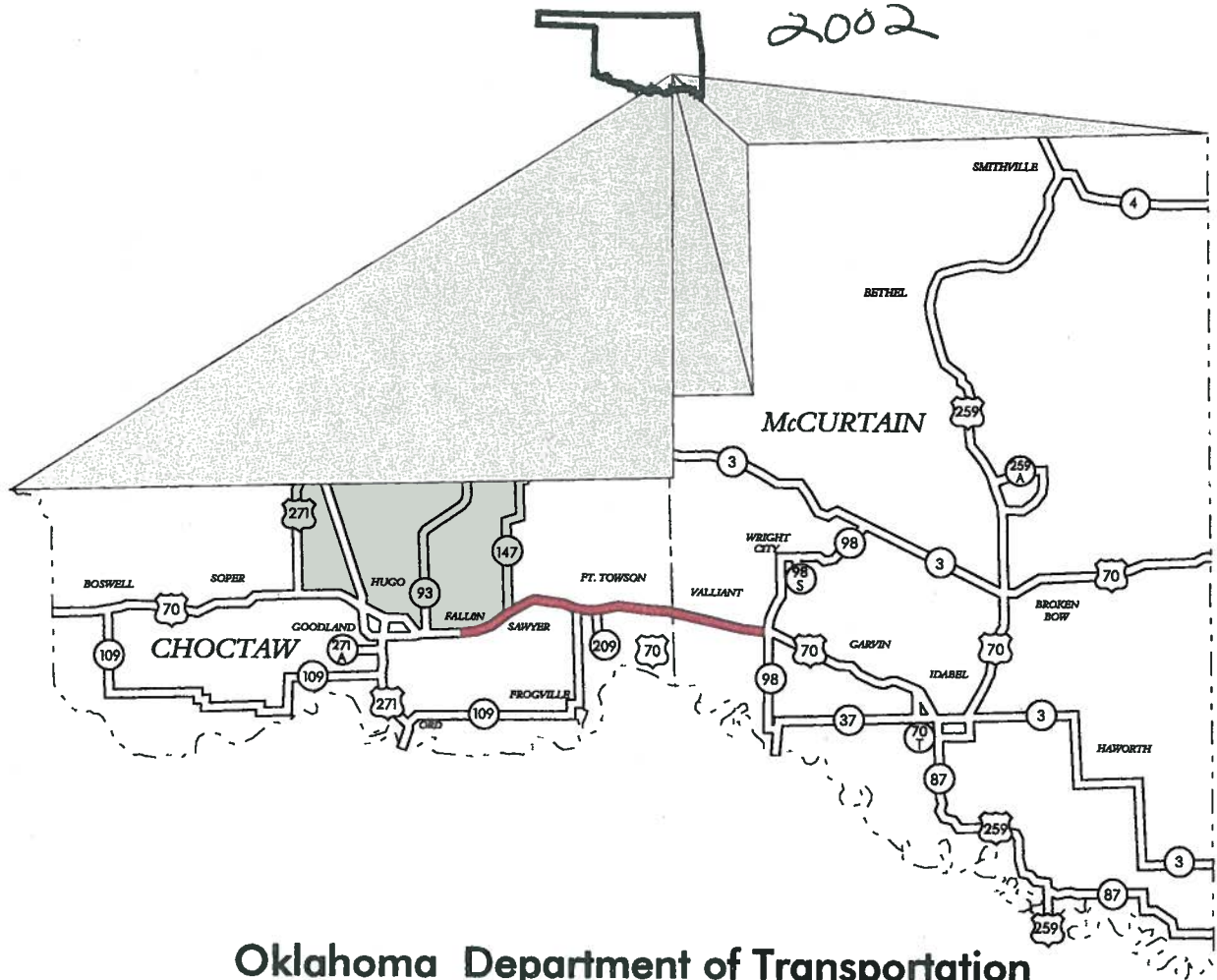


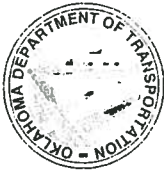
US 70 Environmental Assessment

from Fallon, Choctaw County to SH 98
McCurtain County



Oklahoma Department of Transportation
U.S. Department of Transportation
Federal Highway Administration





Oklahoma Department of Transportation

Planning Division

Office 521-2704 Fax 521-6917

DATE: July 16, 2002

TO: Distribution Below

FROM:  Planning & Research Engineer 

SUBJECT: Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) for proposed reconstruction of US 70 beginning approximately 3.0 miles east of the US 70/SH 93 junction near Hugo east approximately 24.0 miles to the junction of US 70/SH 98, Choctaw and McCurtain Counties. Project NHY-22N(008), J/P 15002(04).

The Department has received a Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) from the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) on the Environmental Assessment prepared for the referenced project. With receipt of the FONSI, environmental processing is complete and the Department can proceed with final design, right-of-way acquisition and construction phases as funds become available.

Please note the following environmental constraints and stipulations which must be addressed in the final design stages of project development regarding the referenced project:

- The proper Section 404 permit needs to be obtained.
- Several potential wetland locations, approximately 7.3 acres based upon preliminary estimates, were identified along the referenced 25.0 mile segment of US 70. Upon completion of preliminary design plans for any proposed improvement to US 70, a copy of the plans needs to be provided to the Department's Biologist for review. The Department's Biologist will coordinate with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers regarding appropriate mitigation for potential wetlands that may be impacted by the proposed improvements to US 70.
- The Department's Hazardous Waste Coordinator identified four active leaking underground storage tank (LUST) sites along the referenced 25.0 mile segment of US 70. Notes need to be added to the project plans regarding these sites and appropriate procedures regarding these sites need to be followed (please see attached correspondence from the Department's Hazardous Waste Coordinator). Two known hazardous waste sites, located in the vicinity of the proposed Valliant Bypass, were identified outside the project area and should be avoided (see attached correspondence from the Department's Hazardous Waste Coordinator).

- Roadway Design and Project Management Division should ensure that the commitment to avoid impacting Hopson Park located in Fort Towson is adhered to in the processing of final design plans. Roadway Design and Project Management Division have notified the Environmental Studies Branch that this commitment will be adhered to during the design phase of the preconstruction process.
- There is a potentially significant archaeological site located within the general vicinity of the proposed Valliant Bypass. The following notes should be added to the section of the final project plans entitled "Environmental Mitigation Notes per Policy Directive C-201-2D(2):

Locations outside the project right-of-way in the following area must not be utilized for borrow, equipment staging, haul roads, or any offsite project-related activity.

T6S, R21E Section 26 S ½ of SW 1/4 of NW 1/4 of NE 1/4

Any project-related disturbance outside the permanent new right-of-way in this area must be approved in advance by the Highway Archaeologist (1-405-325-7201).

These mitigation measures should be discussed at all pre-work conferences per Policy Directive C-201-2E(1).

If you have any questions regarding this memo, please contact Mr. Joe Khatib at (405) 521-2515.

DCS/jck

Attachment

Distribution:

Director
Chief Engineer
Assistant Director - Preconstruction
Bridge Division
Roadway Design Division - Mohamed Nazari
Right-of-Way Division
Project Management Division
Survey Division
Traffic Engineering Division
Division II Engineer
FHWA - Dan Sanayi
Poe & Associates - Jim Benson

FEDERAL HIGHWAY ADMINISTRATION

FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT

for

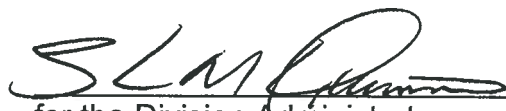
Reconstruction of US-70 to a Four-Lane Facility
US-70 from 3 miles East of SH-93 and Extending East 25 miles,
Choctaw & McCurtain Counties

The proposed action covered by this Environmental Assessment (EA) involves the reconstruction on US-70 beginning approximately 3 miles east of the US-70/SH-93 junction near Hugo east approximately 24 miles to the junction of US-70/SH-98 in Choctaw and McCurtain Counties.

The preferred alternative will consist of reconstructing US-70 to a four-lane divided facility along the rural segments of the new roadway lanes located north of the existing facility. The preferred alternatives for the towns of Sawyer and Fort Towson will be on the existing alignment, and Alternative 3 will be used for the Valliant area.

The Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) has determined that this project will not have any significant impact on the human environment. This Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) is based on the attached EA, which has been independently evaluated by the FHWA and determined to adequately and accurately discuss the need, the environmental issues, and the impacts of the proposed project and appropriate mitigation measures. It provides sufficient evidence and analysis for determining that an Environmental Impact Statement is not required. The Federal Highway Administration takes full responsibility for the accuracy, scope, and content of the attached Environmental Assessment.

9 July 2002
Date


for the Division Administrator
Oklahoma Division
Federal Highway Administration





U.S. Department
Of Transportation
**Federal Highway
Administration**

Oklahoma Division
300 N. Meridian Avenue, Suite 105-S
Oklahoma City, OK 73107-6560

July 9, 2002

In Reply Refer to: HEO-OK

Finding of No Significant Impact:
Reconstruction of US-70 to a Four-Lane Facility from
Three Miles East of SH-93 Extending East 25 Miles,
Choctaw and McCurtain Counties

RECEIVED

JUL 10 2002

DIRECTOR'S OFFICE

Mr. Gary Ridley, Director
Oklahoma Department of Transportation
Oklahoma City, Oklahoma

Attention: Mr. David Streb, P.E.

Dear Mr. Ridley:

Enclosed is a Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) for the subject project as requested in Mr. Streb's letter of May 30, 2002. Also enclosed are two approved copies of the Environmental Assessment (EA) that supports this finding. A notice of availability of the FONSI must be sent to all federal, state, and local government agencies involved with the EA. We recommend that each agency which commented on the EA be advised of the project decision and be provided a copy of the FONSI.

Please contact Mr. Dan Sanayi at 605-6166 extension 328 if you have any questions or comments.

Sincerely yours,



Walter J. Kudzia
Division Administrator

Enclosures





U.S. Department
Of Transportation
**Federal Highway
Administration**

Oklahoma Division

300 N. Meridian Avenue, Suite 105-S
Oklahoma City, OK 73107-6560

July 9, 2002

In Reply Refer to: **HEO-OK**

**Finding of No Significant Impact:
Reconstruction of US-70 to a Four-Lane Facility from
Three Miles East of SH-93 Extending East 25 Miles,
Choctaw and McCurtain Counties**

Mr. Gary Ridley, Director
Oklahoma Department of Transportation
Oklahoma City, Oklahoma

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Please contact Mr. Dan Sanayi at 605-6166 extension 328 if you have any questions or comments.

Sincerely yours,

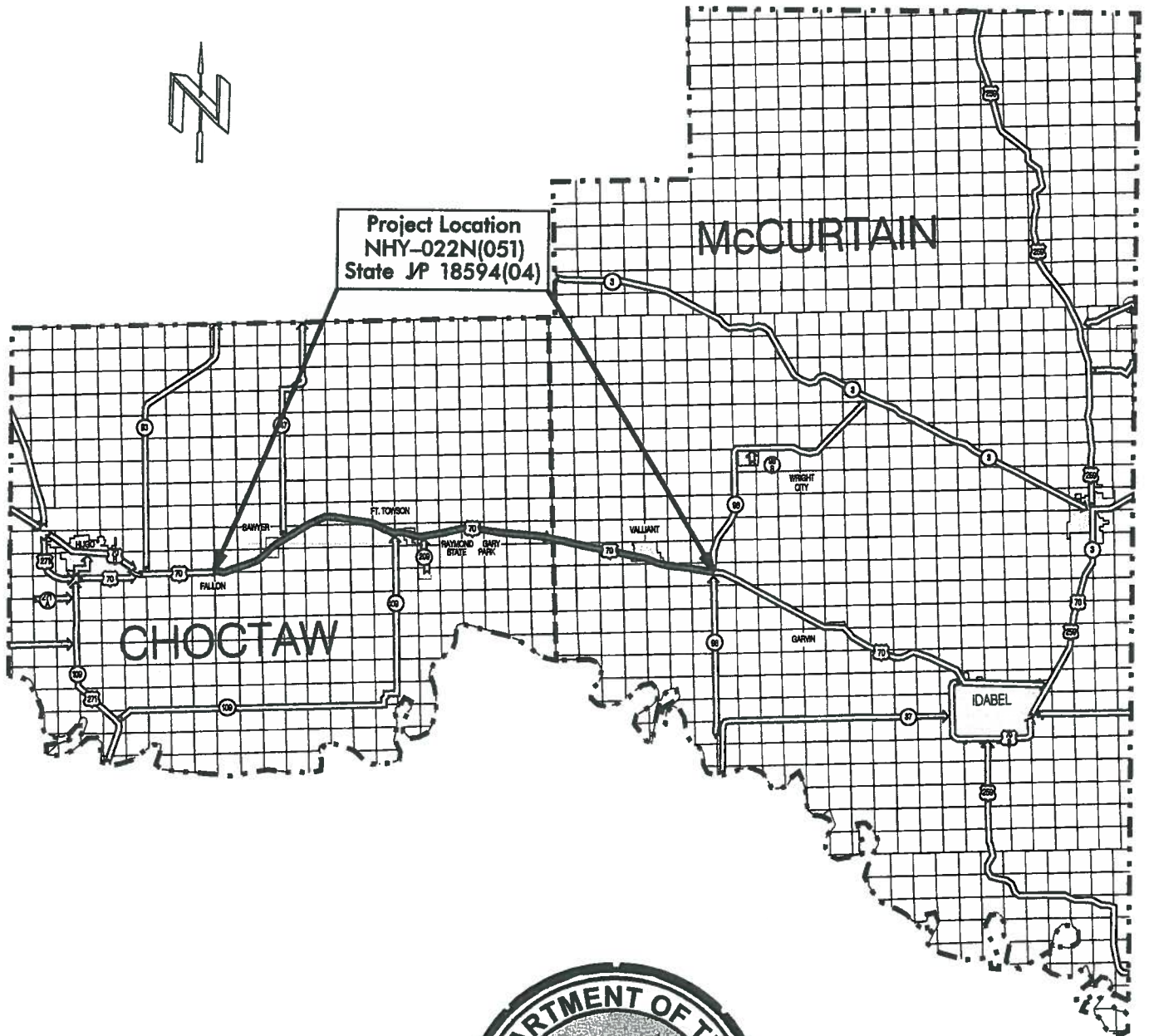
LUBIN M. QUIÑONES

Walter J. Kudzia
Division Administrator

Enclosures



US 70 Corridor Improvements Choctaw & McCurtain County



Date: September 10, 2001
Prepared by Planning Division



OKLAHOMA DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

200 N. E. 21st Street

Oklahoma City, OK 73105-3204

May 30, 2002

Mr. Walter Kudzia, P.E.
Division Administrator
Federal Highway Administration
300 North Meridian, Room 105S
Oklahoma City, Oklahoma 73107

Attention Mr. Lubin Quinones

Dear Mr. Kudzia:

Enclosed are two copies of the Final Environmental Assessment (EA) for the proposed reconstruction of US 70 beginning approximately 3.0 miles east of the junction of US 70/SH 93 extending east approximately 25.0 miles to the junction of US 70/SH 98, Choctaw and McCurtain Counties.

A Public Hearing was held on April 23, 2002 (see Appendix G). No verbal comments or written comments were received as a result of the hearing. Based on the findings of the Environmental Assessment, we have concluded that the proposed project will not have a significant impact on the quality of the human environment. Therefore, we respectfully request your concurrence in a Finding of No Significant Impact for this proposed project.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "David C Streb". The signature is written in a cursive style and is enclosed within a large, hand-drawn oval.

David C Streb, P. E.
Planning and Research Division Engineer

DCS/jck

Enclosure

"The mission of the Oklahoma Department of Transportation is to provide a safe, economical, and effective transportation network for the people, commerce and communities of Oklahoma."

AN EQUAL OPPORTUNITY EMPLOYER

May 30, 2002

Mr. Walter Kudzia, P.E.
Division Administrator
Federal Highway Administration
300 North Meridian, Room 105S
Oklahoma City, Oklahoma 73107

Attention Mr. Lubin Quinones

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Sincerely,

David C Streb, P. E.
Planning and Research Division Engineer

DCS/jck

Enclosure



U.S. Department
Of Transportation
**Federal Highway
Administration**

March 25, 2002

Environmental Assessment:
US-70 from SH-93 East to SH-98,
Choctaw and McCurtain Counties

Mr. Gary M. Ridley, Director
Oklahoma Department of Transportation
Oklahoma City, OK

Attention: Mr. David Streb, P.E.

Dear Mr. Ridley:

In response to your letter dated March 13, 2002, we have reviewed the subject Environmental Assessment (EA) for suitability to release to the public. The EA appears to contain all the necessary and pertinent information. A signed copy of the document is herein returned, and you may make the document available to the public.

We will not review the document again until after the public review period and hearing. At that time, we can make any minor corrections and incorporate appropriate information from the public involvement process prior to completion of the Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI). Any questions on this or related matters should be referred to Mr. Dan Sanayi at 605-6166 extension 328.

Sincerely yours,


Walter J. Kudzia
Division Administrator

Enclosures

RECEIVED
ODOT-PLANNING

Oklahoma Division
2002 1300 N. Meridian Avenue, Suite 105-S
Oklahoma City, OK 73107-6560

In Reply Refer to: HTO-OK

RECEIVED
MAR 26 2002
DIRECTOR'S OFFICE



U.S. Department
Of Transportation
**Federal Highway
Administration**

Oklahoma Division

300 N. Meridian Avenue, Suite 105-S
Oklahoma City, OK 73107-6560

March 25, 2002

In Reply Refer to: HTO-OK

Environmental Assessment:
US-70 from SH-93 East to SH-98,
Choctaw and McCurtain Counties

Mr. Gary M. Ridley, Director
Oklahoma Department of Transportation
Oklahoma City, OK

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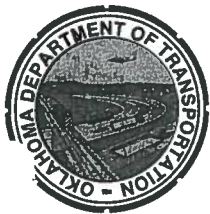
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Sincerely yours,



Walter J. Kudzia
Division Administrator

Enclosures



OKLAHOMA DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

200 N. E. 21st Street

Oklahoma City, OK 73105-3204

March 13, 2002

Mr. Walter Kudzia, P.E.
Division Administrator
Federal Highway Administration
300 North Meridian, Room 105S
Oklahoma City, Oklahoma 73107

Attention Mr. Lubin Quinones:

Dear Mr. Kudzia:

Enclosed are two copies of the Environmental Assessment (EA) for the proposed reconstruction of US 70 beginning approximately 3.0 miles east of the US 70/SH 93 junction near Hugo east approximately 24.0 miles to the junction of US 70/SH 98, Choctaw and McCurtain Counties. This document includes the section of US 70 in the proposed Garvee program and is critical to expediting the completion of this important corridor.

The EA is submitted for your approval so that a public hearing can be scheduled. Your prompt attention is greatly appreciated. Should you have any questions, please contact me at 521-6916 or Joe Khatib at 521-3651.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "David C Streb".

David C Streb, P. E.
Planning and Research Engineer

DCS/jck

Enclosure

March 13, 2002

Mr. Walter Kudzia, P.E.
Division Administrator
Federal Highway Administration
300 North Meridian, Room 105S
Oklahoma City, Oklahoma 73107

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Sincerely,

David C Streb, P. E.
Planning and Research Engineer

DCS/jck

Enclosure



Oklahoma Department of Transportation

Planning Division

Office 521-2704 Fax 521-6917

DATE: February 21, 2001

TO: Project Files

FROM: Joseph C. Khatib, Project Coordinator

SUBJECT: Meeting requested by Valliant Chamber of Commerce regarding proposed reconstruction of US 70 from three miles east of the Junction of US 70/SH 93 east approximately 25.0 miles to the junction of US 70/SH 98, Choctaw and McCurtain Counties.

Department representatives attended a meeting held at 7:00 p.m, Thursday, January 11, 2001 in the Terry Hunt Community Building located in Valliant, Oklahoma due to a request from the Valliant Chamber of Commerce that the Department meet with citizens from the community regarding the proposed improvements to US 70 in Valliant. Representatives of the Department's Roadway Design Division, Planning Division, Bridge Division and Division 2 headquarters were on hand to answer questions regarding proposed improvements to US 70. The main focus of discussion concerned the proposed improvements to US 70 in the community of Valliant, specifically the proposed bypass alignment that was recommended in the US 70 corridor study prepared in 1997.

JCK

Attachments

D. STANLEY PROCK, D.D.S., INC.

BOX 606

310 E. JACKSON
HUGO, OK 74743

TELEPHONE: 326-3542

*DDS
Streb
Hartley*

October 28, 2000

David C. Streb, P. E.
Planning Division
ODOT
200 Northeast 21st Street
Oklahoma City, OK 73105

RECEIVED

NOV 1 2000

Dear Mr. Streb,

I came away from the ODOT public hearing held in Hugo on Tuesday evening, October 24, both appalled and disappointed at the indifference you and your associates held for the residents that are to be displaced by the construction of Highway 70. Questions were answered vaguely and with no effort on ODOT's part to help find solutions.

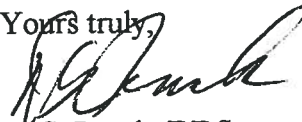
PLANNING DIVISION

My home of the last 25 years is going to be depreciated by 30% to 50% because of the proximity of the new highway. I can live with that, and I am not so naïve that I believe that the location of the highway can be changed. My main concern is the noise level and the possibility of vehicles careening off the highway into my house. This is a major safety concern. This has happened four times in the last 25 years and fortunately there was enough land between my house and the roadway to be of protection. This will disappear with the new highway.

The 64 ft. median between lanes is excessive. The ODOT engineer told me that evening that 46 ft. was the minimum distance but that the planning department chose 64 ft. I am pleading with you, no begging, that you reconsider the 64 ft. median. That extra 20 ft. would put a buffer between my house and the road and also save my farm pond from absorption by the right of way.

I am not asking for much and I urge you to show some compassion and consideration and give this request your attention.

Yours truly,


D. S. Prock, DDS

Cc:
Rep. Randall Erwin
Sen. Jeff Rabon
Hwy. Commissioner David Burrage

RECEIVED

OCT 27 2000

PLANNING DIVISION

October 25, 2000

David C Streb, P.E.
Oklahoma Department of Transportation
Planning Division
200 Northeast 21st Street
Oklahoma City, Oklahoma 73105

Dear Mr Streb:

I was unable to attend the public meeting concerning the US-70 reconstruction project from SH-93 to SH 98. I have discussed the results of the meeting with several people who did attend and look forward to the completion of this much needed improvement.

As secretary and office manager of a utility company and a personal property owner in the Valliant area, I would be very interested in obtaining a copy of the April 1997 US Feasibility Study book. I realize the design is preliminary, but in a town like Valliant people think the telephone company office should have some answers to their questions, and naturally they are very curious about where the four lane will be.

If there is a charge for the book please bill me at P O Box 776, Valliant OK 74764.

Thank you in advance for your help.

Yours truly,



Shirley Prince
Valliant Telephone Co.

SWINK
HISTORICAL PRESERVATION ASSOCIATION
P O Box 165
Swink, OK 74761

*DES
streb
Bulley*

October 26, 2000

Mr. David C. Streb, P.E.
Oklahoma Department of Transportation
200 Northeast 21st. St.
Oklahoma City, OK 73105

RECEIVED

NOV 1 2000

Dear Mr. Streb,

PLANNING DIVISION

This is our written response to your request for comments on the US-70 reconstruction DOT project in our area:

1. Placement of the State Historical Marker for the District Choctaw Chief's House. We have applied for the marker using a CDBG grant award. We would appreciate the placing of the marker as close to the Main Rd. turn -off on the north side of US-70 as possible.
2. A right-turn lane in addition to the two lanes going west at Main Rd. This turn off serves not only local traffic, Ranches and the Swink Community Cemetery but it also serves the Choctaw Heritage Trail, a Rustic Walking Trail newly completed with a Department of Tourism grant. The Rustic Trail will connect the Ft. Towson Historic Site to the District Choctaw Chief's House using Heritage Road. Heritage Rd. is 1/2 mile north of Hwy. 70, Main Rd. dead ends on Heritage Rd. The Trail is available for use 365 days a year by everyone. The Choctaw Nation is applying for a motorized continuation of this Trail that will go east to Wheelock Academy in McCurtain Co. just east of Hwy. 98.

The District Choctaw Chief's House is the oldest House in the State and is on the National Register of Historic Places. It is open to the public 362 days a year. It has been a Tourist attraction since the 1970's and brochures have been distributed since that time using this particular entry road on the map. An additional lane would make turning easier and eliminate slowing of the traffic when Festival's, and other events are held at the site.

We are concerned that Main Rd. be used as the turn-off and marked with appropriate signs for turning that agree with the brochures for the Historic Site and Rustic Trail.

Sincerely,



Lila Swink
Administrative Director

Town of SWINK
P O BOX 8
Swink, OK 74761

October 26, 2000

Mr. David C. Streb P.E.
Oklahoma Department of Transportation
Planing Division
200 Northeast 21st. St.
Oklahoma City, OK 73105

Dear Mr. Streb,

In response to your request for comments on the reconstruction of US-70 in Choctaw County we have the following concerns:

1. Continued access to Swink Community Cemetery using the existing Rd. turn off, from Hwy. 70 going north, (Main Road).
2. The correct survey alignment of Main Road and Main St. on Hwy. 70 for both the north side of the Hwy. and the south side, into the Town of Swink.
3. Additional right turn lane from Hwy. 70 (heading east) onto Main St. We have population of 97 persons mostly retired who often drive under the speed limit and cause faster traffic to slow down excessively while they slowly turn into Town. This turn off also serves the Swink School , the School bus, Swink Community Center, Swink Post Office, two Churches, several Ranches and everyone living South of the Town of Swink to the Red River. *Plus SWINK Vol. FIRE DEPARTMENT.*
4. Additional right turn lane from Hwy. 70 (heading west) onto Main Rd.(going north) This is the main publicized turn-off for the District Choctaw Chief's House the oldest log House in the State of Oklahoma, it is on the National Register of Historic Places. This historic site is open to the public 362 days year. In addition to the Oldest House in the State there is a new Department of Tourism Choctaw Heritage Rustic Trail which begins at the District Choctaw Chief's House and goes west to the Ft. Towson Historic Site. It also serves the Swink Community Cemetery, Ranches and residents living north of the Town of Swink.

Thank you for your consideration of our concerns.

Sincerely,



Randle Swink
Mayor

Mr. David C. Streb, P.E.
Oklahoma Department of Transportation
Planning Division
200 Northeast 21st Street
Oklahoma City, Oklahoma 73105

RECEIVED

OCT 31 2000

PLANNING DIVISION

Sir:

I am writing my concerns regarding Highway 70 going right thru the city of Ft. Towson where the present plans call for a four-lane with guttering and curbs and a 45-mile speed limit. I doubt very seriously if many residents realize the effect this will have on the older drivers who have always leisurely entered the highway and slowly made their way to the City Hall to conduct their business or to go to the Senior Citizens for lunch on Wednesdays or to the other Nutrition Site on Mondays, Tuesdays, and Thursdays. Since this City cannot afford a traffic policeman or any kind of enforcement, this presents a definite invitation for the many trucks to even exceed the 45 mile speed limit that will be posted as they now do the 30-mile per hour speed (not only trucks but traffic going through).

We are thrilled to be getting a 4-lane as this means businesses will now more likely consider this part of Oklahoma to come to. I have observed very little traffic stopping to utilize the local merchants. Mostly locals who live in, around, or near Ft. Towson use the businesses along this corridor. Time means money to businesses and the faster they can get from Point A to Point B increases their profits. There is plenty of land north of the City or even south of the dam on Raymond Gary Lake to really make traveling through this area more inviting to industry. Traffic will increase dramatically as soon as this highway is widened and I can finally envisage industry coming to this part of the country. I never thought I would live to see it and we are long overdue for work to be available for our youth.

To do the right thing now and really make this highway a route for industry traffic seems to me to be the smart thing to do. Also to make it stand up to the heavy traffic it will be receiving. Don't do a mickeymouse job which always leaves a bad taste and a lack of faith in our politicians and State employees.

Sincerely,



Mozelle Alexander, Local Citizen
HC 63 Box 1130
Ft. Towson, OK 74735

Cc: Jeff Rabon
Randall Erwin
Gov. Keating

October 25, 2000

RECEIVED

OCT 26 2000

Mr. David C. Streb, P.E.
Oklahoma Department of Transportation
Planning Division
200 Northeast 21st Street
Oklahoma City, Oklahoma 73105

PLANNING DIVISION

Mr. Streb;

I attended the public meeting concerning US 70 in Hugo last evening. I do live on the south of side of this highway between Hwy. 93 and Fallon Road which we were told will be the first phase of this project. Even though it is my understanding that the highway is going to take property to the north and not anything on the south side my concern is my driveway. My home is the headquarters for our cattle operation, where all of our stock trailers and equipment is housed. As it is now we cannot turn into our drive coming from the west, traveling east because it is too narrow and too sharp of a turn. We must be coming from the east, traveling west and turn into the drive at that angle. With the center median and only turn lanes at section lines we will be unable to enter our current drive. I would like to make you aware of this concern and see about the possibility of widening my drive when the project gets underway.

Thank you.

Sincerely,



Debbie McLemore
HC 69, Box 89
Hugo, Oklahoma 74743

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

FEDERAL HIGHWAY ADMINISTRATION

AND

OKLAHOMA DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

ON

RECONSTRUCTION OF US 70

CHOCTAW AND McCURTAIN COUNTIES

PROJECT NO. NHY-22N(008)

STATE JOB NO. 15002(04)

The proposed project is described as the reconstruction of US 70 beginning approximately 3.0 miles east of the US 70/SH 93 junction near Hugo east approximately 24.0 miles to the junction of US 70/SH 98, Choctaw and McCurtain Counties.

This highway project is proposed for funding under Title 23, United States Code. This statement for the improvement of US 70 has been developed in consultation with the Federal Highway Administration and is submitted pursuant to USC-4332(2) (C).

Submitted:

Date

3/13/02

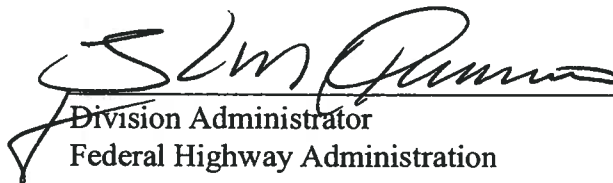


Planning and Research Engineer
Oklahoma Department of Transportation

Concur:

Date

3/18/02



Division Administrator
Federal Highway Administration

TABLE OF CONTENTS

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II.	LOCATION AND DESCRIPTION OF THE PROPOSED ACTION.....	1
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Appendix A Noise Study

Appendix B Hazardous Waste Study

Appendix C Wetlands Study

Appendix D Cultural Resources Study

Appendix E Solicitation Letter Responses

Appendix F Public Meeting Summary

Plate I Project Location Map

Plate II Sufficiency Rating Map

Plate III Valliant Bypass Map

Plate IV Items Considered During Project Development

I. INTRODUCTION

This Environmental Assessment examines the anticipated social, economic and environmental effects of the proposed reconstruction of US 70 in Choctaw and McCurtain Counties beginning approximately 3.0 miles east of the US 70/SH 93 junction near Fallon, extending east approximately 24.0 miles to the junction of US 70/SH 98 near Millerton (Plate I depicts this location). This document was developed to assist in meeting federal program requirements and was completed by the Oklahoma Department of Transportation (ODOT) in conformance with DOT ORDER 5610.1C, CEQ REGULATIONS dated November 29, 1978 and policy directives of the Federal-aid Policy Guide of the Federal Highway Administration. Assessment of the total social, economic and environmental effects of the proposed project was developed in consultation with the Federal Highway Administration and has been coordinated with other federal, state and local agencies or organizations.

II. LOCATION AND DESCRIPTION OF THE PROPOSED ACTION

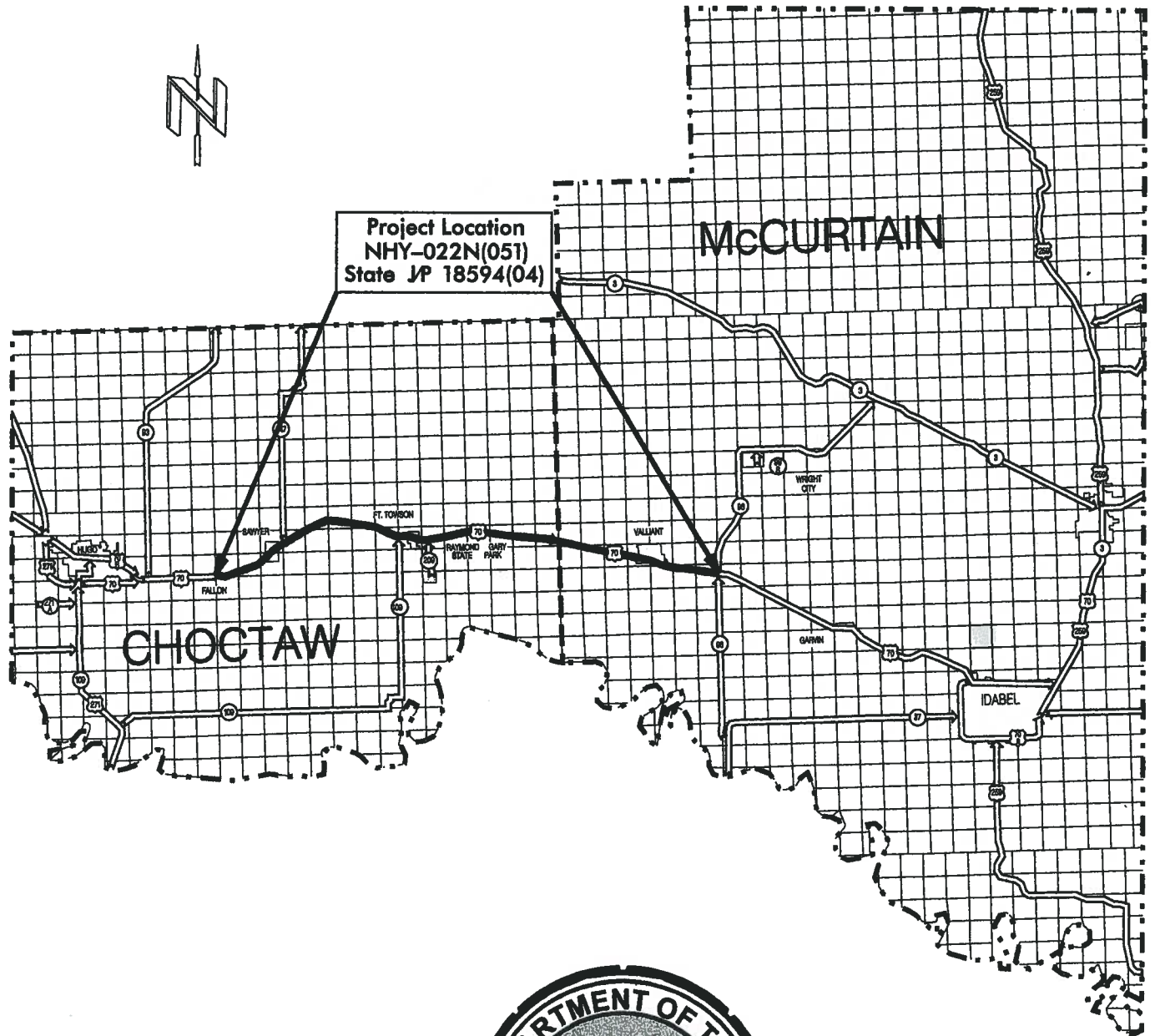
The proposed project is located between the communities of Fallon and Millerton. Specifically, the proposed improvements consist of reconstructing US 70 from a two-lane facility to a four-lane facility from approximately 3.0 miles east of the US 70/SH 93 junction near Hugo, east approximately 24.0 miles, to the junction of US 70/SH 98 near Millerton. A four-lane divided facility will be constructed along the rural portion of US 70 with the new roadway lanes located north of the existing facility due to the location of the Kiamichi Railroad which parallels existing US 70 along the south side. The improvements in the Towns of Sawyer and Fort Towson will be accomplished along the existing alignment with a bypass alignment proposed for the Valliant area.

III. NEED FOR THE PROJECT

US 70 is part of the National Highway System (NHS) and is also identified as a "Transportation Improvement Corridor" (TIC) in the Oklahoma Statewide Intermodal Transportation Plan of 2000. These facilities have been identified as highways that provide significant movement of people and goods, connect other principal transportation facilities and will likely need improvement by the year 2025. A Feasibility Study was completed in April 1997 that provided recommendations for upgrading US 70 from I-35 to the Arkansas State Line. US 70 from 3.0 miles east of the junction of SH 93 to the west side of the community of Fort Towson was designated a high priority segment for needed improvements in the feasibility study. From the west side of Fort Towson to the junction of US 70/SH 98, US 70 was designated a moderate priority segment for needed improvements in the feasibility study. Current ODOT policy for TIC routes requires acquisition of enough right-of-way to incorporate construction of at least four travel lanes.

The 2001 Needs Study and Sufficiency Rating Report prepared by ODOT evaluates any roadway based on the present geometric design and physical condition. This report classified the segment of US 70 from approximately 3.0 miles east of the junction of SH 93 to the junction of SH 147 near Sawyer as critical. The segment from the junction of SH 147 to the west edge of Valliant was rated tolerable. The remaining segment from the west edge of Valliant to the junction of SH 98 was rated adequate. Plate II depicts the depicts the sufficiency rating for the proposed improvements to US 70.

US 70 Corridor Improvements Choctaw & McCurtain County







Date: September 10, 2001
Prepared by Planning Division

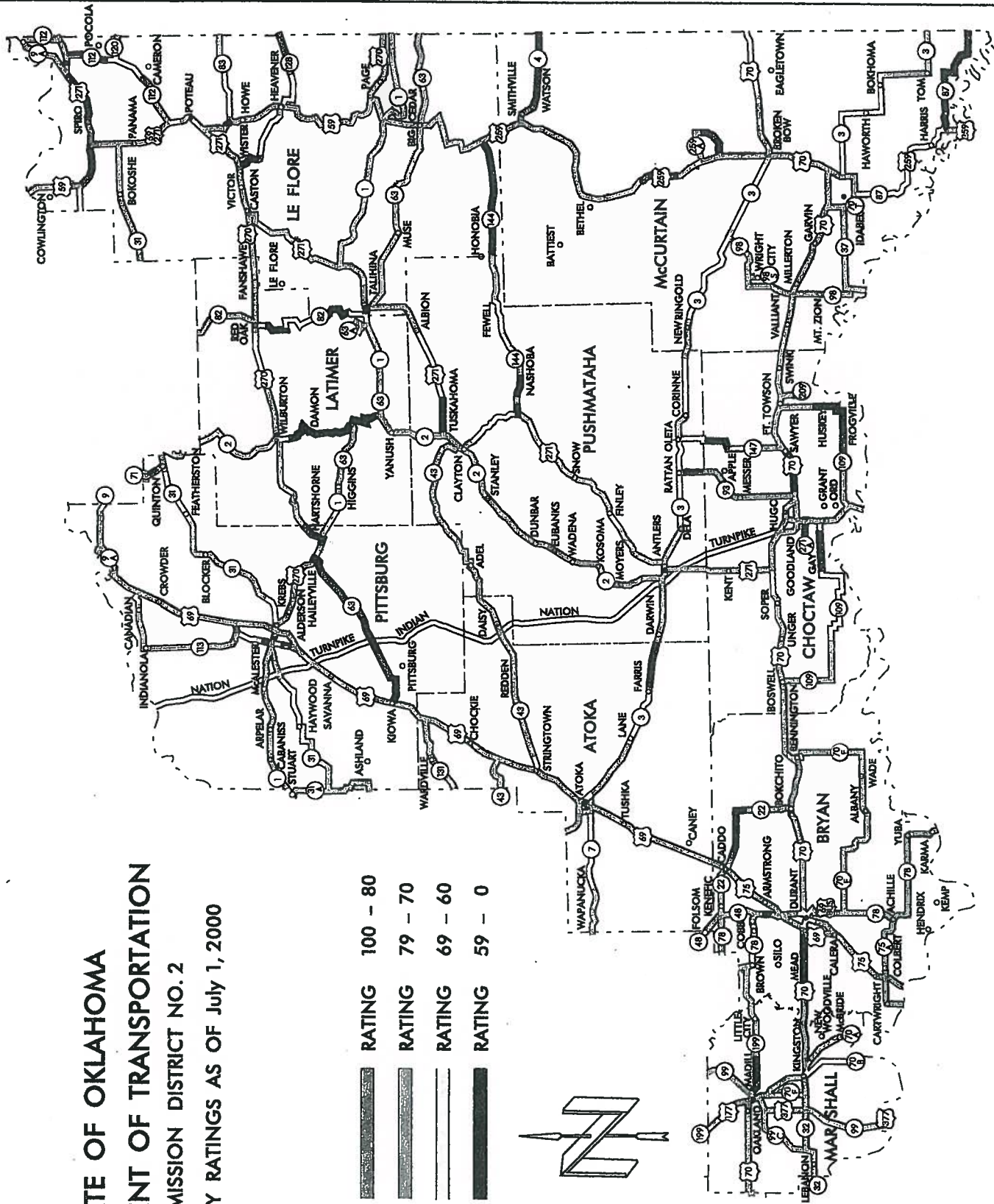
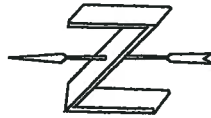
STATE OF OKLAHOMA

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

COMMISSION DISTRICT NO. 2

SUFFICIENCY RATINGS AS OF July 1, 2000

	RATING 100 - 80
	RATING 79 - 70
	RATING 69 - 60
	RATING 59 - 0



The current average annual daily traffic (AADT) count (2001) along the referenced project extent is 7600 vehicles per day near the junction of SH 93/US 70 near Hugo; 4800 vehicles per with day at the west edge of Fort Towson; and 7600 vehicles per day near the junction of US 70/SH 98 near Millerton. Projected future year (2021) traffic volumes at the same locations are 12,200; 7,800; and 12,200 vehicles per day. Truck traffic comprises approximately 16% of the current AADT in this area.

Due to the roadway sufficiency rating, future projected traffic counts and the identification of US 70 as a TIC route, the proposed improvements are warranted.

IV. ALTERNATIVES

For ease of discussion regarding alternatives, the alternatives section will be described as rural and urban/municipal. The rural section consists of the stretches of roadway between the existing towns. The majority of the referenced 24.0 mile section of US 70 is rural in nature. The identified urban/municipal segments are those portions of US 70 at the Towns of Sawyer, Fort Towson and Valliant.

A “do-nothing” or “no-build” alternative was also considered for the referenced 24.0 mile portion of US 70. It would not alleviate inadequacies and deficiencies with the existing roadway, would result in unsafe traffic conditions over time, and would not preserve right-of-way for future expansion along the corridor. Due to these factors, the do-nothing alternative was dropped from further consideration.

Rural Segment

The preferred alternative for the rural segment of US 70 consists of reconstructing US 70 to a four-lane divided facility. The new roadway lanes will be located north of the existing facility due to the location of the Kiamichi Railroad which parallels existing US 70 along the south side for the majority of the rural extent. The adequacy of the existing lanes will be evaluated from a safety aspect during the project design phase to determine the extent of needed improvements to the existing roadway lanes.

Urban Segments

The three urban/municipal segments are described below:

- **US 70 at the Town of Sawyer**

The preferred alternative for US 70 through the Town of Sawyer calls for reconstruction of the existing two lane facility to a five-lane facility utilizing curb and gutter drainage.

- **US 70 at the Town of Fort Towson**

Two alternatives were considered for the proposed improvements to US 70 at Fort Towson in the 1997 feasibility study. The two alternatives were improving the existing route through town and a bypass alignment north of Fort Towson. The recommended alternative was to

improve US 70 through town on the existing alignment. Constructing a bypass alignment north of Fort Towson would be difficult due to several environmental constraints. These constraints involve the location of the broad flood plain along Gates Creek/Lake Raymond Gary north of Fort Towson, location of historic Old Fort Towson northeast of town and the cemetery that is associated with Old Fort Towson.

The existing roadway section in Fort Towson is predominantly a two-lane facility with 8-foot shoulders. A two block section in downtown consists of a 71 foot wide curbed section with some available on-street parking. The proposed improvements would consist of reconstructing the existing two-lane facility to a five-lane facility utilizing curb and gutter drainage.

- **US 70 at the Town of Valliant**

Two alternatives were considered for US 70 at Valliant in the 1997 feasibility study. The two alternatives were improving the existing route through town and a bypass alignment north of Valliant. The recommended alternative was to improve US 70 by constructing a bypass on new alignment north of Valliant. Upgrading the existing alignment would require a grade separation at the TO&E Railroad that currently parallels existing US 70 in Valliant. Accomplishing construction of a grade separation along the existing alignment would require a substantial number of relocations through town. As a result of information garnered during the public involvement process and preliminary environmental review, two additional alignment alternatives for the proposed bypass route were studied along with the bypass route identified in the feasibility study. The three bypass alternatives are presented below:

Alternate 1

This alternative is on new alignment for approximately 3.4 miles and was the proposed bypass alignment identified in the 1997 feasibility study (see purple line on Plate III) north of Valliant.

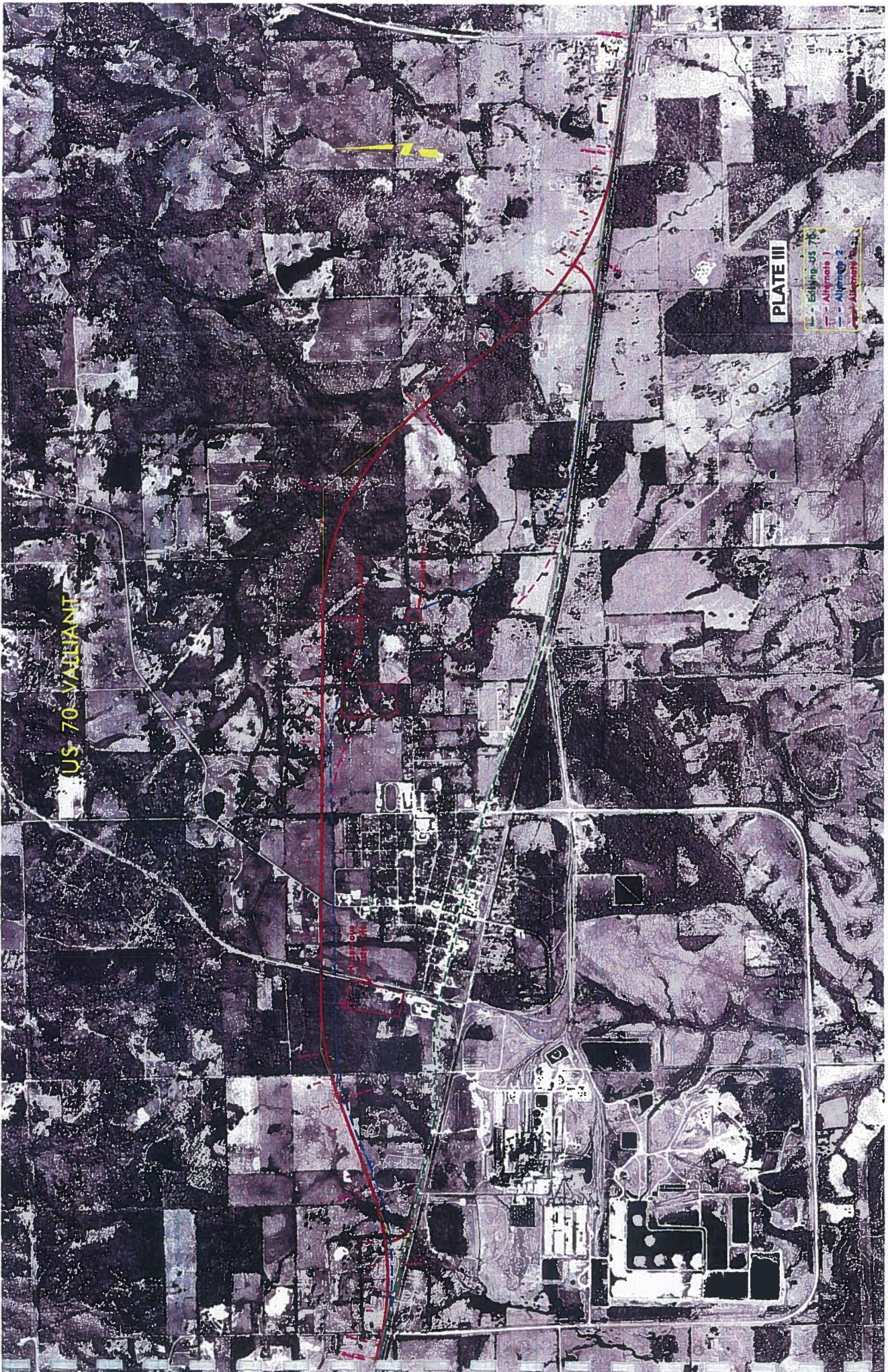
Alternate 2

This alternative is on new alignment for approximately 3.7 miles (see blue line on Plate III) north of Valliant.

Alternate 3

This alternative is on new alignment for approximately 4.6 miles (see red line on Plate III) north of Valliant.

The preferred alternative for improving US 70 in the Valliant area is **Alternate 3**. Alternate 1 and 2 are shorter routes than Alternate 3, however Alternate 1 would cross an old landfill site identified by the Oklahoma Department of Environmental Quality and encroach on property located west of the TO&E Railroad that was identified as a potential hazardous waste site by the United States Environmental Protection Agency and the Oklahoma Department of Environmental Quality.



US 70 - VALLIANT

PLATE III

- Existing US 70
- Alignment 1
- Alignment 2
- Prop. Alignment

Alternative 2 would have encroached on an old cemetery northeast of Valliant (Crittendon Cemetery) that dates back to the early part of the twentieth century and also would have encroached upon the referenced potential hazardous waste site located west of the TO&E Railroad.

The bypass alignment may include construction of an interchange at Dalton Street (Old SH 98) due to its importance as an access point to development that has occurred north of Valliant and around the Pine Creek Lake area and the traffic generated by that development. Requests have been made by local community leaders in Valliant that the Department consider construction of an interchange at this location.

In summary, the preferred alternative for improving the referenced segment of US 70 from approximately 3.0 miles east of the US 70/SH 93 junction near Hugo east approximately 24.0 miles to the junction of US 70/SH 98 near Millerton will consist of reconstructing US 70 to a four-lane divided facility along the rural segments with the new roadway lanes located north of the existing facility due to the location of the Kiamichi Railroad which parallels existing US 70 along the south side. The improvements in the Towns of Sawyer and Fort Towson will be accomplished along the existing alignment with a bypass alignment proposed for the Valliant area.

V. SOCIAL, ECONOMIC AND ENVIRONMENTAL EFFECTS

Plate IV contains a list of the social, economic and environmental factors examined by the Department in the development of this project. Based on this examination, the following are the major consequences of the proposed project.

Relocations

Based upon preliminary estimates, the preferred alternative for the proposed improvements to US 70 will create 17 residential and 14 commercial displacements. These displacements are necessary to accommodate the proposed design. Any relocations which are ultimately required will be accomplished under provisions of the Oklahoma Uniform Relocation Assistance Plan. This program provides both financial and advisory assistance to families, farms and businesses that may be displaced by the proposed improvements to US 70 to help minimize the adverse impacts associated with such relocations.

Noise

A noise study was completed that complies with the ODOT Policy Directive "Highway Noise Abatement" (see Appendix A). The purpose of the noise study is to determine the noise impacts and the possible mitigation of these impacts from the proposed highway improvement. Noise impacts were determined by modeling future noise levels for the preferred alignment and comparing these levels with the existing noise levels and the noise abatement criteria established in 23 CFR 772 (Table 1 lists the FHWA noise abatement criteria). Utilizing the FHWA approved Noise Model (TNMLOOK), noise levels approaching or exceeding 66 dBA Leq(h) are projected to occur along the referenced project extent. It is estimated that 1 residence may be impacted by the proposed project due to noise levels approaching by one dBA or exceeding the noise abatement criteria of 66

ITEMS CONSIDERED DURING PROJECT DEVELOPMENT

- **Purpose and Need for Project**
- **Alternatives**
- **Affected Environment**
- **Possible Environmental Consequences:**
 - **Airport Impacts**
 - **Air Quality Impacts**
 - **Archaeological Sites**
 - **Consideration Relating to Pedestrians and Bicyclists**
 - **Construction Impacts**
 - **Economic Impacts**
 - **Effects on Public Parks, Wildlife and Waterfowl Refuges and Historic Sites**
 - **Energy**
 - **Environmental Justice**
 - **Farmland Impacts**
 - **Floodplain Impacts**
 - **Hazardous Waste/Underground Storage Tanks**
 - **Irreversible and Irrecoverable Commitment of Resources**
 - **Joint Development**
 - **Land Use Impacts**
 - **Noise Impacts**
 - **Permits**
 - **Relationship of Local Short-term Uses vs Long Term Productivity**
 - **Relocation Impacts/ Right-of-Way Acquisition**
 - **Social Impacts**
 - **Threatened or Endangered Species**
 - **Visual Impacts**
 - **Water Body Modification**
 - **Wetland Impacts**
 - **Wildlife Impacts**
 - **Wild and Scenic Rivers**
- **Comments and Coordination/Public Involvement**
- **Drainage Concerns**
- **Accidents/Safety Concerns**

Revised: 12/97

dB(A) Leq(h). No receptor will experience the 15 dB(A) increase that is considered to be a substantial increase for noise impact determination. No noise abatement is recommended for this project.

**Table 1
FEDERAL HIGHWAY ADMINISTRATION
NOISE ABATEMENT CRITERIA**

FHWA NOISE ABATEMENT CRITERIA (NAC)		
Activity Category	Leq Noise Level	Description of Activity Category
A	57 (Exterior)	Tracts of land in which serenity and quiet are of extraordinary significance and serve an important public need and where the preservation of these qualities is essential if the area is to continue to serve its intended purpose. Such areas could include amphitheatres, particular parks or portions of parks, open spaces, or historic districts which are dedicated or recognized by appropriate local officials for activities requiring special qualities of serenity and quiet.
B	67 (Exterior)	Picnic areas, recreation areas, playgrounds, active sports areas, and parks which are not included in Category A and residences, motels, hotels, public meeting rooms, schools, churches, libraries, and hospitals.
C	72 (Exterior)	Developed lands, properties or activities not included in Categories A or B above.
D	--	Undeveloped lands.
E	52 (Interior)	Residences, motels, hotels, public meeting rooms, schools, churches, libraries, hospitals, and auditoriums.

Hazardous Waste

The Department's Hazardous Waste Specialist conducted an initial site investigation for the preferred alternative to identify potentially contaminated properties (See Appendix B). Four active leaking underground storage tank (LUST) sites were identified along the project extent for the preferred alternative. Two sites were located near Valliant, one site was located near Sawyer and one site was located near the junction of US 70/SH 98. The Hazardous Waste Coordinator recommended avoidance and/or minimizing the acquisition of additional right-of-way at several locations that may have housed gas stations or auto repair facilities in the past. Notes will be added to the project plans requiring avoidance of properties located offsite for construction related activities. If right-of-way acquisition cannot be minimized at the referenced locations, a preliminary site investigation will be conducted prior to any construction activities taking place.

Two known hazardous waste sites, Woodland Products and the old Valliant landfill, were identified by the Hazardous Waste Specialist. Although these sites are outside areas where right-of-way is needed for the proposed improvements, notes will be placed on the project plans requiring avoidance of borrow removal, equipment staging or any other offsite construction activities.

Wetlands

Potential wetland impacts were evaluated utilizing the National Wetland Inventory (NWI) maps, soil survey maps and on-site inspection (See Appendix C). Eight wetland areas were identified with a total wetland impact of approximately 7.3 acres. Coordination with the US Army Corps of Engineers has occurred and will continue throughout the life of the proposed project. Section 404 permits for wetland and stream impacts will be obtained, and any wetlands identified will be avoided, minimized and/or mitigated according to US Army Corps of Engineer requirements.

Threatened and Endangered Species

The American Burying Beetle, Interior Least Tern, Bald Eagle, Piping Plover, Scale shell, Ouachita Rock Pocketbook, Red-cockaded Woodpecker, Winged Mapleleaf, American Alligator, and Leopard Darter are listed as threatened and/or endangered species for Choctaw and McCurtain Counties. Informal consultation was conducted for this project between August 1 and September 8, 2001 regarding the referenced threatened and endangered species based upon the preferred alternative. The US Fish and Wildlife Service determined that the described action will have no effect on federally-listed or proposed species or their habitats. No formal consultation or survey is required for listed threatened and/or endangered species.

Cultural Resources

A cultural resources survey for the project was conducted by the Oklahoma Highway Archaeological Survey Program of the Oklahoma Department of Transportation (See Appendix D). This study was performed in coordination with the Oklahoma State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) and the Oklahoma State Archaeologist. In addition, coordination was also conducted with the Choctaw Nation, Wichita Affiliated Tribes of Oklahoma, Caddo Tribe and the Chickasaw Nation.

The Department's cultural resources study resulted in documentation of 6 newly recorded historic or prehistoric archaeological sites (including two cemeteries) within the project study area, reevaluation of 13 previously recorded archaeological sites, 7 historic localities and 22 standing structures. An initial archaeological field inspection of the preferred alignment was conducted and it was determined that no impact to prehistoric cultural resources will occur. The Department, in consultation with the SHPO regarding pre-1945 structures, received a finding stating that the preferred alternative will have no impacts to properties on/or eligible to the National Register of Historic Places. Should subsurface archaeological materials be exposed during construction, the Contractor and Resident Engineer shall notify the Department Archaeologist in accordance with procedures set forth in the Oklahoma Department of Transportation's Standard Specifications for Highway Construction and the Planning Division's Manual for Oklahoma Highway Archaeological Survey Cultural Resources Staff and Department Consultants. In addition, notes will be placed on the project plans requiring avoidance of borrow removal, equipment staging or any other offsite construction activities from areas outside the project limits where potentially significant archaeological sites are located.

Flood plains

Eight locations were identified in the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) 100 year Flood Insurance Rate Map for Choctaw and McCurtain County. The proposed crossings of these surface waterways are designed to convey the 100 year storm and the new roadway surface will be elevated above the 100 year flood plain. Roadway construction will not raise the backwater more than one foot and will not cause flooding on adjacent properties nor will it increase flood liability once construction is completed.

Economic Impacts

A new alignment alternative is proposed for the Valliant area and could affect some businesses in this community. Businesses most likely affected are operations such as gasoline stations, convenience stores and restaurants. The proposed improvements to US 70 will improve access to the Weyerhaeuser Company Papermill, the largest employer in Valliant with approximately 475 employees. Coordination with representatives from Weyerhaeuser revealed that the proposed improvements to US 70 were considered a top priority in the company's plans for possible upgrades to their Valliant facility.

Valliant is classified as a small town or very small community in the research regarding the effects of highway bypasses performed by the University Of Oklahoma, Methodology For Determining the Impact of Highway Bypasses in Oklahoma (Drs. Cynthia L. Rogers and Richard S. Marshment). The Study conducted by Rogers and Marshment noted that non-transportation factors, such as the introduction of large discount retailers in rural markets, decline in agricultural demand and restructuring in the oil and gas industry along with imposition of new environmental regulations may be more important than highway service in the overall aspect of small town economies.

A benefit that may result from the proposed widening of US 70 is improved traffic flow and access to the numerous recreational facilities, Hugo Reservoir, Raymond Gary State Park, historic Fort Towson and Pine Creek Reservoir, that are located along US 70. Improved traffic flow and access to these locations may prompt more tourists and visitors to the surrounding area.

Socioeconomic and Environmental Justice

US 70 is located in Choctaw and McCurtain Counties in southeastern Oklahoma. Three census tracts (census tracts 9969, 9970 and 9984) approximate the US 70 project area. Census tracts 9969 and 9970 are located in Choctaw County, with census tract 9984 located in McCurtain County. Total population for Choctaw County based upon the 2000 census is 15,342 with approximately 28 % minority representation. Total population for McCurtain County based upon the 2000 census is 34,402 with approximately 28 % minority representation. Total minority population for the three census tracts is less than the total minority population in either Choctaw and McCurtain County. The population breakdown for the three referenced census tracts and Choctaw and McCurtain County is presented in Table 2

Table 2
RACE AND ETHNICITY IN THE US 70 STUDY CORRIDOR BY CENSUS TRACT

Census Tract	Total Pop.	White	Black	American Indian	Asian	Hispanic	Other	Total Minority	Percent Minority
9969	2903	2400	81	321	5	35	6	448	15
9970	2932	2038	312	417	2	47	12	790	27
9984	4596	3753	146	479	3	61	23	712	15
Total	10431	8191	539	1217	10	143	41	1950	19
LISTED BY COUNTY									
County	Total Pop.	White	Black	American Indian	Asian	Hispanic	Other	Total Minority	Percent Minority
Choctaw	15342	10517	1678	2295	24	246	76	4319	28
McCurtain	34402	24267	3200	4669	74	1064	465	9472	28

Source: 2000 Census of Population, Bureau of Census

The average wage for Choctaw County in 1998 based upon information provided by the Oklahoma Department of Commerce was 18,196 and the per capita income was 16,472. The average wage for McCurtain County based upon information provided by the Oklahoma Department of Commerce was 21,320 and the per capita income was 17,822. The percentage of persons living below poverty level in Choctaw County was approximately 30 %. The percentage of persons living below poverty level in McCurtain County was approximately 27 %. The percentage of persons living below the poverty level in the three referenced census tracts is listed in Table 3.

Table 3
Percentage of Persons Below Poverty Level

Census Tract Number	Percentage of Persons Below Poverty Levels		
	Census Tract Percentage	Percentage by County	
		Choctaw County	McCurtain County
9969	35%	30%	--
9970	25%	30%	--
9984	19%	--	27%

Source: Oklahoma Department of Commerce

The percentage of people below the poverty level for Census Tract 9969 (Choctaw County) was slightly higher than the overall percentage for the county, however the percentage of people below the poverty level for Census Tracts 9970 (Choctaw County) and 9984 (McCurtain County) were lower than overall percentage for the county.

A December 1998 Federal Highway Administration policy states that the actions to address environmental justice in minority and low-income populations will prevent, “disproportionately high and adverse effects.” As a result of the census data analysis, review of aerial photography, and the proposed right-of-way limits, the displacements necessitated by the proposed improvements to US 70 would not result in disproportionately high or adverse effects for minority and/or low-income populations in the general project area.

VI. COORDINATION

A letter soliciting comments relating to anticipated social, economic and environmental effects of the proposed improvements to US 70 was mailed to thirty local, city, county, state and federal agencies, organizations and individuals on August 2, 2000. Nine replies were received and are included as Appendix E. Comments and responses are summarized below:

- The Oklahoma Department of Wildlife Conservation noted the following: Avoidance of median barriers for extended lengths due to their potential for blocking local movement of wildlife; Mitigation of wetland loss as a result of the proposed project in accordance with Section 404 and 401 of the Clean Water Act; Acquisition of additional right-of-way and construction of the new facility on previously disturbed land to minimize effects on undisturbed habitat; Erosion control measures installed and maintained throughout the construction phase of the proposed project; Revegetation of disturbed grounds utilizing native grasses and forbs; Avoidance of nonselective blanket spraying for vegetation control during routine right-of-way maintenance; Design of highway bridges over streams that do not impede the movement of fish within the stream.

Response: The proposed design will incorporate a grass median not a concrete barrier to separate east and west bound traffic; Section 404 permits for wetland and stream impacts will be obtained, and any wetlands identified will be avoided, minimized and/or mitigated according to US Army Corps of Engineer requirements; The majority of the improvements will be constructed north of the existing facility, due to the location of the Kiamichi Railroad south of the existing facility, and right-of-way needs will be minimized at those locations where it is deemed feasible; Erosion control measures will be implemented during and after construction based upon the Oklahoma Department of Transportation’s Standard Specifications for Highway Construction; Vegetative mulch will be utilized along areas that require revegetation during and after construction in accordance with the Oklahoma Department of Transportation’s Standard Specifications for Highway Construction; Bridge and box culvert structures will be designed in accordance with the American Association of State Highway Transportation’s Standard Manual for Bridge Design.

- The United States Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) identified fourteen locations where possible wetlands were located based upon a review of the USFWS National Wetland Inventory maps. In addition they identified six species in Choctaw County and twelve species in McCurtain County that are identified as threatened and endangered species, but determined that no federally listed species were likely to be

affected by the project and that no further endangered species consultation was needed.

Response: The Department Biologist identified eight wetland areas with a total wetland impact of approximately 7.3 acres. Coordination with the US Army Corps of Engineers has occurred and will continue throughout the life of the proposed project. Section 404 permits for wetland and stream impacts will be obtained, and any wetlands identified will be avoided, minimized and/or mitigated according to US Army Corps of Engineer requirements.

- The United States Army Corps of Engineers (COE) recommended that the Department Biologist assess the areas that may be impacted by the proposed expansion of US 70 for the presence of wetlands and develop a wetland mitigation plan which minimizes impacts to wetlands and provides compensation for unavoidable impacts to wetlands.

Response: The Department Biologist identified eight wetland areas with a total wetland impact of approximately 7.3 acres. Coordination with the US Army Corps of Engineers has occurred and will continue throughout the life of the proposed project. Section 404 permits for wetland and stream impacts will be obtained, and any wetlands identified will be avoided, minimized and/or mitigated according to US Army Corps of Engineer requirements.

- The Chickasaw Nation stated that there was no known culturally sensitive or sacred sites in or near the proposed project site but requested that they be contacted and all work cease in the event any inadvertent discovery is made during construction, in accordance with applicable laws and regulations.

Response: Should subsurface archaeological materials be exposed during construction, the Contractor and Resident Engineer shall notify the Department Archaeologist in accordance with procedures set forth in the Oklahoma Department of Transportation's Standard Specifications for Highway Construction and the Planning Division's Manual for Oklahoma Highway Archaeological Survey Cultural Resources Staff and Department Consultants and coordination with the Chickasaw Nation will take place.

- The District Manager of the Little River Conservation District stated that his agency saw no problem related to the route chosen to improve US 70 through McCurtain County and welcomed this much needed improvement.

Response: The comment is noted.

- The Oklahoma State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) requested identification and documentation of any structures in excess of 45 years of age for determination of eligibility for inclusion on the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP).

Response: The Department Archaeologist in consultation with the SHPO regarding pre-1945 structures received a finding stating that the preferred alternative will have no impacts to properties on/or eligible to the National Register of Historic Places.

- The Oklahoma Archaeological Survey determined that there are listed archaeological sites in the project vicinity and requested a full field inspection to identify and document the known sites as well as locate and document any new sites that may be discovered.

Response: An initial archaeological field inspection of the preferred alignment was conducted by the Department Archaeologist in consultation with the State Archaeologist and it was determined that no impact to prehistoric cultural resources will occur.

- The Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) noted the presence of soil series that are considered prime farmlands.

Response: The site assessment criteria portion of Form AD-1006, *Farmland Conversion Rating Form*, was completed for this project and a rating below the maximum of 160 was obtained. The proposed improvements to US 70 will not negatively impact farmland production within Choctaw and McCurtain Counties.

- The Bureau of Reclamation stated that they had no projects in the vicinity of the proposed improvements to US 70.

Response: The comment is noted.

Corridor Study Public Involvement

The US 70 Feasibility Study's public involvement program included a series of public meetings and workshops. Initial public meetings were conducted in May of 1996 and July of 1996 focusing on route alternatives and project issues at particular locations. The final round of meetings were conducted in October of 1996 to present the recommended alignment routes and project priorities for the corridor.

Public Meeting

A public meeting was held on October 24, 2000 at the Hugo Elementary School located in Hugo, Oklahoma to discuss the proposed improvements to US 70 beginning approximately 3.0 miles east of the US 70/SH 93 junction east 24.0 miles to the junction of US 70/SH 98. A summary of this meeting can be found in Appendix F.

In addition, a meeting arranged and sponsored by the Valliant Chamber of Commerce was attended by Department representatives to answer questions regarding the proposed improvements to US 70 on January 11, 2001.

Public Hearing

A public hearing to consider the social, economic and environmental effects of the proposed project will be held at the earliest possible date. All comments generated by this process will be reviewed and considered prior to preparation of final design plans for the project.