


ARKANSAS STATE HIGHWAY AND TRANSPORTATION DEPARTMENT

INTER OFFICE MEMORANDUM

March 14, 2016

TO: Master Files

FROM: John Fleming, Division Head, Environmental Division 

SUBJECT: AHTD Job Number 050315
FAP Number STPF-0012(32)
West of River Bluff Rd. – East (Passing Lane) (S)
Cleburne County
Tier 2 Categorical Exclusion

The Environmental Division has reviewed the referenced project and it falls within the definition of a Tier 2 Categorical Exclusion under 23 Code of Federal Regulations, Section 771.117, and the AHTD/FHWA Memorandum of Agreement on the processing of Categorical Exclusions.

The purpose of this project is to construct a west bound passing lane on Highway 16 west of Pangburn in Cleburne County. Total length of the project is 1.2 miles. A project location map is attached.

The existing roadway consists of two 12-foot wide paved travel lanes with 3-foot wide gravel shoulders. There is no existing right of way of record through most of the project area.

Proposed improvements include adding a 12-foot wide passing lane between River Bluff Road and Good Springs Road on Highway 16. The new paved shoulder widths will be 6 feet on the passing lane side, and 8 feet on the opposite side of the road. New right of way width will average 120 feet. Approximately 16.4 acres of additional right of way will be required for this project.

Design data for this project is as follows:

Design Year	Average Daily Traffic	Percent Trucks	Design Speed
2016	1,600	19	55 mph
2036	2,500	19	55 mph

Noise predictions have been made for this project utilizing the Federal Highway Administration's TNM (Traffic Noise Model) 2.5 procedures. A noise analysis is attached.

There are no relocatees, wetlands, or environmental justice issues associated with this project. Field inspections found no evidence of existing underground storage tanks or hazardous waste deposits. No impacts to cultural resources are anticipated; concurrence from the State Historic Preservation Officer is attached. Approximately 1.66 acres of Prime Farmland will be converted to highway right of way. Form NRCS-CPA-106 is attached. Construction of this project will not require a Section 404 permit.

Cleburne County is inside the known range of the Northern Long-eared Bat. Coordination with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service in January 25, 2016 concurred that the Final 4(d) Rule and Programmatic Biological Opinion apply for activities that have the potential to affect the Northern Long-eared Bat. The Final 4(d) Rule conditionally exempts the incidental take of Northern Long-eared Bats from take prohibitions in the Endangered Species Act. The exemptions apply as long as the activities do not occur within 0.25 mile of a known hibernaculum or within 150 feet of a known occupied maternity roost from June 1 – July 31. No known hibernaculum or maternity roosts exist within the project limits; therefore, the project can proceed without restrictions. All offsite locations will require a separate evaluation to determine compliance. An offsite restraining condition special provision will be included in the contract to address compliance for all offsite areas.

A Public Involvement Meeting was held for this project on January 28, 2016. A Public Involvement Synopsis for this meeting is attached.

Attachments:

Project Location Map
SHPO Clearance
Noise Analysis
NRCS-CPA-106
USFWS Concurrence
Public Involvement Synopsis
Environmental Study Checklist
Design Sheet

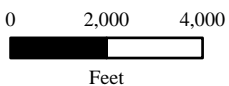
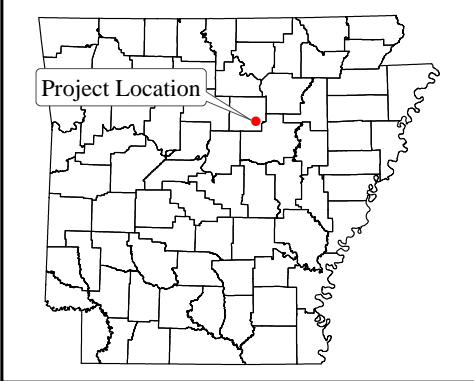
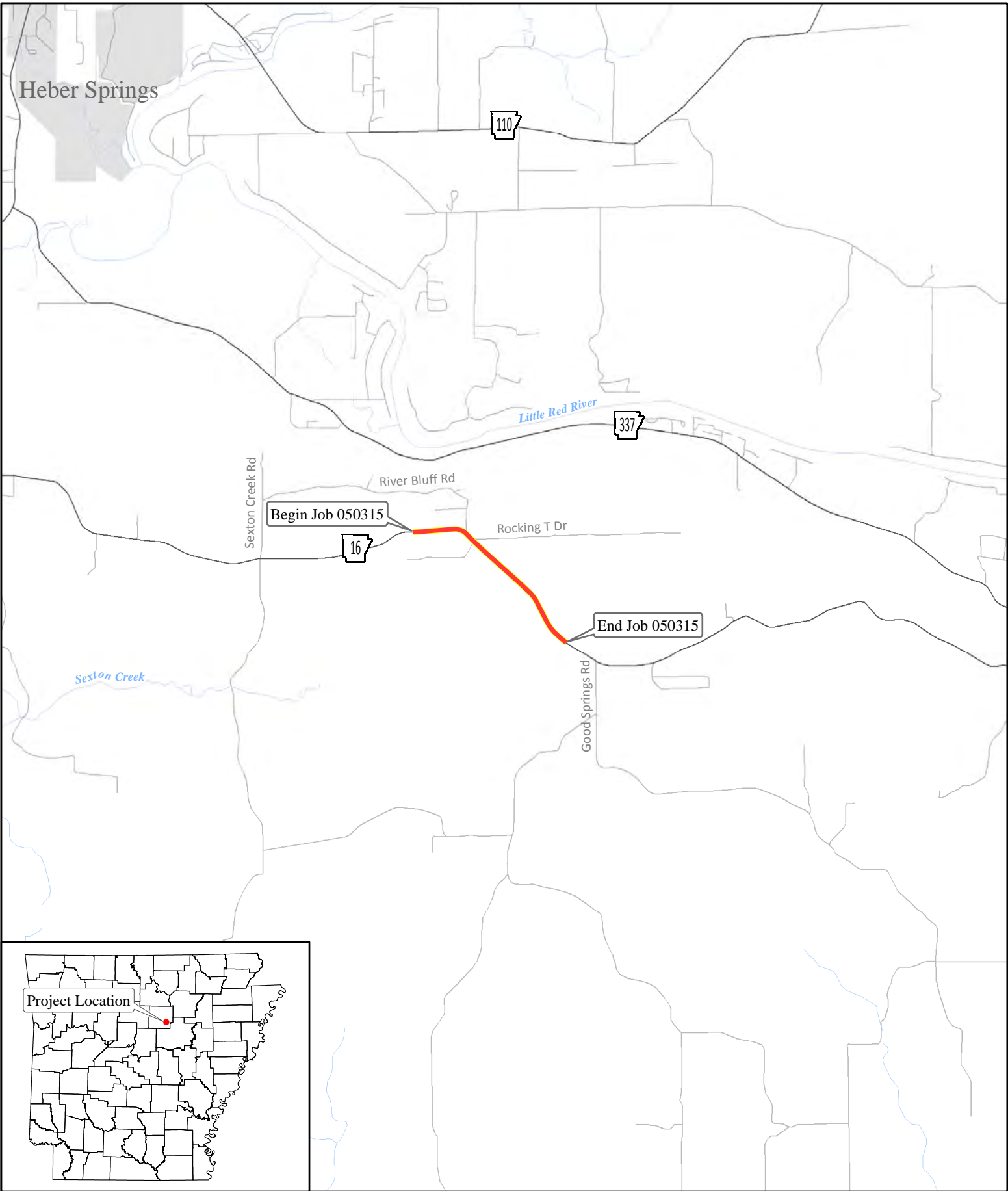
Approved:



Kevin Thornton
Assistant Chief Engineer-Planning

JF:SL:fc

c: Program Management
Right of Way
Roadway Design
District 5
FHWA
Master File



AHTD-Environmental GIS-Hopkins
January 13, 2016

Job 050315
West of River Bluff Rd.-East
(Passing Lane) (Hwy. 16)
Cleburne County



ARKANSAS STATE HIGHWAY
AND
TRANSPORTATION DEPARTMENT

92482.01
FHWA

Scott E. Bennett
Director
Telephone (501) 569-2000
Voice/TTY 711



P.O. Box 2261
Little Rock, Arkansas 72203-2261
Telefax (501) 569-2400
www.arkansashighways.com

January 25, 2016

Mr. Robert Scoggin
State Historic Preservation Officer
1500 Tower Building
323 Center Street
Little Rock, Arkansas 72201

AHPP
JAN 27 2016

Re: AHTD Job Number 050315
West of River Bluff Road – East
(Passing Lane)(S)
Cleburne County

Dear Mr. Scoggin:

A Cultural Resources Survey report for the referenced project is enclosed. Please review for concurrence with the findings of my staff. If you have any questions or require additional information, please contact Milton Hughes of my staff at 501 569-2595.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads 'John Fleming'.

John Fleming
Division Head
Environmental Division

Enclosure

JF:DW:MH:fc

RECEIVED
AHTD

FEB 25 2016

ENVIRONMENTAL
DIVISION

Date **FEB 22 2016**

No known historic properties will be affected by this undertaking. This effect determination could change should new information come to light.

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads 'Frances McSwain'.
Frances McSwain, Deputy State
Historic Preservation Officer

AHTD JOB NUMBER 050315

NOISE ANALYSIS

Fundamentals of Sound and Noise

“Noise” is defined as an unwanted sound. Sounds are described as noise if they interfere with an activity or disturb the person hearing them. Sound is measured in a logarithmic unit called a decibel (dB). The human ear is more sensitive to middle and high frequency sounds than it is to low frequency sounds, so sound levels are weighted to more closely reflect human perceptions. These “A-weighted” sounds are measured using the decibel unit dB(A). Because the dB(A) is based on a logarithmic scale, a 10 dB(A) increase in sound level is generally perceived as twice as loud while a 3 dB(A) increase is just barely perceptible to the human ear.

Sound levels fluctuate with time depending on the sources of the sound audible at a specific location. In addition, the degree of annoyance associated with certain sounds varies by time of day, depending on other ambient sounds affecting the listener and the activities of the listener. The time-varying fluctuations in sound levels at a fixed location can be quite complex, so they are typically reported using statistical or mathematical descriptors that are a function of sound intensity and time. A commonly used descriptor of the equivalent sound level is Leq , which represents the equivalent of a steady, unvarying level over a defined period of time containing the same level of sound energy as the time varying noise environment. $Leq(h)$ is a sound level averaged over one hour. For highway projects, the $Leq(h)$ is commonly used to describe traffic-generated sound levels at locations of outdoor human use and activity (such as residences).

Noise Impact Criteria

Traffic noise impacts take place when the predicted traffic noise levels approach or exceed the noise abatement standard, or when the predicted traffic noise levels exceed the existing noise level by ten dB(A) (decibels on the A-scale). The noise abatement standard of 67 dB(A) is used for sensitive noise receptors such as residences, schools, churches, and parks. The term “approach” is considered to be one dB(A) less than the noise abatement standard.

The number of noise receptors was estimated for this project utilizing the Federal Highway Administration’s Traffic Noise Model 2.5, existing and proposed roadway information, existing traffic information, and projected traffic levels for 2036.

Traffic noise analyses

Traffic noise analyses were performed for the project utilizing a roadway cross-section for Highway 16 consisting of three 12-foot paved travel lanes with paved shoulder widths of 6 feet on the passing lane side, and 8 feet on the opposite side of the road.

Effects of Project

The traffic noise estimates for the project resulted in a noise abatement distance of 69 feet from the centerline of Highway 16 in the project area. Approximately 2 receptors could be affected by future noise levels greater than 66 dB(A)

Traffic Noise Abatement

Since noise impacts are predicted within 500 feet of the proposed project, the feasibility and reasonableness of potential noise abatement measures must be evaluated. Based upon AHTD's "Policy on Highway Traffic Noise Abatement", any noise abatement effort using barrier walls or berms is not warranted for this project. In order to provide direct access to the highway from adjacent properties, breaks in the barrier walls or berms would be required. These necessary breaks for highway access would render any noise barrier ineffective.

To avoid noise levels in excess of design levels, any future receptors should be located a minimum of 10 feet beyond the distance that the noise abatement standard is projected to occur. This distance should be used as a general guide and not a specific rule since the noise will vary depending upon the roadway grades and other noise contributions.

Any excessive project noise, due to construction operations, should be of short duration and have a minimum adverse effect on land uses or activities associated with this project area.

In compliance with Federal guidelines, a copy of this analysis will be transmitted to the White River Planning and Development District for possible use in present and future land use planning.

**FARMLAND CONVERSION IMPACT RATING
FOR CORRIDOR TYPE PROJECTS**

PART I (To be completed by Federal Agency) Job 050315	3. Date of Land Evaluation Request 1/27/16	4. Sheet 1 of _____
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1. Name of Project West of River Bluff Rd - East (Passing Lane)	5. Federal Agency Involved FHWA
2. Type of Project Passing Lane	6. County and State Cleburne AR.

PART II (To be completed by NRCS)		1. Date Request Received by NRCS	2. Person Completing Form
3. Does the corridor contain prime, unique statewide or local important farmland? (If no, the FPPA does not apply - Do not complete additional parts of this form)		YES NO	4. Acres Irrigated Average Farm Size
5. Major Crop(s)	6. Farmable Land in Government Jurisdiction Acres: %	7. Amount of Farmland As Defined in FPPA Acres: %	
8. Name Of Land Evaluation System Used	9. Name of Local Site Assessment System	10. Date Land Evaluation Returned by NRCS	

PART III (To be completed by Federal Agency)	Alternative Corridor For Segment			
	Corridor A	Corridor B	Corridor C	Corridor D
A. Total Acres To Be Converted Directly				
B. Total Acres To Be Converted Indirectly, Or To Receive Services				
C. Total Acres In Corridor				

PART IV (To be completed by NRCS) Land Evaluation Information				
A. Total Acres Prime And Unique Farmland	1.66			
B. Total Acres Statewide And Local Important Farmland				
C. Percentage Of Farmland in County Or Local Govt. Unit To Be Converted				
D. Percentage Of Farmland in Govt. Jurisdiction With Same Or Higher Relative Value				

PART V (To be completed by NRCS) Land Evaluation Information Criterion Relative value of Farmland to Be Serviced or Converted (Scale of 0 - 100 Points)

PART VI (To be completed by Federal Agency) Corridor Assessment Criteria (These criteria are explained in 7 CFR 658.5(c))	Maximum Points			
1. Area in Nonurban Use	15	15		
2. Perimeter in Nonurban Use	10	10		
3. Percent Of Corridor Being Farmed	20	15		
4. Protection Provided By State And Local Government	20	0		
5. Size of Present Farm Unit Compared To Average	10	0		
6. Creation Of Nonfarmable Farmland	25	0		
7. Availability Of Farm Support Services	5	5		
8. On-Farm Investments	20	0		
9. Effects Of Conversion On Farm Support Services	25	0		
10. Compatibility With Existing Agricultural Use	10	0		
TOTAL CORRIDOR ASSESSMENT POINTS	160	45		

PART VII (To be completed by Federal Agency)				
Relative Value Of Farmland (From Part V)	100	100		
Total Corridor Assessment (From Part VI above or a local site assessment)	160	45		
TOTAL POINTS (Total of above 2 lines)	260	145		

1. Corridor Selected: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> New <input type="checkbox"/> Existing	2. Total Acres of Farmlands to be Converted by Project: 1.66 acres of Prime Farmland	3. Date Of Selection:	4. Was A Local Site Assessment Used? YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/>
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5. Reason For Selection:

Signature of Person Completing this Part: *[Signature]* DATE 3/17/16

NOTE: Complete a form for each segment with more than one Alternate Corridor

From: [Bailey, Bill](#)
To: [Seagraves, Josh](#)
Subject: FW: AHTD Job Number 050315 Bat Coordination
Date: Monday, January 25, 2016 12:05:00 PM

Please save to the SS Folder

From: Lewis, Lindsey [mailto:lindsey_lewis@fws.gov]
Sent: Monday, January 25, 2016 12:03 PM
To: Bailey, Bill
Subject: Re: AHTD Job Number 050315 Bat Coordination

Bill,

Based on the location and project description, the Service agrees that the 4(d) rule applies for exemptions related to Northern Long-eared Bat. Furthermore, this action occurs outside the known range for Indiana Bat; therefore, the Service does not believe any further consultation is necessary for this species.

Thanks,

Lindsey Lewis
Biologist

US Fish & Wildlife Service
Arkansas Field Office
110 South Amity Rd., Suite 300
Conway, Arkansas 72032

(501) 513-4489 - voice
(501) 513-4480 - fax
Lindsey.Lewis@fws.gov
<http://www.fws.gov/arkansas-es/>

On Mon, Jan 25, 2016 at 10:38 AM, Bailey, Bill <William.Bailey@ahtd.ar.gov> wrote:
Lindsey...please review the attached map and let us know if you concur with our opinion. The proposed project is located in Cleburne County. The project will impact habitat adjacent to Hwy. 16 between Pangburn and Heber Springs. Due to the recent information released, it is our opinion that the project will be covered under the 4d Rule for bats and is not likely to adversely affect threatened/endangered bat species.

Bill Bailey
Arkansas Highway & Transportation Department
Environmental Division
Environmental Scientist
10324 Interstate 30
Little Rock, AR 72209
501-569-2617

PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT SYNOPSIS

Job Number 050315

West of River Bluff Rd. – East (Passing Lane) (S)

Cleburne County

Thursday, January 28, 2016

An open forum public involvement meeting for the proposed west bound passing lane was held at the Pangburn High School (Safe Room) in Pangburn from 4:00 – 7:00 p.m. on Thursday, January 28, 2016. Efforts to involve minorities and the public in the meeting included:

- Display advertisement placed in the Sun Times on Wednesday, January 20, 2016 and Wednesday, January 27, 2016.
- Distribution of flyers in the project area.

The following information was available for inspection and comment. Small-scale copies of the displays are attached.

- Displays included one aerial photograph at a scale of 1 inch equals 145 feet.
- Preliminary design of the proposed project at a scale of 1 inch equals 50 feet.

Handouts for the public included a comment sheet and a small-scale map illustrating the proposed passing lane location. Copies of these are attached.

Table 1 describes the results of the public participation at the meeting.

TABLE 1	
Public Participation	Totals
Attendance at meeting (including AHTD staff)	35
Total comment forms received	8

AHTD staff reviewed all comments received and evaluated their contents. The summary of comments listed below reflects the personal perception or opinion of the person or organization making the statement. The sequencing of the comments is random and is not intended to reflect importance or numerical values. Some of the comments were combined and/or paraphrased to simplify the synopsis process.

An analysis of the responses received as a result of the public survey is shown in Table 2.

TABLE 2	
Alternative Preferred	Totals
Supports improvements to Highway 16	3
Does not support improvements to Highway 16	3
No response to support of project question	2
Knowledge of historical, archeological or cemetery sites	0
Knowledge of area environmental constraints	0
Home or property offers limitations to the project	1
Beneficial impacts due to the proposed project	3
Adverse impact due to the proposed project	3

A listing of general comments concerning the proposed project follows:

- Most comments received were individual concerns such as loss of homes, businesses and other property, depreciation of property value, and the decrease of distance between the highway and homes.
- Project would increase safety.
- Project may not be necessary because traffic from the oil and gas industry has decreased.
- Noise levels may be increased.

Attachments:

Public handouts, including blank comment form
Small-scale display copies

RJ: *RS*
DN: *DN*

SL:

ARKANSAS STATE HIGHWAY AND TRANSPORTATION DEPARTMENT (AHTD)

CITIZEN COMMENT FORM

**AHTD JOB NUMBER 050315
West of River Bluff Rd.-East (Passing Lane) (Hwy. 16)
CLEBURNE COUNTY**

**LOCATION:
PANGBURN HIGH SCHOOL (SAFE ROOM)
1100 SHORT STREET
PANGBURN, AR
4:00 – 7:00 P.M.
THURSDAY, JANUARY 28, 2016**

Make your comments on this form and leave it with AHTD personnel at the meeting or mail it within 15 days to: Arkansas State Highway and Transportation Department, Environmental Division, Post Office Box 2261, Little Rock, Arkansas 72203-2261.
Email: environmentalpimeetings@ahrd.ar.gov.

Yes No

Do you feel there is a need for the proposed passing lane on Hwy. 16 west of River Bluff Road in Pangburn? Comment (optional) _____

Do you know of any historical sites, family cemeteries, or archaeological sites in the project area? Please note and discuss with staff. _____

Do you know of any environmental constraints, such as endangered species, hazardous waste sites, existing or former landfills, or parks and public lands in the vicinity of the project? Please note and discuss with AHTD staff. _____

Does your home or property offer any limitations to the project, such as septic systems, that the Department needs to consider in its design? _____

(Continue on Back)

AHTD ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS ASSESSMENT FORM

AHTD Job Number 050315 FAP Number STPF-0012(32)
 Job Title West of River Bluff Rd. – East (Passing Lane)(S)

Environmental Impacts	None	Minor	Significant	Comments
Air Quality	X			
Construction Impacts		X		
Cultural Resources	X			
Economic	X			
Endangered Species		X		4(d) rule applies for NLEB - USFWS
Energy Resources	X			
Environmental Justice/Title VI	X			
Fish and Wildlife		X		During construction
Floodplains	X			
Forest Service Property	X			
Hazardous Materials/Landfills	X			
Land Use Impacts	X			
Migratory Birds	X			
Navigation/Coast Guard	X			
Noise Levels	X			
Prime Farmland		X		Form NRCS-CPA-106, 1.66 acres
Protected Waters	X			
Public Recreation Lands	X			
Public Water Supply/WHPA				
Relocates	X			
Section 4(f)/6(f)	X			
Social	X			
Underground Storage Tanks	X			
Visual Impacts	X			
Stream Impacts	X			
Water Quality	X			
Wetlands	X			
Wildlife Refuges	X			

Section 401 Water Quality Certification Required? No
 Short-term Activity Authorization Required? No
 Section 404 Permit Required? No Type

Remarks: _____

Signature of Evaluator *Sherry LeBlanc* Date 3-14-2016

Date Submitted: _____

Date Returned: 1-08-16 Revised

ROADWAY DESIGN REQUEST

Job Number 050315 FAP No. STPF-0012(32) County Cleburne

Job Name West of River Bluff Rd.-East (Passing Lane) (S)

Design Engineer Primary Design Environmental Staff _____

Brief Project Description Construct westbound passing lane.

A. Existing Conditions:

1. Roadway Width:	Metric: _____	English: <u>24'</u>
2. Shoulder Width:	Metric: _____	English: <u>3' shoulders</u>
3. Number of Lanes and Width:	Metric: _____	English: <u>2-12'</u>
4. Existing Right-of-Way:	Metric: _____	English: _____

B. Proposed Conditions:

1. Roadway Width:	Metric: _____	English: <u>50'</u>
2. Shoulder Width:	Metric: _____	English: <u>6' Lt. & 8' Rt.</u>
3. Number of Lanes and Width:	Metric: _____	English: <u>3-12'</u>
4. Average Right-of-Way:	Metric: _____	English: <u>70' Lt. & 50' Rt.</u>

C. Construction Information:

If detour: Where: N/A Length: Metric: _____ English: _____

D. Design Data:

2016 ADT: 1600 2036 ADT: 2500 Trucks: 19%

Ave. Running speed: _____ km/h 55 m.p.h.

E. Approximate total length of project: _____ kilometer(s) 1.20 mile(s)

F. Justification for proposed improvements: _____

G. Total Relocates: None Residences: N/A Businesses: N/A

H. Have you coordinated with any of the following: (provide name and date)

City and/or County Officials: No

State Agency: No

Federal Agency: No