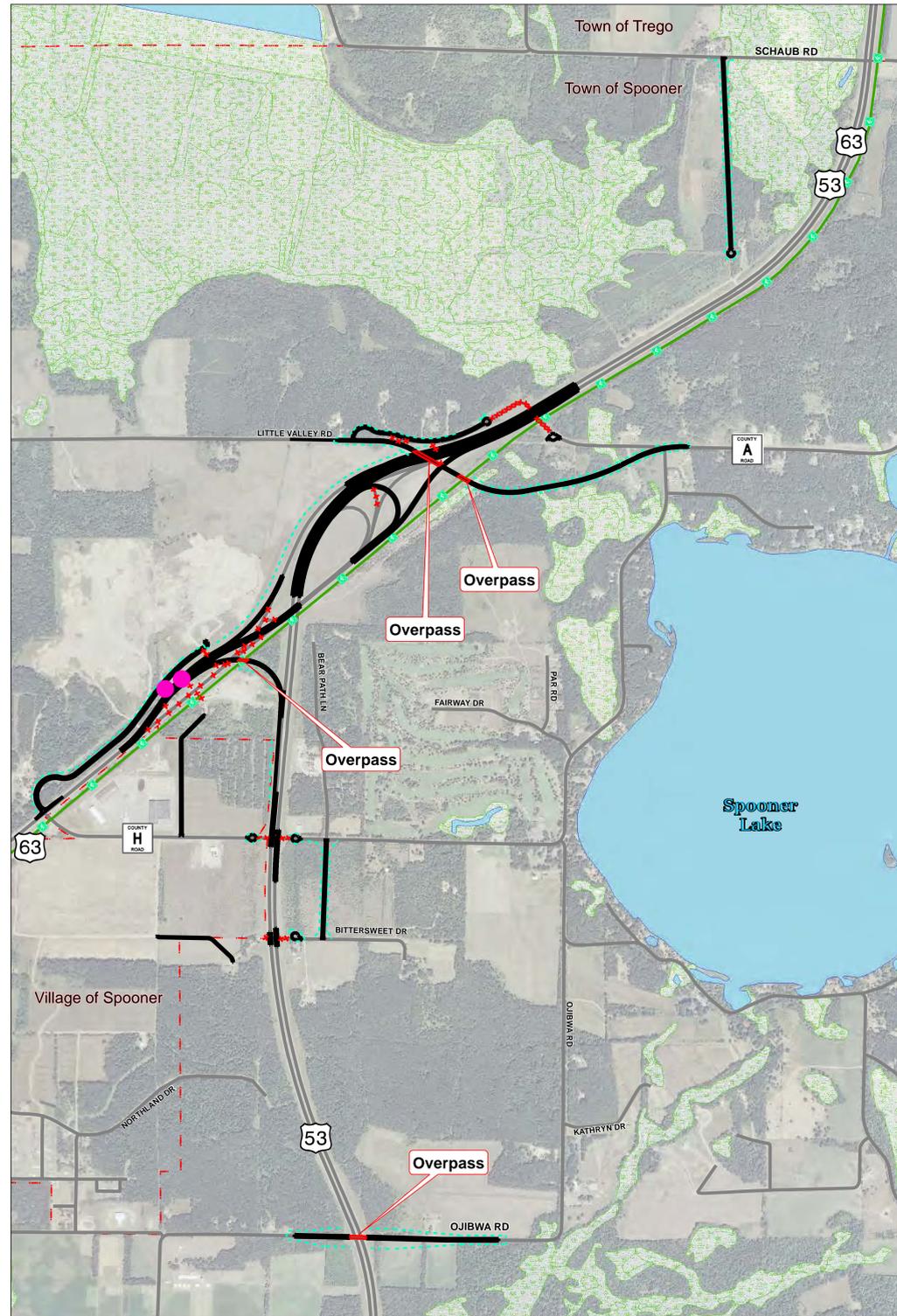




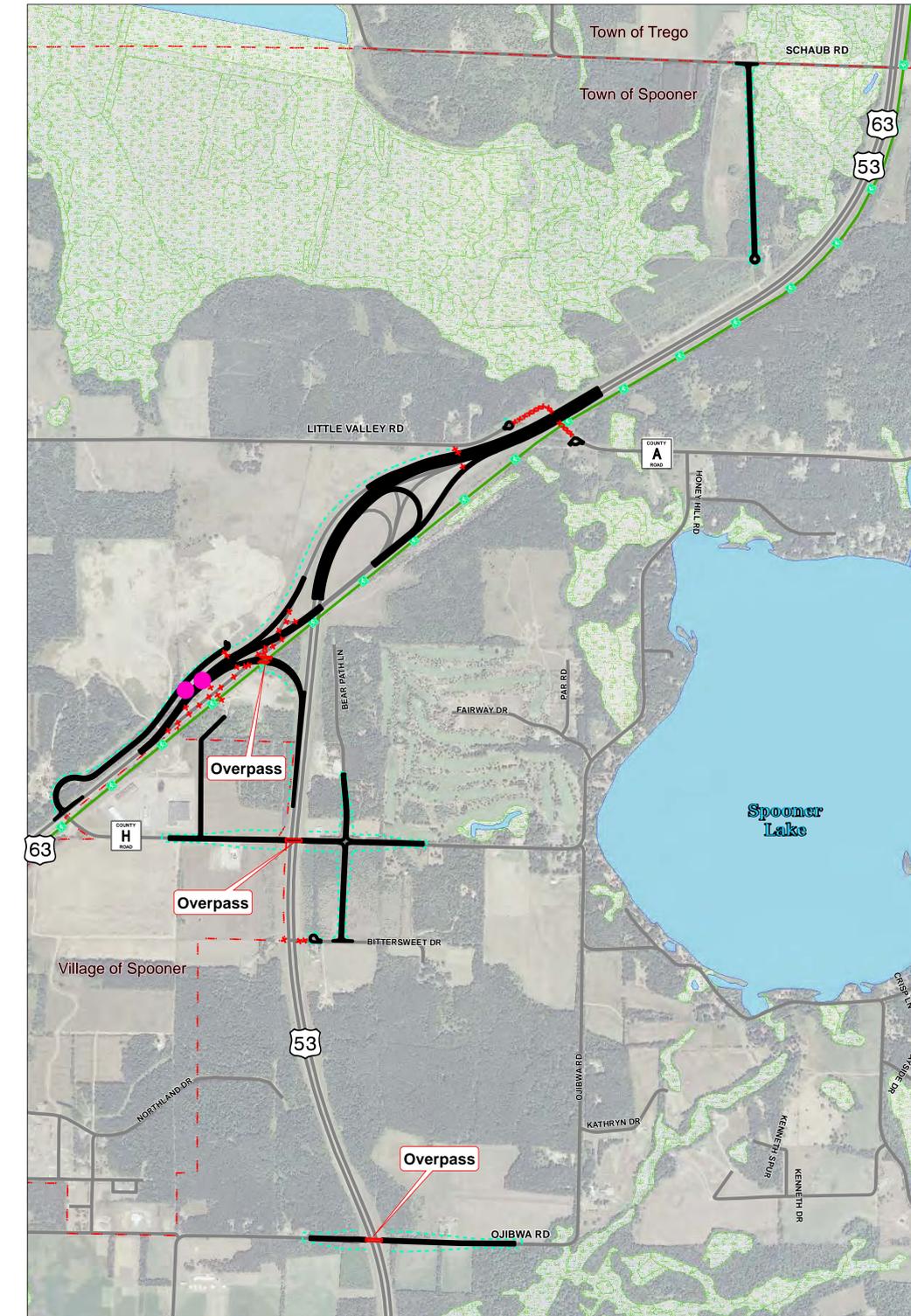
### ALTERNATIVE S1 Overpass at County H



### ALTERNATIVE S2 Overpasses at Ojibwa Rd. and County A



### PREFERRED ALTERNATIVE S3 Overpasses at Ojibwa Rd. and County H



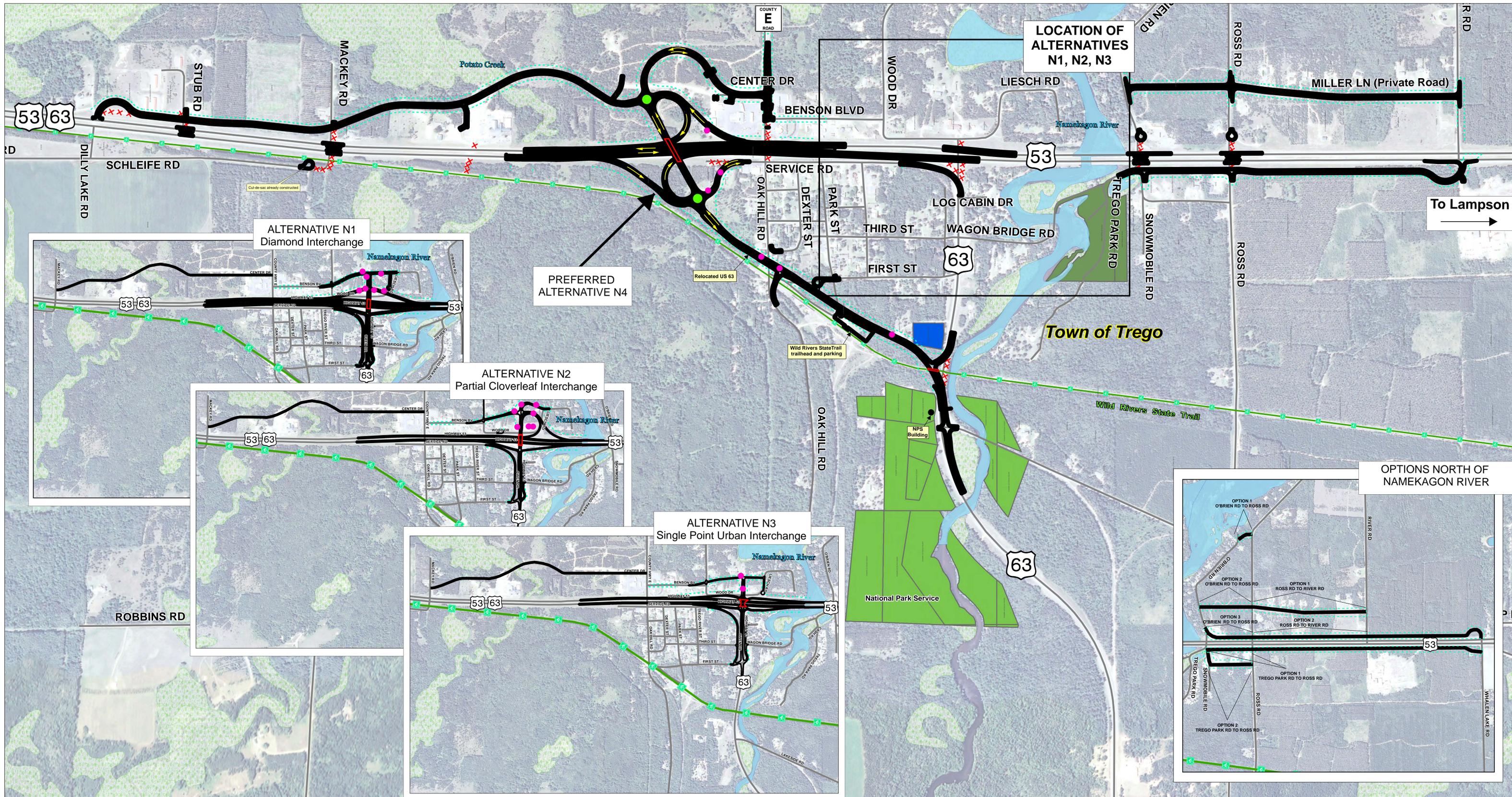
Legend	
	Existing Roads
	New Roads
	New Grade Separation
	Estimated Right of Way
	Wetlands
	Municipal Boundary
	Closure
	Relocation
	Wild Rivers State Trail



**US 53 PRESERVATION STUDY  
SPOONER TO LAMPSON  
WISDOT ID# 1195-00-02**

**EXHIBIT 3A  
SPOONER AREA  
ALTERNATIVES S1, S2, S3**



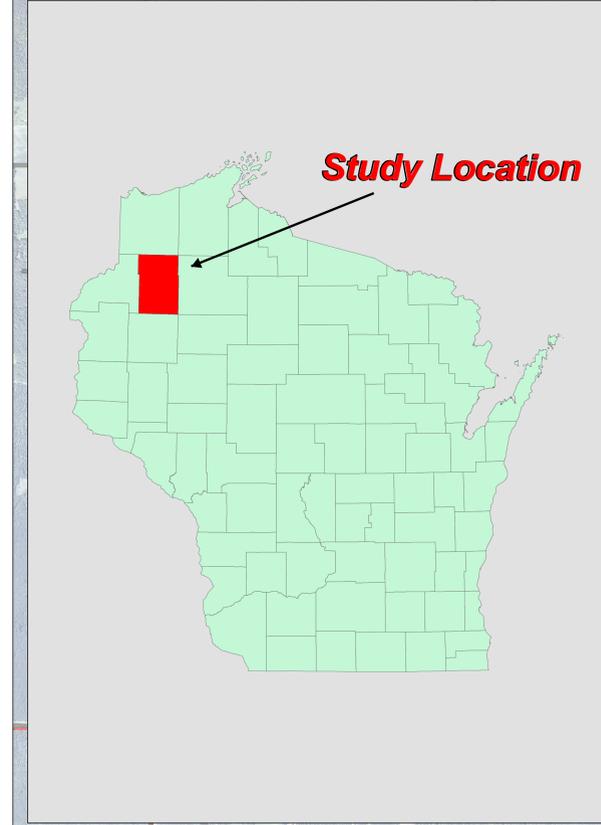
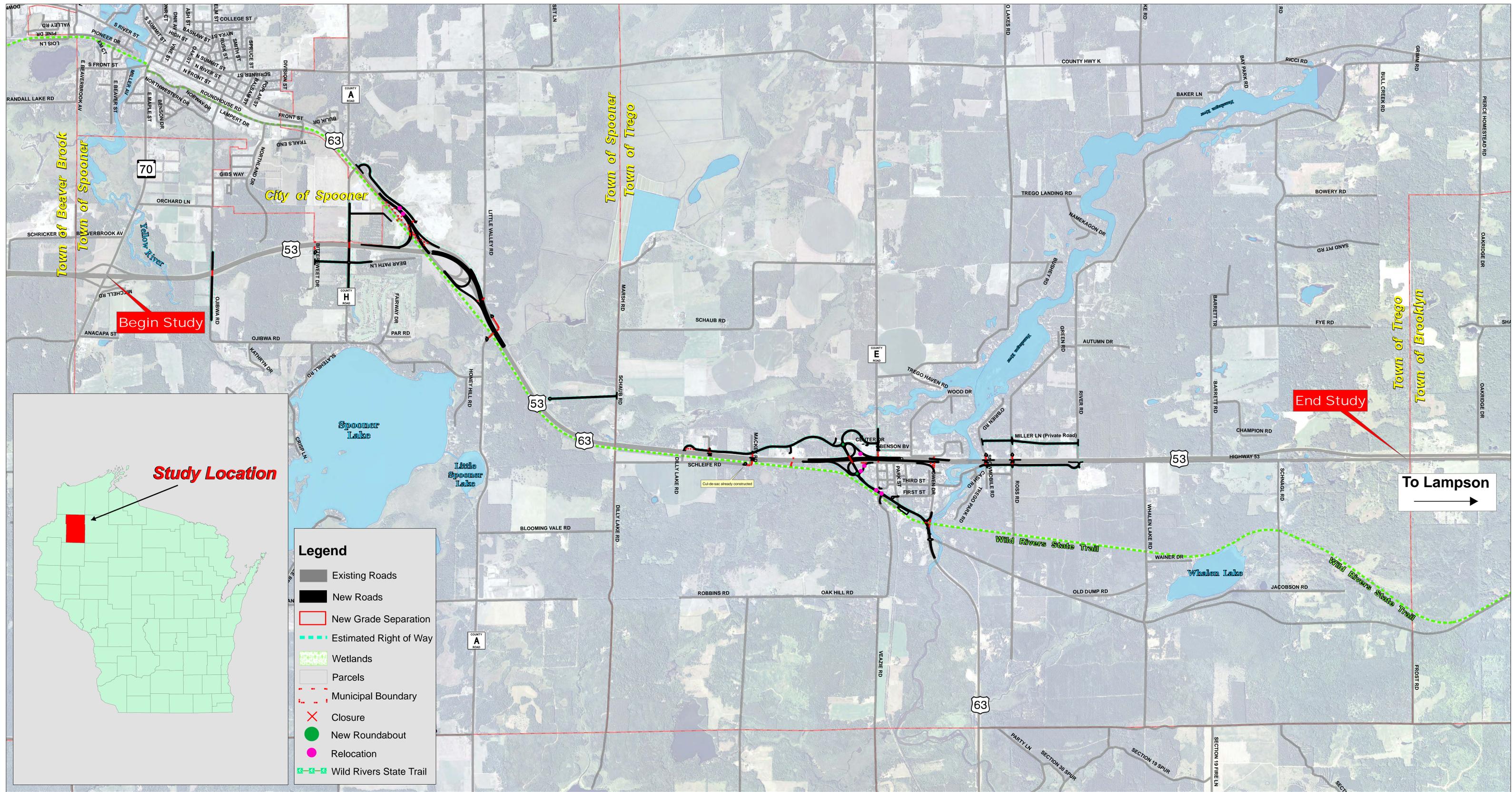


	Existing Roads		Municipal Boundary
	New Roads		Closure
	New Grade Separation		Relocation
	New Roundabout		National Park Service
	Estimated Right of Way		Town of Trego Park
	Wetlands		St. Josephs Cemetery
	Wild Rivers State Trail		

**US 53 PRESERVATION STUDY  
 SPOONER TO LAMPSON  
 WISDOT ID# 1195-00-02**

**EXHIBIT 3B  
 TREGO AREA  
 ALTERNATIVES N1, N2, N3, N4**





**Legend**

-  Existing Roads
-  New Roads
-  New Grade Separation
-  Estimated Right of Way
-  Wetlands
-  Parcels
-  Municipal Boundary
-  Closure
-  New Roundabout
-  Relocation
-  Wild Rivers State Trail

0 0.25 0.5 1 Miles



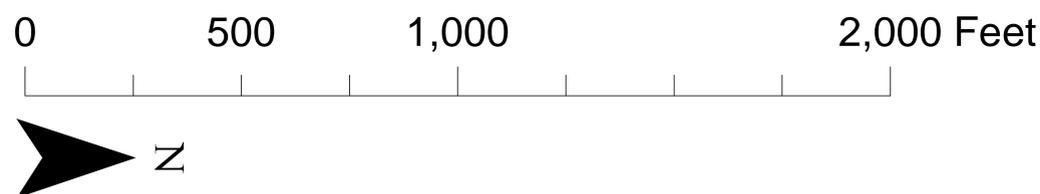
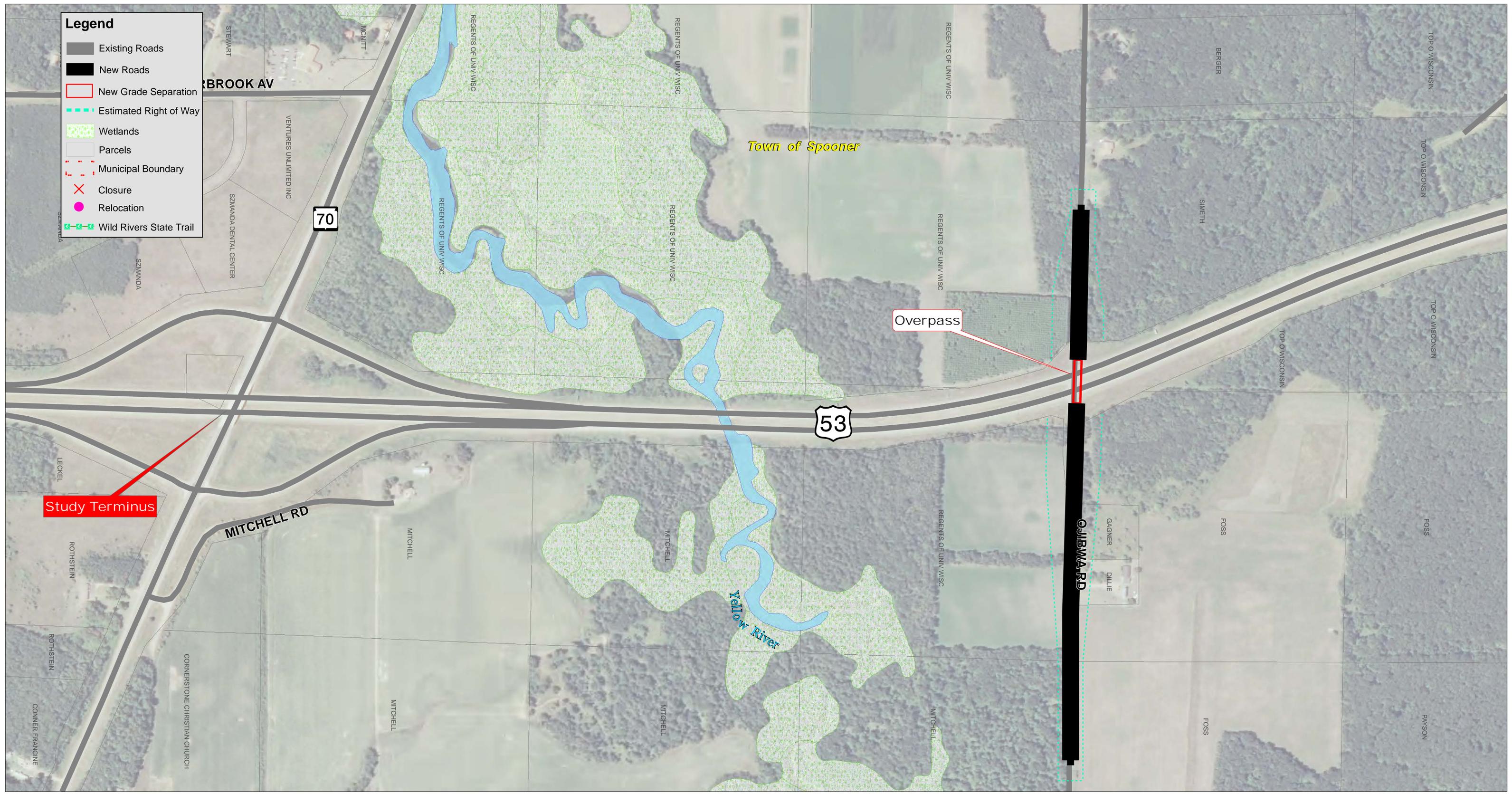
**US 53 PRESERVATION STUDY  
SPOONER TO LAMPSON  
WISDOT ID# 1195-00-02**

**EXHIBIT 3C  
PREFERRED ALTERNATIVE**



**Legend**

-  Existing Roads
-  New Roads
-  New Grade Separation
-  Estimated Right of Way
-  Wetlands
-  Parcels
-  Municipal Boundary
-  Closure
-  Relocation
-  Wild Rivers State Trail



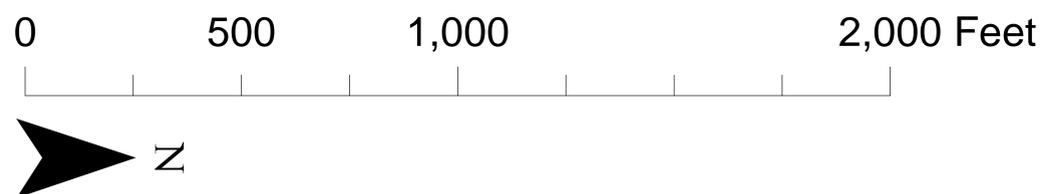
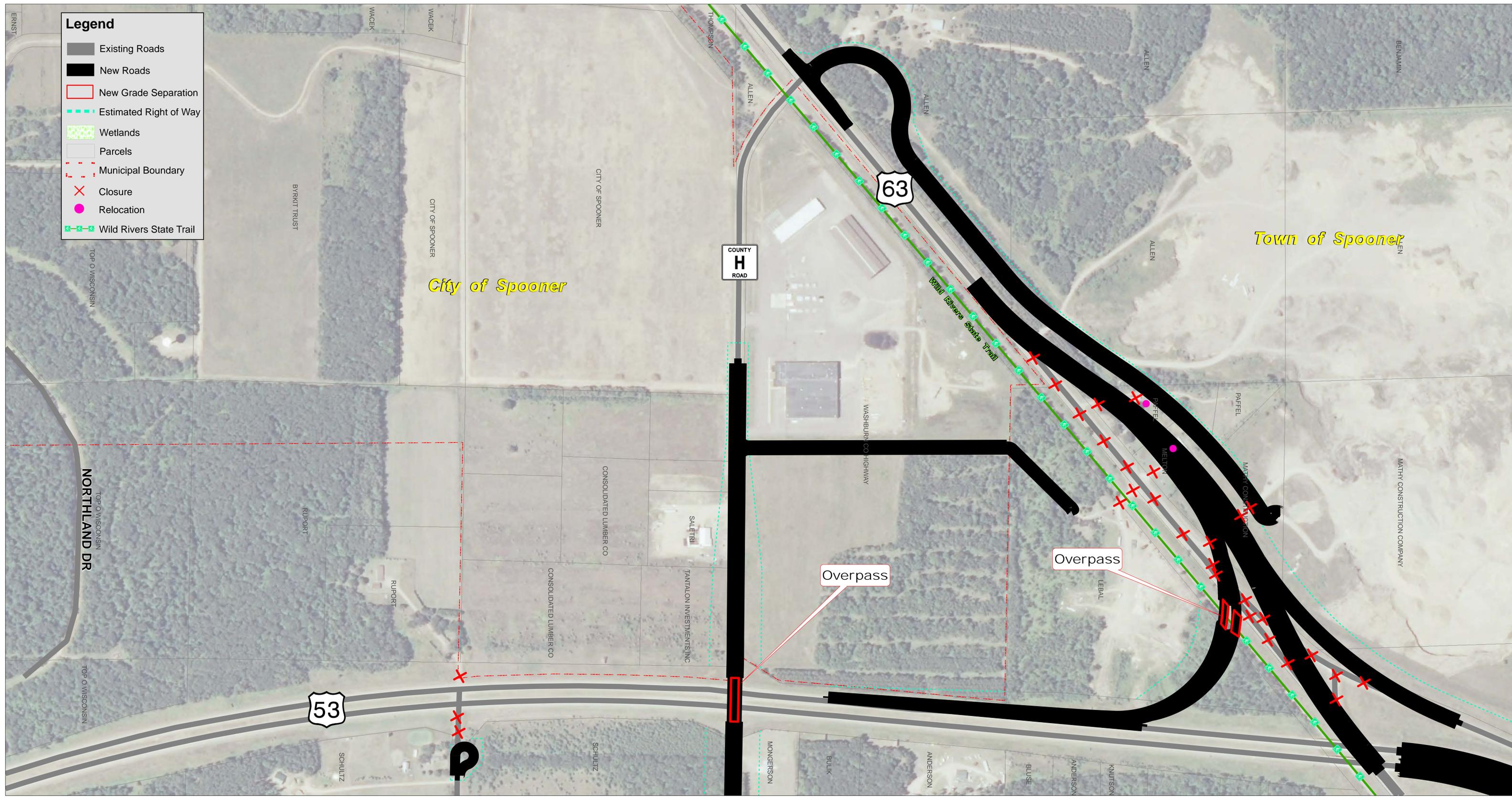
**US 53 PRESERVATION STUDY  
SPOONER TO LAMPSON  
WISDOT ID# 1195-00-02**

**EXHIBIT 4  
PREFERRED ALTERNATIVE DETAIL  
SPOONER AREA : MAP 1 OF 11**



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- Legend**
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  -  New Roads
  -  New Grade Separation
  -  Estimated Right of Way
  -  Wetlands
  -  Parcels
  -  Municipal Boundary
  -  Closure
  -  Relocation
  -  Wild Rivers State Trail

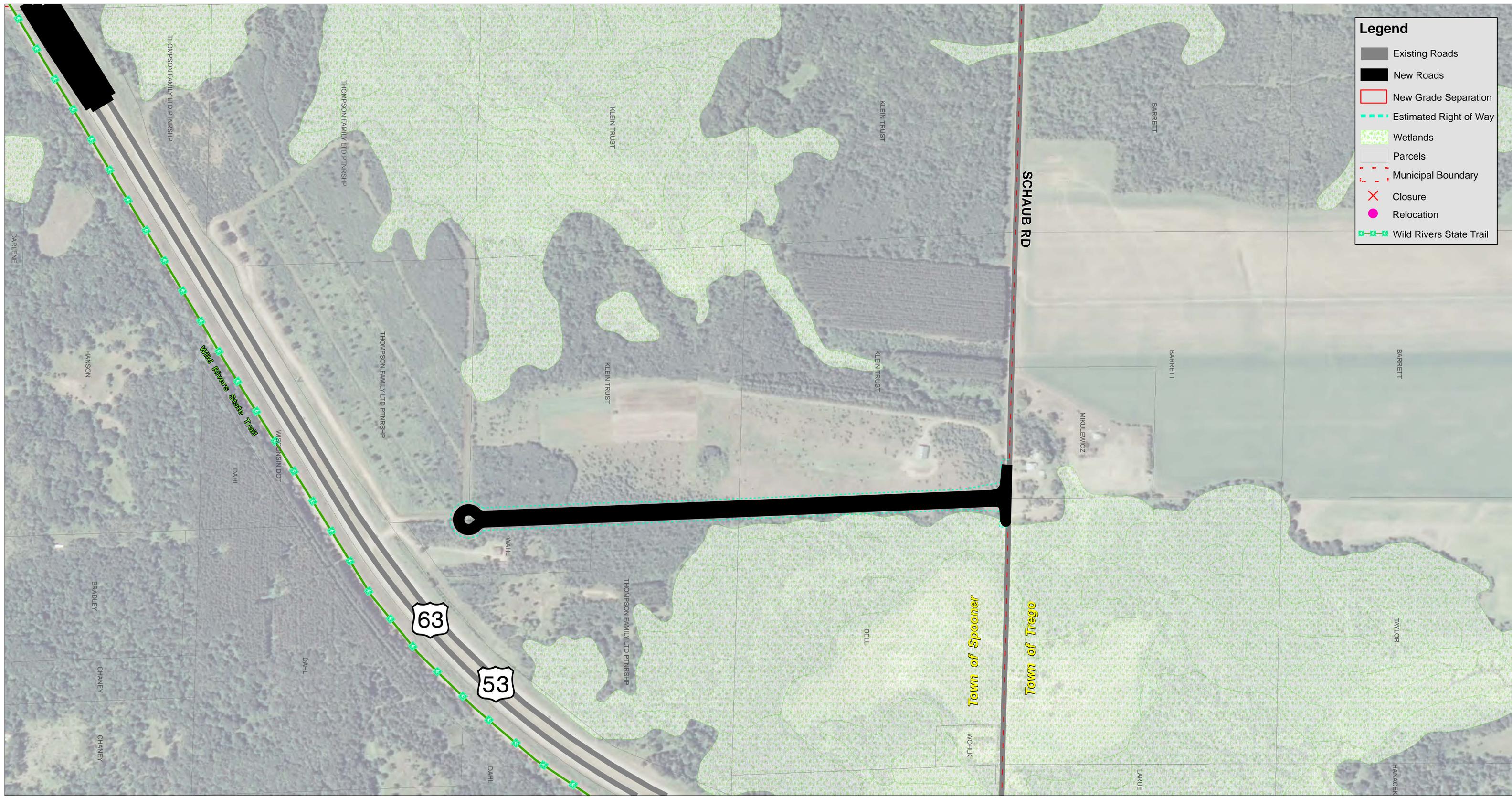


**US 53 PRESERVATION STUDY  
SPOONER TO LAMPSON  
WISDOT ID# 1195-00-02**

**EXHIBIT 4  
PREFERRED ALTERNATIVE DETAIL  
SPOONER AREA : MAP 2 OF 11**

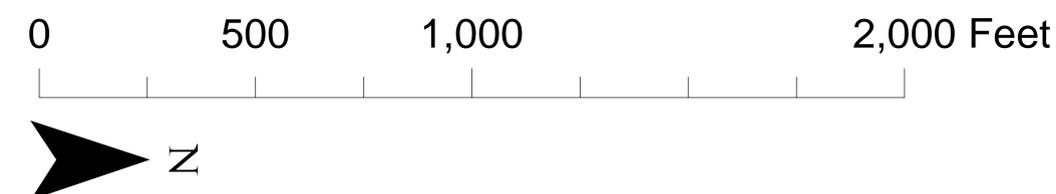






**Legend**

- Existing Roads
- New Roads
- New Grade Separation
- Estimated Right of Way
- Wetlands
- Parcels
- Municipal Boundary
- Closure
- Relocation
- Wild Rivers State Trail

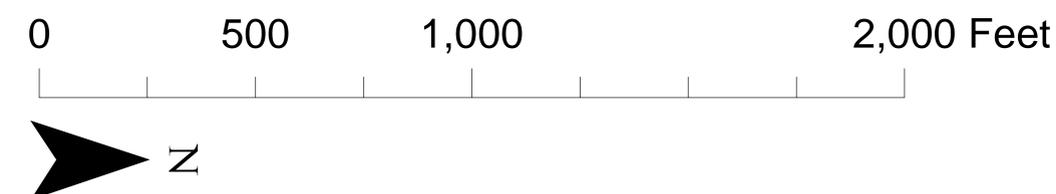
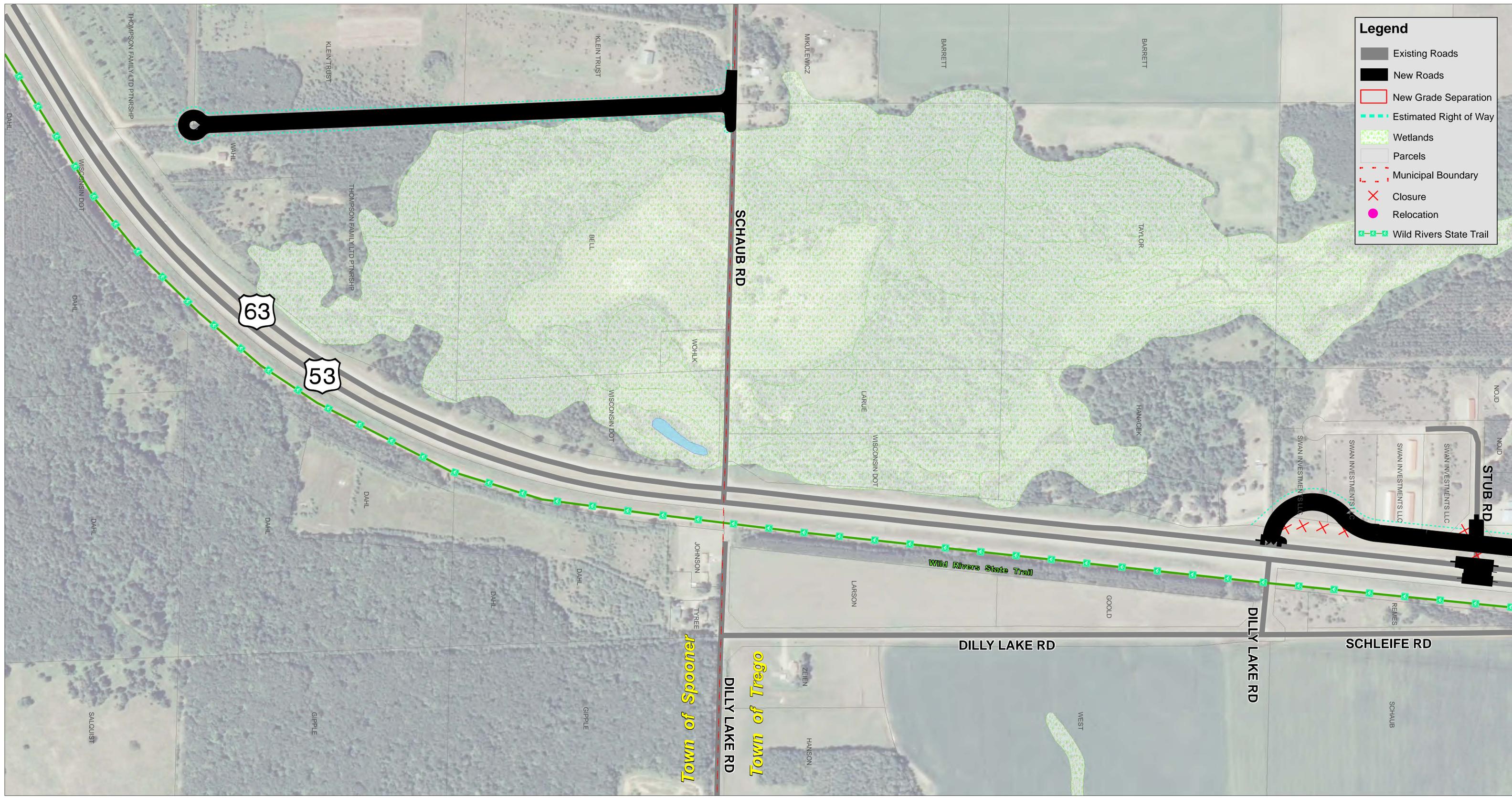


**US 53 PRESERVATION STUDY  
SPOONER TO LAMPSON  
WISDOT ID# 1195-00-02**

**EXHIBIT 4  
PREFERRED ALTERNATIVE DETAIL  
SPOONER AREA : MAP 4 of 11**



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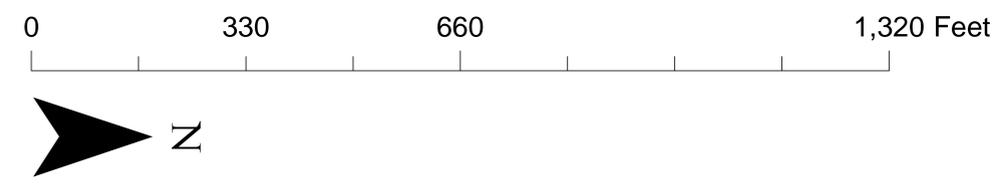
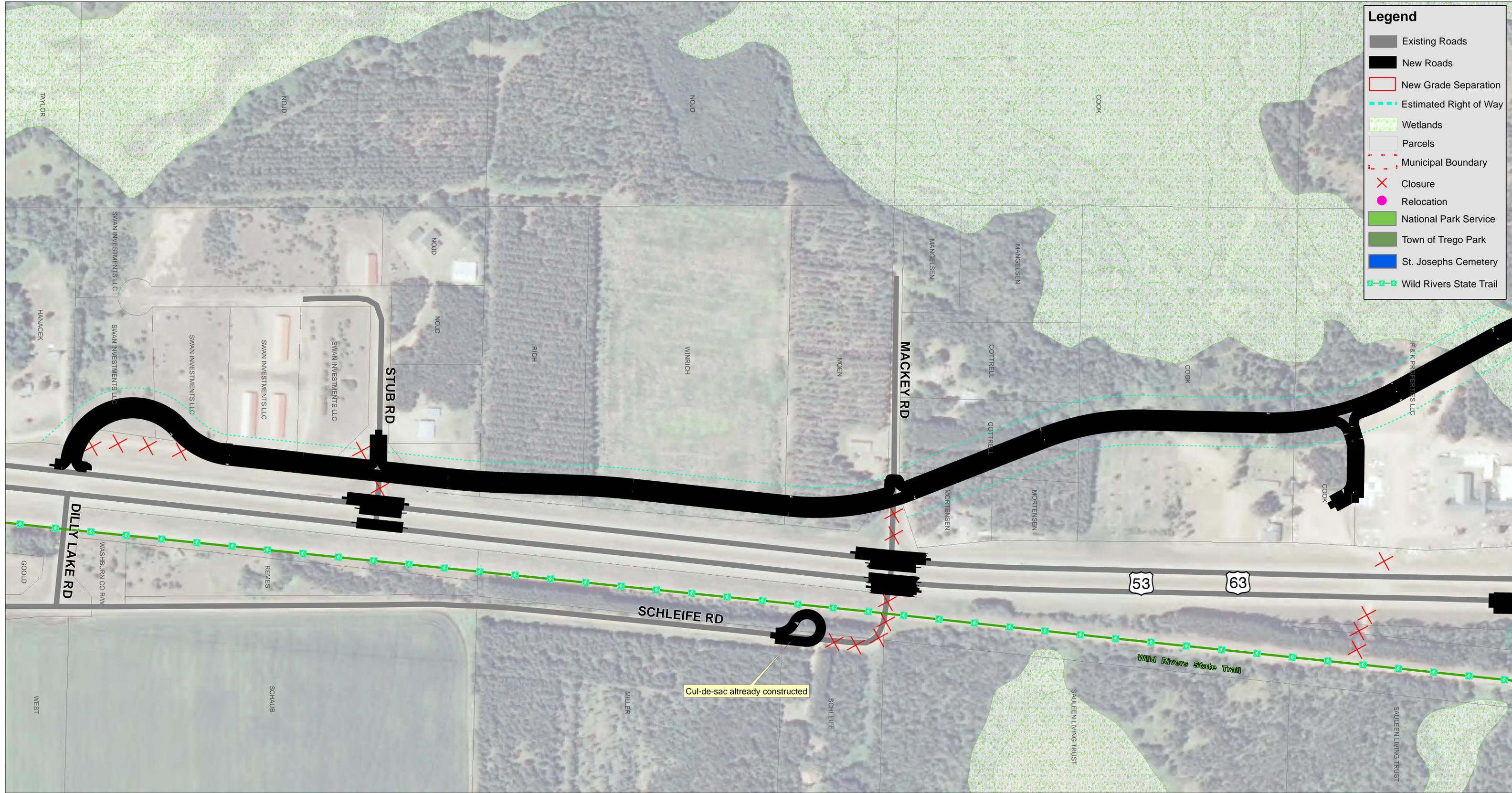
**US 53 PRESERVATION STUDY  
SPOONER TO LAMPSON  
WISDOT ID# 1195-00-02**

**EXHIBIT 4  
PREFERRED ALTERNATIVE DETAIL  
SPOONER AREA : MAP 5 of 11**



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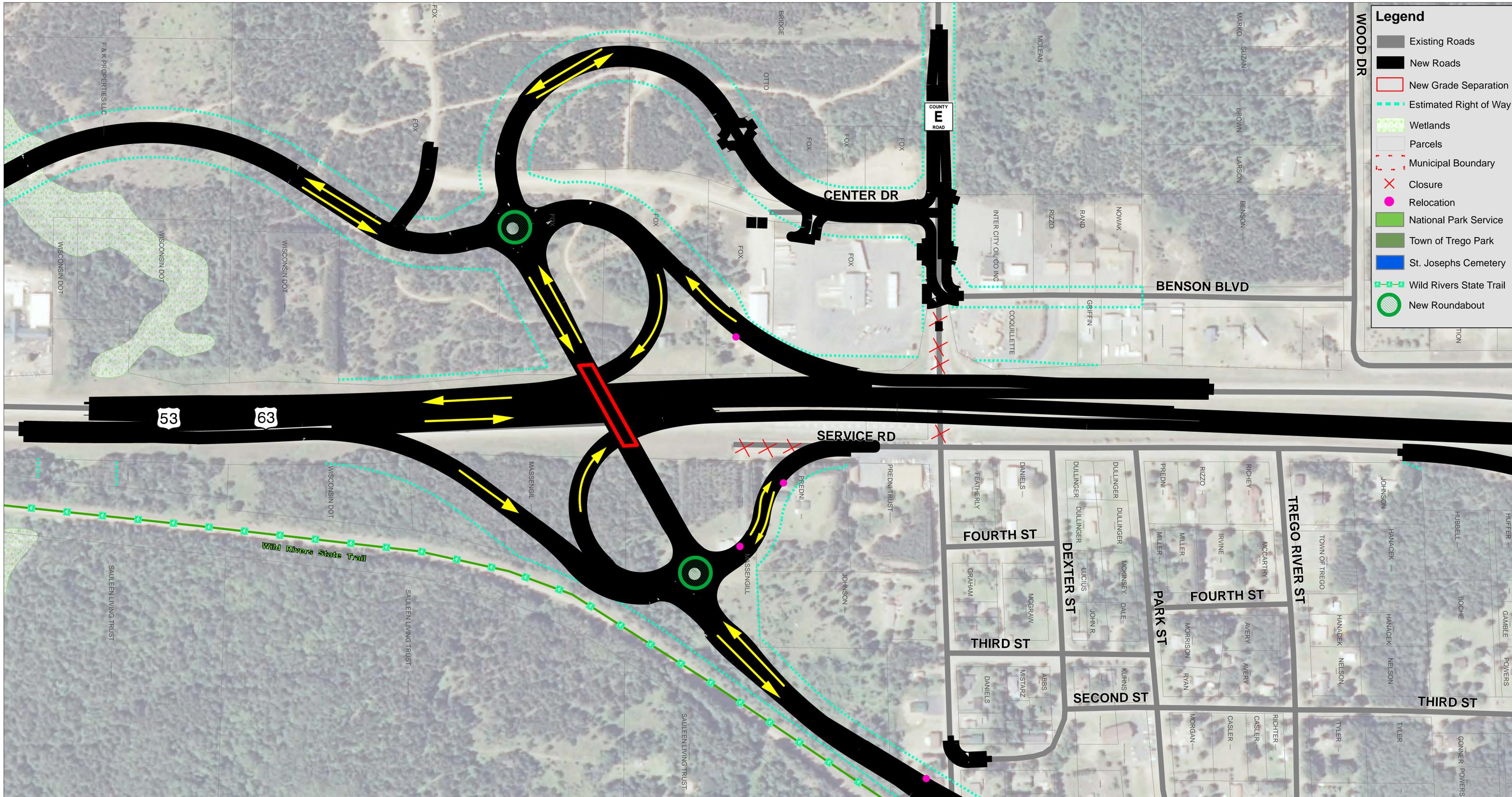
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**US 53 PRESERVATION STUDY  
SPOONER TO LAMPSON  
WISDOT ID# 1195-00-02**

**EXHIBIT 4  
PREFERRED ALTERNATIVE DETAIL  
TREGO AREA : MAP 6 OF 11**





- Legend**
- Existing Roads
  - New Roads
  - New Grade Separation
  - Estimated Right of Way
  - Wetlands
  - Parcels
  - Municipal Boundary
  - Closure
  - Relocation
  - National Park Service
  - Town of Trego Park
  - St. Josephs Cemetery
  - Wild Rivers State Trail
  - New Roundabout



**US 53 PRESERVATION STUDY  
SPOONER TO LAMPSON  
WISDOT ID# 1195-00-02**

**EXHIBIT 4  
PREFERRED ALTERNATIVE DETAIL  
TREGO AREA  
: MAP 7 OF 11**

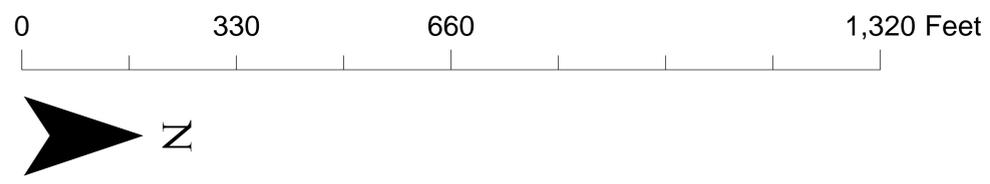
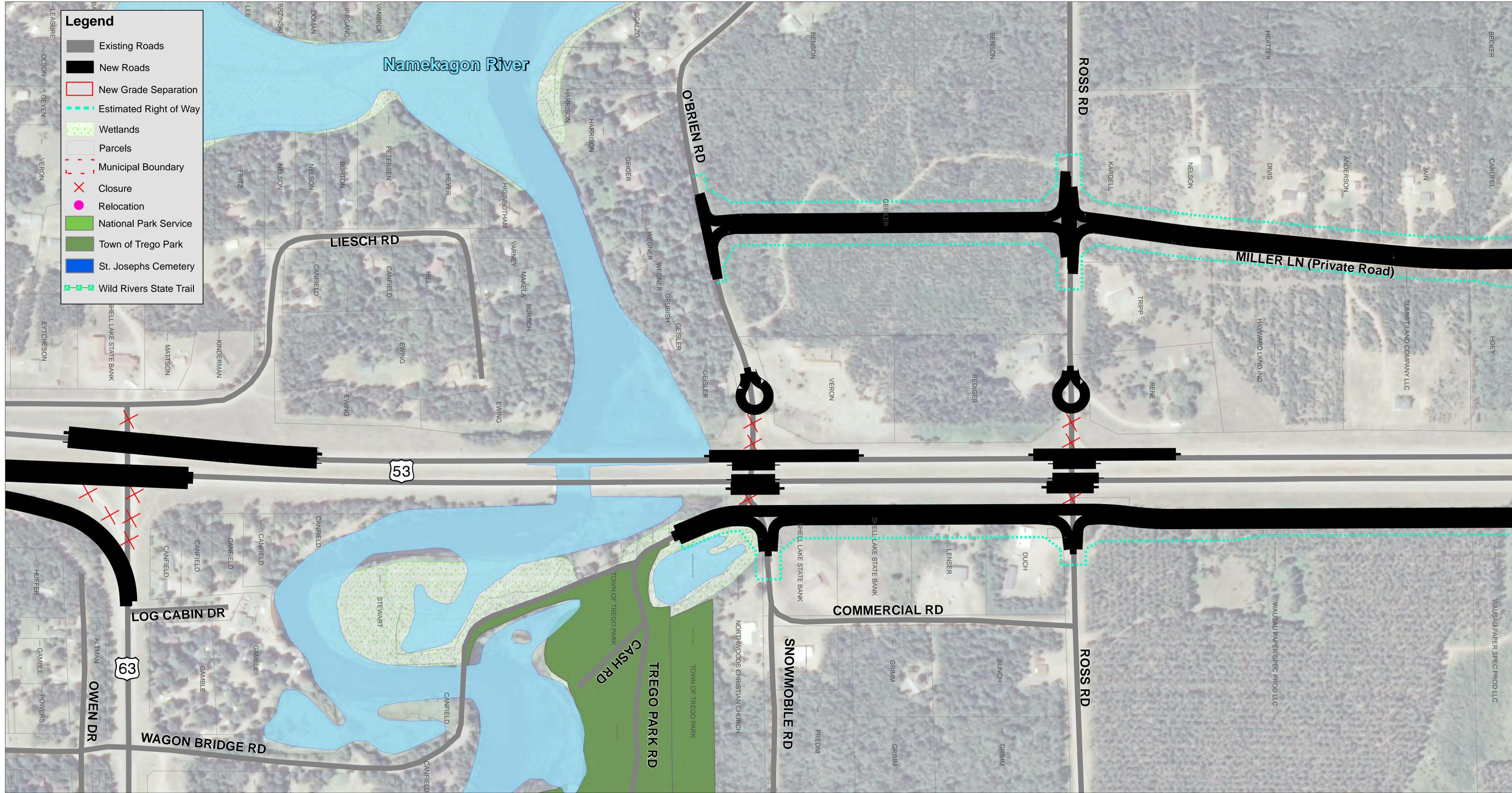


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- Legend**
-  Existing Roads
  -  New Roads
  -  New Grade Separation
  -  Estimated Right of Way
  -  Wetlands
  -  Parcels
  -  Municipal Boundary
  -  Closure
  -  Relocation
  -  National Park Service
  -  Town of Trego Park
  -  St. Josephs Cemetery
  -  Wild Rivers State Trail

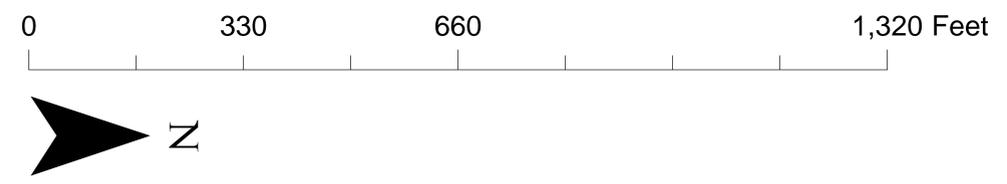


**US 53 PRESERVATION STUDY  
SPOONER TO LAMPSON  
WISDOT ID# 1195-00-02**

**EXHIBIT 4  
PREFERRED ALTERNATIVE DETAIL  
TREGO AREA  
: MAP 9 of 11**



Friday, March 9, 2012 11:34:40 AM  
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**US 53 PRESERVATION STUDY  
SPOONER TO LAMPSON  
WISDOT ID# 1195-00-02**

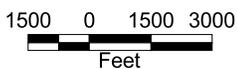
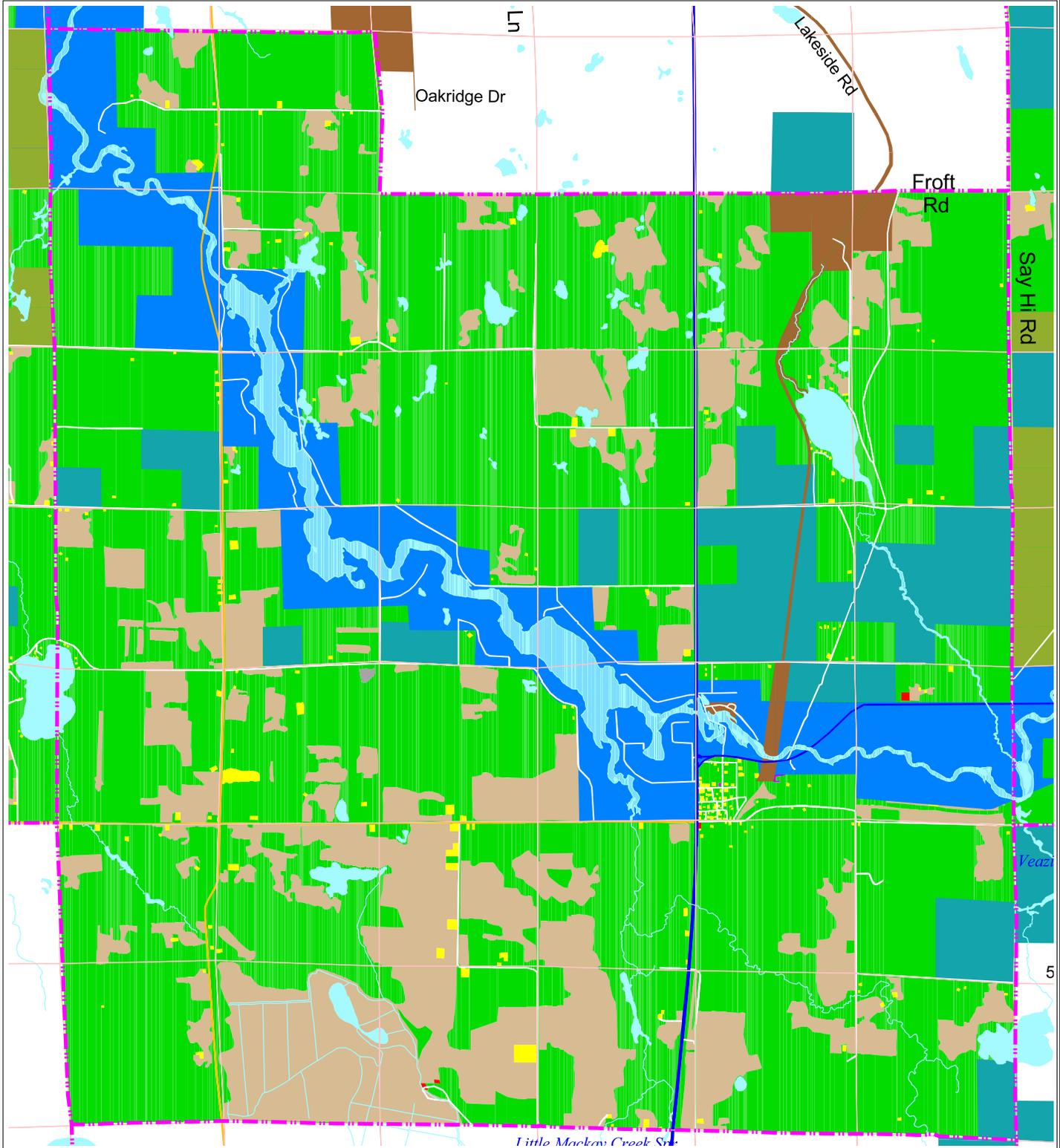
**EXHIBIT 4  
PREFERRED ALTERNATIVE DETAIL  
TREGO AREA : MAP 10 of 11**





# Existing Land Use - Town of Trego

EXHIBIT 5



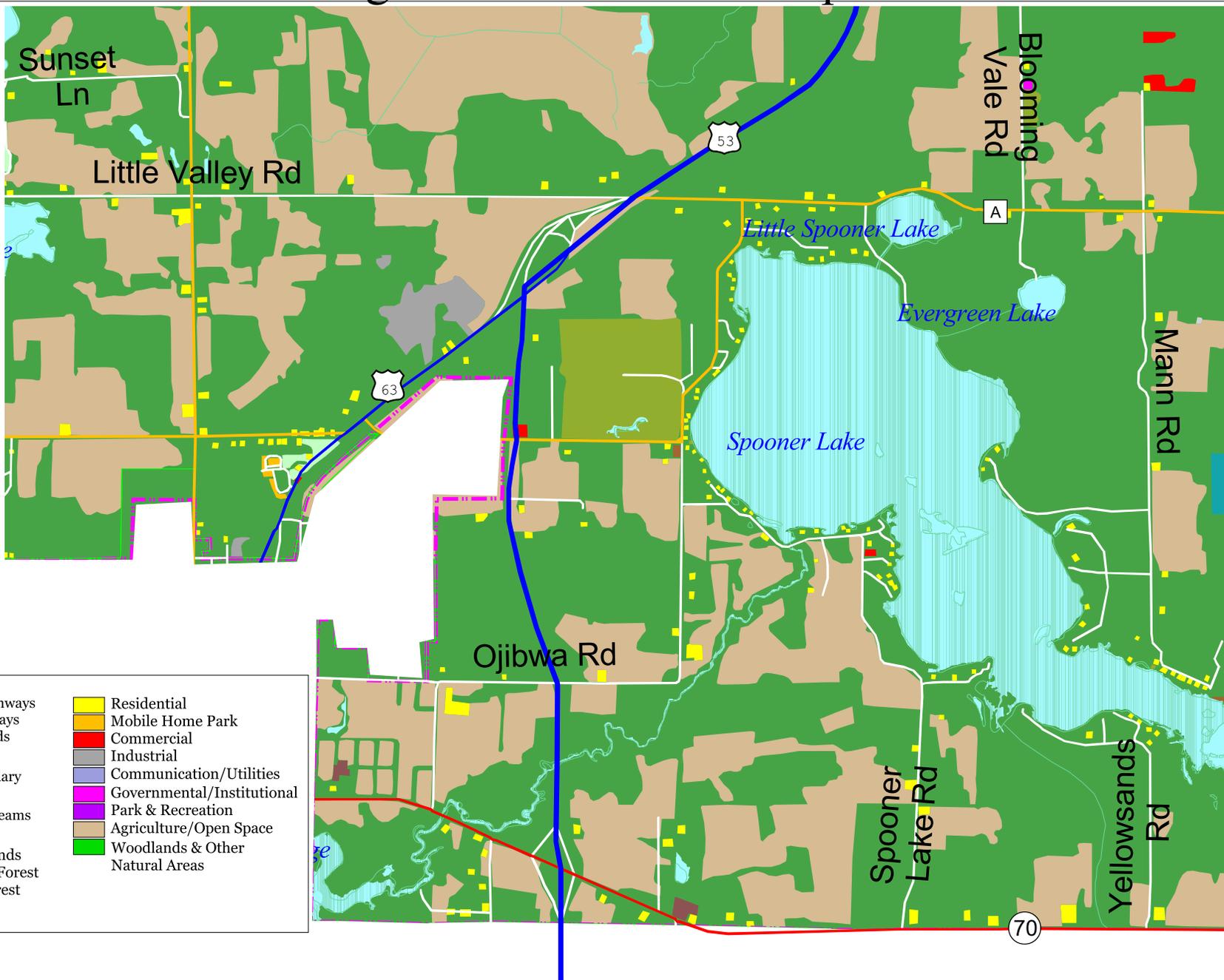
- Federal Highway
- State Highway
- County Roads
- Local Roads
- Town Boundary
- Lakes
- Rivers & Streams

- Residential
- Commercial
- Governmental/Institutional
- Agriculture
- Woodlands
- Commercial Forest Land
- County Forest Land

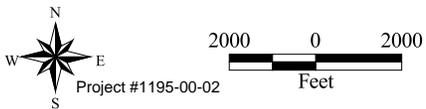


Land use was taken from 1996 aerial photographs and may not depict newer developments.

# Existing Land Use - Town of Spooner



	Federal Highways		Residential
	State Highways		Mobile Home Park
	County Roads		Commercial
	Local Roads		Industrial
	Town Boundary		Communication/Utilities
	Lakes		Governmental/Institutional
	Rivers & Streams		Park & Recreation
	Federal Lands		Agriculture/Open Space
	Industrial Forest		Woodlands & Other Natural Areas
	County Forest		
	State Land		



Land use was taken from 1996 aerial photograph and may depict newer development.





## **List of Appendices**

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Appendix A – Indirect and Cumulative Effects Analysis

Appendix B – Agency and Native American Coordination Letters and Mailing Lists

Appendix C1 – Bureau of Aeronautics (BOA) correspondence

Appendix C2 – Department of Trade and Consumer Protection (DATCP) correspondence

Appendix C3 – Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (WDNR) correspondence

Appendix C4 – United States Corps of Engineers (USACE) correspondence

Appendix C5 – National Park Service (NPS) correspondence

Appendix C6 – National Resource Conservation Service (NRCS) correspondence

Appendix C7 – United States Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) correspondence

Appendix D – Section 106

Appendix E – Agricultural Impact Notice

Appendix F – Conceptual Stage Relocation Plan (CSRP)

Appendix G – Phase I Hazardous Materials Assessment Executive Summary

**Indirect and Cumulative Effects  
Prescreening Analysis  
US 53 (Spooner to Lampson)  
Washburn County, Wisconsin  
WisDOT Project ID 1195-00-02  
Rev 08-14-13**

### **Project Description**

US 53 is classified as a principal arterial highway with the primary purpose of providing interstate and interregional mobility and was designated as a backbone route in the WisDOT Connections 2030 Plan. This plan included a network of existing and improved roadways that consist of a backbone network and connector highways. The backbone network consisted of divided highways that connect each region of the state and major economic centers. The connector highways tie economic and tourism centers to that backbone. The plan achieves its objectives by striving to ensure that these routes have adequate capacity and provide an adequate Level of Service (LOS).

US 53 functions as the primary north/south route on the western side of the state, connecting the cities in the west and south to northern Wisconsin. US 53 is the only facility on the western side of the state that provides four-lane access to northern Wisconsin and the Great Lakes port city of Superior.

The Proposed Action consists of a plan and follow-up actions for improving US 53 between WIS 70 in Spooner to 0.75 miles north of Schnagel Road in Trego. The proposed improvements would be officially mapped under the process established in Wis. Stats. 84.295(10) to help preserve right-of-way for future transportation needs. The purpose is to preserve and officially mapping future right of way. Due to the long-term nature of any future potential design and/or construction, additional environmental approvals and/or EA updates would be required when warranted and as funding becomes available.

The Proposed Action does not include immediate programming of construction funds but is designed in such a way to allow incremental construction and funding over time. The long-term vision and management strategy used by this Proposed Action allows incremental improvements and funding strategies to ultimately achieve the comprehensive system goal of improving the expressway facility.

The purpose of the Proposed Action is to develop a long-term highway access plan for this portion of US 53, officially map the proposed improvements in order to address three needs:

- Long-term highway planning and corridor preservation
- Emerging operational and existing safety concerns
- Land use/transportation planning and coordination

The Proposed Action would not be likely to affect speeds on the highway – its primary operational effect would be to improve safety. Thus, travel times would not be improved for through-travelers. There may be some minimal improvement in travel times for travelers using the new interchange to enter or exit US 53 and US 63, but this improvement could be offset by the increased indirection caused by the closure of existing access points.

### Community Context

The 9.5 mile section of the US 53/63 corridor lies in the City of Spooner and the Towns of Spooner and Trego in Washburn County. According to the Wisconsin Department of Administration, the population of Washburn County increased from 16,036 in 2000 to 17,646 in 2008, an annual increase of 1.25 percent.

The table below shows DOA forecasts for the period of 2005 to 2025. The data shows that the annual population increase is expected to be less than 1 percent annually in both counties.

County	2005 Population	2025 Population	% Change	Annual % Change
Washburn County	17,056	19,950	16.97%	.84%

Source: Wisconsin Department of Administration

The existing land uses surrounding the US 53 corridor include rural wooded uplands and wetlands, agriculture, low density residential, and limited commercial/industrial development. The City of Spooner has higher density residential and commercial uses in comparison to the other unincorporated communities in the study area.

The majority of residential land uses can be classified as widely distributed, low density uses with on-site septic systems typical of rural, agricultural areas. Higher concentrations of residential development include recreational homes located along shoreland lake areas and higher density suburban style housing in Trego.

Commercial activities within the study area include limited services such two restaurants and a convenience store, and industrial activities in rural areas primarily consisting of large quarry operations or managed forest lands. Other commercial/industrial activities include an antique business, metal fabricating business, and a canoe rental business.

A significant portion of the land uses in the study area include forested lands. Agricultural activities are also a significant land use activity that occurs within the area. Agricultural activities are located both east and west of US 53.

In Washburn County, the City of Spooner has completed a comprehensive plan with the assistance of Washburn County and North West Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission (NWRPC). The Town of Trego has developed a land use plan with the assistance of the NWRPC. The county zoning ordinance covers the unincorporated areas of the county. The Town of Trego follows the county zoning ordinance.

The Proposed Action is not in conflict with any of the community plans.

### Indirect Effects

At the present time, the potential exists for development to locate adjacent to any one of the numerous existing at-grade intersections. After the conversion to an expressway with partial access control and long-term preservation is completed, the direct access from US 53 would be at WIS 70 (interchange), US 63 (interchange), Dilly Lake Road, River Road, Whalen Lake Road, Barrett Road, and Schnagel Road. A new interchange south of County E would also provide access to US 53 and US 63. Any development on the lands near these intersections and interchanges would be accessed via alternative local road connections or from US 53 directly. Traffic on these local roads would not be enough to alter their current roadway functionality or capacity.

By removing direct access to nearly all of US 53, it would minimize the likelihood that highway-dependent uses would locate in areas without nearby access to US 53.

Access to US 53 and US 63 from lands adjacent to the new interchange would be via the future interchange and existing roadways (mentioned earlier). Development potential at these locations would likely remain unchanged with or without implementation of the Proposed Action as access would be provided under either the build or no-build scenarios.

Officially mapping (implementing Wis. Stats. 84.295) the proposed improvements may affect the level of interest in the commercial development of properties that currently have nearby access to US 53 and US 63, and would not have such access after the conversion to a partial access control expressway is complete. Potential developers may decide to not make investments in these locations, knowing that eventually access would be changed. However, it should be noted that these areas currently have not been a focus of development interest even with direct access.

In general, the communities in the vicinity of the Proposed Action support the changes because of safety concerns related to the existing at-grade access points on the highway. No concerns were expressed during the public outreach process that the project would have unwanted effects on land use in the area. There is no expectation that the Proposed Action would attract development at any different rate, pace, or location than what current markets and conditions already allow.

#### ***Conclusion Regarding Indirect Effects***

Through screening analysis using WisDOT's pre-screening for indirect effects procedure and FDM guidance on indirect effects, it is concluded that the factors of the project, its location and other conditions do not warrant further detailed analysis of the potential for indirect effects.

The Proposed Action would not have the likelihood to result in insignificant indirect effects as defined by the National Environmental Policy Act. This conclusion was based on the evaluation for 10 pre-screening factors including: project design concepts and scope; project purpose and need; project type; facility function (current and planned); project location; improved travel times to an area; local land use and planning considerations; population and demographic considerations; rate of urbanization; and public/agency concerns. The data and evaluation supporting this conclusion are presented above. Therefore, further detailed evaluation of indirect effects in a detailed analysis is not warranted. If changes are made to the project design or alternatives, this screening will be re-examined for sufficiency.

## **Cumulative Effects**

Improving US 53 is one of several actions or forces that could cumulatively affect the resources that would be affected by the Proposed Action – that is, wetlands and agricultural lands. Other past, present and future actions/forces and their potential effects are described below.

### Conversion of US 53 to a Four-lane Highway

The conversion of the US 53 corridor between Eau Claire and Superior from a two-lane to a four-lane highway began in the late 1960s. In 1976, US 53 was expanded from US 8 at Cameron to just south of Haugen, where it merged back into the existing two-lane highway. In 1988, the US 53 corridor from the northern end of the existing freeway near Haugen northerly to Trego was converted to expressway, partially on new alignment and partially on existing alignment. The Haugen and Spooner bypasses were built at that time. By 1999 the four-lane expansion between Eau Claire and Superior was completed, with some portions of the highway constructed as freeways and some as expressways.

The expansion of US 53 to four lanes likely did have a modest effect on land conversions in northern Wisconsin. The improved travel conditions may have had the effect of encouraging additional tourists to visit the northern part of the state, thus leading to new or expanded businesses to serve those travelers. The improved access to the interstate highway system may have made some other non-tourist businesses in the northern part of the state more viable or successful. Some of these effects may have been experienced in the Spooner and Trego areas, in the vicinity of the Proposed Action.

### Economic Conditions and Energy Prices

Conditions in the US economy fluctuate from year to year. These fluctuations affect the economic activities that, in turn, affect land resources. Economic conditions that favor business development or home building can result in greater land conversions to these uses. Tourist promotional activities likely have the effect of leading to land conversions for tourist-related businesses. Similarly, a downturn in economic conditions could slow the pace of land conversions.

The recent increases in energy costs are likely to affect the choices of individuals regarding travel and vacations plans; these choices in turn could affect land conversions for development in the tourist sector. It is difficult to predict the effects of high energy costs that result in less disposable income for vacationing. There are two plausible scenarios: because of having less disposable income and the high cost of gasoline, individuals could decide to forego vacationing in northern Wisconsin and stay home. Others may forego vacations in more distant locations and decide to take more economical vacations in northern Wisconsin.

The effects of the economy and energy prices on the tourist trade would be more pronounced in the areas of Wisconsin north of the Spooner/Trego area that attract larger numbers of tourists compared to the Spooner/Trego area itself. The Spooner/Trego area could experience effects to the extent the conditions result in the expansion or contraction of businesses, which in turn affects the number of individuals/families that seek to live in the area.

## **Conclusion Regarding Cumulative Effects**

The above activities and forces can have some effects on the conversion on wetlands or agricultural lands to other uses. The greatest effects are due to economic conditions and energy prices, over which the state has limited control. For this reason, further cumulative effects analysis is not warranted.



Division of Transportation
System Development
Northwest Region - Spooner Office
W7102 Green Valley Rd
Spooner, WI 54801

Jim Doyle, Governor
Frank J. Busalacchi, Secretary
Internet: www.dot.wisconsin.gov

Telephone: 715-392-7925
Toll Free: 800-590-1868
Facsimile (FAX): 715-635-5016
E-mail: superior.dtd@dot.state.wi.us

October 31, 2007

ATTN
COMPANY NAME
STREET ADDRESS
PO BOX
CITY, STATE 9-DIGIT ZIP CODE

Salutation/subject

The Wisconsin Department of Transportation, Northwest Region (WisDOT) is in the process of beginning a US 53 Preservation Study from WIS 70 near Spooner to County F in Washburn County (WisDOT ID: 1195-00-02). Communities in the study area are the Towns of Brooklyn, Spooner, and Trego and the City of Spooner.

US 53 is a Backbone route in the WisDOT corridors 2020 plan, and is a vital transportation corridor from both a local and regional perspective. The purpose of this study is to develop a long-term vision for the corridor that will be preserved through officially mapping right-of-way as needed for a freeway/expressway upgrade. Improvements needed as part of a freeway/expressway upgrade could include one strategically located interchange near Trego, alterations to existing interchanges, new overpasses, and cul-de-sacs, and development of a local transportation network to safely balance the needs of the area.

The US 53 Preservation study will include an alternative study, Environmental Assessment (EA), and preliminary engineering along the existing four-lane expressway. Construction funding has not been programmed but the study is necessary to preserve the necessary right-of-way. WisDOT is conducting the study now to ensure long-term options are not precluded as land uses change along the corridor over time, and to help the communities plan development in a way that will be compatible with future access changes.

To assist you in providing comments, we have developed a scoping package that includes the following items:

- 1. Project location map
2. Frequently asked questions (FAQ) and project contacts
3. List of coordinating/cooperating agencies
4. Agency input form
5. Business reply envelope

Please review the enclosed exhibits and submit any comments you may have in writing by November 23, 2007. Please do not hesitate to contact me at 715.635.4975 with any questions, or if you wish to discuss this project in further detail. We have provided a business reply envelope for your convenience in submitting comments. Thank you in advance for your cooperation.

Sincerely,

Marc Bowker, PE
WisDOT Project Manager

Enclosures



**Division of Transportation  
System Development**  
Northwest Region - Spooner Office  
W7102 Green Valley Road  
Spooner, WI 54801

**Jim Doyle, Governor  
Frank J. Busalacchi, Secretary**  
Internet: [www.dot.wisconsin.gov](http://www.dot.wisconsin.gov)

Telephone: 715-392-7925  
Toll Free: 800-590-1868  
Facsimile (FAX): 715-635-5016  
E-mail: [superior.dtd@dot.state.wi.us](mailto:superior.dtd@dot.state.wi.us)

November 9, 2007

GIIWEGIIZHIGOOKWAY MARTIN  
TRIBAL HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER  
LAC VIEUX DESERT BAND OF LAKE SUPERIOR CHIPPEWA  
INDIANS - KETEGITIGAANING OJIBWE NATION  
E23857 POPLAR CIRCLE  
WATERSMEET, WI 49969

Dear giiwegiizhigookway Martin:

The Wisconsin Department of Transportation (WisDOT) is in the process of beginning a US 53 Preservation Study. The study is being conducted by WisDOT along with Short Elliott Hendrickson Inc. (SEH®). The corridor extends from WIS 70 in Spooner to County F in the Town of Brooklyn, in Washburn County (T. 39 N. R. 12 W., T. 40 N. R. 12 W. and T. 41 N. R. 12 W.). The study segment is a National Highway System (NHS) Project. Communities in the study area are the Towns of Brooklyn, Spooner, and Trego, and the City of Spooner. The WisDOT project ID is 1195-00-02.

The US 53 Preservation Study will include an alternative study, Environmental Assessment (EA), and preliminary engineering along the existing four-lane expressway in Washburn County. It has been determined that an Environmental Assessment will serve as the environmental documentation for the project. No construction funds are programmed at this time.

Archeological investigations conducted for the project will enable WisDOT to determine whether archaeological resources are located in the project area and to assess the project's effect upon these resources. Other environmental studies will also be conducted and include historical building survey, endangered species survey, contaminated material investigations, soil testing, and right-of-way surveys. Information obtained from these studies will assist engineers in design to avoid or minimize the proposed project's effect upon cultural and natural resources.

We would be pleased to receive any comments regarding this project or information you wish to share pertaining to archaeological resources located in the area. Please contact us if you would like to set up a meeting to discuss this project. If your tribe would like to become an interested party under Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act or if you would like to receive additional information regarding this proposed project, please contact:

**Jim Becker; Bureau of Equity and Environmental Services; 4802 Sheboygan Avenue; Room 451;  
Madison, Wisconsin 53707; (608) 266-0099.**

*The interested party under Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act  
Lac Vieux Desert Band of Lake Superior  
Chippewa Indians have no interest in*

Project #: US 53 Preservation Study

Sincerely,

Marc Bowker  
WisDOT Project Leader

*Martin THPO  
giiwegiizhigookway Martin/THPO/JPAN*

Enclosures

11-15-07  
File

cc: Jim Becker, Bureau of Equity and Environmental Services  
Greg Weyandt, SEH  
Project #1195-00-02

First Name	Last Name	Professional Title	Organization	Address	City	State	Zip Code
Kevin	Myers	Highway Liaison	Barron Electrical Co-op	1434 N STH 25, PO Box 40	Barron	WI	54812
Monty	Parker	Highway Liaison	Century Tel	20 South Wilson	Rice Lake	WI	54868
Jamey	Oldeen	Highway Liaison	Charter Communications	2304 S. Main Street	Rice Lake	WI	54868
Carol	Blizzard Dunn	Aldersperson - Second Ward	City of Spooner	614 Franklin Street	Spooner	WI	54801
Gary	Cuskey	Mayor	City of Spooner	PO Box 548	Spooner	WI	54801
James	Dohm	Aldersperson - Second Ward	City of Spooner	721 Myra Street	Spooner	WI	54801
Esa	Everroad	Aldersperson - First Ward	City of Spooner	137 Walnut Street	Spooner	WI	54801
Daryl	Gabriel	Aldersperson - Third Ward	City of Spooner	P.O. Box 31	Spooner	WI	54801
Debbie	Koehn	Clerk/Treasurer	City of Spooner	P.O. Box 548	Spooner	WI	54801
Jeffery	Mortier	Aldersperson - First Ward	City of Spooner	1002 N. River Street	Spooner	WI	54801
Fred	Schluter	Aldersperson - Third Ward	City of Spooner	1214 Elm Street	Spooner	WI	54801
Larry	Stelter	Aldersperson - Fourth Ward	City of Spooner	217 Oak Street	Spooner	WI	54801
Chris	Thompson	Aldersperson - Fourth Ward	City of Spooner	828 Greenwood Avenue, P.O. Box 207	Spooner	WI	54801
Wayne	Schirmer	Highway Liaison	Dahlberg Light and Power Company	9221 East Main, PO BOX 300	Solon Springs	WI	54873
Dale	Crisler	Superior Lobe Chapter Coordinator	Ice Age Park & Trail Foundation	1799 25th Street	Rice Lake	WI	54868
Nancy	Frank	Northwest Field Coordinator/Chapter Liaison	Ice Age Park & Trail Foundation	E3602 1450th Avenue	Ridgeland	WI	54763
Tim	McRaith	Superior Lobe Chapter Coordinator	Ice Age Park & Trail Foundation	1799 25th Street	Rice Lake	WI	54868
Mike	Wollmer	Executive Director	Ice Age Park & Trail Foundation	306 East Wilson Street, Lower Level	Madison	WI	53703
Michael	Reynolds	Regional Director	National Park Service - Midwest Region	601 Riverfront Drive	Omaha	NE	68102-4226
Myron	Schuster	Executive Director	Northwest Regional Planning Commission	1400 S. River Street	Spooner	WI	54801
Donald	Haack	Superintendent	Spooner Area School District	500 College Street	Spooner	WI	54801-1298
Darren	Vik	Fire Chief	Spooner Fire District	507 N. Summit	Spooner	WI	54801
Wayne	Fischer		Spooner Municipal Utilities	P.O. Box 548	Spooner	WI	54801
Robert	Andrea	Police Chief	Spooner Police Department	P.O. Box 6	Spooner	WI	54801
Christopher	Stein	Superintendent	St. Croix National Scenic Riverway (NPS)	401 Hamilton Street	St. Croix Falls	WI	54024-0708
Nancy	Erickson	Clerk	Town of Beaver Brook	W5177 Hwy 70	Spooner	WI	54801
Gary	Johnson	Chairperson	Town of Beaver Brook	N4879 Randall Lake Road	Spooner	WI	54801
Dan	Kling	Supervisor	Town of Beaver Brook	W5475 CTY HWY B	Sarona	WI	54870
Tom	Perlick	Supervisor	Town of Beaver Brook	W5014 CTY HWY B	Sarona	WI	54870
Chris	Burke	Supervisor	Town of Brooklyn	N9204 Lakeside Road	Trego	WI	54888
Gerald	Graham	Chairperson	Town of Brooklyn	W5833 Palmer Dr.	Trego	WI	54888
Darlene	Smith	Clerk	Town of Brooklyn	W6032 Oakridge Drive	Trego	WI	54888
Robert	Voight	Supervisor	Town of Brooklyn	W5278 CTH F	Trego	WI	54888
Ella Marie	Hills	Clerk	Town of Evergreen	W7790 Dock Lake Road	Spooner	WI	54801
Tim	Kessler	Supervisor	Town of Evergreen	W9199 Dock Lake Road	Spooner	WI	54801
Melvin "Bill"	LaPorte	Chairperson	Town of Evergreen	W8060 Dock Lake Road	Spooner	WI	54801
Larry	Lawrence	Supervisor	Town of Evergreen	W7373 CTY RD E	Spooner	WI	54801
John	Fenniman	Chairperson	Town of Spooner	N5540 Rocky Ridge Road	Spooner	WI	54801
Ed	Fischer	Supervisor	Town of Spooner	W5851 Honey Hill Road	Spooner	WI	54801
Pat	Savage	Supervisor	Town of Spooner	N5529 Bengs Court	Spooner	WI	54801
Carol	Strunk	Clerk	Town of Spooner	W5748 CTY HWY A	Spooner	WI	54801
Gary	Campbell	Chairperson	Town of Trego	W6316 CTY HWY E	Trego	WI	54888
Wes	Huffer	Supervisor	Town of Trego	N8521 US HWY 53	Trego	WI	54888
Barb	Norton	Clerk	Town of Trego	W6097 River Road	Trego	WI	54888
Howard	Schmock	Supervisor	Town of Trego	W6456 Barrett Road	Trego	WI	54888
Jason	Berkner	Representative - Washburn County	US Army Corps of Engineers	15954 Rivers Edge, Suite 240	Hayward	WI	54843

Mark	Chandler		US DOT - FHWA Wisconsin Division	525 Junction Road Suite 8000	Madison	WI	53717
Janet M.	Smith		US Fish and Wildlife Service	2661 Scott Tower Drive	New Franken	WI	54229
Louise	Clemency	Field Supervisor	US Fish And Wildlife Service - Green Bay Field Office	2661 Scott Tower Drive	New Franken	WI	54229-9565
Patricia	Leavenworth		USDA - Natural Resource Conservation Service, Wisconsin State Office	8030 Excelsior Drive	Madison	WI	53717-2905
Tom	Fredrickson	District Conservationist	USDA - NRCS Spooner Service Center	800 N. Front Street, Room 103	Spooner	WI	54801-1350
Tim	Miland	Soil Scientist	USDA-NRCS	1304 N. Hillcrest Parkway, Suite A	Altoona	WI	54720
William	Allard	District 9 Supervisor	Washburn County	N7069 Oak Hill Road	Trego	WI	54888
Timothy	Brabec	District 12 Supervisor	Washburn County	N4439 Beers Road	Spooner	WI	54801
Carol	Buck	Emergency Management Coordinator	Washburn County	10 Fourth Avenue, P.O. Box 429	Shell Lake	WI	54871
William	Campbell	District 20 Supervisor	Washburn County	N3933 Hwy 63	Shell Lake	WI	54871
James	Dohm	District 16 Supervisor	Washburn County	721 Myra Street	Spooner	WI	54801
Terry	Dryden	Sheriff	Washburn County	421 Highway 63, PO Box 429	Shell Lake	WI	54871
Elizabeth	Esser	District 8 Supervisor	Washburn County	W7550 Hwy 70	Spooner	WI	54801
Larry	Ford	District 17 Supervisor	Washburn County	300 Park West Avenue	Spooner	WI	54801
Lynn	Hoepfner	County Clerk	Washburn County	10 Fourth Avenue	Shell Lake	WI	54871
Jon	Johnson	Highway Commissioner	Washburn County	1600 County Highway H	Spooner	WI	54801
Mike	Keefe	Administrative Coordinator	Washburn County	10 Fourth Avenue, PO Box 337	Shell Lake	WI	54871
Don	Quinton	District 18 Supervisor	Washburn County	519 South Front Street	Spooner	WI	54801
Thomas	Ricci	District 6 Supervisor	Washburn County	N8656 Ricci Road	Trego	WI	54888
Brad	Robole	Planning, Land & Resource Management Director	Washburn County	10 Fourth Avenue, P.O. Box 486	Shell Lake	WI	54871
Steven	Sather	District 19 Supervisor	Washburn County	N4785 Hill Drive	Spooner	WI	54801
Steven	Waggoner	District 3 Supervisor	Washburn County	W4206 Hwy 77	Minong	WI	54859
Robert	Washkuhn	District 11 Supervisor	Washburn County	W8225 Sand Road	Shell Lake	WI	54871
Beverly	Stencel		Washburn County - UW Extension	850 W. Beaver Brook Avenue	Spooner	WI	54801
			Washburn County Historical Society	PO Box 366	Shell Lake	WI	54871
Thomas	Krostag	Highway Liaison	WE Energies	1921 8th Street South	Wisconsin Rapids	WI	54494
Amy	Cronk	Transportation Liaison	Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources	810 W. Maple Street	Spooner	WI	54801
Nick	Milroy	73rd District Representative	Wisconsin State Assembly	Room 8 North, State Capitol, P.O. Box 8953	Madison	WI	53708-8953
Roger	Rivard	75th District Representative	Wisconsin State Assembly	Room 119 North, State Capitol, P.O. Box 8952	Madison	WI	53708-8952
Jeffrey	Frenette	Commander	Wisconsin State Patrol Northwest Region-Spooner Post	7102 Green Valley Road	Spooner	WI	54801
Robert	Jauch	25th District Senator	Wisconsin State Senate	Room 118 South, State Capitol, PO Box 7882	Madison	WI	53707-7882
Pat	Krietlow	23rd District Senator	Wisconsin State Senate	10 South State Capitol, PO Box 7882	Madison	WI	53707-7882
Bob	Newbery		WisDOT - Central Office	4802 Sheboygan Avenue 451	Madison	WI	53705
Amy	Adrihan	Environmental Review Specialist	WisDOT - NW Region	1701 N. 4th Street	Superior	WI	54880
Marc	Bowker		WisDOT - NW Region	W7102 Green Valley Road	Spooner	WI	54801
Jeff	Emerson		WisDOT - NW Region	W7102 Green Valley Road	Spooner	WI	54801
Nancy	Dotson		Xcel Energy	PO Box 8, 1414 W Hamilton Ave	Eau Claire	WI	54702-0008
Peter	Nauth	Impact Analyst	DATCP	P.O. Box 8911	Madison	WI	53708-8911
Eric	Callisto		Wisconsin Public Service Commission	610 North Whitney Way, PO Box 7854	Madison	WI	53707-7854

First Name	Last Name	Professional Title	Organization	Address	City	State	Zip Code
Ms. Wanda	McFaggen		St. Croix Band Chippewa Indians of Wisconsin	Tribal Historic Preservation Office, 24663 Angeline Avenue	Webster	WI	54893-9246
		Attn: Cultural Resource Director	Sokaogon Chippewa Community Mole Lake Band	3051 Sand Lake Road	Crandon	WI	54520
Melinda	Young	Tribal Historic Preservation Officer	Lac du Flambeau Band of Lake Superior Chippewa Indians of Wisconsin	Tribal Historic Preservation Office, PO Box 67	Lac du Flambeau	WI	54538
Jerry	Smith	Tribal Historic Preservation Officer	Lac Courte Oreilles Band of Lake Superior Chippewa Indians of Wisconsin	Tribal Office, 13394 W. Trepania Road	Hayward	WI	54843
Jonathan	Buffalo	NAGPRA Representative	Sac and Fox of the Mississippi in Iowa	349 Meskwaki Road	Tama	IA	52339-9629
Jane	Nioce		Sac and Fox Nation of Missouri in Kansas and Nebraska	305 N. Main	Reserve	KS	66434
Edith	Leoso	Tribal Historic Preservation Officer	Bad River Band of Lake Superior Chippewa Indians of Wisconsin	PO Box 39	Odanah	WI	54861
Steve	Ortiz	Chairman, NHPA Rep.	Prairie Band Potawatomi Nation	16281 Q Road	Mayetta	KS	66509
Dave	Grignon	Tribal Historic Preservation Officer	Menominee Indian Tribe of Wisconsin	W3426 CTH V V West, PO Box 910	Keshena	WI	54135
Larry	Balber	Tribal Historic Preservation Officer	Red Cliff Band of Lake Superior Chippewa Indians of Wisconsin	88385 Pike Road, Highway 13	Bayfield	WI	54814
Mike	Alloway		Forest County Potawatomi Community of Wisconsin	Tribal Office, PO Box 340	Crandon	WI	54520
Sandra	Massey	NAGPRA Representative	Sac and Fox Nation of Oklahoma	RR 2, Box 246	Stroud	OK	74079
giivegiizhigookway	Martin	Tribal Historic Preservation Officer	Lac Vieux Desert Band of Lake Superior Chippewa Indians - Ketegitigaaning Ojibwe Nation	PO Box 249	Watersmeet	WI	49969

**From:** Kelly, Jerry - DOT  
**Sent:** Friday, April 30, 2010 3:08 PM  
**To:** Bowker, Marc - DOT  
**Cc:** Brummond, Scott - DOT  
**Subject:** US 53 project from WIS 70 to County F

Marc,

Thank you for your announcement concerning the US 53 project from WIS 70 to County F in Washburn County. As you noted in your letter of April 23, 2010, the Nest of Eagles Airport is near the project corridor. However, the Nest of Eagles Airport is not a State Airport System Plan airport and, as such, is not afforded the level of review needed for BOA to meet the requirements of FAA's Advisory Circular 150/5200-33B: Hazardous Wildlife Attractants at or near Airports. As a result, the BOA does not have any comments on the proposed US 53 project.

If you have any questions or need additional information, please contact me.

*Jerry Kelly*

Environmental Review Specialist  
WisDOT Bureau of Aeronautics  
4802 Sheboygan Ave., Room 701  
Madison, Wisconsin 53707  
(608) 266-2934  
jerry.kelly@dot.wi.gov

November 2, 2011

Ms. Barbara Feeney  
Short Elliot Hendrickson, Inc.  
2808 Odana Rd, Suite 200  
Madison, WI 53719-1137

Dear Ms. Feeney:

Re: US 53 Preservation Study  
WIS 70 to Schnagel Road  
ID# 1195-00-02

The Department of Agriculture, Trade, and Consumer Protection (DATCP) has reviewed the notification and any supplemental information you have provided concerning the potential need for an agricultural impact statement (AIS) for the above project. We have determined that an AIS will not be prepared for this project at this time. It would not be productive for DATCP to contact the affected farmland owners regarding the project's impact on their farm when the actual project may not take place until the distant future. Landownership and land use may change significantly before WisDOT acquires the necessary property.

When WisDOT decides to move forward with the acquisition of farmland for the proposed project, DATCP should be re-notified. DATCP requests that you include this commitment in the Environmental Assessment that is being prepared for this project. The commitment could state: "At the time that any part of this project moves into final design, DATCP should be notified. If more than five acres of property would be acquired from any agricultural operation, an Agricultural Impact Statement must be prepared. If five acres or less is involved, DATCP has discretion whether to prepare an AIS. WisDOT cannot begin negotiation with a property owner until 30 days after the AIS has been published, if an AIS will be prepared for the project"

Please call me with any questions at 608/224-4650.

Sincerely,



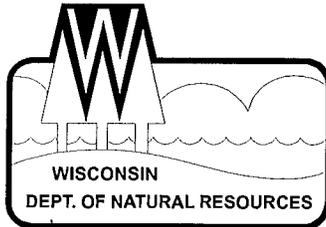
Peter Nauth  
Agricultural Impact Program  
(608) 224-4650

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Project #1195-00-02

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## State of Wisconsin \ DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES

Jim Doyle, Governor  
 Scott Hassett, Secretary  
 John Gozdziwski, Regional Director

Northern Region Headquarters  
 810 W. Maple Street  
 Spooner, Wisconsin 54801  
 Telephone 715-635-2101  
 FAX 715-635-4105  
 TDD 715-635-4001

December 20, 2007

Marc Bowker  
 DOT, Northwest Region – Spooner Office  
 P.O. Box 282  
 Spooner, WI 54801

RE: **I.D. # 1195-00-02**  
**USH 53 Corridor Preservation Study – Spooner/Trego Area**  
**Washburn County**

Dear Marc:

This letter is in response to your inquiry for our comments on what natural resources the above referenced freeway conversion and associated access changes could impact. Our comments identify existing resources within one mile either side of USH 53, and in some cases provide suggestions on how to protect those resources. Please keep in mind that this is a very broad overview of potential resource issues. When an alternatives analysis is provided we will conduct a more in-depth field investigation and review.

**Surface Waters** - The following surface waters are located within the study area.

- **Yellow River** – A clear warm water drainage stream. Provides good habitat for furbearers and is used by a large number of nesting ducks and migrating waterfowl in the spring and fall. Populations of purple loosestrife, an invasive aquatic plant, are found along the river.
- **Spooner Lake** – A hard water drainage impoundment on the headwaters of the Yellow River. There are extensive wetlands along the lake which include sedge meadows, bogs and scrub shrub wetlands. Muskrats are common, as well as nesting ducks. Extensive use by migrating waterfowl in spring and fall. Contains curly-leaf pondweed, an invasive aquatic plant.
- **Little Spooner Lake**- A soft water seepage lake connected to Spooner Lake by a boat channel. Approximately 30% of the shoreline is wetlands, including sedge meadows, scrub shrub wetlands and bogs. Provides nesting cover for ducks and loons.
- **Little Mackay Creek** – Clear water spring fed Class II brook trout stream. All feeder streams and spring ponds are also considered to be trout water.
- **Potato Creek** – Warm water drainage stream. Used by furbearers and nesting ducks, and waterfowl during spring and fall migrations.
- **Namekagon River** – A clear warm water drainage stream. Used by furbearers, nesting ducks, and waterfowl during spring and fall migrations. The Namekagon River contains populations of endangered and rare species of mussels, insects and

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- fish. It is also a part of the St. Croix National Scenic Waterway.
- **Whalen Creek** – Clear spring-fed stream. Above Whalen Lake the creek is Class I brook and brown trout water. Below Whalen Lake it is a warm water fishery. Used by furbearers, nesting ducks and waterfowl during the spring and fall migrations.
  - **Whalen Lake** – Hard water drainage lake containing adjacent scrub shrub wetlands. Used by furbearers and nesting ducks.

**Wetlands** - Several wetland types are found throughout the project area. Shallow open water communities, deep marshes, shallow marshes, and bogs are a few examples of the wetland types that are found throughout this segment of the USH 53 corridor. Wetlands are often associated with threatened and endangered plant and bird species, as we discuss in the next section. These areas are also very important for waterfowl production, furbearers, frogs, turtles and aquatic invertebrates, as well as providing floodwater retention and filtering of stormwater. All efforts should be made to avoid wetland impacts.

**Threatened/Endangered/Special Concern Species** – Several bird, plant and fish species have been found within the project area. We have attached specific species information and avoidance recommendations at the end of this letter. Most of these species and communities are associated with the Namekagon River.

**Recreational Trails** - A recreational trail corridor runs through the study area. The Wild Rivers State Trail provides opportunities for activities such as ATV riding, snowmobiling and hiking. There is a parking lot and access point in Trego. This trail is on a federally granted right-of-ways and cannot be for any other purposes. In addition, the Wild Rivers Trail is part of the Rails to Trails Program and cannot be used for any other purpose than recreational.

**Whalen Creek Fishery Area** – The Whalen Creek Fishery Area consists of 188 acres of state-owned property. The principal wildlife found on the property are ruffed grouse and deer, and the habitat includes a stream, marsh, springs, and forest upland. Recreational uses include trout fishing, trapping, hiking and berry picking.

We look forward to continued coordination on this corridor preservation study. If you have any questions regarding the information in this letter, please feel free to call me at 715-635-4229.

Sincerely,



Amy Cronk  
Environmental Review Coordinator

cc: Troy Stapelmann – DOT, Northwest Region – Eau Claire  
Amy Adrihan – DOT, Northwest Region – Superior  
Greg Weyandt – SEH, Chippewa Falls

## Endangered, Threatened, and Special Concern Species found in Highway 53 Preservation Study limits from Spooner to Trego

The following plant and animal species are known to occur in or near the corridor for the USH 53 Preservation Study from Spooner to Trego. Species information and some avoidance recommendations are given below.

Group	Scientific Name	Common Name	State Status *	Federal Status*
Bird	<i>Haliaeetus leucocephalus</i>	Bald Eagle	SC/FL	LT,PD
Fish	<i>Moxostoma valenciennesi</i>	Greater Redhorse	THR	
Dragonfly	<i>Ophiogomphus smithi</i> <i>Ophiogomphus howei</i>	Sand Snaketail Pygmy Snaketail	SC THR	
Mussel	<i>Alasmidonta marginata</i> <i>Cyclonaias tuberculata</i> <i>Elliptio complanata</i>	Elktoe Purple Wartback Eastern Elliptio	SC END SC	
Plant	<i>Poa paludigena</i> <i>Arabis missouriensis</i> <i>Artemisia frigida</i>	Bog Bluegrass Deam's Rockcress Prairie Sagebrush	THR SC SC	

\* LT,PD = currently listed as threatened, but proposed for de-listing; SC = Special Concern (those species about which some problem of abundance or distribution is suspected but not yet proved.); SC/FL = Special Concern in WI, but federally listed as endangered or threatened; THR = Threatened

**Bald Eagle (*Haliaeetus leucocephalus*)** – A species of Special Concern in Wisconsin and a Federally listed threatened species, prefer to nest in tall trees (usually white pine) with a commanding view of nearby lakes or streams. Eagles return to nest sites in late winter or early spring and eggs are laid in late March or early April. The first egg hatches about 40 days later.

The following steps must be followed to avoid negative impacts to or incidental take of Bald Eagles:

1. The project area should be surveyed for large aspen or white pine trees (diameter of  $\geq$  12 inches) containing eagle nests before any trees are cleared from the property;
2. If a nest is found, avoid disturbances such as land clearing and tree removal within 330-feet of the nest year round;
3. Avoid nest disturbances within 330-660 feet during the February 15<sup>th</sup> to August 15<sup>th</sup> breeding and nesting season;
4. Bald Eagle roosts and feeding sits should be protected within 660 feet of a nest. If tree removal occurs, it is suggested that several super-canopy trees be left for future nest tree replacement;

5. Leave standing as many large dead trees as possible, especially trees with a diameter of  $\geq 12$  inches.

**Greater Redhorse** (*Moxostoma valenciennesi*) - A fish listed as Threatened in Wisconsin which prefers clear water of medium to large rivers, over bottoms of sand, gravel, or boulders. Spawning occurs in May or June.

The Greater Redhorse is recognized as a Species of Greatest Conservation Need in the Wisconsin Wildlife Action Plan. Threats to and issues affecting this species that may be relevant to road construction include:

- Agriculture and urbanization of shorelines and watersheds can attribute to habitat degradation on the medium and large rivers, lakes and reservoirs where this species occurs.
- Point and non-point source pollution, including turbidity and sedimentation.

Preservation of natural riverine habitat is needed to provide appropriate feeding and spawning grounds for this species which prefers moderate to fast flowing rivers and requires riffle areas free of silt for spawning. In addition, control of point and non-point source pollution is needed to protect this species. Appropriate methods may include broad riparian buffer strips, stiff pesticide application laws, upland erosion control practices, and modern pollution control systems.

**Sand Snaketail** (*Ophiogomphus smithi*) – A dragonfly listed as a species of special concern in Wisconsin, which has been found in small to medium clean, fast-flowing sandy warm streams. The flight period extends from late May through mid June. *Ophiogomphus* are apparently limited in distribution by the type of substrate the larvae can survive in, and are one of the least tolerant groups of aquatic insects to perturbations in water quality. Most species require clean gravel of a certain size in well-aerated warm water streams.

The Sand Snaketail is also recognized as a Species of Greatest Conservation Need in the Wisconsin Wildlife Action Plan. They often have a life cycle of two to three years which means the predominant life stage (larvae) have to have their requirements met for long periods of time. Threats to and issues affecting this species that may be relevant to road construction include:

- Inorganic and organic sedimentation imbedded in stream substrate.
- Alteration of flow regimes caused by impoundments and large scale conversion of natural cover types in the watershed.
- Point and nonpoint sources of pollutants.
- Shoreline and littoral zone modifications.
- Drainage or impoundment of natural wetlands.

Priority conservation actions include protecting the waterbodies that contain significant populations of the sand snaketail. This can be done by incorporating effective and appropriate erosion control methods that will prevent sediment from reaching the stream.

**Pygmy Snaketail** (*Ophiogomphus howei*) - A dragonfly presently listed as a Federal Species of Concern and Threatened in Wisconsin and has been found in small to large, clean, fast-flowing warm streams with gravel- sand substrates. Adults apparently forage and perch on the stream-

side forest canopy. The flight period extends from late May through late June. *Ophiogomphus* are apparently limited in distribution by the type of substrate the larvae can survive in, and are one of the least tolerant groups of aquatic insects to perturbations in water quality. Most species require clean gravel of a certain size in well-aerated warm water streams.

The Sand Snaketail is also recognized as a Species of Greatest Conservation Need in the Wisconsin Wildlife Action Plan. They often have a life cycle of two to three years which means the predominant life stage (larvae) have to have their requirements met for long periods of time. Threats to and issues affecting this species that may be relevant to road construction include:

- Inorganic and organic sedimentation imbedded in stream substrate.
- Alteration of flow regimes caused by impoundments and large scale conversion of natural cover types in the watershed.
- Point and nonpoint sources of pollutants.
- Shoreline and littoral zone modifications.
- Drainage or impoundment of natural wetlands.

Priority conservation actions include protecting the waterbodies that contain significant populations of the sand snaketail. This can be done by incorporating effective and appropriate erosion control methods that will prevent sediment from reaching the stream.

**Elktoe** (*Alasmidonta marginata*)- A State Special Concern mussel which is found in various-sized streams with flowing water, sand, gravel or rock substrates that are stable. The known host fishes include five widespread species including redhorse and sucker species and rockbass.

Primary factors associated with road construction that may contribute to a decline in this mussel species include extensive habitat modification and destruction, water contamination, and competition with exotic species. Changes in land use patterns have altered the natural hydrologic regimes of some river systems. These changes cause:

- Unstable physical habitat alterations (e.g., fluctuating river current velocities, shear stress, altered temperature and water chemistry regimes) that long-lived mussels are unable to adapt to.
- Changes in fish host communities and fish host abundance.
- Heavy sedimentation can bury once suitable habitats along with glochidia (larvae) and resident adult mussels.
- Increased turbidity can result in reduced food supplies and lower oxygen supplies.
- Sediments transport other pollutants of concern (e.g., chemicals and toxins, excess nutrients) that can affect mussel health and longevity.

Priority conservation actions include protecting the waterbodies that contain significant populations of the pygmy snaketail. Some of those actions may include:

- Evaluating impacts of changes in water quality and hydrologic dynamics to mussel populations.
- Preventing and mitigating nonpoint source pollution, and addressing watershed land use practices.
- Controlling and managing invasive species; prevent future introductions of nonnative species.

- Developing and applying general habitat management guidelines.

**Purple Wartyback** (*Cyclonaias tuberculata*) - A mussel listed as Endangered in Wisconsin which is found in large rivers in the western and southern parts of the state. It prefers a stable substrate containing rock, gravel and sand in swift current. Known hosts include bullhead and catfish species.

The Purple Wartyback is also recognized as a Species of Greatest Conservation Need in the Wisconsin Wildlife Action Plan. Threats to and issues affecting the decline of this species that may be relevant to road construction include habitat destruction and river pollution.

Protection of habitat and improvements in water quality along with restriction of dredging, impoundments, sand and gravel mining, and navigational improvements would benefit this species. The development of fish runways to facilitate the movement of host species through or around dams could also help to protect the Purple Wartyback.

**Eastern Elliptio** (*Elliptio complanata*) – A mussel of special concern in Wisconsin which is usually found in the Lake Superior drainage of the northwest part of the state. It lives in streams, lakes, impoundments and bays of Lake Superior. The known host fish include a number of common species.

**Bog Bluegrass** (*Poa paludigena*) – A federal species of concern and threatened in Wisconsin, it is a plant found in forested seeps and fens, mostly under hardwoods and alders. Blooming occurs over a short period, usually in early to mid-June. Optimal identification period is throughout the month of June.

**Deam's Rockcress** (*Arabis missouriensis*) - A plant listed as a Federal Species of Concern and State Special Concern plant. This species prefers mesic alluvial floodplain forests. Blooming occurs throughout the month of May. Optimal identification period is from early May to mid-June

**Prairie Sagebrush** (*Artemisia frigida*) - A plant of Special Concern in Wisconsin, prefers very dry prairies and sand terraces. Blooming occurs from early August through late September. Optimal identification period is from early August to late September.



State of Wisconsin \ DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES

Jim Doyle, Governor  
Scott Hassett, Secretary  
John Gozdziwski, Regional Director

Northern Region Headquarters  
810 W. Maple Street  
Spooner, Wisconsin 54801  
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FAX 715-635-4105  
TDD 715-635-4001

September 9, 2008

Marc Bowker  
DOT, Northwest Region – Spooner Office  
P.O. Box 282  
Spooner, WI 54801

RE: I.D. # 1195-00-02  
USH 53 Preservation Study (Spooner – Lampson)  
Washburn County

Dear Marc:

This letter is in follow-up to your submittal of conceptual design alternatives and our subsequent joint field review for the above referenced project. The purpose of this letter is to provide our comments on the alternatives that have been developed to date as part of this study.

**COMMENTS ON ISSUES COMMON TO ALL ALTERNATIVES:**

**VEGETATIVE BUFFERS FOR WETLANDS** - Trans 401.106(6) describes the buffer zones that are needed to provide protection to wetlands and other surface waters that are located adjacent to proposed construction projects. It is our expectation that these standards will be incorporated into all aspects of this study.

**WILD RIVERS STATE TRAIL AND RAILROAD RIGHT-OF-WAY** – The Wild Rivers State Trail is located between the City of Rice Lake in Barron County and the City of Superior in Douglas County and is an active Rails-to-Trails route. We are requesting that any new crossings of the Wild Rivers Trail (WRT) are constructed as separated grade crossings that span the entire trail and railroad right-of-way (ROW). This will provide more protection for users of the WRT and the railroad, and also protect the integrity of the federally granted right-of-way, which cannot be used for any purposes other than recreational trails.

Deam's Rockcress and Prairie Sagebrush, which are plants of special concern in Wisconsin, have both been previously surveyed along portions of the WRT. Construction of separated grade crossings that span the entire ROW of the trail would avoid impacts to these plant populations.

Please be advised that a large portion of the WRT from Spooner to Trego is currently owned by WisDOT and would require coordination with WisDOT Rails and Harbors staff.

**OLD ROAD CORE REMOVALS** – We encourage removing any old road beds and

blending those areas into the surrounding natural terrain.

**WETLANDS** – Please note that the Wisconsin Wetland Inventory maps are not always complete and may not show the locations of wetlands under two acres in size. Some of the areas along the proposed interchange locations may need to be walked to verify or identify the locations of wetlands.

## COMMENTS ON ISSUES COMMON TO ALL ALTERNATIVES AT SPOONER:

**CTH H/USH 53** – An alternative that we believe needs further consideration and discussion of is the concept of constructing an interchange at the CTH H/USH 53 intersection. It appears from the information that was submitted to us that the existing USH 53/USH 63 interchange north of Spooner has several substandard curves and is scheduled for realignment at a future date. Perhaps it would be feasible to remove the existing USH 53/USH 63 interchange and construct an interchange at the CTH H/USH 53 intersection rather than realigning the north interchange. We understand that WisDOT would prefer to have interchanges along USH 53 at least three miles apart, but there are other areas nearby that have interchanges less than three miles apart in distance. For example, the two Rice Lake interchanges on USH 53 in Barron County are less than three miles apart. Constructing the interchange at this location may also prevent the need for a new connector town road to Schaub Road. Please provide us with further information discussing why this alternative is not being pursued.

**New town road connector to Schaub Road** – There are wetlands in the vicinity of where this new town road would be located. As referenced above, not only will these wetlands need to be avoided, but there will also have to be an adequate protective buffer zone provided.

**Private residence access** – It appears from the maps that if USH 63 was realigned the current USH 63 road core near Poor Richard's Antiques would be removed. Would a portion of this old road core remain intact to provide access to the private residence and business currently located on the east side of USH 63?

In addition, there is a private residence access that would be removed on the USH 53 southbound lane just south of CTH H. Where would the new access for this property be located? Identifying and resolving these types of private access issues should be included in this study because it would help the local municipalities with future land use planning. In addition, due to increasing development throughout the Spooner area, it may be even more difficult to identify an alternative access route for private residents when these interchanges are built.

## SPECIFIC COMMENTS ON ALTERNATIVES AT SPOONER:

### **Alternative 1: Overpass at CTH H**

**New town road between Bittersweet Drive and CTH H** – Moving this new road further west so it is closer to the USH 53 corridor would minimize fragmentation of wildlife habitat and private property.

### **Alternative 2: Overpasses at Ojibwa Road and Little Valley Road**

**Overpass at Ojibwa Road/Ramsdell Road** – Construction of an overpass at this location has the potential to change drainage patterns within the Yellow River watershed. The Yellow River is considered to be an Area of Special Natural Resource Interest (ASNRI) since it contains populations of Greater Redhorse, which are a threatened fish species in Wisconsin. This portion of the Yellow River also contains populations of wild rice so it is important to maintain drainage patterns and adequately treat all storm water runoff before it enters the river.

**Overpass at Little Valley Road/CTH A** – There are several wetlands on the east side of USH 53 where CTH A is shown to be realigned. All efforts shall be made to avoid and minimize impacts to these impacts to the maximum extent practicable. Several of them appear to be high quality wetlands and may also be navigably tied to Spooner Lake. Realigning CTH A through this area could change drainage patterns, hydrology, and consequently the water quality of Spooner Lake. An assessment would need to be conducted to ensure the new alignment would not change the functions and values of these wetlands and also to ensure it would not change the hydrology or water quality Spooner Lake and other adjacent wetlands.

### **SPECIFIC COMMENTS ON ALTERNATIVES AT TREGO:**

#### **Alternatives 1, 2, 3: Interchange at USH 53/STH 63**

**Namekagon River** – We have many concerns with locating an interchange this close to the Namekagon River. In our resource comment letter dated December 20, 2007 we identified the extensive natural resources associated with the Namekagon River, which is an ASNRI (Area of Special Natural Resource Interest). One of the reasons for its classification as an ASNRI is due to the fact that the Namekagon River is an Outstanding Resource Water (ORW). An ORW is a surface water which provides valuable fisheries, hydrologically or geologically unique features, outstanding recreational opportunities, unique environmental settings, and which is not significantly impacted by human activities.

There are several endangered resources that are found in this portion of the Namekagon River, which include mussels, dragonflies and one fish species. As noted in our December 2007 letter, all of these species are very susceptible to sedimentation and changes in water quality. For example, the pygmy snaketail, a dragonfly that is listed as threatened in Wisconsin, is one of the least tolerant groups of aquatic insects to perturbations in water quality. Please refer to the December 2007 letter for specific information on the endangered resources located at this location.

An interchange this close to the Namekagon River would not only directly impact the river and riparian wetlands with the construction of new ramps, but also indirectly by changing stormwater and drainage patterns. These physical changes to the river could in turn negatively impact the sensitive endangered resources associated with the river.

There is also a mapped floodplain along this portion of the Namekagon River. A hydrologic and hydraulic study would be needed to determine if the additional ramps and wetland fill would increase backwater flood elevations.

The Namekagon River is also part of the St. Croix National Scenic Waterway. If you have not already done so, we strongly recommend that you conduct early coordination with the National Park Service on this alternative.

**Frontage road on east side of USH 53 north of Trego**– The maps submitted to us show that a frontage road would need to be constructed along the east side of USH 53 north of Trego. It appears that there are alternatives to building this entire frontage road. Several of the existing roads could provide access to private property located within this area. Using existing roads would omit the need to build the entire frontage road and minimize impacts associated with forest fragmentation and increased storm water runoff from impervious surfaces. Please inform us as to what other feasible alternatives exist here.

**Frontage road on west side of USH 53 north of Trego** – It appears that there are also alternatives to constructing this entire frontage road. For example, the west end of O'Brien Road could be connected to Ross Road and eliminate the need for a new frontage road from the east end of O'Brien Road to Ross Road. In addition, Miller Lane could be improved and become the connection between River Road and USH 53. Eliminating this entire frontage road would minimize impacts associated with forest fragmentation and increased storm water runoff from impervious surfaces. Please inform us as to what other feasible alternatives exist here.

**Snowmobile Road** - It is unclear to us why the new frontage road between Snowmobile Road and Ross Road would be needed. There appears to be an access road between Snowmobile Road and Ross Road that could be improved and continue to provide access. Again, there appears to be other feasible alternatives here that would minimize the need to construct additional roads.

#### **Alternative 4: Interchange at CTH E**

**Wild Rivers Trail (WRT)** - The WisDOT currently owns the WRT up to a point just north of the existing parking lot and bathroom facilities in Trego. North of this point the WIDNR owns the WRT and ROW.

In 1997 WIDNR awarded a \$61,482.00 grant to the Washburn County Forestry Department to have the ballast and guide wires removed, and to build the toilet facilities, picnic and parking areas in Trego. If these facilities are impacted from the realignment of USH 63 and are not replaced, the WIDNR may have to be reimbursed for the money that was awarded for the construction of these facilities. If the DOT proposes to construct a new crossing of the portion of the WRT that is within WIDNR ownership an easement for a separated grade crossing will be needed.

**Potato Creek** – During our field review of this area we verified the presence of riparian wetlands along Potato Creek. The proposed alignment should be shifted to avoid and minimize impacts to those wetlands, in addition to providing an adequate protective buffer zone. Potato Creek is considered to be warm water fishery and timing restrictions would be needed to protect those warm water species during their spawning and nursery periods. In addition, Bog Bluegrass, a plant species that is threatened in Wisconsin, has been previously surveyed in this area. A survey would be needed to identify any existing populations of bog bluegrass and determine how it would be impacted by the construction of a new local road. It may even be feasible to relocate the plants and

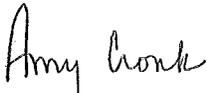
monitor them if there is a large enough population. If there are Bog Bluegrass plants that would be impacted by construction activities, coordination with our Bureau of Endangered Resources would be necessary to complete the Incidental Take process.

One aspect of this alternative we want to see further discussion and consideration of is not to build the north end of the new frontage/access road between CTH E and Schleife Road on the west side of USH 53. This option would omit the crossing of Potato Creek and avoid filling in the riparian wetlands and mapped floodplain associated with the creek, and possibly avoid impacting the Bog Bluegrass, which is a threatened plant species. A feasible option would be to dead-end the north end of that frontage road at the Wild River Road and Trail property. Access to these properties and businesses would still be provided by using the Schleife Road entrance. Please provide us with further discussion of this option.

At this time, we do not have sufficient information to identify a preferred alternative. We will complete our review process and identify our preferred alternative after we have received the additional information requested and have an opportunity to review the Environmental Assessment on the study design alternatives.

We thank you for the opportunity to comment on the preservation study. If you have any questions regarding this letter or the information we have requested, please feel free to contact me here in our Spooner office at (715) 635-4229.

Sincerely,



Amy Cronk  
Environmental Review Coordinator

cc: Terry Jordan - Spooner  
Tim Miller - Ladysmith  
Greg Weyandt, SEH  
Jason Berkner, ACOE – Hayward  
Amy Adrihan, DOT – Superior  
Vicky Schaefer, DOT Rails and Harbors - Madison  
Jill Medland, NPS – St. Croix Falls



December 5, 2011

Marc Bowker  
WisDOT Northwest Region  
W7102 Green Valley Rd.  
Spooner, WI 54801

RE: DOT ID# 1195-00-02  
USH 53 Corridor Study Preferred Alternative Comments  
Spooner/Trego Area

Dear Marc:

The purpose of this letter is to relay our comments regarding the preferred alternatives for the above referenced project. We have reviewed the information for the corridor study and have the following comments:

#### Southern Segment (Spooner)

**Roadbed Removals** - Old roadbeds should be completely removed and restored to original topography. If opportunities for wetland restoration exist in roadbed removal areas they should be pursued.

**Stormwater Management** - Due to the amount of grading associated with this alternative, DOT will be required to develop and submit a stormwater management plan that addresses the applicable post-construction performance standards of TRANS 401.

**Wetland Avoidance** - All efforts must be made to avoid and minimize impacts to wetlands within the project area. There is a fairly high quality wetland complex located in the southwest quadrant of the Schaub Road/USH 53 intersection. According to the plans, it appears that the new town road that would be constructed off of Schaub Road could impact this wetland. Efforts must be made to push this road further to the west to avoid placing any fill in the wetland. A vegetated buffer should be in place between the fill slope and the delineated boundary of the wetland.

**Unnamed tributary to Little Mackey Creek** - There is an unmapped stream located within the wetland complex that is referenced in the above section. It is an unnamed tributary to Little Mackey Creek, which is a Class II brook trout stream (see attached Map #1). All efforts should be made to avoid impacts to this stream and surrounding wetland.

#### Northern Segment (Trego)

**Wetlands** - There appear to be two small mapped wetlands along USH 53 just north of the existing Trego Park Road/USH 53 intersection that could be impacted by the proposed frontage road. Efforts must be made to avoid and minimize impacts to these and any other wetlands located within the project limits.

**Wild Rivers Trail** - We understand that the proposed alignment of USH 63 would require a new crossing of the Wild Rivers Trail in Trego. Our agency would be willing to consider a land trade to accomplish this option. We are interested in acquiring the trail parking area in Trego that is currently

under DOT ownership. In return, we would consider trading with DOT the necessary acreage needed for the new crossing of the trail. DOT would be responsible for paying for the assessment and survey of the properties. DOT would also be responsible for maintaining the rail corridor as a trail. In addition, if rail traffic ever returned to the corridor, DOT would also be responsible for constructing a bridge over USH 63 that would be capable of supporting that rail traffic. These details would all need to be addressed in the documentation needed for the land transaction.

**Stormwater Management** - Due to the amount of grading associated with this alternative, DOT will be required to develop and submit a stormwater management plan that addresses the applicable post-construction performance standards of TRANS 401.

**Potato Creek Crossing** – As mentioned in our initial resource comment letter and subsequent correspondence, there are sensitive resources associated with Potato Creek. Several species of mussels have been found in Potato Creek, including Round Pigtoe, a species of special concern in Wisconsin. Mussels must be allowed to move freely throughout the stream so they can access feeding and spawning areas. Their movement can only be accommodated by the presence of natural streambed substrate. It is imperative that the new structure is designed to not impede the stream flow and the natural movement of fish, mussels, animals and other aquatic life, and not increase the velocity of the stream. In addition, this crossing is located in a mapped floodplain, so a hydraulic and hydrologic analysis for the crossing and new structure would need to be conducted.

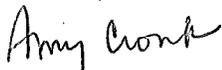
**Trego Park Road** – It is not clear from the maps what kind of improvements would need to be made to Trego Park Road. Please keep in mind that the portion of Trego Park Road that is within the project limits is located in wetlands and mapped floodplain. If the road were to be widened or raised in this area, a hydraulic and hydrologic analysis may be needed. In addition, these are riparian wetlands to the Namekagon River, which is a National Scenic River, so the DOT will need coordinate with the National Park Service if this road were to be changed in any way.

There is an opportunity to remove a portion of Trego Park Road and restore mapped floodplain, wetlands, and important fish and wildlife habitat. Trego Park Road could be realigned to the east of the wetland that is currently on the east side of the road (see attached Map #2), and create an on-site wetland mitigation area. Please provide documentation on this issue.

**Roadbed Removals** – Old roadbeds should be completely removed and restored to original topography. If opportunities for wetland restoration exist in roadbed removal areas they should be pursued.

We appreciate the efforts that have been made to avoid and minimize impacts to wetlands and other sensitive resources. Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the preferred alternatives for this corridor study. If you have any questions regarding this letter, please feel free to contact me at (715) 635-4229.

Sincerely,



Amy Cronk

Environmental Review Coordinator

cc: Amy Adrihan, WisDOT Northwest Region  
 Anna Davey, WisDOT Northwest Region  
 Bill Sande, ACOE – Hayward  
 Jason Berkner, ACOE – Hayward  
 Jill Medland, National Park Service

Schaub Rd. intermittent stream



This map is a user generated static output from an Internet mapping site and is for general reference only. Data layers that appear on this map may or may not be accurate, current, or otherwise reliable. THIS MAP IS NOT TO BE USED FOR NAVIGATION.

Unnamed tributary to Little Mackey Creek



Legend

- Major Highways
  - Interstate
  - State Highway
  - U.S. Highways
- County Roads
- Local Roads
- Rivers and Streams
  - Intermittent
  - Fluctuating
  - Perennial
- 24K Open Water
- County Boundary
- Municipalities
  - Village
  - City



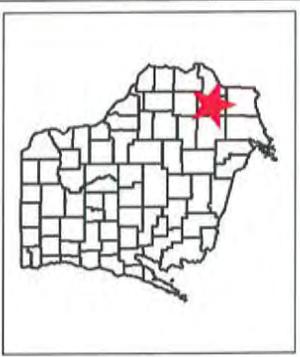
Scale: 1:15,157

Yellow areas are wetlands  
Blue areas are mapped floodplain

Trego Park Road - realign to restore wetlands and floodplain?  
Possible on-site wetland restoration area?



This map is a user-generated static output from an Internet mapping site and is for general reference only. Data layers that appear on this map may or may not be accurate, current, or otherwise reliable. THIS MAP IS NOT TO BE USED FOR NAVIGATION.



**Legend**

- Major Highways
  - Interstate
  - State Highway
  - U.S. Highways
  - County Roads
- Local Roads
- Wetland Points**
  - Excavated Pond
  - Dammed Pond
  - Wetland Too Small to Delineate
  - Filled Excavated Pond
  - Filled Dammed Pond
  - Filled Wetland Too Small to Delineate
  - Filled or Drained Wetland
- Wetland Areas**
  - Upland Wetland
  - Filled or Drained Wetland
- Rivers and Streams**
  - Intermittent
  - Fluctuating
  - Perennial
- County Boundary
- Municipality
- Village
- City



Scale: 1:7,355



DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY  
ST. PAUL DISTRICT, CORPS OF ENGINEERS  
ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS CENTRE  
190 FIFTH STREET EAST  
ST. PAUL MN 55101-1638

November 2, 2007

REPLY TO  
ATTENTION

Operations-Regulatory  
MVP-OP-R-2007-5961-JRB

Mr. Marc Bowker  
Wisconsin Department of Transportation  
W7102 Green Valley Road  
Spooner, Wisconsin 54801

Dear Mr. Marc Bowker:

We have received your request for comments on the scoping package for the proposed U.S. 53 Preservation Study from STH 70 near Spooner to CTH F in Washburn County (WisDOT ID 1195-00-02). Due to limited staff and resources, it is unlikely that U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Regulatory staff will review or comment on this document until we receive a jurisdictional determination request and/or a permit application. In lieu of a specific response, please consider the following general information concerning our regulatory program that may apply to the proposed project.

If the proposal involves activity in navigable waters of the United States, it may be subject to the Corps of Engineers' jurisdiction under Section 10 of the Rivers and Harbors Act of 1899 (Section 10). Section 10 prohibits the construction, excavation, or deposition of materials in, over, or under navigable waters of the United States, or any work that would affect the course, location, condition, or capacity of those waters, unless the work has been authorized by a Department of the Army permit.

If the proposal involves deposition of dredged or fill material into waters of the United States, including discharges associated with mechanical land clearing, it may be subject to the Corps of Engineers' jurisdiction under Section 404 of the Clean Water Act (CWA Section 404). Waters of the United States include navigable waters, their tributaries, and adjacent wetlands (33 CFR § 328.3). CWA Section 301(a) prohibits discharges of dredged or fill material into waters of the United

States, unless the work has been authorized by a Department of the Army permit under Section 404.

Projects requiring Corps permits are evaluated as general or standard permits depending on the impact to the aquatic ecosystem. A general permit authorizes a category or categories of activities that are similar in nature and cause only minimal individual and cumulative environmental impacts. A standard permit is required for activities that may cause more than minimal adverse effects to the aquatic environment and would otherwise not meet the terms and conditions of a general permit. Please note that, in either case, our regulations require that adverse impacts to the aquatic environment be avoided and minimized to the greatest extent practicable. Information about the Corps permitting process can be obtained online at <http://www.mvp.usace.army.mil/regulatory>.

The Corps' evaluation of a Section 10 and/or a Section 404 permit application involves multiple analyses, including (1) evaluating the proposal's impacts in accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) (33 CFR part 325), (2) determining whether the proposal is contrary to the public interest (33 CFR § 320.4), and (3) in the case of a Section 404 permit, determining whether the proposal complies with the Section 404(b)(1) Guidelines (Guidelines) (40 CFR part 230).

#### **Compliance with the Section 404(b)(1) Guidelines**

Under the 404(b)(1) Guidelines, no discharge can be permitted if there is a practicable alternative with less adverse impact on the aquatic environment, unless the alternative has other significant adverse effects on the natural environment (40 CFR § 230.10(a)). In addition, no discharge can be permitted under the Guidelines if it would, individually or cumulatively, cause or contribute to significant degradation of waters of the United States, or violate other applicable laws, such as State water quality standards, toxic effluent standards, or the Endangered Species Act. The 404(b)(1) Guidelines also state that no discharge in wetlands shall be permitted unless appropriate and practicable steps have been taken which will minimize potential adverse impacts of the discharge on the aquatic ecosystem.

### **Analysis of Alternatives**

Under the 404(b)(1) Guidelines, when a proposal is not "water dependent," meaning that it does not need to be located in or near special aquatic sites, such as wetlands, to serve its basic purpose, it is presumed that there are alternative upland sites available and that the use of an upland site would be less environmentally damaging.

The overall project purpose is used for determining practicable alternatives under the 404(b)(1) Guidelines. The overall project purpose must be specific enough to define a permit applicant's needs, but not so restrictive as to preclude all discussion of alternatives. The Corps must evaluate practicable alternatives that meet the overall project purpose.

A practicable alternative is defined as one that would fulfill the proposal's overall purpose after considering cost, existing technology, and logistics. Defining the project purpose is the responsibility of the Corps; however, applicant input is considered in making this determination. Time and money spent on the proposal prior to applying for a Section 404 permit cannot be factored into the Corps' decision whether there is a less damaging practicable alternative to the proposal.

### **Public Interest Review**

The decision whether to issue a permit will be based on an evaluation of the probable impacts, including cumulative impacts, of the proposed activity and its intended use on the public interest. Evaluation of the probable impact that the proposed activity may have on the public interest requires a careful weighing of all those factors that become relevant in each particular case. The benefits that reasonably may be expected to accrue from the proposal must be balanced against its reasonably foreseeable detriments. The decision whether to authorize a proposal, and if so, the conditions under which it will be allowed to occur, are therefore determined by the outcome of this general balancing process.

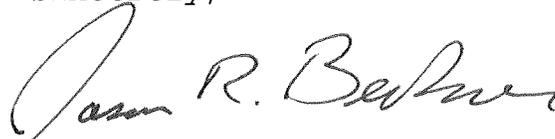
The public interest factors include such considerations as conservation, economics, aesthetics, navigation, fish and wildlife values, water supply, water quality, energy needs, and flood damage prevention. The Corps also considers all comments

received in the permit process, whether in response to a public notice or a public hearing. The Corps must determine that a proposal is not contrary to the public interest in order to issue a permit.

If you have not already made an application for a Corps permit, you may request a pre-application consultation meeting with the Corps to obtain information regarding the data, studies or other information that will be necessary for the permit evaluation process. A pre-application consultation meeting is strongly recommended if your proposal has substantial impacts to waters of the United States, or if it is a large or controversial project.

If you have any questions, or you would like to request a pre-application consultation meeting, please contact Jason Berkner at (715) 934-2170, the Corps' project manager for the County in which this proposal is located.

Sincerely,



Robert J. Whiting  
Chief, Regulatory Branch

Copy furnished:  
Amy Cronk, WDOT



## United States Department of the Interior

NATIONAL PARK SERVICE  
St. Croix National Scenic Riverway  
401 Hamilton Street  
St. Croix Falls, Wisconsin 54024-0708

IN REPLY REFER TO:

February 13, 2009

L7615(SACN)

Mr. Marc Bowker  
Planning Engineer  
Wisconsin Department of Transportation  
718 W. Clairemont Avenue  
Eau Claire, WI 54701-5108

Dear Mr. Bowker:

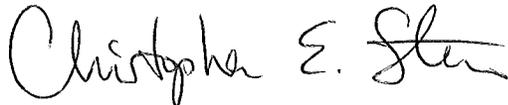
This is in response to a phone call and follow-up emails from Darren Fortney of Short Elliott Hendrickson Inc. regarding the US 53 Corridor Preservation Study (the study). US 53 is one of Wisconsin's most important north-south corridors. The study focuses on the stretch of US 53 between Rice Lake and Superior. Currently, there are six intersections along this stretch that have higher than acceptable fatality rates from traffic crashes, including the US 63 intersection at Trego, Wisconsin. As communities and traffic volumes grow, demand for access and concern about safety will continue to increase. The study will establish a plan and official map to preserve land necessary to meet access demands and address safety concerns along US 53.

The National Park Service (NPS) manages the St. Croix National Scenic Riverway (Riverway), which includes the Namekagon River in the study area; thus, we are very interested in the study. The Riverway was established in 1968 under the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act (Public Law 90-542) to protect its water quality and its outstanding scenic and recreational values for enjoyment by this and future generations. The Riverway includes the rivers themselves (the St. Croix and Namekagon) and a narrow strip of land on both sides. Of particular interest to the NPS is to ensure that the study includes planning to protect the Riverway and related facilities. All of the alternatives posted on the project website indicate change in the US 53 crossing of the Namekagon River and the nearby US 53/US 63 intersection. The NPS Namekagon River Visitor Center and Maintenance/Housing complex are located just east of this intersection on US 63.

The Riverway is protected by both the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act and Section 4(f) of the Department of Transportation Act. Impacts that are of particular concern to the NPS are potential increases in impervious surface area, increased stormwater run-off and protecting the water quality of the Namekagon River. Of equal concern are potential impacts to operations at the Namekagon River Visitor Center and Maintenance/Housing Complex due to changes in access.

The NPS requests an on-site meeting to discuss the alternatives, the potential impacts of construction when it occurs, and planning that could be incorporated into this study to avoid or minimize harm to the Riverway. We believe that a meeting would be helpful to both our agencies in terms of understandings and planning for the impacts of future construction. The NPS suggests the April/May timeframe for a meeting so that the site will be free of snow. Please contact Jill Medland of our staff at 715-483-2284 to coordinate an on-site meeting.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Christopher E. Stein". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial "C" and a stylized "E".

Christopher E. Stein  
Superintendent

cc:  
Darren Fortney  
Principal/Project Manager  
Transportation Planning Services  
Short Elliott Hendrickson Inc. (SEH)  
6808 Odana Road, Suite 200  
Madison, WI 53719



## United States Department of the Interior

NATIONAL PARK SERVICE  
St. Croix National Scenic Riverway  
401 Hamilton Street  
St. Croix Falls, Wisconsin 54024-0708

IN REPLY REFER TO:

July 2, 2009

L7615(SACN)

Mr. Marc Bowker  
Planning Engineer  
Wisconsin Department of Transportation  
718 W. Clairemont Avenue  
Eau Claire, WI 54701-5108

Dear Mr. Bowker:

This is a follow-up to our meetings of March 13 and May 7 to discuss the alternatives under consideration for the US Highway 53 Corridor Preservation Study (the study). The purpose of the study is to establish a plan and official map to preserve land necessary to meet access demands and address safety concerns along US Hwy 53.

The National Park Service (NPS) manages the St. Croix National Scenic Riverway (Riverway), which includes the Namekagon River in the study area. The Riverway was established in 1968 under the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act (Public Law 90-542) to protect its water quality and its outstanding natural, cultural, scenic and aesthetic values for enjoyment by this and future generations. The Riverway includes the rivers themselves (the St. Croix and Namekagon) and a narrow strip of land on both sides. In the study area, this narrow strip of land includes the NPS Namekagon Visitor Center, maintenance shop and staff housing. These facilities are located a short distance east of the intersection of US Hwy 53 and US Hwy 63.

To increase safety, the study identifies four alternatives for reconfiguring the intersection of US Hwy 53 and US Hwy 63. Based on our review and your presentation of March 13, Alternatives 1-3 would result in greater impacts to the Namekagon River, while Alternative 4 would result in greater impacts to the NPS Visitor Center property.

The NPS prefers Alternative 4 because it would have less impact on the primary resource, the Namekagon River. However, we are concerned that it would also result in vehicular and pedestrian conflicts near the Namekagon Visitor Center. The road configuration would make it difficult for vehicles headed east on US Hwy 63 to safely turn left into the visitor center parking lot. In addition, because there is a canoe landing on the north side of US Hwy 63 and the visitor center is on the south side, pedestrian safety is of concern.

In response to these concerns, the Wisconsin Department of Transportation (WDOT) developed three different options for realigning US Hwy 63 under Alternative 4. The original proposed

alignment is Option 1, which would skirt just to the north and west of the Namekagon Visitor Center. As stated above, the NPS has safety concerns with this option. Option 2 would obliterate the existing visitor center, but would provide an improved road curvature for traffic. It would also allow for removal of existing roadbed and restoration of native vegetation along the Namekagon River. Option 3 would place US Hwy 63 between the Visitor Center and the maintenance shop and staff housing, raising operational concerns for the NPS.

The Namekagon Visitor Center property was purchased with assistance from the Land and Water Conservation Fund (L&WCF). As you know, Section 6(f) of the L&WCF Act protects this land. It assures that once an area has been funded with assistance from the L&WCF program, it is maintained in public recreation use unless the NPS approves of substitution property. The substitution property must be of reasonably equivalent usefulness and location and of at least equal fair market value.

In addition to 6(f), the Namekagon River and Visitor Center property are protected under Section 4(f) of the Department of Transportation Act of 1966 (48 U.S.C. 1653(f)). As you know, the intent of Section 4(f) is to ensure that lands from eligible parks, recreational areas, wildlife and waterfowl refuges, or public and private historical sites are not put to a transportation use unless there is no feasible or prudent alternative and the project includes all planning to minimize harm to the 4(f) resource.

While Option 2 would obliterate the existing Namekagon Visitor Center, it would provide the safest road configuration and an opportunity for restoration near the river. The existing Visitor Center could be replaced in a desirable location as part of the substitution required under 6(f) of the L&WCF Act. Therefore, Option 2 is preferred by the NPS as it appears to be in the best long-term public interest.

While the NPS does have a preference for Alternative 4 - Option 2, the U.S. Department of the Interior (DOI) will need to review and concur with a Section 4(f) determination prepared by the Federal Highway Administration and WDOT. The Section 4(f) statement is to provide documentation that there is no feasible and prudent alternative and the project includes all possible planning to minimize harm to the 4(f) resource. The NPS will provide comments to the DOI on the necessary 4(f) statement.

The NPS looks forward to continuing to work with the WDOT on this project to develop measures to minimize harm to the 4(f) resources and to determine the appropriate substitution for conversion of 6(f) property. Please contact Jill Medland of our staff at 715-483-2284 if you have any questions.

Sincerely,



Christopher E. Stein  
Superintendent

cc:

Darren Fortney  
Principal/Project Manager  
Transportation Planning Services  
Short Elliott Hendrickson Inc. (SEH)  
6808 Odana Road, Suite 200  
Madison, WI 53719

Nick Chevance  
Regional Environmental Coordinator  
Midwest Regional Office  
601 Riverfront Drive  
Omaha, Nebraska 68102

Chuck Carlson, Namekagon District Ranger, St Croix NSR  
Laura Hojem, Lands Technician, St Croix NSR



1304 N. Hillcrest Pkwy, Ste A  
Altoona, WI 54720  
Phone: (715) 832-6547  
Fax: (715) 832-6975

February 27<sup>th</sup>, 2009

Marc Bowker  
WisDOT Project Leader  
Northwest Region  
W7102 Green Valley Road  
Spooner, WI 54801

Re: US 53 Preservation Study North and South  
Segments Spooner to Lampson

I have reviewed the Farmland Conversion Impact Rating (Form AD-1006) submitted on February 26<sup>th</sup>, 2009, with respect to the requirements of the Farmland Protection Policy Act (FPPA) for the above referenced project.

Because total Site Assessment points (Part VI, Form AD-1006) are less than 60, this project is not subject to protection under the FPPA. No further action is necessary on your part to comply with its requirements.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on this project.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Tim Miland", is written over a light blue horizontal line.

Tim Miland  
Soil Scientist  
USDA-Natural Resources Conservation Service

cc: Tom Fredrickson, DC, NRCS, Spooner, WI  
Darren Fortney, AICP of SEH



## United States Department of the Interior

## FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE

Green Bay ES Field Office  
2661 Scott Tower Drive  
New Franken, Wisconsin 54229-9565  
Telephone 920/866-1717  
FAX 920/866-1710

November 8, 2007

Mark Bowker  
Wisconsin Department of Transportation  
Northwest Region-Spooner Office  
W7102 Green Valley Road  
Spooner, Wisconsin 54801

re: Project I.D. 1195-00-02  
US 53 Preservation Study  
Washburn County, Wisconsin

Dear Mr. Bowker:

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Service) has received your letter dated October 31, 2007, requesting our review of the subject project. Recent reductions in funding for the Service's Ecological Services programs have resulted in a greatly reduced staff at this office. Therefore, we are currently unable to provide the requested review of this project.

We have attached for your consideration general guidance for avoiding impacts to fish and wildlife resources from transportation projects.

If you are seeking information on potential project impacts to Federally-listed species, candidate species, or Critical Habitat, we encourage you to visit the Service's Region 3 Section 7 Technical Assistance web site at <http://www.fws.gov/midwest/endangered/section7/s7process/>. There, you will find guidance to assist you in fulfilling the requirements for consultation under Section 7 of the Endangered Species Act, including a step-by-step explanation of the section 7 process, species distribution lists, species life history information and conservation measures, and examples of typical letters. If your review of the above material suggests that your project may impact listed species or Critical Habitat, please contact this office for additional assistance.

If you have questions or need further information, you may contact us at 920-866-1717.

Sincerely,

  
Louise Clemency  
Field Supervisor

Enclosure

## **General Guidance on Avoiding and Minimizing Project Impacts to Fish and Wildlife**

### Wetland Mitigation

In refining and selecting project alternatives, efforts should be made to select an alternative that does not adversely impact wetlands. If no other alternative is feasible and it is clearly demonstrated that project construction resulting in wetland disturbance or loss cannot be avoided, a wetland mitigation plan should be developed that identifies measures proposed to minimize adverse impacts and replace lost wetland habitat values and other wetland functions and values. Any project that has new impacts to wetlands or waterways, including seasonal ephemeral and intermittent streams, should include design features such as culverts to retain hydrological connection between areas fragmented by the project. If stream or wetland impacts will occur, state or federal permits may be needed.

### Migratory Birds

Under the Migratory Bird Treaty Act of 1918, as amended, it is unlawful to take, capture, kill, or possess migratory birds, their nests, eggs, and young. If migratory birds are known to nest on any structures which may be disturbed by project construction, activities should begin before the initiation of the breeding season for those species or after breeding has concluded. Alternatively, the structures can be *tightly screened* before the breeding season to prevent nesting. Generally, we recommend that screening or any other habitat disturbance occur before May 1 or after August 30 to minimize potential impacts to migratory birds, but please be aware that some species may initiate nesting before May 1.

### Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act

Guidance on avoiding disturbance of bald eagles is available at the Service's "Bald Eagle Management Guidelines & Conservation Measures" web site at <http://www.fws.gov/midwest/eagle/guidelines/index.html>.

### Other Fish and Wildlife

It has been well documented that wildlife often use riparian areas along streams and rivers as travel corridors, particularly as roads and highways have bisected the landscape. The Service supports and encourages the maintenance or creation of habitat connectivity wherever possible. As such, we recommend that you install culverts that do not impede the movement of water, sediments, or aquatic species along existing waterways. Culverts should be designed and constructed in such a way as to allow small to medium-sized terrestrial or amphibious species to safely follow the stream corridor without being forced to cross the road. This may be accomplished by enlarging culverts and including a continuous raised shelf along one or both sides of the culvert, connecting to stream banks on either side.

We recommend that bridges and abutments be designed and constructed in such a way as to allow terrestrial wildlife to pass under the bridge without entering the river during normal flow conditions. This may require lengthening the bridge, limitations on the use of exposed riprap, modifications to the surface of the riprap (e.g., grouting the surface or filling with soil or other natural materials), or modifications in the substrate and/or slope at the base of the abutments, as some wildlife species cannot or prefer not to traverse areas of riprap.

**SECTION 106 REVIEW  
ARCHAEOLOGICAL/HISTORICAL INFORMATION**

Wisconsin Department of Transportation  
DT1635 11/2006

**SHPO**

For instructions, see FDM Chapter 26

**I. PROJECT INFORMATION**

Project ID 1195-00-02	Highway - Street US 53 Freeway Preservation Study	County Washburn
Project Termini WIS 70 to 0.75 miles north of Schnagel Road, Washburn County		Region - Office Northwest Region
Regional Project Engineer - Project Manager Marc Bowker		Area Code - Telephone Number (715) 635-4975
Consultant Project Engineer - Project Manager Darren Fortney, SEH		Area Code - Telephone Number (608) 826-6471
Archaeological Consultant Katie Egan-Bruhy, CCRG		Area Code - Telephone Number (414) 446-4121
Architecture/History Consultant Rachel Bankowitz, CCRG		Area Code - Telephone Number (414) 446-4121
Date of Need		SHSW # 12-0542/WB
Return a signed copy of this form to:		

**II. PROJECT DESCRIPTION**

Project Length 10 miles	Land to be Acquired: Fee Simple 139.9 acres	Land to be Acquired: Easement 0 acres
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Distance as measured from existing centerline	Existing	Proposed	Other Factors	Existing	Proposed
Right-of-Way Width	0'-320'	32'-434'	Terrace Width	N/A	N/A - Rural
Shoulder	3'-9'	3' to 12'	Sidewalk Width	N/A	N/A - Rural
Slope Intercept	N/A	25' to 368'	Number of Lanes	4	4
Edge of Pavement	12'-24'	11' to 15'	Grade Separated Crossing	2	3
Back of Curb Line	25'-26'	14'-28'	Vision Triangle acres	N/A	N/A
Realignment	N/A	0'-1,000' (US 63)	Temporary Bypass acres	N/A	N/A
Other - List:			Stream Channel Change	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Attach Map(s) that depict "maximum" impacts.	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No	Tree topping and/or grubbing	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No

Brief Narrative Project Description - Include all ground disturbing activities. For archaeology, include plan view map indicating the maximum area of ground disturbance and/or new right-of-way, whichever is greater. Include all temporary, limited and permanent easements.

The Proposed Action consists of a plan and follow-up actions for the preservation and conversion of the current expressway for US 53 between WIS 70 and 0.75 miles north of Schnagel Road (Washburn County) to an expressway facility with partial access control. The proposed improvements resulting in this conversion would be officially mapped under the process established in Wisconsin Statutes, 84.295 to help preserve right of way for future transportation needs. This portion of US 53 would officially be designated as an expressway with partial access control. Thus, the short-term aspect of the Proposed Action is official mapping, while the long-term aspect is the plan for eventual conversion and construction of an expressway with partial access control.

Some of the existing intersections would be reconstructed as cul-de-sacs or grade separations. One interchange would be constructed south of County E in the Town of Trego. Two overpasses would be constructed at Ojibwa

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Rd./Ramsdell Rd. and County H, both in the Town of Spooner. Two grade separated crossings to accommodate the Wild Rivers State Trail would also be constructed. In addition, several sections of the existing local roadway system would be reconstructed or altered to insure internal local road system continuity and access to the expressway.

Add continuation sheet, if needed.

**III. CONSULTATION**

How has notification of the project been provided to:

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Property Owners	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Historical Societies/Organizations	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Native American Tribes
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Public Information Meeting Notice	<input type="checkbox"/> Public Information Meeting Notice	<input type="checkbox"/> Public Info. Mtg. Notice
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Letter - Required for Archaeology	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Letter	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Letter
<input type="checkbox"/> Telephone Call	<input type="checkbox"/> Telephone Call	<input type="checkbox"/> Telephone Call
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other:	<input type="checkbox"/> Other:	<input type="checkbox"/> Other:

\*Attach one copy of the base letter, list of addresses and comments received. For history include telephone memos as appropriate.

**IV. AREA OF POTENTIAL EFFECTS - APE**

**ARCHAEOLOGY:** Area of potential effect for archaeology is the existing and proposed ROW, temporary and permanent easements. Agricultural practices do not constitute a ground disturbance exemption.

**HISTORY:** Describe the area of potential effects for buildings/structures. The APE consists of all properties adjacent to and within the viewshed of each intersection proposed for redesign, as well as all properties adjacent to the existing alignment of USH 53 from WIS 70 to 0.75 miles north of Schnagel Road.

**V. PHASE I ARCHEOLOGICAL OR RECONNAISSANCE HISTORY SURVEY NEEDED**

ARCHAEOLOGY	HISTORY
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Archaeological survey is needed	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Architecture/History survey is needed
<input type="checkbox"/> Archaeological survey is not needed - Provide justification <input type="checkbox"/> Screening list (date).	<input type="checkbox"/> Architecture/History survey is not needed <input type="checkbox"/> No structures or buildings of any kind within APE <input type="checkbox"/> Screening list (date).

**VI. SURVEY COMPLETED**

ARCHAEOLOGY	HISTORY
<input type="checkbox"/> NO archaeological sites(s) identified - ASFR attached	<input type="checkbox"/> NO buildings/structures identified - A/HSF attached
<input type="checkbox"/> NO potentially eligible site(s) in project area - Phase I Report attached	<input type="checkbox"/> Potentially eligible buildings/structures identified in the APE - A/HSF attached
<input type="checkbox"/> Potentially eligible site(s) identified-Phase I Report attached <input type="checkbox"/> Avoided through redesign <input type="checkbox"/> Phase II conducted - go to VII (Evaluation).	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Potentially eligible buildings/structures avoided - documentation attached
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Phase I Report attached - Cemetery/cataloged burial documentation	

**VII. DETERMINATION OF ELIGIBILITY (EVALUATION) COMPLETED**

<input type="checkbox"/> No arch site(s) eligible for NRHP - Phase II Report attached	<input type="checkbox"/> No buildings/structure(s) eligible for NRHP - DOE attached
<input type="checkbox"/> Arch site(s) eligible for NRHP - Phase II Report attached	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Building/structure(s) eligible for NRHP - DOE attached
<input type="checkbox"/> Site(s) eligible for NRHP - DOE attached	

**VIII. COMMITMENTS/SPECIAL PROVISIONS - must be included with special provisions language**

Per Wis. Stat. 157.70, within one year from start of construction activities, WisDOT (coordinate with CRT) must request the WHS-HP for permit/authorization to work w/in the boundaries of burial site(s):BWB-0025 (Riverside Cemetery).

**IX. PROJECT DECISION**

No historic properties (historical or archaeological) in the APE.

No historic properties (historical or archaeological) affected.

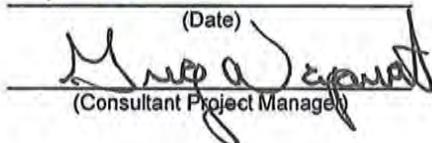
Historic properties (historical and/or archaeological) may be affected by project;

Go to Step 4: Assess affects and begin consultation on affects

Documentation for Determination of No Adverse Effects is included with this form. WIDOT has concluded that this project will have No Adverse Effect on historic properties. Signature by SHPO below indicates SHPO concurrence in the DNAE and concludes the Section 106 Review process for this project.

  
(Regional Project Manager)

4-16-2012  
(Date)

  
(Consultant Project Manager)

  
(WIDOT Historic Preservation Officer)

5/30/2012  
(Date)

  
(State Historic Preservation Officer)

6/19/12  
(Date)

State Bank of Trego Building, W5630 Oak Hill Road, Trego, Washburn County, Wisconsin

**Wisconsin Historical Society  
Determination of Eligibility Form**

(DOE March 2011)

WisDOT Project ID #: WisDOT ID 1195-00-02

WHS #: 12-0542/WB

Property Name(s): State Bank of Trego

Address/Location: W5630 Oak Hill Road

City & County: Trego, Washburn County Zip Code: 54888-9422

Town: \_\_\_\_\_ Range: \_\_\_\_\_ Section: \_\_\_\_\_

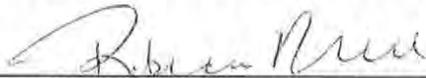
Date of Construction: 1910; ca. 1960

**WisDOT Certification**

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended, I hereby certify that this request for Determination of Eligibility:

Meets the National Register of Historic Places criteria.

Does not meet the National Register of Historic Places criteria.



5/30/2012

Rebecca Burkel, WisDOT Historic Preservation Officer

Date

**State Historic Preservation Office**

In my opinion, the property:

Meets the National Register of Historic Places criteria.

Does not meet the National Register of Historic Places criteria.



4/19/12

Michael E. Stevens, State Historic Preservation Officer

Date

Comments (FOR AGENCY USE ONLY):

Division of Historic Preservation  
Wisconsin Historical Society  
816 State Street  
Madison, WI 53706

**AGRICULTURAL IMPACT NOTICE**

DT1999 2003 (Replaces ED872)

Wisconsin Department of Transportation

Proposing Agency Wisconsin Department of Transportation		
Project ID 1195-00-02	Highway US 53	County Washburn
Project Title US 53 Corridor Preservation Project		Project Length 9.5 Miles
Type and Status of Environmental Document Environmental Assessment (EA)		
Proposing Agency Wants to Review Pre-Publication Draft of AIS? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No		AIS Needed by What Date? N/A

1. Project Description

a. Describe existing facility - Include existing right of way width.

US 53 is a four-lane divided highway facility providing direct access via numerous at-grade intersections with public roads and private driveways. There are interchanges currently in place at WIS 70 and US 63. **See Exhibit 1, Study Location Map**

b. Describe proposed action - Include anticipated right of way width and any easements.

The limits of the study extend from WIS 70 interchange in Spooner to 0.75 miles north of Schnagl Road, which is approximately 3.25 miles north of Trego along US 53 in Washburn County Wisconsin, a distance of approximately ten miles. The study area extends one mile east and west of US 53.

2. Alternatives considered - Identify the preferred alternative if any, and if other alternatives are no longer under consideration include the reasons why they are not proposed for adoption.

**No Build Alternative**

The No Build Alternative would not include improvements or alterations to the existing corridor; however, the corridor would be officially mapped using Wis. Stats. 84.295(10). This alternative would not adequately address safety and operational issues at intersections within the project area and would actually perpetuate the current problems in the corridor.

The No Build Alternative does not support the function of a *Connections 2030* backbone route to provide safe and efficient regional mobility and economic vitality. For this reason, the No Build Alternative does not fulfill the project purpose and need.

**Build Alternatives**

The corridor project is divided into the Spooner Area and the Trego Area. The Spooner Area begins at WIS 70 and continues to Schaub Road/Dilly Lake Road. The Trego Area begins at Schaub Road/Dilly Lake Road and continues to 0.75 miles north of Schnagl Road. The Spooner Area has three build alternatives while the Trego Area has four build alternatives. The alternatives and options are described below:

**SPOONER AREA** – **Exhibit 3A**

**Alternative S1 – Overpass at County H:**

This alternative includes the following alterations in the project area:

- o Overpass at County H
- o Closed access resulting in cul-de-sacs at: Ojibwa Road, Bittersweet Road, Little Valley Road and County A
- o Redesigned partial cloverleaf interchange at US 53/63 in Spooner (same as S2 and S3)
- o Local road connection between Bittersweet Drive and County H (same as S2 and S3)
- o Local road extending south from Schaub Road (same as S2 and S3)
- o Existing at-grade access would remain at Schaub Road/Dilly Lake Road (same as S2 and S3)

Alternative S1 is not proposed for adoption because of unfavorable public input related to lack of overpass locations. Because Alternative S1 decreases access and crossings to US 53/63, this alternative would likely cause indirection and funneling to the County H overpass while limiting circulation on local roads.

### **Alternative S2 – Overpasses at Ojibwa Rd. and County A:**

This alternative includes the following alterations in the project area:

- Two overpasses at realigned County A/Little Valley Rd. (One overpass spanning the Wild River State Trail and Wisconsin Great Northern Railroad and a second overpass spanning US 53/63)
- Overpass at Ojibwa Road
- Closed access resulting in cul-de-sacs at: Bittersweet Road, County H and Little Valley Road
- Redesigned partial cloverleaf interchange at US 53/63 in Spooner (same as S1 and S3)
- Local road connection between Bittersweet Drive and County H (same as S1 and S3)
- Local road extending south from Schaub Road (same as S1 and S3)
- Existing at-grade access would remain at Schaub Road/Dilly Lake Road (same as S1 and S3)

Alternative S2 is not proposed for adoption because of unfavorable public input related to overpass locations and wetland impacts associated with an overpass at County A, as well as, increased cost and maintenance. Closed access at County H would likely cause significant indirection.

### **Alternative S3 – Overpasses at Ojibwa Rd. and County H:**

#### **PREFERRED ALTERNATIVE** (See Exhibits 3A, 3C, and 4)

This alternative is a hybrid of Alternatives S1 and S2:

- Overpass at County H
- Overpass at Ojibwa Road
- Closed access resulting in cul-de-sacs at: Bittersweet Road, County A and Little Valley Road
- Redesigned partial cloverleaf interchange at US 53/63 in Spooner (same as S1 and S2)
- Local road connection between Bittersweet Drive and County H (same as S1 and S2)
- Local road extending south from Schaub Road (same as S1 and S2)
- Existing at-grade access would remain at Schaub Road/Dilly Lake Road (same as S1 and S2)

Preferred Alternative S3 is proposed for adoption because of favorable public input related to overpass locations. Alternative S1 was the Preferred Alternative early in the public involvement process but lacked the grade separated crossing at Ojibwa Road. Information gathered at the Public Information Meetings reinforced Alternative S3 as the alternative offering the best circulation because it also includes the grade separated crossing at Ojibwa Road.

## **TREGO AREA** – Exhibit 3B

### **Alternative N1 – Diamond interchange at US 53/63:**

This alternative includes the following alterations in the project area:

- Diamond interchange at US 53/63 on existing alignment
- Bridge over Potato Creek (same as N2, N3, and N4)
- Local road connection from Dilly Lake Road to County E (same as N2, N3, and N4)
- Existing at-grade intersections to US 53 would remain at Dilly Lake Road, River Road, Whalen Lake Road, Barrett Road and Schnagel Road. (same as N2, N3, and N4)
- An interchange in Trego at US 53/63 on existing alignment (same as N2 and N3)
- Namekagon River bridge widening (same as N2 and N3)
- Access to US 53 closed at Schleife Road, 1<sup>st</sup> Street, Stub Road, Mackey Road, County E, Oak Hill Road, Wood Drive, US 63, O'Brien Road, Snowmobile Road, Ross Road, and River Road. (same as N2 and N3)
- Cul-de-sacs at Schleife Road, O'Brien Road and Ross Road. (same as N2 and N3)
- Local road connection from County E to Leisch Road. (same as N2 and N3)
- Local road connection from Service Road to 1<sup>st</sup> Street. (same as N2 and N3)
- Local road connection from Log Cabin Drive to 1<sup>st</sup> Street. (same as N2 and N3)

- o Existing at-grade intersections would remain at Dilly Lake Road, Whalen Lake Road, Barrett Road and Schnagel Road. (same as N2 and N3)

Alternative N1 is not proposed for adoption because of public input, environmental consequences of widening the Namekagon River Bridge and the acquisition/relocation of eight commercial businesses.

### **Alternative N2 – Partial cloverleaf/diamond interchange at US 53/63:**

This alternative includes the following alterations in the project area:

- o Partial cloverleaf/diamond interchange at US 53/63 on existing alignment
- o Bridge over Potato Creek (same as N1, N3, and N4)
- o Local road connection from Dilly Lake Road to County E (same as N1, N3, and N4)
- o Existing at-grade intersections to US 53 would remain at Dilly Lake Road, River Road, Whalen Lake Road, Barrett Road and Schnagel Road. (same as N1, N3, and N4)
- o An interchange in Trego at US 53/63 on existing alignment (same as N2 and N3)
- o Namekagon River bridge widening (same as N1 and N3)
- o Access to US 53 closed at Schleife Road, 1<sup>st</sup> Street, Stub Road, Mackey Road, County E, Oak Hill Road, Wood Drive, US 63, O'Brien Road, Snowmobile Road, Ross Road, and River Road. (same as N1 and N3)
- o Cul-de-sacs at Schleife Road, O'Brien Road and Ross Road. (same as N1 and N3)
- o Local road connection from County E to Leisch Road. (same as N1 and N3)
- o Local road connection from Service Road to 1<sup>st</sup> Street. (same as N1 and N3)
- o Local road connection from Log Cabin Drive to 1<sup>st</sup> Street. (same as N1 and N3)
- o Existing at-grade intersections would remain at Dilly Lake Road, Whalen Lake Road, Barrett Road and Schnagel Road. (same as N1 and N3)

Alternative N2 is not proposed for adoption because of public input, environmental consequences of widening the Namekagon River Bridge and the acquisition/relocation of seven commercial businesses.

### **Alternative N3 – Single point interchange at US 53/US 63:**

This alternative includes the following alterations in the project area:

- o Single point interchange at US 53/63 on existing alignment
- o Bridge over Potato Creek (same as N1, N2, and N4)
- o Local road connection from Dilly Lake Road to County E (same as N1, N2, and N4)
- o Existing at-grade intersections to US 53 would remain at Dilly Lake Road, River Road, Whalen Lake Road, Barrett Road and Schnagel Road. (same as N1, N2, and N4)
- o An interchange in Trego at US 53/63 on existing alignment (same as N1 and N2)
- o Namekagon River bridge widening (same as N1 and N2)
- o Access to US 53 closed at Schleife Road, 1<sup>st</sup> Street, Stub Road, Mackey Road, County E, Oak Hill Road, Wood Drive, US 63, O'Brien Road, Snowmobile Road, Ross Road, and River Road. (same as N1 and N2)
- o Cul-de-sacs at Schleife Road, O'Brien Road and Ross Road. (same as N1 and N2)
- o Local road connection from County E to Leisch Road. (same as N1 and N2)
- o Local road connection from Service Road to 1<sup>st</sup> Street. (same as N1 and N2)
- o Local road connection from Log Cabin Drive to 1<sup>st</sup> Street. (same as N1 and N2)
- o Existing at-grade intersections would remain at Dilly Lake Road, Whalen Lake Road, Barrett Road and Schnagel Road. (same as N1 and N2)

Alternative N3 is not proposed for adoption because of public input, environmental consequences of widening the Namekagon River Bridge and the acquisition/relocation of six commercial businesses.

### **Alternative N4 – Partial cloverleaf interchange realigned south of County E:** **PREFERRED ALTERNATIVE** (See Exhibits 3B, 3C, and 4)

This alternative includes the following alterations in the project area:

- o Partial cloverleaf interchange south of County E
- o Relocation of US 63 to connect to the new interchange

- Access to US 53 closed at: Schleife Road, 1<sup>st</sup> Street, Stub Road, Mackey Road, County E, Oak Hill Road, Wood Drive, US 63, O'Brien Road, Snowmobile Road and Ross Road
- Cul-de-sacs at Schleife Road, O'Brien Road and Ross Road
- Local road connection from new interchange to County E
- New Wild River State Trail overpass approximately 100 feet south of existing overpass location
- Unlike alternatives N1, N2 and N3, alternative N4 offers access at River Road; eliminating the need to extend the local roadway to Whalen Lake Road
- Bridge over Potato Creek (same as N1, N2, and N3)
- Local road connection from Dilly Lake Road to County E (same as N1, N2, and N3)
- Existing at-grade intersections to US 53 would remain at Dilly Lake Road, River Road, Whalen Lake Road, Barrett Road and Schnagel Road. (same as N1, N2, and N3)

Preferred Alternative N4 is proposed for adoption because of favorable public input, avoidance of impacts to the Namekagon River Bridge and the reduced number of commercial business acquisitions/relocations (1) compared to the other alternatives.

Two options were considered for local road connections on both the east and west sides of US 53 between O'Brien Road and River Road. Option 2 was discarded early in the process due to unfavorable public input. Option 1, both east and west, has been selected as the preferred option due to favorable public input, use of existing private road, maintenance of straight town roads, and minimal affects to existing development. The options are described below:

**West frontage road options**

Option 1 (Preferred)

- New local road connection from O'Brien Road to Ross Road.
- Uses existing Miller Lane from Ross Road to River Road.

Option 2

- New local road connection from O'Brien Road to Ross Road.
- New local road connection from Ross Road to River Road.

**East frontage road options**

Option 1 (Preferred)

- New local road connection between Snowmobile Road, Ross Road, and River Road.

Option 2

- Use existing private road connection between Snowmobile Road and Ross Road.

3. Maps and Exhibits

- a. Include a project location map showing the project's limits.
- b. Include an exhibit illustrating property lines, parcel numbers, and any roadway to be obliterated. The exhibit (township plat map, aerial photograph, layout sketch, contour map, etc.) should clearly present the pertinent information and be commensurate with the scope of the project and its apparent impact on farm operations.

# Farm Operation Interests of 5 Acres or Less but more than 1 Acre

Project ID 1195-00-02	Project Title US 53 Corridor Preservation Study
--------------------------	--

Parcel No.	Owner(s) (Include operator if diff. from owner)	Acres			Existing Farm Operation	Present Use/Remarks
		Acquired	5 Ee	5 Ee		
65-034-2-39-12-33-201-000-001000	Regents of University of Wisconsin	2.6	x		360	UW Spooner Ag Research Station
65-042-2-40-12-27-104-000-0010	Mihalko Land and Log Inc.	1.2	X		160	Tree farm
There are 0 acquisitions, each one an acre or less, that are categorically non-significant totaling						
					Acres	

## Farm Operation Interest Over 5 Acres

Parcel Number 65-042-2-40-12-26-3 03-000-0010 65-042-2-40-12-26-3 02-000-0010	Project ID 1195-00-02
Owner Wausau Paper Spec. Prod. LLC	Operator (If different from owner)

Type of Land	Acres			Remaining
	Before	Acquired		
		Fee Simple	Easement	
Cropland and pasture				
Woodland	160	6		154
Land of undetermined or other use				
Total Acres of Farm Operation				

Description of farm operation and nature of acquisition - Discuss as appropriate any resulting severances, changes in access, expected changes in land use, effect on farm structures, effect on cattle or livestock passes or crossings, roadway obliteration (if any) etc.

Wausau Paper is based in Mosinee, WI with tree farms scattered throughout northern Wisconsin, Minnesota, Ohio, and Kentucky. The company specializes in production of paper products using fresh wood, lumberyard scraps, and recycled paper products. The US 53 Preservation Study includes a strip acquisition of six acres from the 160-acre tree farm located approximately 0.25 miles north of Trego and the Namekagon River.

Access would be closed at Ross Rd. and redirected north to River Rd. along a new local road.



# CONCEPTUAL STAGE RELOCATION PLAN

WisDOT Project I.D. 1195-00-02  
US 53 Corridor Preservation Project  
Washburn County

November 2011

Prepared for:  
Wisconsin Department of Transportation – Northwest Region

## Introduction

### Purpose

This Conceptual Stage Relocation Plan provides details about the potential impacts and relocations that may occur as a result of improvements to US 53 from the City of Spooner through Trego in the county of Washburn. This report is also included in the projects' Environmental Assessment (EA) document.

No right of way of building acquisitions are proposed to occur in the near future. An in-depth and up-to-date analysis of the proposed relocations would be prepared at a future time, closer to the time of design/construction.

This Conceptual Stage Relocation Plan presents:

1. The approximate number of households and businesses that may be relocated by the project.
2. The probable availability of decent, safe, and sanitary replacement housing and comparable commercial facilities within the financial means of the households and businesses that may be affected by the project.
3. An estimate of the possible total relocation assistance costs.

This report has been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the U.S. Department of Transportation, Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) *Environmental Impact and Related Procedures Final Rule* (23 CFR 771), the FHWA Technical Advisory for environmental document preparation (T 6640.8A, October 30, 1987), and the State of Wisconsin Department of Transportation –Division of Highways and Transportation Services *Relocation Assistance Manual*.

### Project Description

The Proposed Action would officially designate as expressway with partial access control an 11-mile section of US 53 between the WIS 70 interchange (Town of Spooner) and 0.75 miles north of Schnagel Road in Trego. See project location map below.



The Proposed Action consists of a plan and follow-up actions for the conversion of the current expressway for US 53 between WIS 70 in the City of Spooner to 0.75 miles north of Schnagel Road in Trego to an expressway facility with partial access control. The proposed improvements would be officially mapped under the process established in Wisconsin Statutes. 84.295 to help preserve right of way for future transportation needs. This portion of US 53 would officially be designated as an expressway facility with partial access control.

The Proposed Action and the actual steps of right of way purchase, final design, or construction would result in the conversion of the existing four-lane divided expressway to an expressway facility with partial access control by removing select at-grade public and private intersections from the facility in this section of US 53. Some of the existing intersections would be reconstructed as cul-de-sacs or grade separations. One interchange would be constructed west of County E in Trego. In addition, several sections of the existing local roadway system would be reconstructed or altered to insure internal local road system continuity and access to the expressway system.

This action uses the process established in Chapter 84, Section 295 of the Wisconsin State Statutes (Wis. Stats. 84.295). Wis. Stats. 84.295 includes long-term planning, official mapping, and preservation tools available to the Wisconsin Department of Transportation (WisDOT) to help protect and preserve right of way for future transportation needs. This proactive tool allows WisDOT to address safety, operation, and mobility/capacity issues in advance of impending long-term needs.

## Data Sources

1. WisDOT Real Estate Program Manual
2. Local realtor websites
3. Washburn County GIS and property records
4. WisDOT Facilities Development Manual (FDM)

## Construction Time Frame

The Proposed Action does not include immediate programming of construction funds but is designed in such a way to allow incremental construction and funding over time. The long-term vision and management strategy used by this Proposed Action allows incremental improvements and funding strategies to ultimately achieve the comprehensive system goal of an expressway facility with partial access control.

## Residential/Business Displacement Summary

The acquisition and relocation procedures WisDOT must follow are established by the Uniform Relocation Act of 1970. These statutes are in place to ensure landowners and tenants are treated fairly when the public interest requires the purchase and relocation of homes and businesses.

The following information regarding relocation services applies to the one commercial business and one residential property that may be impacted and relocated by the Proposed Action.

### Relocation Services for Commercial Displacees

#### A. Commercial Project Assurances

Assist owners of displaced business and farm operations in obtaining and becoming established in suitable, replacement, business locations or replacement farms.

#### B. The Wisconsin Department of Transportation Real Estate Section will assist the commercial properties to be relocated by:

1. Maintaining listings of available commercial properties.
2. Maintaining close contact with local real estate agencies and brokers dealing in commercial space.
3. Informing businesses of the Small Business Administration entitlements when federal aid is involved.
4. Contacting local development corporations and other similar organizations to make all possible assistance available.
5. Assisting in obtaining or transferring business permits and licenses.
6. Assisting in making and securing moving arrangements.
7. Assisting in developing an inventory list of personal/business property to be moved.
8. Advising businesses in site management procedures and occupancy terms and conditions.

9. Advising businesses of their relocation claim entitlements and assist them in filing the claim with documentation.

#### Relocation Services for Residential Displacees

In addition to maintaining necessary records and performing various administrative functions, the WisDOT Real Estate staff would offer and provide the following specific assistance to all residential relocatees:

1. Counsel each individual family with regard to their specific re-housing needs, resulting in securing replacement housing that is decent, safe and sanitary; adequate for their needs; suitably located; and within their financial means.
2. Continually gather data commensurate with the relocatee's needs and advise them accordingly. Provide current and continuing information on availability, prices and rentals of comparable decent, safe and sanitary sales and rental housing. Arrangements would be made for inspection of referral housing and inspections would be made of those units the relocatee indicates a desire to rent or purchase. The purpose of the inspections is to formally certify adequacy and that the units are decent, safe and sanitary.
3. Assist prospective homeowners in obtaining mortgage financing and preparation and submission of offers to purchase. Assist in obtaining relocation documents such as credit reports, appraisals and surveys.
4. Advise prospective tenants on lease arrangements, tenant/landlord responsibilities, security deposit practices, and rental ranges.
5. Provide information and referrals to local welfare and social service assistance agencies when it appears there is a need for such service.
6. Provide information on school district boundaries and routing/scheduling of public transportation.
7. Make regular personal contacts with each relocatee to discuss and providing leads, referrals and all such other matters regarding re-housing which is of interest to the relocatee and necessary for successful relocation. Visitation would be geared to the complexity, specific needs, and level of availability of replacement properties, and would be repeated until the relocation agent's responsibilities are discharged completely and fully in compliance with the spirit and intent of the program.
8. Provide assistance in completing claims for relocation payments for which each relocatee may be eligible.
9. Assist in making moving arrangements including the transfer of utility service.
10. Provide all required written notices, delivered by personal contact whenever feasible to ensure full understanding of eligibility requirements, payment options, project information and other notices required by law, regulations, or as otherwise appropriate.
11. Advise relocatees of grievance procedures, arrangements and agencies involved.

As summarized in the table below, there would be a total of seven (7) single-family residential displacements and two (2) business displacements for the Proposed Action.

<b>Residential Relocations</b>					
<b>Unit Number</b>	<b>Type/Size</b>	<b>Ownership</b>	<b>Approximate Assessed Value (Improvements)</b>	<b>Approximate Assessed Value (Land)</b>	<b>Total Fair Market Value (2011)</b>
Units 1 and 2	Single-family, 3 bedrooms	Owner occupied	\$86,500	\$26,000	\$112,500
Unit 3	Single-family, 3 bedrooms	Owner occupied	\$134,000	\$27,300	\$161,300
Unit 4	Single-family, 3 bedrooms	Owner occupied	\$97,600	\$15,800	\$113,400
Unit 5	Single-family, 3 bedrooms	Rental property	\$107,700	\$2,200	\$109,900
Unit 6	Single-family, 3 bedrooms	Owner occupied	\$53,200	\$11,000	\$64,200
Unit 7	Single-family, 3 bedrooms	Owner occupied	\$100,600	\$10,600	\$111,200
Source: Washburn County Land Records					

<b>Commercial Relocations</b>					
<b>Type</b>	<b>Ownership</b>	<b>Type Business</b>	<b>Location</b>	<b>Acreage</b>	<b>Approximate Assessed Value</b>
Unit 1	Tenant	Metal Fabricator	Town of Trego	2.9	\$117,300
Unit 2	Owner	Antiques Retailer	Town of Spooner	1.65	\$78,400
Source: Washburn County Land Records					

## **Displacement Costs**

In addition to fair market value for the displaced home and business, costs would include relocation payments up to \$31,000 per owner-occupied residence and up to \$30,000 per tenant business. The relocation payment is based on the following:

- *A differential payment* for the difference, if any, between the acquisition price and the reasonable cost to purchase a comparable replacement dwelling or the actual cost of the replacement dwelling, whichever is less.

- A *refinancing payment* for loss of favorable financing if the mortgage or land contract on the replacement dwelling has a higher rate of interest than the rate on the present mortgage or land contract.
- An *incidental expense payment* for reasonable cost incurred in purchasing the replacement dwelling (legal fees, closing costs, etc.)

In addition, moving costs would also be covered for residential and business displacements and would vary depending on the individual situation. Businesses are also eligible for a “reestablishment” payment up to \$10,000.

## Summary of Relocation Costs

Summary of Relocation Costs: Units 1 and 2 Residential Properties	
Acquisition Estimate	\$ 112,500
Relocation Payments	\$ 31,000
Incidental & Closing Costs	\$ 3,000
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$ 146,500</b>

Summary of Relocation Costs: Unit 3 Residential Property	
Acquisition Estimate	\$ 161,300
Relocation Payments	\$ 31,000
Incidental & Closing Costs	\$ 3,000
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$ 195,300</b>

Summary of Relocation Costs: Unit 4 Residential Property	
Acquisition Estimate	\$ 113,400
Relocation Payments	\$ 31,000
Incidental & Closing Costs	\$ 3,000
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$ 147,400</b>

<b>Summary of Relocation Costs: Unit 5 Residential Property</b>	
Acquisition Estimate	\$ 109,900
Relocation Payments	\$ 31,000
Incidental & Closing Costs	\$ 3,000
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$ 143,900</b>

<b>Summary of Relocation Costs: Unit 6 Residential Property</b>	
Acquisition Estimate	\$ 64,200
Relocation Payments	\$ 31,000
Incidental & Closing Costs	\$ 3,000
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$ 98,200</b>

<b>Summary of Relocation Costs: Unit 7 Residential Property</b>	
Acquisition Estimate	\$ 111,200
Relocation Payments	\$ 31,000
Incidental & Closing Costs	\$ 3,000
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$ 145,200</b>

<b>Summary of Relocation Costs: Unit 1 Commercial Property</b>	
Acquisition Estimate	\$ 117,300
Business Replacement Payments	\$9,000
Business Move Payments	\$ 10,000
Business Incidentals	\$ 1,000
Business Re-establishment Payments	\$ 10,000
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$ 147,300</b>

<b>Summary of Relocation Costs: Unit 2 Commercial Property</b>	
<b>Acquisition Estimate</b>	<b>\$ 78,400</b>
<b>Business Replacement Payments</b>	<b>\$9,000</b>
<b>Business Move Payments</b>	<b>\$ 10,000</b>
<b>Business Incidentals</b>	<b>\$ 1,000</b>
<b>Business Re-establishment Payments</b>	<b>\$ 10,000</b>
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$ 108,400</b>

### **Household Displacement Characteristics**

Property owners were sent invitations to attend and provide comments to all public involvement opportunities. An in-depth and up-to-date analysis of the residential relocations would be completed closer to design/construction.

### **Divisive or Disruptive Effect on Community**

No effect on community is anticipated since mixed land use is dominant within Trego.

### **Impact on Neighborhoods and Housing**

The residential displacements would not have an impact on neighborhoods and housing.

### **Business Displacement Characteristics**

Based on contacts with the owners of the displaced businesses through the project’s public involvement activities and phone conversations, there are no special relocation needs or characteristics with respect to race, income level, tenure, elderly, family size, or other factors.

### **Relocation Housing Availability**

The following information on relocation housing sites is based on Multiple Listing Service (MLS) data for residential properties in the area. Residential property information is derived from the online site, [www.realtor.com](http://www.realtor.com).

Relocation housing availability is summarized in the following table.

<b>Needed</b>		<b>Available</b>	
7	Single-family 3 bedroom	28 properties (priced \$23k-\$200k)	Single-family 3 bedroom
Source: <a href="http://www.realtor.com">www.realtor.com</a>			

Sufficient relocation housing is expected to be available at or before the time real estate activities are initiated for the project.

## Business Site Availability

The following information on relocation of commercial sites is based on a search of properties in Washburn County. Property information is derived from the online site, [www.loopnet.com](http://www.loopnet.com).

Relocation commercial availability is summarized in the following table.

	<b>Needed</b>	<b>Available</b>
2	Commercial/Industrial/Retail	6 properties (priced \$94,000 - \$185,000)
Source: <a href="http://www.loopnet.com">www.loopnet.com</a>		

## Special Relocation Advisory Services and Environmental Justice

There are no known unusual circumstances with respect to race, income level, age, disability, or other factors that would require special relocation advisory services for owners of the displaced home or business. The project's public involvement efforts included three public information meeting, three local official meetings, numerous and ongoing contact with the home and business owners, mailings to Native American Tribes, regarding the project. Based on these efforts, there is no indication that the proposed improvements would affect any low-income, minority, elderly, or disabled individuals, groups, or populations subject to Environmental Justice requirements, the Americans with Disabilities Act, or the Age Discrimination Act.

## Actions to Remedy Insufficient Relocation Housing and Business Sites

Sufficient relocation housing is expected to be available at the time real estate activities are initiated for the proposed project. Because availability of suitable business replacement sites may be limited, planning activities for business acquisitions could require a longer than normal lead-time. The acquisition and relocation program will be conducted in accordance with the Uniform Relocation Assistance and Real Property Acquisition Act of 1970.

## Coordination with Local Officials

Coordination with local officials has included meetings with representatives from the towns of Spooner, Trego from the state and federal review agencies, and other interests.

## **Phase 1 Hazardous Materials Assessment**

### *US 53 - Preservation Study Spooner to Lampson*

Washburn County, Wisconsin

WisDOT Project ID 1195-00-02

Prepared by:

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SEH No. AWIDOT0815.00

October 17, 2011

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## Executive Summary

Short Elliott Hendrickson Inc. (SEH<sup>®</sup>) has completed this Phase 1 Hazardous Materials Assessment (HMA) for the Wisconsin Department of Transportation (WisDOT), Bureau of Equity and Environmental Services, under Master Contract 1195-00-02. The project, the proposed US Highway 53 (US 53) Preservation Study, includes an approximately 10-mile-long corridor along US Highways 53 and 63 from the Town of Spooner to the Town of Trego in Washburn County. The purpose of conducting the Phase 1 HMA was to identify potential hazardous materials sites that could impact proposed WisDOT project operations. A total of six potential hazardous materials sites were identified during completion of this Phase 1 HMA.

The proposed project does not include immediate programming of construction funds but is designed in such a way as to allow incremental construction and funding over time. The direct impacts presented in this HMA were examined as if the improvements were being constructed in the near future.

Historical land use information obtained for three of the six potential hazardous materials sites suggests contamination is not likely present at or adjacent to the proposed corridor. Available information has provided no indications of soil and/or groundwater contamination at the Fox Petroleum Co. site. Information available does suggest possible contamination at two other sites, Trego ICO and Melissa A. Mortensen property, but it is not expected that these contaminants would be encountered during construction. Accordingly, no additional investigation is recommended for these three sites.

Historical land use information available for the B and M Service Station suggests that soil contamination present at the site may be encountered in the right-of-way during construction. Visual observation during site reconnaissance at the Mary Fox Parcels, which are under consideration for partial acquisition, suggests a potential for contamination to be present in the areas behind the steel pole building. Visual observation during site reconnaissance at the WisDOT Property, through which the proposed corridor would run, suggests possible creosote contamination from a large pile of railroad ties. Therefore, based on the information available, Phase 2 Subsurface Investigations are recommended at the B and M Service Station, the Mary Fox Parcels, and the WisDOT Property.