

**FEDERAL HIGHWAY ADMINISTRATION
FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT**

FOR

IMPROVEMENTS TO I-80/I-380/U.S. 218/IA 27 SYSTEM INTERCHANGE

JOHNSON COUNTY, IOWA

IM-080-6(235)239- -OE-52

The Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) has determined that the project would not have any significant impact on the human environment. The finding of no significant impact is based on the attached environmental assessment, which the FHWA has evaluated independently and determined to discuss adequately and accurately the environmental issues and impacts of the proposed project. The environmental assessment provides sufficient evidence and analysis for determining that an environmental impact statement is not required.

The FHWA takes full responsibility for the accuracy, scope, and content of the environmental assessment.

5/24/2010

Date

Michael Scatelli

For Division Administrator
Federal Highway Administration

Federal Highway Administration
Finding of No Significant Impact
for
Improvements to I-80/I-380/U.S. 218/IA 27 System Interchange
Johnson County, Iowa

Description of the Proposed Action

The proposed action consists of improving the Interstate 80/Interstate 380/U.S. 218 (I-80/I-380/U.S. 218) System Interchange in Johnson County, Iowa (Figure 1). It involves replacing all loop ramps with directional ramps. I-80 would be upgraded to an eight-lane section (four lanes each direction). It would have a closed median with a barrier section separating directions of travel. To the east, the proposed eight-lane section would transition to the six existing lanes near the Coral Ridge/IA 965 interchange. To the west, the eight-lane section would transition to the four existing lanes at the Ireland Avenue interchange. I-380/U.S. 218 would be upgraded to a six-lane section through the system interchange. South of the interchange, U.S. 218 would transition back to the four-lane section near 355th Street SW. To the north, I-380 would transition back to the four-lane section south of Forevergreen Road.

Environmental Assessment Availability

The environmental assessment (EA) was signed on June 18, 2009. It was distributed to selected resource/regulatory agencies for review and comment. Notice of the EA's availability for review was published in the *Iowa City Press-Citizen* and the *North Liberty Leader* on August 12 and September 2, 2009 (see Appendix A). The EA was available for review at the Coralville Public Library and Tiffin's Springmier Community Library.

Review and Comment Period

The review and comment period for the environmental assessment ended October 12, 2009. Four federal or state agencies provided written comments on the environmental assessment. No public comment letters were received during the comment period. This finding of no significant impact (FONSI) includes a summary of the public hearing (see "Public Hearing"). A written record of the hearing was produced as a separate document.

Agency Comments

Agency comments are summarized below from the letters contained in Appendix B.

- The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) noted that placement of dredge or fill material into waters of the U.S. (including jurisdictional wetlands) requires Department of the Army authorization under Section 404 of the Clean Water Act.
- The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development stated that there would be no detrimental effects to any of its projects within the study area.
- The Iowa Department of Natural Resources (DNR) advised that any construction that bares the soil of an area greater than or equal to 1 acre may require a stormwater discharge permit from the Iowa DNR. It further stated that reasonable precautions must

be taken to prevent the discharge of fugitive dust during construction, referring to Iowa Administrative Code 567-23.3(2)"c." The DNR requested that it receive copies of any further correspondence between the Iowa DOT and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) regarding potential impact to state-endangered, federal candidate species eastern massasauga rattlesnake, and state- and federally-endangered Indiana bat.

- The Conservation and Recreation Division of Iowa DNR affirmed the Iowa DOT's intent to continue to work with the City of Coralville, USACE, and Iowa DNR to mitigate for impacts to parkland resulting from the project. It further requested that best management practices be used to control erosion and protect water quality.

Public Hearing

Notice of public hearing was published in the *North Liberty Leader* and the *Iowa City Press-Citizen* on August 12 and September 2, 2009. The hearing was held on September 15, 2009, at the Iowa City West High School in Iowa City from 5:00 to 7:00 PM. Forty-four people attended the hearing. Attendees discussed the project with Iowa DOT and consultant staff. Three written comment forms were submitted at or following the hearing. Questions asked and issues discussed at the hearing are summarized below:

- Comments that the cloverleaf interchange is the cause of many of the accidents and that its removal would be a good thing.
- Questions about the project timeline, in particular as it related to construction and property acquisition. There were inquiries about the right-of-way needs for the project and about how property values are determined.
- Questions about rerouting of Kansas Avenue in the southwest quadrant of the interchange.
- Questions about street connections from Ireland Avenue to Kansas Avenue.
- Suggestion from the City of Tiffin that the Kansas Avenue relocation be reoriented to meet the proposed 340th Street extension.
- Various questions regarding property access during construction.
- Questions about construction and temporary closures of the Jasper Avenue bridge over I-80.
- Comments from public officials in both North Liberty and Tiffin, that they would like the project to extend farther north on I-380 and include construction of an interchange at Forevergreen Road.
- Concerns about noise impacts to individual properties in the southeast quadrant of the interchange, and request for additional vegetative screening between properties and the interchange.

Appendix C contains copies of written comments and Iowa DOT's response letters.

Basis for Finding of No Significant Impact

The proposed interchange improvements require acquisition of 16 acres of property from Coralville Creekside Park, a 163-acre park located in the southeast quadrant of the interchange. FHWA determined the park is protected under Section 4(f) as a public park/recreation area. The City of Coralville (the agency with jurisdiction) concurred that the permanent incorporation of 16 acres of the park property into highway right-of-way will not affect the activities, features, and attributes that qualify the park for protection under Section 4(f), subject to mitigation measures that have been agreed upon in the Cooperative Agreement signed by the City and Iowa DOT (Appendix D contains a copy of the concurrence letter). The specific mitigation commitments from the Cooperative Agreement are detailed under "Special Conditions for Location Approval." Based on consideration of the mitigation and coordination with the City, FHWA has made a determination that the proposed project will have a *de minimis* impact on the property.

No state-listed plant or animal species were found within the project area, but potential habitat was found for the eastern massasauga rattlesnake, Indiana bat, and bald eagle. Determination of Effect forms were completed and submitted to USFWS for review and concurrence. In its letter dated March 11, 2010 (see Appendix B), the USFWS concurred that the proposed project would have no effect on the species or habitats of the federally threatened western prairie fringed orchid (*Platanthera praeclara*), the federally threatened prairie bush clover (*Lespedeza leptostachya*), the federally threatened eastern prairie fringed orchid (*Platanthera leucophaea*), and the federal candidate species eastern massasauga rattlesnake (*Sistrurus catenatus catenatus*). Regarding the Indiana bat (*Myotis sodalis*), as the project includes clearing woodland in areas with suitable Indiana bat habitat and potential species presence, the USFWS has stipulated several conditions to minimize habitat loss and avoid take. Based on these conditions (see "Special Conditions for Location Approval"), the USFWS concurs with the Iowa DOT's findings that the proposed project is not likely to adversely affect the endangered Indiana bat.

Potential impacts to human and natural resources were evaluated in the EA, and the evaluation of these resources documented the absence of significant impacts associated with implementation of the proposed project.

Special Conditions for Location Approval

Because the project is within the 100-year floodplain of Clear and Deer creeks, it would require a floodplain development permit from the Iowa DNR, which has been delegated authority by the Federal Emergency Management Agency to issue these permits.

Although traffic volumes at the interchange would increase in the future, noise levels are not expected to exceed FHWA noise abatement criteria. Noise effects will be considered when decisions are being made about future land use in the area of the reconstructed interchange.

The project will comply with the City of Coralville's stormwater ordinances, as specified in its MS-4 Storm Water Permit.

If the project affects the City's wetland mitigation site south and east of the project corridor, the DOT will take the actions necessary to assume responsibility for the parts of the City's wetland mitigation site required by the USACE.

Iowa DOT agrees to provide visual screening between the northbound U.S. 218 to eastbound I-80 ramp and the two barns located within Creekside Park property. Screening will be at least 10 feet above the centerline of the off-ramp elevations and constructed as an earthen berm where such construction can be feasibly designed and constructed. Where there is insufficient distance between the ramp and the barns to construct a 10-foot berm above the centerline of the off-ramp elevations, screening may be provided through landscaping and trees, or other features such as walls. The DOT will coordinate with and consider input from the City, and the City shall provide concurrence on the proposed landscaping plan.

The City purchased part of the parcel needed for roadway-right-of-way with a Resource Enhancement and Protection Grant, which restricts the use of the property. Accordingly, Iowa DOT will assume responsibility for coordinating with the Iowa DNR and any other state or federal agency to accomplish the land transfer in compliance with the grants terms and conditions. The Iowa DOT shall acquire a replacement parcel or reimburse the City for a replacement parcel of the approximate same size in within the Clear Creek watershed. Further, the DOT will acquire a replacement parcel in the Clear Creek Corridor or reimburse the City of any property needed for the Project in the northeast quadrant. The City will cooperate with the DOT to facilitate the granting of necessary permits from the IDNR and USACE as it pertains to the parcel being conveyed to the Iowa DOT by the City.

The DOT will allow the City to construct the Clear Creek Trail through the project area from the southerly right-of-way of I-80 to the westerly right-of-way line of I-380 before construction of the project. The City will consider the interchange design during the development of the trail and make reasonable effort to reduce future impacts to the interchange.

Clearing of trees or vegetation would occur within the period September 16 to April 14, which is outside the summer roosting months for Indiana bat.

The Iowa DOT will develop a forest management plan to restore (through tree planting), enhance (through management), and preserve woodland areas within and adjacent to the project corridor, as part of an Indiana bat mitigation plan.

Environmental Assessment Errata

Page 3, under section **4. Alternatives**, second sentence. Change “The Build Alternative” to “The No Build Alternative”.

Page 5, under **Screening Step 2**, first bullet. “Because the southbound to eastbound loop in the south~~west~~ quadrant . . .”

Page 5, Under **Screening Step 2**, third bullet. Add clarification to sentence as follows: “The last loop to be removed would be the westbound to southbound ramp *in the northwest quadrant, . . .*”

Page 9, under section **5.1.1, Land Use**, third paragraph, last sentence. Replace “(also within Coralville)” with “(within the City of Tiffin and Johnson County)”.

Page 20, under section **5.4, Cumulative Impacts**, second bullet. Replace “Westcorp Industrial Park” with “WestCor Business Park”.

Page 23, **Table 10.** Add the following row:

Permit or Approval	Granting Agency	Reason
MS-4 Stormwater Permit	City of Coralville	Per the agreement between the City and Iowa DOT <i>de minimis</i> agreement for impact to Coralville Park property, the ordinance addresses City requirements relating to stormwater quality, construction, erosion control and runoff, and illicit discharges.

Page 24, **Table 11.** Delete row 10, "Iowa Department of Natural Resources / Environmental Protection Division."

Appendix A
Notice of EA Availability

**NOTICE OF LOCATION DESIGN PUBLIC HEARING
AND ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT AVAILABILITY FOR THE
PROPOSED IMPROVEMENT OF THE I-80/I-380/U.S. 218/IA 27
SYSTEM INTERCHANGE IN JOHNSON COUNTY AND NOTICE TO
ACQUIRE PRIVATE PROPERTY FOR SAID PROJECT**

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN:

Notice is hereby given to all interested persons that an Open Forum Location Design Public Hearing will be held on September 15, 2009, between 5 and 7 p.m., in the cafeteria, Iowa City West High School, 2901 Melrose Avenue, Iowa City, Iowa, to discuss the proposed improvement of the I-80/I-380/U.S. 218/IA 27 system interchange in Johnson County. The purpose of this hearing is to discuss the Environmental Assessment (EA) completed for this project, the two alternatives, the Build and No-Build, carried forward for further review and their anticipated impacts.

The Build Alternative provides for replacing the four loops in the interchange with directional ramps; widening I-80 to eight lanes from the Ireland Avenue interchange, two miles west of I-380, east to near the Coral Ridge/IA 965 interchange and widening I-380/U.S. 218/IA 27 to six lanes from north of the Melrose Avenue interchange north approximately four miles to just south of the Forevergreen Road overpass. I-80 mainline widening would provide four 12-foot wide lanes of travel in each direction, 12-foot inside and outside shoulders and a closed median with barrier. The I-380/U.S. 218/IA 27 roadway would provide three 12-foot wide travel lanes in each direction with 12-foot wide inside and outside shoulders and a grass median. Access rights were previously acquired for I-80, I-380 and U.S. 218/IA 27. Jasper and Kansas avenues would be modified to accommodate the improvement. A new bridge would be constructed on Jasper Avenue over I-80. Kansas Avenue S.W. would be relocated to the west and south and would provide access to residences from the south instead of the north.

Because of funding constraints, it may be necessary to construct the build alternative in two or more construction phases. If adequate funds are available, the improvement could be constructed without staging.

The No-Build Alternative would be the continuation of the highway system as it exists. It would not address the safety needs, increasing traffic volumes and substandard geometrics of the roadway within the project corridor. This alternative would not satisfy the Project Purpose and Need requirements. However, it is carried forward to serve as a baseline for comparison with the Build Alternative.

Coralville Creekside Park, a Section 4(f) Resource, is within the proposed project limits and is subject to protection as a public park/recreation area. This is your opportunity to review and comment on the proposed *de minimis* effect of the system interchange project on portions of Coralville Creekside Park. *De minimis* impacts on publicly owned parks, recreation areas, and wildlife and waterfowl refuges are defined as those that do not "adversely affect the activities, features and attributes" of the Section 4(f) Resource.

The Iowa Department of Transportation (DOT) in cooperation with the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) has prepared an EA for this project. Copies may be obtained by contacting either of the following:

Jim Rost, Director
Office of Location and Environment
Iowa Department of Transportation
800 Lincoln Way
Ames, Iowa 50010
Telephone: 515-239-1798

Lubin Quinones, Division Administrator
Federal Highway Administration
Iowa Division Office
105 Sixth Street
Ames, Iowa 50010
Telephone: 515-233-7300

A copy of the EA will be available for inspection at the hearing and is also available for viewing at the Coralville Public Library, 1401 5th Street, Coralville, Iowa, or at the Springmier Community Library, 311 W Marengo Road, Tiffin, Iowa.

A review deadline of October 12, 2009, has been established for receipt of comments on the EA. All comments received on this document by that date will be considered by the Iowa Department of Transportation and the Federal Highway Administration in their evaluation of the environmental impacts of the project. Comments on the EA should be submitted to the Director, Office of Location and Environment, at the above address.

This public hearing will be conducted utilizing an open forum format. No formal presentation will be made. Interested individuals are encouraged to attend the hearing anytime between 5 and 7 p.m. to express their views and ask questions about the proposed improvement and the EA. Oral and written statements will be accepted at the public hearing.

For general information regarding the proposed improvement, or the public hearing, contact Catherine Cutler, District Planner, District 6 Office, Iowa Department of Transportation, P.O. Box 3150, 430 16th Avenue S.W., Cedar Rapids, Iowa 52406-3150, telephone 319-364-0235 or 800-866-4368, e-mail catherine.cutler@dot.iowa.gov.

Written statements and related exhibits, in place of or in addition to oral statements made at the public hearing, will be accepted at the hearing or may be submitted to the Office of Location and Environment, Iowa DOT, 800 Lincoln Way, Ames, Iowa, 50010. All written material received by October 12, 2009, will be included in the hearing transcript.

All persons interested in the project are invited to attend this hearing. The meeting room is accessible for persons with disabilities. If you require special accommodations at the meeting, please notify Ms. Cutler by September 9, 2009, so arrangements can be made.

NOTICE TO PROPERTY OWNERS

A governmental body which proposes to acquire property under the power of eminent domain for a public improvement project is required to give notice of a public hearing to all owners and contract purchasers of record of agricultural land that may be subject to condemnation.

1. DESCRIPTION OF THE PROPOSED IMPROVEMENT.

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that the Iowa Department of Transportation (DOT) will consider approving the following described project:

The proposed improvement of the I-80/I-380/U.S. 218/IA 27 system interchange in Johnson County.

2. PRIVATE PROPERTY MAY BE ACQUIRED BY PURCHASE OR CONDEMNATION.

If the Iowa DOT approves the above-described project, the DOT will be required to acquire property for the proposed improvements. The DOT will attempt to purchase the required property by good faith negotiations; however, it may condemn those properties, which it is unable to purchase. The proposed location of the above-described public improvement is shown in the EA.

3. IOWA DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION PROCESS TO DECIDE TO FUND THE DESIGN, TO SELECT THE ROUTE OR SITE LOCATION, OR TO ACQUIRE OR CONDEMN PROPERTY INTERESTS.

In order to acquire the necessary properties and property interests required for the project, the Iowa Department of Transportation is required to approve the location of the project. The DOT will hold a public hearing to present to the public the proposed improvement and the anticipated impacts of the improvement.

Persons whose property may be affected by the project, as well as the general public, may comment on the project at the hearing. The comments will be presented to Iowa DOT staff. Based in part on the information received at the hearing, the Iowa DOT will select the location for the project and decide whether to fund the site-specific design and to authorize by purchase or condemnation the acquisition of right of way for the project.

4. OPPORTUNITY FOR PUBLIC INPUT.

As previously stated in this notice, an Open Forum Location Design Public Hearing will be held on September 15, 2009, between 5 and 7 p.m. in the cafeteria, Iowa City West High School, 2901 Melrose Avenue, Iowa City, Iowa. Iowa DOT staff will be available to answer questions about the proposed improvement and the Environmental Assessment. Written statements can be submitted to the DOT at the hearing, or sent to Office of Location and Environment, Iowa DOT, 800 Lincoln Way, Ames, Iowa 50010.

5. IOWA DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION CONTACT.

For information regarding the proposed improvement contact:

Catherine Cutler
District Planner
District 6 Office
Iowa Department of Transportation
P. O. Box 3150, 430 16th Avenue S.W.
Cedar Rapids, Iowa 52406-3150
Telephone 319-364-0235 or 800-866-4368
e-mail catherine.cutler@dot.iowa.gov

This notice is given by authority of the Iowa Department of Transportation.

This notice is not an offer to buy land nor is it an offer to provide relocation assistance. Affected property owners are not required to move from their residences or relocate their businesses at this time. Eligibility for relocation benefits will not occur until after an offer to purchase has been made to individual property owners.

To view information concerning this project please go to the following Web site:
<http://www.iowadot.gov/pim>

Federal and state laws prohibit employment and/or public accommodation discrimination on the basis of age, color, creed, disability, gender identity, national origin, pregnancy, race, religion, sex, sexual orientation or veteran's status. If you believe you have been discriminated against, please contact the Iowa Civil Rights Commission at 800-457-4416 or Iowa Department of Transportation's affirmative action officer. If you need accommodations because of a disability to access the Iowa Department of Transportation's services, contact the agency's affirmative action officer at 800-262-0003.

Appendix B
Comment Letters Regarding the Environmental
Assessment

Department of the Army to Iowa DOT, September 2, 2009

HUD to Iowa DOT, October 7, 2009

Coralville to Iowa DOT, October 8, 2009

Iowa DOT to Coralville, October 28, 2009

Iowa DNR to Iowa DOT, October 12, 2009

Iowa DNR to Iowa DOT, October 12, 2009

U.S. DOI to Iowa DOT, March 11, 2010



REPLY TO
ATTENTION OF:

DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
ROCK ISLAND DISTRICT, CORPS OF ENGINEERS
CLOCK TOWER BUILDING - P.O. BOX 2004
ROCK ISLAND, ILLINOIS 61204-2004

September 2, 2009

Planning, Programs, and
Project Management Division

RECEIVED

SEP 08 2009

OFFICE OF LOCATION & ENVIRONMENT

Mr. James Rost
Director, Office of Location and Environment
Iowa Department of Transportation
800 Lincoln Way
Ames, Iowa 50010

Dear Mr. Rost:

I am writing in response to your letter dated June 26, 2009, with the attached Environmental Assessment (EA), concerning proposed Interstate 80/Interstate 380 (I-80/380) System Interchange in Johnson County, Iowa (Iowa DOT Project Number IMN-080-6(235)239-0E-52).

Rock Island District staff reviewed your EA. Any proposed placement of dredged or fill material into waters of the United States (including jurisdictional wetlands) requires Department of the Army authorization under Section 404 of the Clean Water Act. Based on the information you provided, a Section 404 permit will be required for this project. A completed application packet should be submitted to the Rock Island District for processing as soon as possible. The application should include final plans, wetland delineations, details of proposed impacts to wetlands and other waters of the United States, a statement explaining how impacts associated with the proposed activity are to be avoided, a description of planned components that are intended to minimize impacts to wetlands and streams, and a complete wetland/stream mitigation plan.

No other concerns surfaced during our review. Thank you for the opportunity to comment on your proposal. If you need more information, please call Mr. Randy Kraciun of our Economic and Environmental Analysis Branch, telephone 309/794-5174.

You may find additional information about the Corps' Rock Island District on our website at <http://www.mvr.usace.army.mil>. To find out about other Districts within the Corps, you may visit: <http://www.usace.army.mil/about/Pages/Locations.aspx>.

Sincerely,

Kenneth A. Barr
Chief, Economic and Environmental
Analysis Branch



U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development

Iowa State Office
Federal Building
210 Walnut Street, Room 239
Des Moines, Iowa 50309-2155

RECEIVED

OCT - 8 2009

OFFICE OF LOCATION & ENVIRONMENT

October 7, 2009

James Rost
Director, Office of Location & Environment
Iowa Department of Transportation
800 Lincoln Way
Ames, IA 50010

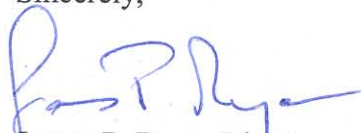
Subject: Interstate 80 / Interstate 380 (I-80/380) System Interchange
National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) Document
Iowa DOT Project Number IMN-080-6(235)239-0E-52

Dear Mr. Rost:

We have received your inquiry to the subject location for Environmental Assessment Documentation and have reviewed such.

We do not contemplate any detrimental effects on any of our projects in the area under review.

Sincerely,



James P. Ryan, Director
Des Moines Multifamily
Program Center



October 8, 2009

Mr. James Rost
Director, Office of Location and Environment
Iowa Department of Transportation
800 Lincoln Way
Ames, IA 50010

RECEIVED
OCT 18 2009
OFFICE OF LOCATION & ENVIRONMENT

Re: I-80/I-380 System Interchange
Environmental Assessment
Comments

Dear Mr. Rost:

I have reviewed this document and offer the following comments:

1. Page 3, Section 4, second sentence – I think the sentence should say.. The No Build Alternative, alternatives considered...
2. Page 5, Screening Step 2
 - a. First Bullet – SB to EB loop is in the southwest quadrant not the southeast quadrant.
 - b. Third Bullet – WB to SB loop is in the northwest quadrant.
 - c. Last paragraph – What are the ‘publicly perceived safety issues with the loop ramps’?
3. Page 9, Section 5.1.1, third paragraph, last sentence – Lands southwest of the interchange are in Tiffin and Johnson County - not Coralville.
4. Page 10, Coralville Creekside Park – We have a pending agreement with the DOT which will address the *De minimis* impacts issue to this park. Presuming approval of this agreement, we will concur with the concept of this project.
5. Page 14, second paragraph – I believe the rules have changed requiring a higher wetlands mitigation ratio than 1.5:1.
6. Page 19, Section 5.3.1, second paragraph – The City of Coralville intends to have outdoor human use – festivals, outdoor meetings, outdoor leisure activities, etc. - around the existing barns on our property. The closest barn is located within 30 feet of the proposed future right-of-way line and 110 feet from the proposed off ramp.
7. Page 20, Section 5.4, second bullet – The industrial park is WestCor Business Park not Westcorp Industrial Park.
8. Page 23, Table 10 – The design and construction of this project will have to abide by the applicable City of Coralville storm water quality, construction

City Administration
1512 7th Street
Coralville, Iowa 52241-
1708
Ph: 319-248-1700
Fax: 319-248-1894

erosion control and runoff, and illicit discharge ordinances and permits which are defined in our pending agreement.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on this document.

The I-80/I-380 Systems Interchange Improvements Project is a much needed safety project for interstate traffic as well as region traffic in eastern Iowa.

Sincerely,



Dan Holderness
City Engineer
1512 7th Street
Coralville, IA 52241-0127
(319) 248-1720
dholderness@ci.coralville.ia.us

CC Jim Schnoebelen, District 6 Engineer



Iowa Department of Transportation

800 Lincoln Way, Ames, IA 50010

515-239-1798

Fax: 515-239-1726

October 28, 2009

Mr. Dan Holderness
City Engineer
1512-7th Street
Coralville, IA 52241-0127

Dear Mr. Holderness:

Thank you for your October 8, 2009 comment letter (enclosed) on the Environmental Assessment (EA) for the I-80/380 System Interchange project. Your comments in items 1, 2a, 2b, 3, 7, and 8 will be addressed in a section of the Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) that discusses errata in the EA. Comments 2c, 4, 5, and 6 are addressed below.

- 2c. Iowa DOT receives public complaints about the loop ramps at the interchange. Weaving distance between the loops, coupled with the high volume of traffic, influence the public's perception of the safety of the interchange and the loop configuration. This is especially a concern for the south loops, due to the vertical crest west of the interchange and the effect it has on visibility as the driver approaches the interchange. The EA language "publicly perceived safety issues" is a reference to those complaints.
4. Iowa DOT acknowledges that there is a pending agreement between the City and DOT which would mitigate the project's effects to Coralville Creekside Park to achieve a *de minimis* impact determination.
5. You are correct that higher ratios may be required for wetland mitigation. However, we won't know what ratios are required until we apply for a Section 404 permit from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. The text of the EA on page 10 acknowledges this uncertainty by stating that wetland impacts will be mitigated at a "minimum ratio" of 1.5:1.

Mr. Dan Holderness
Page 2
October 28, 2009

6. The City of Coralville intends to have outdoor human use such as festivals, outdoor meetings, and outdoor leisure activities in the area of the existing barns in the southeast quadrant of the interchange. Page 11 of the EA acknowledges that the barns will be closer to the proposed ramp than they are to the existing roadway. However, as described on page 19 of the EA, although traffic volumes at the interchange would increase in the future, noise levels are not expected to exceed the Federal Highway Administration noise abatement criterion. The pending agreement between the City and Iowa DOT includes visual screening between the proposed ramp and the barns.

Thank you again for your comments. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me at (515) 239-1798.

Sincerely,



James Rost, Director
Office of Location & Environment

JR:JV:sm

Enclosure

cc: Ken Yanna, District 6
Cathy Cutler, District 6
Roger Larsen, Location
Tom Parham, FHWA
Mike LaPietra, FHWA



STATE OF IOWA

CHESTER J. CULVER, GOVERNOR
PATTY JUDGE, LT. GOVERNOR

DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES
RICHARD A. LEOPOLD, DIRECTOR

October 12, 2009

James Rost
Iowa Department of Transportation
800 Lincoln Way
Ames, IA 50010

RE: Environmental Review for Natural Resources
Interstate 80 / Interstate 380 (I-80/380) System Interchange
Environmental Assessment
Iowa DOT Project Number IMN-080-6(235)239-0E-52
Johnson County
Section 22, 27, 33-36, Township 80N, Range 7W
Section 2, Township 79N, Range 7W

Dear Mr. Rost:

Thank you for inviting Department comment on the impact of this project. It is the Department's understanding that the study area was surveyed for state- and federally-listed threatened and endangered species in July 2004 and April and July 2008. No state-listed plant or animal species were found, but potential habitat was found in the proposed project footprint for the state-endangered, federal candidate species Eastern Massasauga Rattlesnake (*Sistrurus catenatus*) and state- and federally-endangered Indiana Bat (*Myotis sodalis*).

The Iowa Department of Transportation will continue to coordinate with the US Fish and Wildlife Service for concurrence that the project may affect, but is not likely to adversely affect these two species. The Department requests that copies of this correspondence are forwarded to Inga Foster for inclusion in the project file.

This letter is a record of review for protected species, rare natural communities, state lands and waters in the project area, including review by personnel representing state parks, preserves, recreation areas, fisheries and wildlife but does not include comment from the Environmental Services Division of this Department. This letter does not constitute a permit. Other permits may be required from the Department or other state or federal agencies before work begins on this project.

Any construction activity that bares the soil of an area greater than or equal to one acre including clearing, grading or excavation may require a storm water discharge permit from the Department. Construction activities may include the temporary or permanent storage of dredge material. For more information regarding this matter, please contact Ruth Rosdail at (515) 281-6782.

The Department administers regulations that pertain to fugitive dust IAW Iowa Administrative Code 567-23.3(2)“c.” All persons shall take reasonable precautions to prevent the discharge of visible emissions of fugitive dusts beyond the lot line of property during construction, alteration, repairing or demolishing of buildings, bridges or other vertical structures or haul roads. All questions regarding fugitive dust regulations should be directed to Jim McGraw at (515) 242-5167.

If you have questions about this letter or require further information, please contact me at (515) 281-8967.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Inga Foster". The signature is written in a cursive style with a blue ink color.

Inga Foster
Environmental Specialist
Conservation and Recreation Division

FILE COPY: Inga Foster

Tracking Number: 4082



STATE OF IOWA

CHESTER J. CULVER, GOVERNOR
PATTY JUDGE, LT. GOVERNOR

DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES
RICHARD A. LEOPOLD, DIRECTOR

October 12, 2009

Ms. Janet Vine
Iowa Department of Transportation
800 Lincoln Way
Ames, IA 50010

Subject: Interstate 80 / Interstate 380 System Interchange Environmental Assessment
IDOT # IMN-080-6(235)239-0E-52

Dear Ms. Vine:

Thank you for inviting our comments on the impact of the above referenced project. We have reviewed the information and have the following comments:

Due to the proposed impacts within the project footprint which includes Coralville Creekside Park (the City of Coralville has a mitigation site within the park), the Iowa Department of Transportation will continue work with the Corps of Engineers and the Iowa Department of Natural Resources (IDNR) to adequately mitigate for all impacts resulting from this project.

We would ask that Best Management Practices be used to control erosion and protect water quality at and near the project. We appreciate all your efforts to avoid and minimize impacts to wetlands and waters of the U.S. Mitigation for unavoidable stream and wetland impacts will be required.

On page 24, Table 11 Agency and Tribal Coordination states that comments were requested from IDNR / Environmental Protection Division as well as from the IDNR / Environmental Services Division. The IDNR Environmental Protection Division was renamed the Environmental Services Division.

If you have any questions or require additional information from us, please write me at the address shown below or call me at (515) 281-6615.

Sincerely,

Christine M. Schwake

Christine M. Schwake
Environmental Specialist

10/12/09 HA

Post-it® Fax Note	7671	Date	10/12/09	# of pages	▶ 1
To	Janet Vine	From	Chris Schwake		
Co./Dept.	IDOT	Co.	IDNR		
Phone #	515 239 1467	Phone #	515 281 6615		
Fax #	515 239 1726	Fax #	515 281 8895		



United States Department of the Interior



FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE

Rock Island Field Office

1511 47th Avenue

Moline, Illinois 61265

Phone: (309) 757-5800 Fax: (309) 757-5807

IN REPLY REFER
TO:
FWS/RIFO

March 11, 2010

Mr. Scott Marler
Iowa Department of Transportation
800 Lincoln Way
Ames, Iowa 50010

Dear Mr. Marler:

We have reviewed your request for concurrences for the proposed I-80/380 System Interchange (IMN-080-6(2350239-0E-52) in Johnson County, Iowa, and its impacts on the following federally listed species: the endangered Indiana bat (*Myotis sodalis*), the federally threatened western prairie fringed orchid (*Platanthera praeclara*), the federally threatened prairie bush clover (*Lespedeza leptostachya*), the federally threatened eastern prairie fringed orchid (*Platanthera leucophaea*), and the federal candidate species, eastern massasauga rattlesnake (*Sistrurus catenatus catenatus*). With regards to the three plant species and the massasauga rattlesnake, we concur with your findings that the proposed project will have no effect on those species or their habitats.

However, with regard to Indiana bats, the project includes clearing woodland in areas with suitable Indiana bat habitat and potential species presence. The proposed project will result in a loss of potential Indiana bat summer roosting and maternity habitat. We understand that clearing will be done when bats are not present and that in addition to avoiding direct impacts to the species, plans will be developed to restore (through tree planting), enhance (through management), and preserve woodland areas within and adjacent to the project corridor. An active forest management plan will be required to be developed for the remaining existing timber stands that will be preserved as part of the mitigation plan. The habitat improvements provided by managing the existing timber will aid in offsetting the temporal lag time for the mitigation tree plantings which will be of little value for Indiana bats for many years. The Service will work closely with IDOT to implement the plan and monitor the known population of Indiana bats in the area to ensure their continued success.

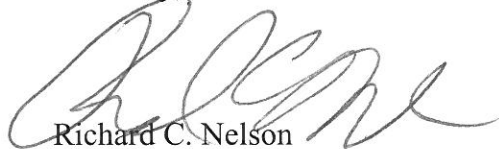
Based on the above measures to minimize habitat loss and avoid take, we concur with your findings that the proposed project is not likely to adversely affect the endangered Indiana bat. Should the project be modified or new information indicate endangered species may be affected, consultation should be initiated.

Mr. Scott Marler

2

Thank you for the opportunity to provide comments. If you have any additional questions or concerns, please contact Joe Slater of my staff.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Richard C. Nelson', written in a cursive style.

Richard C. Nelson
Field Supervisor

cc: IADNR (Howell)

S:\Office Users\Joe\baconcurnlaaidot.doc

Appendix C
Public Comments and DOT Responses



Iowa Department of Transportation

HIGHWAY DIVISION, OFFICE OF LOCATION AND ENVIRONMENT, 515-239-1225

Citizen Comments

JOHNSON COUNTY

IMN-80-6(235)239--OE-52

I am looking for more info as to similar construction projects the DOT has taken on within our state. Is this information available? If so is it a matter of public record. I would like to see things like estimated impacts on homes, what was considered being so close to a home to make it undesired living for the resident, etc. If that was disagreed by the state vs resident how it was settled? Also how is the price of the land taken estimated? And if the lowering of future value of a home made closer to the noise/road/project taken into consideration & if it was - was a reimbursement made for that fact? Would there be any sort of wall/tree line planted to lessen any impact of homes being made closer to such projects?

Thank You!

PLEASE PRINT

Name: Cristine M. Klein

Address: 3351 Kansas Ave SW
Oxford, IA 52322

Phone: (319) 541-4966

E-mail: cristie7789@yahoo.com

I (do do not)
desire a response.

Written statements received by
October 12, 2009, will be included
in the public hearing transcript.

**District 6
430 Sixteenth Avenue SW
P.O. Box 3150, Cedar Rapids, IA 52406-3150**

**PHONE: 319-364-0235
FAX: 319-364-9614**

Cristine Klein
3351 Kansas Avenue SW
Oxford, IA 52322

December 21, 2009
Ref.: IMN-80-6(235)—OE-52
Johnson County

Dear Ms. Klein,

Thank you for your comments regarding proposed changes to the I-80/I-380 systems interchange. The project is currently not funded to proceed to final design, land acquisition or construction. There will be further notice to you if the project continues and more opportunities to provide comments should it receive funding.

If the project becomes funded, the Iowa Department of Transportation (DOT) will need to acquire the property rights necessary for this project. The DOT is required to provide compensation for the diminishment in value as a result of the acquisition of property rights. Typically compensation is based upon an appraisal provided by the DOT. Owners are provided several options for resolving any disagreements. The options will be explained fully at the time of acquisition and are also available in the enclosed pamphlet "Highways and Your Land."

Your property appears approximately 300-400 feet from the flyover ramp. It is a circumstance that is a single residence issue and actually beyond the distance for consideration of a special noise abatement design feature. It would appear to be a situation where even though some traffic is moved closer to the property, it must be considered an unavoidable effect of an improvement project to serve the safety and convenience of the public. This is not an uncommon occurrence on major transportation system projects.

If you have further questions or comments, please contact me.

Very truly yours,

Catherine Cutler
District 6 Planner

CC Ken Yanna, P.E., District 6 Office
Roger Larsen, P.E., Office of Location and Environment
Gary Hood, Office of Location and Environment



Iowa Department of Transportation

HIGHWAY DIVISION, OFFICE OF LOCATION AND ENVIRONMENT, 515-239-1225

Citizen Comments

**JOHNSON COUNTY
IMN-80-6(235)239--OE-52**

Thanks

Professionally presented

PLEASE PRINT

Name: Arleigh Chemical
Address: 1450 High Country Rd
Coronet Iowa 52241

Phone: _____

E-mail: ANSC@AVALON.NAT

I (do do not)
desire a response.

Written statements received by
October 12, 2009, will be included
in the public hearing transcript.



Iowa Department of Transportation

HIGHWAY DIVISION, OFFICE OF LOCATION AND ENVIRONMENT, 515-239-1225

Citizen Comments

JOHNSON COUNTY

IMN-80-6(235)239--OE-52

As a part-owner of a parcel of land that will be impacted by this project, I have no concerns or issues giving up the ground that will be required. ~~As a~~ As a business owner, the changes contemplated will have a positive impact on the safety of my employees, ~~and~~ customers and vendors who depend on this interchange to get to and from Hawkeye Foodservice Distribution. The current design, along with too much speed, has contributed to too many accidents over the years. It's a much needed change as the area grows.

PLEASE PRINT

Name:

Jeff A. Beaverman

Address:

Hawkeye Foodservice Distribution, Inc.
PO Box 1820 Iowa City, IA 52241

Phone:

319-645-2193

E-mail:

jeffb@hawkeyefoodservice.com

I (do do not)
desire a response.

Written statements received by
October 12, 2009, will be included
in the public hearing transcript.

Appendix D
City of Coralville 4(f) Correspondence



Iowa Department of Transportation

District 6 Office
430 Sixteenth Avenue SW
P.O. Box 3150
Cedar Rapids, IA 52406-3150

PHONE: 319-364-0235
FAX: 319-364-9614

January 13, 2010

Ref: IMN-80-6(235)239—0E-52
Johnson County
City of Coralville
Agreement No. 2009-16-296

Mr. Dan Holderness, P. E.
City Engineer/City of Coralville
1512 7th Street
Coralville, IA 52241-0127

SUBJECT: I-80 / I-380 System Interchange -Coralville Creekside Park-Section 4(f) effects

Dear Mr. Holderness:

The Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) determined that Coralville Creekside Park, a publicly owned park/recreation area, is a protected property under 49 USC 303, commonly referred to as Section 4(f) of the U.S. Department of Transportation Act of 1966. As described in the I-80 / I-380 System Interchange Environmental Assessment (EA), a strip of approximately 16 acres of the park adjacent to the southeast quadrant of the interchange and adjacent to I-80 will be acquired and converted to transportation use for reconstruction of the system interchange. After considering any measures that are in place to avoid, minimize, and mitigate the impact, FHWA may determine that the impact to the park is *de minimis*. *De minimis* impacts on publicly owned parks and recreation areas are defined as those that do not adversely affect the activities, features, and attributes that qualify the property for protection under Section 4(f).

The City of Coralville and the Iowa Department of Transportation (DOT) have signed and executed a cooperative agreement (enclosed) that identifies the measures that the DOT will implement to mitigate the effects of the I-80 / I-380 System Interchange project on Coralville Creekside Park. In consideration of the mitigation measures, it is determined that the I-80 / I-380 System Interchange project will not adversely affect the activities, features, and attributes that qualify the Coralville Creekside Park for protection under Section 4(f).

If you concur with this determination (reference item 2.B of the enclosed cooperative agreement), please sign the concurrence line below and return this letter.

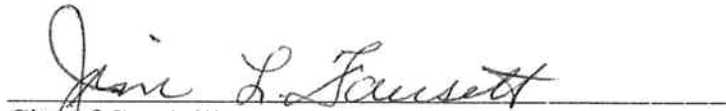
Sincerely,



James R. Schnoebelen, P. E.
District 6 Engineer

Enclosure (1)

cc: Roger Larsen, Office of Location and Environment/Iowa DOT-Ames
Janet Vine, Office of Location and Environment (NEPA)/Iowa DOT-Ames
Tom Parham, FHWA-Ames
Mike LaPietra, FHWA-Ames



City of Coralville

3/31/10

Date

Sincerely,

James R. Schnoebelen, P. E.
District 6 Engineer
Iowa Department of Transportation

JRS/sjb