

State College Area Connector Project August 2024 Public Open House Meeting



February 2025

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Overview

The Pennsylvania Department of Transportation (PennDOT), in cooperation with the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and coordination with the Centre County Metropolitan Planning Organization, completed the final State College Area Connector (SCAC) Planning and Environmental Linkages (PEL) Study Report in June 2023. In a letter dated September 14, 2023, FHWA accepted the PEL Report findings and determined that an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) is the appropriate level of documentation in accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) for the future SCAC Project. A Notice of Intent (NOI) to prepare an EIS was published in the Federal Register on July 24, 2024 with a 30-day comment period. The NOI and associated comments are included in **Appendix A**.

On August 15, 2024, PennDOT hosted a public open house meeting as part of the EIS scoping phase of project development. The EIS scoping phase is an early and open process to determine the scope of issues for analysis in an EIS, including identifying the important issues and eliminating unimportant issues from further study. The meeting presented work efforts that have been completed since the PEL Study including a revised purpose and need, detailed environmental mapping, and refined alternatives.

The meeting was held at the Mount Nittany Middle school. Meeting materials were made available on the study website (www.PennDOT.gov/SCAC) on August 12, 2024, with an open public comment period from August 15, 2024, to August 30, 2024.

This report documents the open house public meeting notification process, meeting contents, and comments received with associated responses.

Meeting Notification and Advertisement

A variety of methods were used to notify review agencies, elected and public officials, citizens, stakeholders, and local leaders about the SCAC open house public meeting. The following section identifies the notification process.

Agency Coordination Meeting

An Agency Coordination Meeting was held on July 24, 2024, with the cooperating and participating agencies. The meeting included a presentation that provided a project update, a review of open house public meeting information with an invitation for the resource agencies to attend the meeting, and initial discussions on holding an agency field view. The Agency Coordination Meeting email invitation, agenda, and presentation are included in **Appendix B**.

Public Officials' Invitation and Meeting

A public officials' public meeting briefing was held at the Boalsburg Fire Company on July 31, 2024, from 6:00 P.M. to 8:00 P.M. Letter invitations were sent via email to 26 public officials and government partners on July 22, 2024. The purpose of the public

officials' public meeting briefing was to present the open house meeting materials for review, provide an opportunity for questions and comments prior to the information being made available to the public, and officially invite them to the public open house meeting. A presentation was provided to the officials that depicted the draft exhibits which would be utilized at the August 2024 open house public meetings. Additionally, the exhibits were printed and displayed for more detailed review and discussion by the public officials. General concerns communicated during the meeting included: potential residential and commercial displacements, overall timing of the project, access, and overall cost and funding of the proposed alternatives. **Figures 1 and 2** show the public officials meeting open house and presentation, respectively. The letter invitation emailed to public officials, presentation, and meeting sign-in sheets are included in **Appendix C**.



Figure 1 – Public Official Open House



Figure 2 – Public Official Presentation

Public Meeting - Email Invitations

Public meeting invitations were sent via e-mail to 1,449 interested parties (e.g., property and business owners, etc.) from the website mailing list on August 2, 2024, August 6, 2024, and August 13, 2024. The invitation included the dates, times, and locations for the open house public meeting. A copy of the invitation is included in **Appendix D**.

Property Owner Letters

Public meeting invitations were mailed to 613 parties (property and business owners, etc.) located within the project area. A copy of the flyer graphic which was also used as the

email invitation graphic is included in **Appendix E**. A list of the names and addresses who were provided with the letter is contained in the project technical files.

Every Door Direct Mail Notification

Mail notifications were delivered via the US Postal Service (USPS) Every Door Direct Mail service to mailing routes in Centre Hall and Boalsburg on August 9, 2024. The mailing route maps, USPS receipts, and a copy of the SCAC postcard are found in **Appendix F**.

Outreach to the Amish Community

Targeted outreach was conducted with the local Amish community to provide notification of the open house public meetings. Three Amish church districts are located adjacent to the SCAC project area: West Penns Valley Church District, West Brush Valley Church District, and Nittany Valley Church District. Paper copies of the open house public meeting flyers were mailed to each of the church districts on August 6, 2024. Copies of the transmittal letter providing multiple copies of the open house public meeting flyer are located in **Appendix G**.

Media Notification

The open house public meeting was advertised in the Centre Daily Times on Sunday, July 28, 2024, and Sunday, August 11, 2024. An advertisement ran in the Lewistown Sentinel on Saturday, July 27, 2024, and Saturday, August 10, 2024. **Appendix H** contains copies of the newspaper advertisements.

Press Releases

As part of the public involvement process, an official Press Release was issued by PennDOT's District 2 Press Office on July 24, 2024, to announce the dates, times, and details for the open house public meetings. Press Releases were distributed to major media outlets in the Centre County region. Copies of the press releases are included in **Appendix I**.

Media Coverage

Several news outlets ran stories on the August 2024 open house public meetings and their news reports provided the meeting dates and times, locations, and details about the project. Media coverage included an article by StateCollege.com on July 26, 2024, an article by Centre Daily times on July 26, 2024, an article by WPSU on July 26, 2024, a news report by WTAJ on July 26, 2024, and an article by CentreCountyGazette.com on August 1, 2024.

Specific post-meeting media coverage included a news report by ABC 23 on August 16, 2024, a news report and article by WJAC on August 15, 2024, an article by WPSU on August 16, 2024, and an article by WTAJ on August 15, 2024. **Appendix J** contains copies of the news reports and articles.

PennDOT Social Media

An open house public meeting notification was posted on PennDOT District 2-0's X (formerly Twitter) account. PennDOT also posted meeting announcements via their 511PAStateCollege account on July 30, 2024, August 5, 2024, and August 7, 2024. **Figure 3** shows an example of a meeting post issued for the SCAC open house public meeting.

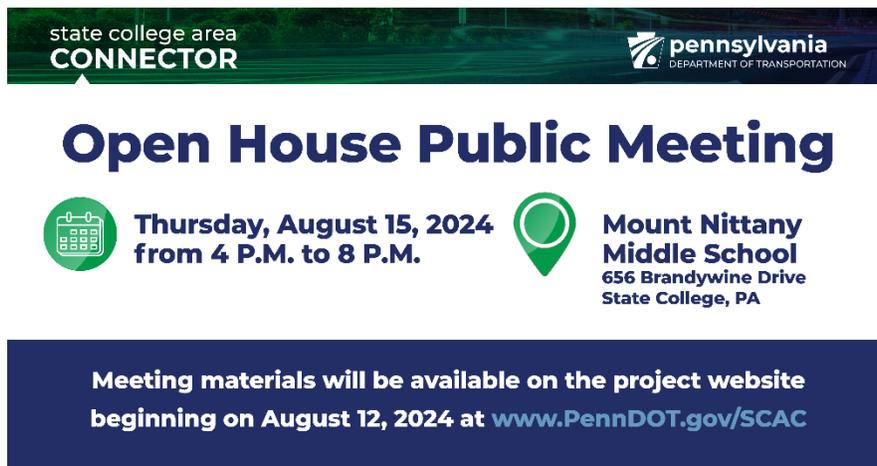


Figure 3 – Example media posted on PennDOT's X account and Facebook accounts.

Other Notification Efforts

Centre County Metropolitan Planning Organization (CCMPO) assisted with advertising the August 2024 open house public meetings by posting an announcement to their Facebook page on July 29, 2024 (**Appendix K**).

The Centre Region Council of Governments posted a notification for the open house public meeting on their website on July 24, 2024. Potter and Harris Townships posted a meeting notification to their websites on August 8, 2024, and August 15, 2024, respectively (**Appendix K**).

Open House Public Meeting Overview

Upon arrival at the open house public meetings, meeting participants were asked to sign in and collect handouts at the Welcome Station. Participants then proceeded to the gymnasium to tour the informational displays, ask the project team questions, and/or complete a comment card. Computer stations were provided for the public to view and overlay the SCAC environmental mapping with the proposed alternative corridors. A project video was played throughout the evening. Details on the open house public meeting materials and participation are outlined below.

Meeting Handouts

There were four specific handouts developed and made available at the open house public meeting. Prior to the meetings, these materials were also uploaded to the project website for pre-review on August 12, 2024. The handouts included the Transportation Development Process and Schedule handout, the Sound Decisions About Highway Noise Abatement brochure, the When Your Land Is Needed For Transportation Purposes publication, and a meeting comment form (**Appendix L**). The comment form was available in person at the “How Can You Participate?” station and was also available to complete via an electronic survey on the project website.

Meeting Layout and Information Presented

The meeting was designed to have nine stations which were staffed with PennDOT and project team personnel to address questions and document comments/concerns from attendees.

- **Welcome and Sign-In Station** – At this station, attendees were welcomed and asked to sign-in to the meeting. Attendees were also provided with an overview of the meeting layout and directed to the video station. A board disclosing PennDOT’s non-discrimination statement was also displayed.
- **Video Station** – A video approximately 15 minutes long was played for attendees generally every 20 to 25 minutes throughout the evening (**Figure 4**). The video provided a welcome message from PennDOT’s Assistance Design Engineer, Eric Murnyack, PE; overview of work completed since the PEL Study which included detailed environment data collection; updated traffic analysis and refinement of engineering design; review of the proposed US 322 alignment alternatives; project timeline; and an overview of the information contained in the open house area. A copy of the presentation transcript can be found in **Appendix M**.
- **Introduction Information Station** – This station provided four boards for attendees to review. The boards focused on the overall transportation development process, the NEPA process, the EIS process, and the SCAC Project purpose and needs. These boards can be found in **Appendix N**.

- **Environmental Station** – This station provided eight boards for attendees to review (**Figure 5**). The boards included four maps that displayed natural resources, cultural resources, agricultural resources, and socio-economic and community resources. In addition, there were two farmland process boards – one outlined the farmland protection laws in Pennsylvania, and one outlined the farmland evaluation process. There were also two Section 106 (historic resources) process boards – one that documented the evaluation process and one that documented the consulting party process. These boards can be found in **Appendix N**.
- **Engineering Station** – This station provided nine boards and three roll plots for attendees to view. The boards included four typical section boards depicting the various roadway sections being considered for the project (**Figure 6**); three boards that showed the differences between the PEL Study corridors and the proposed alignment alternative with notation on reasons for the key differences; two boards that outlined the environmental effects board (3 sets) and alternative comparison boards (3 sets). In addition, there were two sets of 15' roll plots for each of the proposed North, South, and Central Alternatives (**Figures 7, 8, and 9**). Each of the stations were staffed by project personnel to address specific questions and document general concerns. Copies of the boards, roll plots, and staff notes can be found in **Appendix N**.

The engineering station also had a computer set up that played a video on a continuous loop depicting how a Single Point Urban Interchange would function. The video was developed by HNTB Corporation for the Missouri Department of Transportation. The video can be found at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mwpoPQ1SPJU>.

- **Web Map Viewing Station** – Seven staffed computer stations were provided in the open house area. At each of these stations, project team members assisted attendees viewing the alternatives for specific properties and areas (**Figure 10**). Station staff also collected specific information from attendees regarding property concerns (e.g., environmental features, well locations, septic fields, and preferred future access to their properties). Copies of staff notes can be found in **Appendix N**.
- **Noise Information Station** – At this station, project personnel discussed the existing monitored noise levels at various sites throughout the project area and review the proposed noise analysis process moving forward (**Figure 11**). The station included a board documenting the location of existing noise level sampling sites and the brochure, *Sound Decisions About Highway Noise Abatement* (**Appendix L**).
- **Right-of-way Station** – At this station, PennDOT right-of-way agents were available for participants to ask questions and discuss the land acquisition process

during the open house public meeting (**Figure 12**). PennDOT’s Publication 83, which outlines and answers the most frequently asked questions regarding PennDOT’s transportation land acquisition process, was provided as a handout at this station (**Appendix L**).

- **Comment Station** – A comment form and supplies to complete the form were provided for attendees to use and submit in the comment box. This station also displayed a board offering the different ways attendees could comment on the project and the comment deadline.



Figure 4 – Video Station Presentation



Figure 5 – Environmental Station Board



Figure 6 – Engineering Station: North Alternative Roll Plot Area



Figure 7 – Engineering Station: Typical Section Boards Area



Figure 8 – Engineering Station: South Alternative Roll Plot Area



Figure 9 – Engineering Station: Alternative Roll Plot Area



Figure 10 – Web Map Viewing Area



Figure 11 – Noise Information Station



Figure 12 – Right-of-Way Station

Meeting Participation

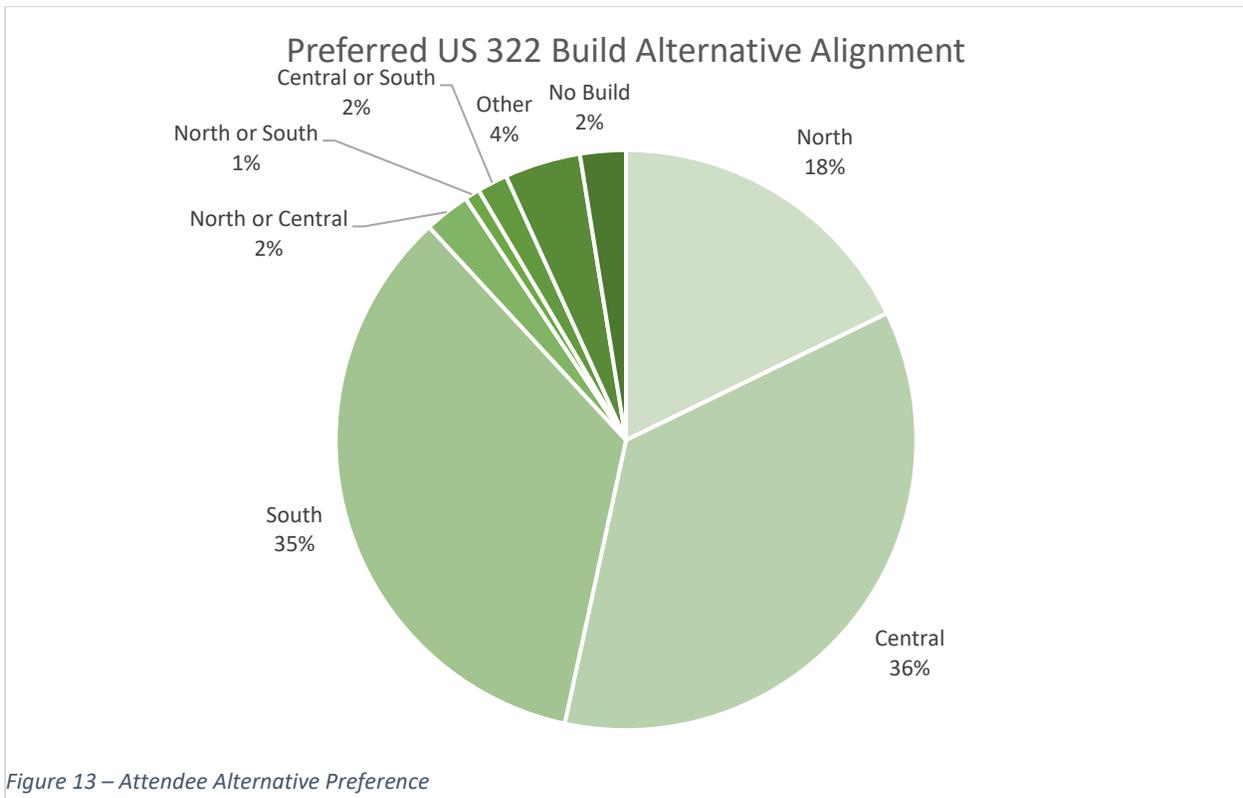
A total of 395 participants signed-in at the open house public meeting. Copies of the sign-in sheets are located in the project technical files. **Figures 4 through 12** depict attendance at the meeting.

Public Comments

The public comment period was open from August 12, 2024, to August 30, 2024. Comments were accepted at the meeting, by mail, email, or via the website form. A total of 162 comments were received from 154 participants (Note: several individuals submitted the same comments multiple times) during the public comment period. Participants at the open house public meeting submitted 71 comment forms. Additionally, 5 email comments and 86 comments via the online comment form or study website were received during the comment period. The following sections provide a general summary of the public comments. Copies of the comments received are located in the project technical files.

Public Comment Summary Questions 1 and 2

The public comment form asked two questions and had a third area for attendees to write in questions or provide comments. Question 1 asked public meeting participants to identify their preferred US 322 Build Alternative alignment (North, Central, or South) and Question 2 provided a space to document the rationale for their preference. **Figure 13** provides a summary of the responses received for Question 1.



The following section provides a summary of the rationale provided for the attendees’ alternative preference as requested in Question 2.

North Alternative

A total of 21 participants indicated that they preferred the North Alternative. Participants specified that they preferred this alternative because it is least impactful to the following resources: private property and homes (displacements); commercial properties and the township commercial district; productive agricultural land, farming operations, and actively farmed hydric soils; headwaters to Spring Creek; and wetlands adjacent to Huntridge Manor. Additionally, participants indicated that this alignment avoids impacts to the following resources: lands in conservation; the mountain; exceptional value streams; wetlands; and bird and apex predator habitat. Other reasons for the North Alternative preference included that this alternative would be the furthest from specific property owners; least disruptive to specific property owners during construction; and provides possible future access to PA 45.

Central Alternative

A total of 42 participants indicated that they preferred the Central Alternative. Participants specified that they preferred this alternative due to the least impacts to the following:

forests; wetlands and streams, including High Quality Cold Water (HQCW) streams; natural lands; wildlife and bird habitat; historic farms; historic and cultural sites; agricultural lands; the Kuhn's Tree Farm; Encore Farms LLC; Kerr Land and Cattle Company; communities; and residential homes and commercial units. Additionally, participants indicated that this alignment avoids impacts to the following areas: the historic village of Tusseyville; specific residential properties and neighborhoods; and the mountainside. Other reasons for preference of the Central Alternative were that it aligns more closely with the existing US 322 roadway; limits disturbances to areas near existing US 322; lowers risk of exposing acid-bearing rocks; uses existing contours completed when the original US 322 roadway was constructed; allows access to golf course, ski area, and mountain camps; and appears to be the most balanced in terms of impacts.

South Alternative

A total of 41 participants indicated that they preferred the South Alternative. Participants specified that they preferred this alternative because it is least impactful to the Huntridge Manor residential community; Nittany Meadow Farm; agricultural operations; commercial businesses and structures; and the Spring Creek headwaters and watershed. Other reasons for preference of the South Alternative were that it is furthest from specific residential properties, thus offering a significant reduction in noise; appears to be the most practical and safest alternative; and provides access to affected properties via the existing US 322 roadway.

North or Central Alternatives

Three participants indicated that they preferred the North or Central Alternatives. Reasons for this preference included that these alignments were the path of least resistance; preservation of neighborhoods impacted by the South Alternative; and have the overall lowest impacts.

North or South Alternatives

One participant indicated that they preferred the North or South Alternatives due to the proximity of the Central Alternative to their property.

Central or South Alternatives

Two participants indicated that they preferred the Central or South Alternatives due to these alignments impacting poorer quality farmland as opposed to the North Alternative which would impact some of the best farmland in Centre County. Other reasons for this preference included concerns about the geologic features (depressions, sinkholes, and fault lines) and potential impacts to underground waterways associated with Spring Creek resulting from the North Alternative, as well as one participant specifying that the Central or South Alternatives were preferred due to the North Alternative impacting their property.

Other

Five comment forms noted a preference for an alternative mode to advance. Generally, participants indicated their preference was for improvements to the existing roadways; less car-dependent communities; or transit (bus and train) and/or rail alternatives. Several participants indicated that they have concerns about farmland impacts; or they preferred a solution that does not involve the high cost of roadway construction, eminent domain, or displacement of people and commercial businesses.

No Build

Three comment forms noted a preference for a no build alternative.

None Preferred or Blank

A total of 12 comment forms, online comments, or emails were submitted that specified no preference or that none of the US 322 Build Alternative alignments were preferred or were left blank. Some participants specified they had no preference because each of the alternatives would affect their property the same way.

Public Comment Summary Questions 3 or Other Written Comments

The concerns and questions raised in the last portion of the comment form or comments and concerns received via another format are documented in in **Appendix O** along with a response.

Conclusion

The information presented in this report summarizes the efforts undertaken to engage the public in the SCAC project EIS scoping efforts. The open house public meeting was held on August 15, 2024, and was attended by 395 individuals. A total of 162 public comments were received during the comment period. Information received from this open house public meeting will be used by the project team to guide preliminary engineering, as well as by NEPA to refine project alternatives and understand community concerns related to important area resources.

APPENDIX A – Notice of Intent to Prepare and EIS

1. Published NOI
2. NOI Comments and Responses

History and Archaeology of Ancient Israel” at the Museum of the Bible, Washington, District of Columbia, and at possible additional exhibitions or venues yet to be determined, are of cultural significance, and, further, that their temporary exhibition or display within the United States as aforementioned is in the national interest. I have ordered that Public Notice of these determinations be published in the **Federal Register**.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:

Reed Liriano, Program Coordinator, Office of the Legal Adviser, U.S. Department of State (telephone: 202–632–6471; email: section2459@state.gov). The mailing address is U.S. Department of State, L/PA, 2200 C Street NW (SA–5), Suite 5H03, Washington, DC 20522–0505.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The foregoing determinations were made pursuant to the authority vested in me by the Act of October 19, 1965 (79 Stat. 985; 22 U.S.C. 2459), Executive Order 12047 of March 27, 1978, the Foreign Affairs Reform and Restructuring Act of 1998 (112 Stat. 2681, *et seq.*; 22 U.S.C. 6501 note, *et seq.*), Delegation of Authority No. 234 of October 1, 1999, Delegation of Authority No. 236–3 of August 28, 2000, and Delegation of Authority No. 523 of December 22, 2021.

Nicole L. Elkon,

Deputy Assistant Secretary for Professional and Cultural Exchanges, Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs, Department of State.

[FR Doc. 2024–16254 Filed 7–23–24; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4710–05–P

SURFACE TRANSPORTATION BOARD

Release of Waybill Data

The Surface Transportation Board has received a request from the Harris County Toll Road Authority (WB24–30–6/17/24) for permission to use select data from the Board’s 2022 Unmasked Carload Waybill Samples. A copy of this request may be obtained from the Board’s website under docket no. WB24–30.

The waybill sample contains confidential railroad and shipper data; therefore, if any parties object to these requests, they should file their objections with the Director of the Board’s Office of Economics within 14 calendar days of the date of this notice. The rules for release of waybill data are codified at 49 CFR 1244.9.

Contact: Alexander Dusenberry, (202) 245–0319.

Regena Smith-Bernard,

Clearance Clerk.

[FR Doc. 2024–16252 Filed 7–23–24; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4915–01–P

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Federal Highway Administration

[Docket No. FHWA–2024–0056]

Notice of Intent To Prepare an Environmental Impact Statement for a Proposed Highway Project, Centre County, PA

AGENCY: Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), Department of Transportation (DOT).

ACTION: Notice of intent to prepare an environmental impact statement.

SUMMARY: The FHWA, in coordination with the Pennsylvania Department of Transportation (PennDOT) is issuing the Notice of Intent (NOI) to solicit comments and advise the public, agencies, and stakeholders that an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) will be prepared to study potential improvements to US 322 also known as the State College Area Connector Project from Potters Mills, PA to Boalsburg, PA. The project identification number is 112784. This NOI should be reviewed together with the NOI Additional Project Information document, which contains important details about the proposed project and complements the information in this NOI.

DATES: Comments on the NOI or the NOI Additional Project Information document are to be received by FHWA through the methods below by August 23, 2024.

ADDRESSES: This NOI and the NOI Additional Project Information are also available in the docket referenced above at www.regulations.gov and on the project website located at www.penndot.pa.gov/SCAC. The NOI Additional Project Information document will be mailed upon request. Interested parties are invited to submit comments by any of the following methods:

Website: For access to the documents, go to the Federal eRulemaking Portal located at www.regulations.gov or the project website located at www.penndot.pa.gov/SCAC. Follow the online instructions for submitting comments.

Mailing address or for hand delivery or courier: Docket Management Facility, U.S. Department of Transportation, 1200

New Jersey Avenue SE, West Building Ground Floor, Room W12–140, Washington, DC 20590.

All submissions should include the agency name, the docket number that appears in the heading of this notice, and the project identification number. All comments received will be posted without change to www.regulations.gov, including any personal information provided. A summary of the comments will be included in the Draft EIS.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:

FHWA: Julia Moore, Senior Environmental Specialist, Federal Highway Administration, Pennsylvania Division Office, 30 North Third Street, Suite 700, Harrisburg, PA 17101; Julia.Moore@dot.gov; 717–221–4585. PennDOT: Eric Murnyack, PE, Project Manager, 70 PennDOT Drive, Clearfield, PA 16830; email emurnyack@pa.gov; 814–765–0435.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: It is important to note that the FHWA and PennDOT are committed to public involvement in this project. The FHWA, as Federal lead agency, and PennDOT, as project sponsor, are preparing an EIS to study potential improvements to US 322 also known as the State College Area Connector Project from Potters Mills, PA to Boalsburg, PA. All public comments received in response to this notice will be considered and potential revisions made to the information presented herein as appropriate. The environmental review of alternatives for the transportation project will be conducted in accordance with the requirements of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) of 1969, as amended (42 U.S.C. 4321, *et seq.*), 23 U.S.C. 139, CEQ regulations implementing NEPA (40 CFR 1500–1508), FHWA regulations implementing NEPA (23 CFR 771.101–771.139) and all applicable Federal, State, and local governmental laws and regulations.

Background. Within the State College Area Connector project area, there have been many transportation improvement studies and projects that have influenced travel within and immediately adjacent to the study area dating back to the 1970s. However, in the 1990s, key regional studies occurred which greatly influenced travel and development within the study area. The following provides a high-level summary of the local and regional transportation projects which have provided influence on the State College Area Connector project area.

Interstate 80:

○ I–80 was completed in Pennsylvania in 1970.

- I-80 through Pennsylvania influenced traffic patterns, particularly an increase in interstate truck traffic. This increase in traffic affected travel conditions within the project area.

- Roadway safety and quality of life in Centre County communities traversed by these roadways were influenced by the I-80 completion.

Interstate 99:

- US 220 study west of the State College area led to the development of a major improvement project for a new north-south interstate through Centre County that culminated with the construction of I-99 extending from Blair County to US 322 (the Mount Nittany Expressway).

- PA 26 corridor study resulted in the construction of I-99 from US 322 (the Mount Nittany Expressway) north towards I-80.

- I-80 Exit 161 (Bellefonte Interchange) is under development to replace the existing interchange with a new high-speed interchange and complete the I-99/I-80 connection. Construction of the interchange improvements will complete the goal for a major north-south interstate (I-99) through the center of the Commonwealth connecting two major east-west interstates, the Pennsylvania Turnpike (I-76) and I-80.

South Central Centre County Transportation Study (SCCCTS):

- SCCCTS was initiated in 1998 to evaluate and address transportation needs along the US 322, PA 144, and PA 45 corridors. The SCCCTS project needs identified specific transportation problems in each of the three corridors and on the local road system, as well as needs associated with regional travel patterns. The regional travel pattern need statement addressed the high percentage of through trips (in particular the high volume of truck traffic), high crash rates (including fatalities), poor Level of Service (LOS) (including LOS associated with heavy truck traffic) and increases in travel demand associated with local and regional planned development. However, SCCCTS was terminated in 2004 due to funding shortfalls and the NOI rescinded on July 29, 2019.

Safety Improvements:

- Following the termination of SCCCTS in 2004, short-term safety improvements along the US 322 were conducted between 2006 and 2015. These improvements included general intersection improvements (e.g., turn lanes), safety improvements (e.g., safety dot warning pavement markings, removal of passing zones), minor roadway realignments, and bridge reconstruction. These improvements

were initiated to address some of the safety concerns identified during the SCCCTS study.

Potters Mills Gap (PMG)

Transportation Project:

- PennDOT and FHWA initiated the PMG Transportation Project to improve a 3.75-mile-long section of US 322 in Potter Township within the area locally known as "Potters Mills Gap". This project area encompassed the southeastern portion of the SCCCTS study area. It was determined that this project had independent utility and addressed a defined purpose and need. The project included the construction of a new limited access four-lane roadway section that started at the Sand Mountain Road intersection and extended west, tying back into existing US 322 with a new interchange and roundabout, west of the PA 144/US 322 intersection.

SCCCTS Data Refresh:

- In 2018, PennDOT collected data to update the traffic and environmental information from the former SCCCTS (2004), to identify changes to travel patterns, the transportation network, and environmental conditions. This information supported the 2019 decision by State officials to restart efforts to address regional transportation needs in the US 322, PA 44, and PA 45 area. Nearly, \$15 million in State funding was allocated to advance the State College Area Connector Study.

State College Area Connector Planning and Environmental Linkages (PEL) Study:

- In 2020, PennDOT, in cooperation with FHWA and coordination with the Centre County Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO), initiated the State College Area Connector PEL Study. The PEL process promoted early coordination with the public as well as Federal, State, and local agencies in a transparent and collaborative environment that identified and evaluated transportation needs in the area, and developed and evaluated alternatives while considering community concerns in transportation decision-making early in the planning process. The PEL study identified a range of alternatives and screened them against the purpose and need and potential for environmental impacts. Three Build Alternatives corridors were recommended for further study. These three recommended Build Alternatives and a refined study area are being advanced for NEPA study with a Notice of Intent to prepare an EIS.

The following information provided in the NOI is supplemented with more detail in the NOI Additional Project Information document.

(a) Purpose and Need for the Proposed Action

The purpose of this project is to improve roadway congestion by achieving acceptable LOS and to address safety issues by reducing the predicted crash frequency along the US 322 corridor between Potters Mills and Boalsburg. Additionally, the project will aim to provide a transportation network that meets driver expectations.

The preliminary needs identified for the project are that high peak hour traffic volumes cause congestion and result in unacceptable LOS (LOS D [rural only], E, or F) on US 322 roadways and intersections; the existing roadway configurations and traffic conditions contribute to safety concerns in the project area; and the roadway network and configuration in the project area lacks continuity and does not meet driver expectations.

The project purpose and needs were first presented as part of the Pre-NOI/PEL phase of project development and were presented to the State and Federal resource agencies at an agency coordination meeting in July 2020 and to public officials and the general public at a virtual meeting in October 2020. Resource agencies and the public were invited to comment on the Purpose and Need. The purpose and need statements were refined following the PEL study for the US 322 project area. The project-specific purpose and needs were presented to the resource agencies in January 2024. The purpose and needs and supporting documentation, including data and public input summary, will be available in the Draft EIS. No specific comments were received from any of the resource agencies.

(b) A Preliminary Description of the Proposed Action and Alternatives the Environmental Impact Statement Will Consider

As concluded in the PEL Study, the proposed action is anticipated to include construction of an approximately 8-mile four-lane limited access facility from the end of US 322/ Mount Nittany Expressway in Boalsburg to the newly constructed limited access portion of US 322 at Potters Mills in Centre County, Pennsylvania. Agencies and the public are invited to comment on the Range of Alternatives for the proposed action. Additional information on the Range of Alternatives is in the NOI Additional Project Information document. The Range of Alternatives proposed to be considered in the EIS include the following:

No Build Alternative

The No Build Alternative involves taking no action, except routine maintenance and other small projects currently listed in the Centre County Transportation Improvement Program (TIP). The existing two-lane alignment of US 322 between Potters Mills Gap and Boalsburg, Pennsylvania would remain. No new alignments or roadway improvements would be constructed.

Build Alternative—US 322–1S

The US 322–1S Build Alternative (US 322–1S) would have logical termini at the US 322 (Mt. Nittany Expressway) in Boalsburg and US 322 at Potters Mills Gap. US 322–1S would begin at the existing US 322 interchange with PA 45 near Boalsburg and follow existing US 322 to a point east of the Elks Club Road/Bear Meadows Road intersection. In this area, a two-lane service road would be provided on the north side of the limited access highway to provide connectivity to the local road network. US 322–1S would shift off existing US 322 to the north until it crosses south over US 322 near Neff Road in Tusseyville. The alternative would parallel US 322 to the south before connecting to the newly constructed US 322/PA 144 interchange at Potters Mills Gap. The Build Alternative US 322–1S would be 8.3 miles long.

Build Alternative—US 322–1OEX

The US 322–1OEX Build Alternative (US 322–1OEX) is a hybrid of US 322–1S that attempts to maximize the use of the existing US 322 right-of-way. US 322–1OEX would have logical termini at the US 322 (Mt. Nittany Expressway) in Boalsburg and US 322 at Potters Mills Gap. US 322–1OEX would begin at the existing US 322 interchange with PA 45 near Boalsburg and follow existing US 322 to a point east of the Elks Club Road/Bear Meadows Road intersection. In this area, a two-lane service road would be provided on the north side of the limited access highway to provide connectivity to the local road network. US 322–1OEX would shift off existing US 322 to the north until it crosses back to US 322 near Neff Road in Tusseyville. From there it would follow existing US 322 to the newly constructed US 322/PA 144 interchange at Potters Mills Gap, with the inclusion of a two-lane service road to maintain local access for properties adjacent to the new limited access facility. US 322–1OEX would be 8.3 miles long.

Build Alternative—US 322–5

The US 322–5 Build Alternative (US 322–5) would have logical termini at the US 322 (Mt. Nittany Expressway) in

Boalsburg and US 322 at Potters Mills Gap. US 322–5 would begin at the existing US 322 interchange with PA 45 near Boalsburg and follow existing US 322 to a point east of the Elks Club Road/Bear Meadows Road intersection. A two-lane service road on the north side of the limited access highway would connect to the local road network. US 322–5 would turn southeast off the existing US 322 corridor near Tait Road, and proceed east along the lower slope of Tussey Mountain, paralleling US 322. The corridor would continue paralleling US 322 to the south, crossing over Church Hill Road, Dogtown Road, and Mountain Back Road and connect to the newly constructed US 322/PA 144 interchange at Potters Mills Gap. US 322–5 would be 8.4 miles long.

(c) Brief Summary of Expected Impacts

As part of the PEL process, PennDOT conducted scoping activities for the State College Area Connector Project. Resource data was collected from publicly available web based existing maps and data; direct coordination with various Federal, State, and local government agencies; select site reconnaissance; coordination with private organizations; and public input. This information was used to identify the types of environmental, cultural, and socioeconomic resources present and those likely to be affected. The following resources will be evaluated in the EIS and supporting technical studies: cultural resources (archaeology and historic architecture); hazardous materials; air quality; greenhouse gases and climate change; noise-sensitive areas; natural resources (wildlife and habitat; threatened, endangered, and special concern species; waters of the US; water quality; groundwater; floodplains; and farmlands), visual resources; section 4(f) resources (public recreational facilities, historic properties, and State Game Lands); and socioeconomic resources (communities and community facilities, population and housing, economic resources, land use and right-of-way, and environmental justice). Potential direct, indirect, and cumulative effects will be assessed and documented in the EIS. Preliminary review of the existing conditions with or adjacent to the Build Alternative corridors for the project could result in effects to the following:

- *Environmental Justice*: Minority and/or low-income (environmental justice) populations have been identified within the vicinity of the Project, specifically within Harris Township. An assessment of the potential for disproportionate and

adverse effects on environmental justice populations will be conducted, as described in section 4 of the NOI Additional Project Information document.

- *Regional and local economies*: Within the vicinity of the Project, there are industrial and commercial centers, and agricultural farm businesses. Industrial and commercial centers are clustered along existing US 322 in portions of Potter Township and Harris Township. Agricultural farm businesses are concentrated in the center and eastern portion of the project area. An assessment of the Project's potential effects on regional and local economies will be conducted,

- *Wetland and surface waters*: State and Federal regulated freshwater wetlands and waterways are present in the vicinity of the Project, including but not limited to Sinking Creek, Spring Creek, Boal Gap Run, Sleepy Creek, Galbraith Gap Run, and associated tributaries. A surface water and wetland delineation will be conducted to identify all State-regulated wetlands and Waters of the U.S. within and adjacent to the Build Alternative corridors. An assessment of the Project's potential effects on wetlands and surface waters will be conducted,

- *Threatened and endangered species*: Federally and State-listed threatened and/or endangered species have the potential to occur within the vicinity of the Project. A Pennsylvania Natural Diversity Inventory (PNDI) search was completed to determine potential threatened and endangered species resources within or adjacent to the Build Alternative corridors. The following species were identified in the search:

- Plant State Species Only
 - Serviceberry (proposed endangered)
 - Long-fruited anemone (endangered)
 - Tall gamma (endangered)
 - Roundleaf services (proposed endangered)
 - Brome grass (proposed threatened)
 - Bebb's sedge (endangered/proposed threatened)
 - Hansom sedge (endangered)
 - Prairie sedge (threatened)
 - Heller's witchgrass (proposed threatened)
 - Vetchling (proposed endangered)
 - Grooved yellow flax (endangered)
 - False gromwell (endangered)
 - Hard-leafed goldenrod (proposed endangered)
 - Mountain starwort (proposed threatened)
 - Tufted buttercup (endangered)
 - Northeastern bulrush (endangered/proposed threatened)

- Declined trillium (proposed threatened)
- Mammal Species
 - Indiana Bat (Federal endangered)
 - Northern Long-eared Bat (Federal endangered)
 - Tri-colored Bat (Federal proposed endangered)
 - Eastern Small-footed Bat (State threatened)
- Reptile Species
 - Timber rattlesnake (State protected species)
- Aquatic Species
 - Triangle floater (State protected species)

Coordination with the resource agencies also noted concerns for migratory bird species and bat hibernacula in the area. An assessment of the Project's potential effects on threatened and endangered species will be conducted and coordination with the resource agencies conducted, accordingly.

- *Farmland*: Productive agricultural land and farmland soils pursuant to the Farmland Protection Policy Act are present in the vicinity of the Project. Agricultural evaluations will be conducted including secondary source data collection and farmer interviews. An assessment of the Project's potential effects on productive agricultural land and farmland soils will be conducted.

- *Historic properties*: A reconnaissance survey was conducted for resources within or adjacent to the Build Alternative corridors. The survey included a review of the Pennsylvania Historic and Museum Commission's files of resources identified as listed in or eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP), and limited field investigation to identify properties potentially eligible for inclusion in the NRHP. An Area of Potential Effects (APE) will be established for the Project and an assessment will be conducted to identify the potential effects on historic properties. Coordination with the State Historic Preservation Office and interested parties will be included as part of the effect's findings.

- *Visual resources*: Visually sensitive resources are present in the vicinity of the Project, including but not limited to historic properties including the Penns Valley/Brush Valley Rural Historic District, and Rothrock State Forest. An assessment of the Project's potential effects on visual resources will be conducted.

- *Air quality*: The project lies in Centre County, Pennsylvania which is currently designated as a maintenance area under the 1997 8-hour ozone

NAAQS. Centre County is in attainment for all other criteria pollutants for which NAAQS are established. An assessment of the Project's potential effects on air quality will be conducted.

- *Traffic noise*: Noise sensitive receptors, as described in 23 CFR part 772, are present within the vicinity of the Project and include, but are not limited to residences and trails. An assessment of the Project's potential effects on traffic noise will be conducted.

- *Construction effects*: Construction of the Project has the potential to affect noise, air quality, traffic and transportation, local and regional economies, water quality, and other environmental resources. Construction effects would be temporary and would cease with the completion of construction. An assessment of the Project's potential construction-related effects will be conducted.

The analyses and evaluations conducted for the EIS will identify the potential for construction-related (short-term) and operational (long-term) effects (direct, indirect, and cumulative); whether the anticipated effects would be adverse; and mitigation measures for adverse effects. Evaluations under section 4(f) of the USDOT Act of 1966, 23 CFR part 774, and section 6(f) of the Land and Water Conservation Fund Act of 1965, 54 U.S.C. 200302, will be prepared, and consultation under section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, 54 U.S.C. 300101–307108, will be undertaken concurrently with the NEPA process. Additional information on the expected impacts is provided in the NOI Additional Project Information document available for review in the docket established for this project and on the project website as noted in the **ADDRESSES** section. Comments on the expected effects to be analyzed in the Draft EIS (DEIS) are welcomed during the NOI comment period. The identification of environmental effects for analysis in the DEIS may be revised due to the consideration of public comments.

(d) Anticipated Permits, Other Authorizations, and Cooperating and Participating Agencies

A Clean Water Act Section 404 permit decision from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) is anticipated in September 2026. Other anticipated State authorizations include a Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection (PADEP) Section 401 Water Quality Certification/Chapter 105 Standard Permit in August 2026. Section 7 consultation under the Endangered

Species Act is expected to be concluded in September 2025, and Section 106 consultation under the National Historic Preservation Act is anticipated to be concluded in December 2024. A U.S. Department of Transportation Act of 1966, Individual Section 4(f) authorization is anticipated in April 2026. See the NOI Additional Project Information document for more detail on the anticipated permits and other authorizations. Cooperating Agencies include the USACE, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Environmental Protection Agency, Pennsylvania State Historic Preservation Office, and PADEP. Participating Agencies include the PA Fish and Boat Commission, PA Department of Conservation and Natural Resources, PA Game Commission, PA Department of Agriculture, Centre County Conservation District, Centre County Board of Commissioners, Harris Township Board of Supervisors, College Township Council, Seneca Nation of Indians, and Delaware Tribe of Indians.

(e) Scoping and Public Review

Agency Scoping

PennDOT has conducted agency coordination to inform the purpose and need and preliminary project alternatives, scoping meeting, and other elements outlined in this document. An Agency Coordination Plan was reviewed and agreed to by the Pennsylvania resource agencies, including the Cooperating and Participating agencies. It is a living document that will be updated through the EIS process. The resource agency meetings in Pennsylvania are referred to as Agency Coordination Meetings (ACM). Since PennDOT is the lead agency for this project, the agency meetings are typically held on the ACM's regularly scheduled meeting dates. A total of 12 agency coordination meetings were held between February 2020 and January 2024.

Public Review

PennDOT conducted public outreach activities during the PEL Study for the State College Area Connector to present information and collect public input. The PEL Study had a Public and Agency Coordination Plan which provided the foundation for the outreach activities.

Additionally, PennDOT conducted four public open house meetings. These meetings solicited public comment on the presented information which included:

- Virtual Open House Meeting—
 - October 2020
 - overview of the transportation development process

- PEL Study process
- environmental resources
- engineering and traffic data
- purpose and need.
- Open House Public Meeting—September 21 and 22, 2021
 - PEL Study process
 - range of alternative concepts
 - Upgrade Existing and Build Alternative corridor concepts
 - alternative screening process
 - preliminary environmental and traffic analysis.
- Open House Public Meeting—April 5 and 6, 2022
 - environmental data collection efforts
 - traffic analyses
 - Upgrade Existing and Build Alternative corridor refinements
 - key resource and alternative changes since September 2021 meetings.
- Open House Public Meeting—October 19 and 20, 2022
 - PEL Study Report draft recommendations for alternatives to move forward
 - potential environmental and traffic impacts/benefits.

In addition, public official kick-off meetings were held in August, September, and November 2020 (Harris Township/August 10, Centre Hall Borough/August 13, Potter Township/August 17, College Township/August 20, Benner Township/September 3, Spring Township/September 8, Centre County/November 24, 2020). These meetings introduced the data presented in the Virtual Open House Meeting.

Combined public official meetings were also held:

- August 31, 2021, in advance of the September 2021 open house meeting.
- March 30, 2022, in advance of the April 2022 open house meeting.
- September 7, 2022, in advance of the October 2022 open house meetings.

The public and agency scoping process is continuing with the publication of this NOI. PennDOT will maintain and update the project website, as identified in the **ADDRESSES** section of this notice, to direct the public to the Final State College Area Connector Planning and Environmental Linkages Report and associated scoping documents and solicit public input. Additionally, PennDOT will continue to conduct targeted outreach to communities in and around the project area. A 30-day public comment period is being held in association with the publication of the NOI in the **Federal Register**. There will be at least three more public involvement opportunities for the State College Area Connector

Project. During project Scoping, there will be two public open house meetings. The first Scoping public open house meeting will occur after the NOI is issued and will present detailed traffic analysis, updated environmental features, and preliminary engineering alignment alternatives. The second Scoping public open house meeting will be held following alternative refinement and identification of a draft recommended preferred alternative. This public open house meeting will also present the revised preliminary alignment alternatives, associated potential environmental effects, and conceptual mitigation. Lastly, following the issuance of the Notice of Availability of the Draft EIS, a public hearing with an option for multiple nights, if necessary, will be held. Refer to the Coordination Plan for Public Involvement for more information.

(f) Schedule for the Decision-Making Process

Following the issuance of this notice, FHWA and PennDOT will coordinate with the Participating and Cooperating Agencies to develop study documentation and the Draft EIS.

- The Draft EIS is anticipated to be issued in July 2025.
- The combined Final EIS/Record of Decision is anticipated in July 2026.
- A section 404 permit decision from the USACE is expected in September 2026.

See the NOI Additional Project Information document for schedule details.

(g) Request for Identification of Potential Alternatives, Information, and Analyses Relevant to the Proposed Action

To ensure that a full range of issues related to the project are addressed and all potential issues are identified, FHWA invites comments and suggestions from all interested parties. The project team requests comments and suggestions on purpose and needs, potential alternatives and impacts, and the identification of any relevant information, studies, or analyses of any kind concerning impacts affecting the quality of the human environment. Any information presented herein, including the project-specific purpose and need, preliminary range of alternatives and identification of impacts may be revised after consideration of the comments. The purpose of this request is to bring relevant comments, information, and analyses to the agency's attention, as early in the process as possible, to enable the agency to make maximum use of this information in decision

making. Comments may be submitted according to the instructions in the **ADDRESSES** section of this notice.

(h) Contact Information

FHWA: Julia Moore, Senior Environmental Specialist, Federal Highway Administration, Pennsylvania Division, 30 North Third Street, Suite 700, Harrisburg, PA 17101; email Julia.Moore@dot.gov; 717-221-4585.

Pennsylvania Department of Transportation: Eric Murnyack, PE, Project Manager, 70 PennDOT Drive, Clearfield, PA 16830; email emurnyack@pa.gov; 814-765-0435.

Jennifer Maureen Crobak,

Director of Planning, Environment, Finance, Federal Highway Administration.

[FR Doc. 2024-16257 Filed 7-23-24; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4910-22-P

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Federal Highway Administration

Notice of Final Federal Agency Actions on Proposed Transportation Project in Maryland

AGENCY: Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), DOT.

ACTION: Notice of limitation on claims for judicial review of actions by FHWA and other Federal agencies.

SUMMARY: This notice announces action taken by FHWA and other Federal agencies that are final. The actions relate to the Rebuild of the I-695 (Baltimore Beltway) Francis Scott Key Bridge over Patapsco River and its approaches. The actions grant licenses, permits, or approvals for the Project. The emergency Categorical Exclusion (CE) under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and other documents in the Project file provide details on the Project and FHWA's actions.

DATES: By this notice, FHWA is advising the public of final agency actions subject to 23 U.S.C. 139(l)(1). A claim seeking judicial review of the Federal agency actions on the highway project will be barred unless the claim is filed on or before December 23, 2024. If the Federal law that authorizes judicial review of a claim provides a time period of less than 150 days for filing such claim, then that shorter time period still applies.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:

Valeriya Remezova, Division Administrator, Federal Highway Administration, 31 Hopkins Plaza, Suite 1520, Baltimore, MD 21201, Telephone (410) 962-4440.

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Comment ID	Comment Date	Last Name, First Name City, State	Comment	Response
FHWA-2024-0056-0003	7/31/24	Artibani, Nicholas Downingtown, PA	Please dont built any more highway miles. its been proven time and time again it doesn't help traffic but creates more causing more noise and pollution instead. it has many many downsides with the upside of you can get somewhere a little quicker. another money sink for a road very few comparatively will use and everything that will be effected by the highway in a negative way such as cutting off nature with a loud asphalt river, removing habitats, creating pollution both from exhaust, brake pad dust, and tire dust a large source of micro plastics also adding in child hood asthma.	<p>FHWA and PennDOT will advance the proposed project and associated investigations in accordance with National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) of 1969, as amended (42 U.S.C. 4321, et seq.), 23 U.S.C. 139, FHWA regulations implementing NEPA (23 CFR 771.101-771.139) and all applicable Federal, State, and local governmental laws and regulations.</p> <p>FHWA and PennDOT will develop an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) to document the project findings. The EIS will identify the underlying purpose and need to which FHWA and PennDOT are responding in proposing the alternatives including the proposed action. The EIS will also document the range of alternatives considered, advanced, and dismissed, including a No Build. The EIS will also address effects to the natural, cultural and socioeconomic environment and proposed mitigation measures, as appropriate.</p>
FHWA-2024-0056-0006	7/31/24	Grzegorzcyk, Adam	Please don't destroy PA farmland. It's the Commonwealth's backbone.	<p>FHWA and PennDOT will advance the proposed project and associated investigations in accordance with National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) of 1969, as amended (42 U.S.C. 4321, et seq.), 23 U.S.C. 139, FHWA regulations implementing NEPA (23 CFR 771.101-771.139) and all applicable Federal, State, and local governmental laws and regulations.</p> <p>FHWA and PennDOT will develop an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) to document the project findings. The EIS will identify the underlying purpose and need to which FHWA and PennDOT are responding in proposing the alternatives including the proposed</p>

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				action. The EIS will also document the range of alternatives considered, advanced, and dismissed, including a No Build. The EIS will also address effects to the natural, cultural and socioeconomic environment and proposed mitigation measures, as appropriate. This will include the evaluation of farmland.
FHWA-2024-0056-0012	7/31/24	Anonymous	please do not do this. how are we supposed to be proud of our state or country when it wants to bulldoze over people's farms for more highway space.	<p>FHWA and PennDOT will advance the proposed project and associated investigations in accordance with National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) of 1969, as amended (42 U.S.C. 4321, et seq.), 23 U.S.C. 139, FHWA regulations implementing NEPA (23 CFR 771.101-771.139) and all applicable Federal, State, and local governmental laws and regulations.</p> <p>FHWA and PennDOT will develop an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) to document the project findings. The EIS will identify the underlying purpose and need to which FHWA and PennDOT are responding in proposing the alternatives including the proposed action. The EIS will also document the range of alternatives considered, advanced, and dismissed, including a No Build. The EIS will also address effects to the natural, cultural and socioeconomic environment and proposed mitigation measures, as appropriate. This will include the evaluation of farmland.</p>
FHWA-2024-0056-0013	7/31/24	Weaver, David	<p>The no-build alternative is the best alternative option listed.</p> <p>The goal of this project is to reduce congestion and improve safety. However, expanding highways have always been shown to induce more traffic with traffic</p>	<p>FHWA and PennDOT will advance the proposed project and associated investigations in accordance with National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) of 1969, as amended (42 U.S.C. 4321, et seq.), 23 U.S.C. 139, FHWA regulations implementing NEPA (23 CFR 771.101-</p>

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			<p>congestion returning or surpassing previous levels within 7 years.</p> <p>Further expanding highways leads to more automobile dependency and automobiles are the most dangerous method of transportation.</p> <p>Expanding highways here will forever destroy precious farmland and reduce the natural habitat for many endangered species.</p> <p>This project is not sustainable for the planet nor our budgets. It will be extremely costly to produce and there is money allocated for its continued maintenance.</p> <p>The no-build alternative is the best alternative option listed, but further study should be conducted to research rail projects to meet the transportation needs.</p>	<p>771.139) and all applicable Federal, State, and local governmental laws and regulations.</p> <p>FHWA and PennDOT will develop an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) to document the project findings. The EIS will identify the underlying purpose and need to which FHWA and PennDOT are responding in proposing the alternatives including the proposed action. The EIS will also document the range of alternatives considered, advanced, and dismissed, including a No Build. The EIS will also address effects to the natural, cultural and socioeconomic environment and proposed mitigation measures, as appropriate.</p>
FHWA-2024-0056-0002	7/31/24	Gardiner, John State College, PA	<p>The 322 State College Area Connector is an unnecessary, environmentally damaging project which does not meet the current or future needs of local residents. It is scientifically proven that more roads creates more roadway congestion, and this fact has been known since 1933 in a St. Louis municipal report.</p> <p>The highway would occupy a massive swath of land, cutting through farms and forests alike, and the positioning of the western end of the corridor necessitates demolition of at least one of two cherished community institutions. This project also enforces car-dependency, which is the most energy-inefficient form of transportation. Recent scientific papers have found that conversion to electric vehicles</p>	<p>FHWA and PennDOT will advance the proposed project and associated investigations in accordance with National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) of 1969, as amended (42 U.S.C. 4321, et seq.), 23 U.S.C. 139, FHWA regulations implementing NEPA (23 CFR 771.101-771.139) and all applicable Federal, State, and local governmental laws and regulations.</p> <p>FHWA and PennDOT will develop an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) to document the project findings. The EIS will identify the underlying purpose and need to which FHWA and PennDOT are responding in proposing the alternatives including the proposed action. The EIS will also document the range of alternatives considered, advanced, and dismissed,</p>

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			<p>will be insufficient to address climate change. Car-dependency is also classist, causing a disproportionate burden on impoverished individuals, forcing them to pay thousands of dollars a year on maintenance and gas. Finally, the improvement in crashes and fatalities would be marginal, at best, potentially reducing crashes from vehicle conflicts but increasing VMT with more road space and faster travel times, thereby inducing more people to take more trips, generating more crashes again. This project may have made sense 40 years ago, but with what we know now, it is an incredibly expensive infrastructural commitment to the wrong type of solution for current problems.</p> <p>The only true way to reduce crashes and emissions is to relieve the east-west congestion currently squeezing through Potters Mill Gap by an alternative means. The absolute majority of people using this stretch of 322 use it to travel between State College and points east. Improved frequencies and service of Amtrak Pennsylvanian, and a light-weight, environmentally-friendly DMU Light Rail service – such as seen in the nearby NJT River Line – between Tyrone, State College, and Bellefonte (potentially offering commuter service to Altoona, and a tunnel under Bald Eagle Mountain for more direct travel to State College) would relieve the 322 corridor of most of its users, leaving the existing infrastructure capable of the handling the reduced traffic loads.</p> <p>The 322 project in its current form will provably accomplish none of its stated goals in a meaningful or</p>	<p>including a No Build. The EIS will also address effects to the natural, cultural and socioeconomic environment and proposed mitigation measures, as appropriate.</p>

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			future-proofed way. It will exacerbate climate change and economic burdens on underprivileged classes and minorities. Car-dependency is big government overreach, with the state saying "we'll trap you in your local community unless you spend tens-of-thousands to buy and maintain a car," and the construction of unnecessarily massive highways is wasteful big government spending. The only solution to traffic is a viable alternative to driving, and car-dependent infrastructure is climate arson.	
FHWA-2024-0056-0011	7/31/24	ThompChampaignIllinoisSon, Lombard Williamsport, Virgin Islands US	No PennDOT! No. Highways will only just cause more congestion. The only way to solve this is by making walkable cities, good public transportation and more passenger rail. Make Centre County accessible by rail and better transportation instead of destroying a farm.	<p>FHWA and PennDOT will advance the proposed project and associated investigations in accordance with National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) of 1969, as amended (42 U.S.C. 4321, et seq.), 23 U.S.C. 139, FHWA regulations implementing NEPA (23 CFR 771.101-771.139) and all applicable Federal, State, and local governmental laws and regulations.</p> <p>FHWA and PennDOT will develop an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) to document the project findings. The EIS will identify the underlying purpose and need to which FHWA and PennDOT are responding in proposing the alternatives including the proposed action. The EIS will also document the range of alternatives considered, advanced, and dismissed, including a No Build. The EIS will also address effects to the natural, cultural and socioeconomic environment and proposed mitigation measures, as appropriate.</p>
FHWA-2024-0056-0010	7/31/24	Aniello, Chris New York, NY	Do not do this	Thank you for your comment.

Comment ID	Comment Date	Last Name, First Name City, State	Comment	Response
FHWA-2024-0056-0004	7/31/24	Haberman, Luke	This highway will be an additionally financial liability for the State and Federal government. We as a country need to be taking steps to address our climate goals by moving away from car dependency - this project will push Pennsylvania to heavier car dependency for decades. I strongly recommend and support the No Build Alternative.	<p>FHWA and PennDOT will advance the proposed project and associated investigations in accordance with National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) of 1969, as amended (42 U.S.C. 4321, et seq.), 23 U.S.C. 139, FHWA regulations implementing NEPA (23 CFR 771.101-771.139) and all applicable Federal, State, and local governmental laws and regulations.</p> <p>FHWA and PennDOT will develop an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) to document the project findings. The EIS will identify the underlying purpose and need to which FHWA and PennDOT are responding in proposing the alternatives including the proposed action. The EIS will also document the range of alternatives considered, advanced, and dismissed, including a No Build. The EIS will also address effects to the natural, cultural and socioeconomic environment and proposed mitigation measures, as appropriate.</p>
FHWA-2024-0056-0015	8/1/24	Johnson, Ben	No. Scrap the entire plan. We do not need even MORE highways. Scrap the plan and take the money to build up viable alternatives to driving. This paradigm is inherently unsustainable. All you will do is induce more demand which will demand MORE highways and highway lanes. We need people to have viable alternatives to driving and we definitely don't need to destroy farms and the communities surrounding them just to shave a few minutes off of someone's commute at best.	<p>FHWA and PennDOT will advance the proposed project and associated investigations in accordance with National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) of 1969, as amended (42 U.S.C. 4321, et seq.), 23 U.S.C. 139, FHWA regulations implementing NEPA (23 CFR 771.101-771.139) and all applicable Federal, State, and local governmental laws and regulations.</p> <p>FHWA and PennDOT will develop an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) to document the project findings. The EIS will identify the underlying purpose and need to which FHWA and PennDOT are responding in proposing the alternatives including the proposed</p>

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				action. The EIS will also document the range of alternatives considered, advanced, and dismissed, including a No Build. The EIS will also address effects to the natural, cultural and socioeconomic environment and proposed mitigation measures, as appropriate.
FHWA-2024-0056-0016	8/1/24	Abraham, Emil	<p>If the purpose is to reduce congestion, I believe the best options will reduce the number of cars on the road.</p> <p>The option that I'd recommend is adding a bus route during high peak hour traffic. Having a viable alternative will allow people to choose an alternative to driving. Thus, reducing congestion, reducing greenhouse gases, reducing wear and tear on the road, and decrease the overall cost to the individual users of the road.</p> <p>If forced to choose amongst the available alternatives, I would choose the No Build Alternative.</p>	<p>FHWA and PennDOT will advance the proposed project and associated investigations in accordance with National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) of 1969, as amended (42 U.S.C. 4321, et seq.), 23 U.S.C. 139, FHWA regulations implementing NEPA (23 CFR 771.101-771.139) and all applicable Federal, State, and local governmental laws and regulations.</p> <p>FHWA and PennDOT will develop an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) to document the project findings. The EIS will identify the underlying purpose and need to which FHWA and PennDOT are responding in proposing the alternatives including the proposed action. The EIS will also document the range of alternatives considered, advanced, and dismissed, including a No Build. The EIS will also address effects to the natural, cultural and socioeconomic environment and proposed mitigation measures, as appropriate.</p>
FHWA-2024-0056-0007	7/31/24	Crocker, Michael	<p>Do not put cars over people and widen the festering scar that is this highway! We have to start moving forward to a better, sustainable future and this project would set us so far back. Do not poison the next generation for a temporary decrease in traffic.</p>	<p>FHWA and PennDOT will advance the proposed project and associated investigations in accordance with National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) of 1969, as amended (42 U.S.C. 4321, et seq.), 23 U.S.C. 139, FHWA regulations implementing NEPA (23 CFR 771.101-771.139) and all applicable Federal, State, and local governmental laws and regulations.</p>

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				FHWA and PennDOT will develop an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) to document the project findings. The EIS will identify the underlying purpose and need to which FHWA and PennDOT are responding in proposing the alternatives including the proposed action. The EIS will also document the range of alternatives considered, advanced, and dismissed, including a No Build. The EIS will also address effects to the natural, cultural and socioeconomic environment and proposed mitigation measures, as appropriate.
FHWA-2024-0056-0009	7/31/24	Muzhaqi, Artan Philadelphia, PA	<p>Here's a comment you could use:</p> <p>I am writing to express my opposition to the proposed highway project described in the Notice of Intent to Prepare an Environmental Impact Statement. Building more lanes will not solve traffic issues in the long term; it often leads to induced demand, where increased road capacity encourages more driving, eventually leading to congestion similar to current levels.</p> <p>Instead of investing in more highways, we should prioritize public transportation solutions, such as trains, which offer a more sustainable and efficient means of transportation. Public trains can reduce traffic congestion, lower greenhouse gas emissions, and save valuable land and resources that would otherwise be consumed by highway expansion.</p> <p>By focusing on expanding and improving public train infrastructure, we can address traffic issues more effectively and create a more sustainable transportation future.</p>	<p>FHWA and PennDOT will advance the proposed project and associated investigations in accordance with National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) of 1969, as amended (42 U.S.C. 4321, et seq.), 23 U.S.C. 139, FHWA regulations implementing NEPA (23 CFR 771.101-771.139) and all applicable Federal, State, and local governmental laws and regulations.</p> <p>FHWA and PennDOT will develop an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) to document the project findings. The EIS will identify the underlying purpose and need to which FHWA and PennDOT are responding in proposing the alternatives including the proposed action. The EIS will also document the range of alternatives considered, advanced, and dismissed, including a No Build. The EIS will also address effects to the natural, cultural and socioeconomic environment and proposed mitigation measures, as appropriate.</p>

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FHWA-2024-0056-0014	8/1/24	Hobbs, Jack Portland, OR	Expanding highways and building more lane miles will likely increase VMT at a time when we desperately need to reduce carbon emissions and shift focus to rapid public transit for reasons of climate, safety, and wellbeing. This is a shared atmosphere and will presumably use some degree of federal funding, so I consider myself an impacted party.	<p>FHWA and PennDOT will advance the proposed project and associated investigations in accordance with National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) of 1969, as amended (42 U.S.C. 4321, et seq.), 23 U.S.C. 139, FHWA regulations implementing NEPA (23 CFR 771.101-771.139) and all applicable Federal, State, and local governmental laws and regulations.</p> <p>FHWA and PennDOT will develop an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) to document the project findings. The EIS will identify the underlying purpose and need to which FHWA and PennDOT are responding in proposing the alternatives including the proposed action. The EIS will also document the range of alternatives considered, advanced, and dismissed, including a No Build. The EIS will also address effects to the natural, cultural and socioeconomic environment and proposed mitigation measures, as appropriate.</p>
FHWA-2024-0056-0005	7/31/24	Redmond, Michelle Havre De Grace, MD	No! Stop with all the highways. We have enough. Create government-run railroads and car alternatives! Do not touch our farmland!!!	<p>FHWA and PennDOT will advance the proposed project and associated investigations in accordance with National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) of 1969, as amended (42 U.S.C. 4321, et seq.), 23 U.S.C. 139, FHWA regulations implementing NEPA (23 CFR 771.101-771.139) and all applicable Federal, State, and local governmental laws and regulations.</p> <p>FHWA and PennDOT will develop an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) to document the project findings. The EIS will identify the underlying purpose and need to which FHWA and PennDOT are responding in proposing the alternatives including the proposed</p>

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				action. The EIS will also document the range of alternatives considered, advanced, and dismissed, including a No Build. The EIS will also address effects to the natural, cultural and socioeconomic environment and proposed mitigation measures, as appropriate. This will include farmland.
FHWA-2024-0056-0008	7/31/24	Labell, Paul Hellertown, PA	This is a terrible idea. Keep Pennsylvania beautiful!	Thank you for your comment.
FHWA-2024-0056-0019	8/2/24	Gamin, Ali Lakewood, OH	<p>To Whom It May Concern,</p> <p>I am writing to express my opposition to the proposed improvements to US 322, also known as the State College Area Connector Project, from Potters Mills, PA to Boalsburg, PA. While I understand the intent to enhance transportation infrastructure, I have several concerns regarding the potential impacts of this project.</p> <p>Environmental Impact: The construction and expansion of US 322 could have significant adverse effects on the local environment. The area is home to diverse wildlife and natural habitats that could be disrupted or destroyed by the development. Additionally, increased traffic and construction activities could lead to higher levels of pollution, negatively affecting air and water quality. The removal of trees and vegetation could result in habitat loss for many species, leading to a decline in biodiversity. Furthermore, the alteration of natural landscapes could increase the risk of soil erosion and water runoff, potentially causing flooding and other environmental issues in surrounding areas.</p>	<p>FHWA and PennDOT will advance the proposed project and associated investigations in accordance with National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) of 1969, as amended (42 U.S.C. 4321, et seq.), 23 U.S.C. 139, FHWA regulations implementing NEPA (23 CFR 771.101-771.139) and all applicable Federal, State, and local governmental laws and regulations.</p> <p>FHWA and PennDOT will develop an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) to document the project findings. The EIS will identify the underlying purpose and need to which FHWA and PennDOT are responding in proposing the alternatives including the proposed action. The EIS will also document the range of alternatives considered, advanced, and dismissed, including a No Build. The EIS will also address effects to the natural, cultural and socioeconomic environment and proposed mitigation measures, as appropriate.</p>

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			<p>Community Disruption: The proposed project could lead to the displacement of residents and businesses within the affected area. This disruption could have long-term economic and social consequences for the local community. The construction process itself could also cause significant inconvenience and safety concerns for residents.</p> <p>Alternative Solutions: Before proceeding with such a large-scale project, I urge the FHWA and PennDOT to explore alternative solutions that could achieve the desired transportation improvements with less environmental and community impact. These alternatives could include:</p> <p>Enhancing Public Transportation Options: Expanding bus services and routes to provide more comprehensive coverage and reduce the reliance on personal vehicles.</p> <p>Developing a light rail or commuter train system to connect key areas within the region, offering a sustainable and efficient transportation option.</p> <p>Implementing Traffic Management Strategies: Introducing intelligent traffic management systems to optimize traffic flow and reduce congestion.</p> <p>Encouraging carpooling and ride-sharing programs to decrease the number of vehicles on the road.</p> <p>Promoting Active Transportation: Building and improving infrastructure for pedestrians and cyclists, such as sidewalks, bike lanes, and multi-use trails.</p> <p>Implementing programs to encourage walking and cycling as viable and healthy transportation options.</p>	

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			<p>Public Involvement: I appreciate the commitment to public involvement in this project and urge the FHWA and PennDOT to continue engaging with the community throughout the planning and decision-making process. It is crucial to ensure that all voices are heard and that the concerns of local residents are addressed.</p> <p>In conclusion, while I recognize the need for transportation improvements, I believe that the proposed State College Area Connector Project poses significant risks to the environment and community. I strongly urge the FHWA and PennDOT to reconsider the project and explore alternative solutions that minimize these impacts.</p> <p>Thank you for considering my comments.</p> <p>Sincerely, Ali Gamin</p>	
FHWA-2024-0056-0017	8/1/2024	Anonymous	Do it.	Thank you for your comment.
FHWA-2024-0056-0018	8/1/24	Smith, Joshua	Full support. Build build build. Should have been done long ago, that 8 mile stretch is pure torture to drive.	Thank you for your comment.
FHWA-2024-0056-0020	8/15/24	Derstein, Anonymous Boalsburg, PA	<p>All road options lead to Boalsburg at the Route 322 bypass. From there, trucks shift gears up and down to make the grade. This noise pollution disrupts indoor and outdoor activities. The bypass wraps around the Boalsburg Hill District so truck noise is heard from the Route 45 overpass to Warner Boulevard overpass. I believe one of the goals of this project is to improve truck and auto safety.</p> <p>At the very least, please consider adjusting the grade</p>	FHWA and PennDOT will advance the proposed project and associated investigations in accordance with National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) of 1969, as amended (42 U.S.C. 4321, et seq.), 23 U.S.C. 139 , FHWA regulations implementing NEPA (23 CFR 771.101-771.139) and all applicable Federal, State, and local governmental laws and regulations.

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			to reduce the noise in the Boalsburg Hill District. This would improve the quality of life to that which existed prior to the four-lane highway. I've been told that this 322 Bypass stretch of road is not a consideration of this project, however, the increased traffic from the highway project will definitely increase truck traffic and noise. I've also been told the grade of the road at this point does not warrant signage to control engine braking. I believe the noise pollution is significant enough to warrant correction of the highway grade from Route 45 overpass to Warner Boulevard overpass while a four-lane highway is being added to the Route 322 bypass.	FHWA and PennDOT will develop an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) to document the project findings. The EIS will identify the underlying purpose and need to which FHWA and PennDOT are responding in proposing the alternatives including the proposed action. The EIS will also document the range of alternatives considered, advanced, and dismissed, including a No Build. The EIS will also address effects to the natural, cultural and socioeconomic environment and proposed mitigation measures, as appropriate. A noise analysis will be completed for the project.
FHWA-2024-0056-0021	8/16/24	Collins, John Centre Hall, PA	Make SCAC a Showcase for Comprehensive Transportation Improvements John Collins (TransBLS@gmail.com) SCAC Open House 8/15/24	Thank you for your comment. The use of Intelligent Transportation System (ITS) features and other Transportation Systems Management Operations (TSMO) strategies will be considered during the Preliminary Engineering and detailed environment study (NEPA) and further refined in final design, as appropriate.
FHWA-2024-0056-0026	8/23/24		SUMMARY: I support improving transportation facilities in the project area. PennDOT is to be congratulated for improving the SCAC concept by deleting the Route 144 Alternatives and the Route 45 Connector that would have created new safety, congestion, and environmental issues. MY BACKGROUND: I have lived in the SCAC project area since 2004 and travel the roads (Routes 322, 45, and 144) daily. I am a retired engineer and lawyer. I worked for the US Environmental Protection Agency reviewing PennDOT NEPA statements and for USDOT reviewing and approving transit and highway projects. I wrote 4f statements for the DC Metro system. I began my	
			Note submitted comments twice on NOI.	

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			<p>transportation career working for the Philadelphia MPO. I was President of ITS America (Intelligent Transportation Systems of America) and on the Board of ITS PA, and an ITS contractor for PennDOT. I have testified as an expert witness in highway litigation.</p> <p>PROBLEM: The Purpose and Need for the SCAC is now all highway oriented: "The purpose of this project is to improve roadway congestion by achieving acceptable LOS and to address safety issues by reducing the predicted crash frequency along the US 322 corridor between Potters Mills and Boalsburg. Additionally, the project will aim to provide a transportation network that meets driver expectations. (Fed. Reg. Vol No 142, p. 59956) (emphasis added). These are good goals, but too narrow.</p> <p>PEL WAS BROADER: In the PEL Study (page 88), PennDOT said "Multi-modal improvements could be included as part of the Build Alternative, where appropriate or programmed as new projects or upgrade facilities to improve multi-modal connectivity throughout the study area. * * * TCM and TSM Alternatives could also be included as part of the Build Alternative, where appropriate, or programmed as new projects or upgrade facilities." Instead, PennDOT punted and merely referenced other studies and is not proposing to use the SCAC to advance other transportation opportunities.</p> <p>CONCEPT: Make the SCAC an end-to-end showcase for a system of Transportation System Management Opportunities (TSMO). Include as part of "purpose and need" of SCAC and include specific commitments</p>	

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			<p>and funding in the Draft and Final EISs.</p> <p>WHY: SCAC is a once in a lifetime \$500 million plus project. It is highly visible: 100 miles from Harrisburg. Over one million visitors annually to Penn State (108,000 sitting in stands @ game). On national TV 7+ weekends each fall.</p> <p>RISK OF NARROWER APPROACH: Potential for massive bottlenecks and crashes, because all traffic from the south must funnel through Seven Mountains. The existing 322 already has safety issues (108 crashes 2014-18).</p> <p>OPPORTUNITY: Demonstrate management skills, problem solving, customer service, and government competence. Opportunity like PennDOT's I-95 Philadelphia Frankfort Bridge reconstruction.</p> <p>HOW: Manage as a system of systems</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Pre-construction: Get ITS cameras and message signs in place for work zone safety, incident response, and traveler information. Build fringe lot at south end with solar and electric vehicle (EV) and transit connections. Get travelers used to alternative transportation. Solar could be on structure to provide covered parking. •Construction: Use cameras to show challenges and ongoing construction (like PHL I-95 bridge reconstruction.) Support CATA van and transit service. (Like I-95 DC Shirley Highway bus lanes.) Use message signs for CATA and fringe parking information. Coordinate with Penn State Task Force for special events. •Operation: Use lessons learned to refine transportation system operations and improvements. 	

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			Use message signs for ongoing CATA and fringe parking information. Promote EV and bus alternatives.	
FHWA-2024-0056-0022	8/21/24	Alters, Daniel Boalsburg, PA	<p>I am providing my personal comments on Docket No. FHWA-2024-0056, the Notice of Intent to prepare an Environmental Impact Statement for a proposed highway project in Centre County, Pennsylvania.</p> <p>My name is Dan Alters, and I live in Harris Township, in the village of Boalsburg, Pennsylvania. I retired, after a 35-year career, as the Water Programs Manager at the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection, Williamsport Regional Office. However, I remain aware of environmental issues at many levels of society and government, and am an active advocate for many of these issues.</p> <p>I advocate for the minimum-build alternative of the 322-connector project, known as 322-1S in the NOI and the Central Alternative by PennDOT. As a local resident likely to be impacted by this project, I am disappointed that our society is choosing to build a multi-million-dollar highway – one that has awful local impacts to so much of what we hold dear – in order to service traffic demands that primarily occur seven Saturdays a year. Much is said about traffic crashes at various locations and the involvement of heavy or large vehicles, but little discussion includes enforcement of the speed limits on 322, perhaps the most likely cause of those crashes. Perhaps traveling to a football game or a pricey concert should involve an overnight stay or just leaving earlier.</p>	<p>FHWA and PennDOT will advance the proposed project and associated investigations in accordance with National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) of 1969, as amended (42 U.S.C. 4321, et seq.), 23 U.S.C. 139, FHWA regulations implementing NEPA (23 CFR 771.101-771.139) and all applicable Federal, State, and local governmental laws and regulations.</p> <p>FHWA and PennDOT will develop an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) to document the project findings. The EIS will identify the underlying purpose and need to which FHWA and PennDOT are responding in proposing the alternatives including the proposed action. The EIS will also document the range of alternatives considered, advanced, and dismissed, including a No Build. The EIS will also address effects to the natural, cultural and socioeconomic environment and proposed mitigation measures, as appropriate.</p>

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			<p>Our nearby state university conducts multiple events on its campus, and brings its patrons through our communities. Demand-side management of traffic must be included in the solution to traffic issues, and cooperation from the university must be obtained. An intermodal approach to transportation systems management must also be part of this project – there is no reason high-capacity electric busses could not be used to travel the 15 or 20 miles to downtown from outlying communities. Rail service from distant cities to Lewistown followed by bus or shuttle service to State College must also be an integral part of this solution.</p> <p>I trust the eventual environmental impact statement will have taken a hard look at long-haul truck traffic in the centre region, and found ways to encourage that traffic to avoid local highways and use only interstate roadways as the preferred option for these vehicles.</p> <p>Southern Alternative The mountainside route, designated 322-5 or the Southern Alternative, is the worst possible choice from an environmental standpoint. Destroying forests, dividing and paving farmland, and interrupting and possibly contaminating waterflow in the headwaters of high-quality, nationally known cold-water fisheries is unconscionable. Choosing this alternative would likely create backlash from the environmental community, and possible time-delaying litigation.</p>	

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			<p>This alternative involves the most earthmoving, is slightly longer, and needs the least construction time, making the contractor that successfully wins the job very happy. Putting the highway on the mountainside leaves the old corridor available for businesses and the adjacent farmland available for eventual development. It will be interesting to follow the money if this alternative is chosen.</p> <p>Central Alternative The Central Alternative, or 322-1S, has fewer impacts noted, as pointed out by many of the consultants present at the August 15 open-house. As the agencies work through this EIS process, calculating the cost of avoiding, correcting or mitigating each of the impacts for each alternative might be a better indication of suitability of the alternative, rather than just the number of impacts. A cynic might argue that all the meetings and open houses and hearings are merely for show, and that since FHWA and PennDOT look at the bottom line, not necessarily what is best for the environment or the smaller communities impacted, the decision is simply in the numbers and essentially has already been made. Write the EIS and get it over with.</p> <p>Northern Alternative The Northern Alternative, or 322-1OEX, appears to have fewer significant environmental impacts than the other alternatives, although it takes some farmland. While this may be important in the short term, as farmers age - and no one steps up to run the farm - the land will eventually become subdivisions.</p>	

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			<p>Completion of all of the highway projects contemplated for the Centre Region will ensure this area becomes more attractive, bringing in businesses and the employees they require. This alternative just completes the process a bit faster.</p> <p>Pennsylvania’s Department of Transportation, as the project’s lead agency, must comply with all of the federal requirements as well as this Commonwealth’s laws, rules and regulations while constructing this project. In addition to all of these requirements, PennDOT must keep in mind Article I, Section 27 of the amendments to the Constitution of Pennsylvania, which states “The people have a right to clean air, pure water, and to the preservation of natural, scenic, historic, and esthetic values of the environment. Pennsylvania’s public natural resources are the common property of all the people, including generations yet to come. As trustee of these resources, the Commonwealth shall conserve and maintain them for the benefit of all the people.” It’s not a suggestion, as my old boss still says.</p> <p>Thank you for this opportunity to comment.</p>	
FHWA-2024-0056-0023	8/21/24	WhoPoo App	<p>Culverts and wildlife corridors must be included in this proposed highway project. Wildlife move both daily and seasonally to survive. However, the habitats animals rely on continue to be fragmented by housing, roads, fences, energy facilities, and other man-made barriers. As a result, animals are struggling more and more to reach food, water, shelter, and</p>	<p>FHWA and PennDOT will advance the proposed project and associated investigations in accordance with National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) of 1969, as amended (42 U.S.C. 4321, et seq.), 23 U.S.C. 139, FHWA regulations implementing NEPA (23 CFR 771.101-771.139) and all applicable Federal, State, and local governmental laws and regulations.</p>

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			<p>breeding sites. One million animals are killed each day on American roads, and the car insurance cost to Americans is in the billions. Habitat connectivity is defined as the degree to which the landscape facilitates or impedes animal movement and other ecological processes, such as seed dispersal. And climate change is fundamentally altering landscapes, forcing many animals to relocate. As habitat continues to be fragmented, degraded, and lost to development, the need for a coordinated connectivity network is growing. Better habitat connectivity will allow wildlife to migrate and disperse throughout the country with the changing seasons, boost biodiversity and resilience in degraded ecosystems, safeguard genetic flow between populations, and ensure species are better able to adapt to our changing climate. This work is an important and long overdue investment in the long-term health of wildlife populations and ecological processes. The following are examples of current and proposed wildlife corridors:</p> <p>Elk and bighorn sheep: In the Upper Rio Grande Valley, the National Wildlife Federation is working with the New Mexico Wildlife Federation, Colorado Wildlife Federation, and other partners to establish federal protections for wildlife habitat connectivity across three national forests (the Carson and Santa Fe in New Mexico, and Rio Grande in Colorado) and the Rio Grande del Norte National Monument. This corridor would help species like elk, bighorn sheep, mule deer, pronghorn, lynx, black bear, mountain</p>	<p>FHWA and PennDOT will develop an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) to document the project findings. The EIS will identify the underlying purpose and need to which FHWA and PennDOT are responding in proposing the alternatives including the proposed action. The EIS will also document the range of alternatives considered, advanced, and dismissed, including a No Build. The EIS will also address effects to the natural, cultural and socioeconomic environment and proposed mitigation measures, as appropriate. Wildlife crossings and corridors will be considered in the investigations.</p>

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			<p>lions, and the rare Rio Grande cutthroat trout.</p> <p>Migrating birds and monarch butterflies: The Burnham Wildlife Corridor is a 100-acre landscape within Chicago’s Lakeshore Park featuring the prairie and woodland ecosystems that are native to this part of the Central U.S. The corridor runs right through the heart of the city. It is mainly used as a refuge for the three million migratory birds that pass through the Windy City each year, but also creates valuable butterfly habitat.</p> <p>Mule deer: In Wyoming, the Red Desert to Hoback mule deer corridor supports the longest mule deer migration in the U.S.</p> <p>Pronghorn and greater sage-grouse: The Northern Great Plains, which extend from Montana into Canada, support the longest pronghorn and greater sage-grouse migrations for both species. Taking a holistic approach to conservation, collaboration continues across the patchwork of public and working lands to sustain connectivity.</p> <p>Enhancing Habitat Connectivity Through Wildlife Crossings</p> <p>In addition to identifying and prioritizing corridors across the landscape, the National Wildlife Federation also supports infrastructure that enhances these efforts. This work consists of building overpasses and underpasses across highways that block mule deer and pronghorn migrations and creating culverts (pathways for water to flow under infrastructure) that allow turtles and amphibians to cross barriers safely.</p>	

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			<p>Models for Connectivity Banff: A system of wildlife crossings in Banff National Park across the Trans-Canada Highway has reduced ungulate-vehicle collisions by approximately 80 percent.</p> <p>Montana: A network of 81 wildlife crossings over and under U.S. Highway 93 in Montana, combined with more than nine miles of fencing, reduced deer-vehicle collisions by over 90 percent.</p> <p>California mountain lions: By creating a safe passage for wildlife near Highway 101, the Liberty Canyon Wildlife Crossing in California will be the largest wildlife crossing in the world, and a global model for urban wildlife conservation.</p> <p>Florida panthers: The Florida Department of Transportation has constructed numerous wildlife underpasses on busy state roads throughout South Florida.</p> <p>Turtles: In Massachusetts, a culvert was installed under Route 44 to allow spotted turtles to cross a dangerous roadway that bisected two populations. Please emulate all of these programs in this program.</p>	
FHWA-2024-0056-0024	8/22/24	United States Fish and Wildlife Service	<p>Please find the comments of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Pennsylvania Field Office, attached. Thank you for the opportunity to comment on this Notice of Intent.</p> <p>See full comments Attachment A to this table</p>	<p>Thank you for your comments. FHWA and PennDOT will develop an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) to document the State College Area Connector investigations, findings, recommendations, and mitigations.</p> <p>As part of the EIS process, FHWA and PennDOT will work to develop alternatives that best avoid and minimize impacts to natural, cultural and socioeconomic resources. This would include natural</p>

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				<p>habitat, stream, and wetlands areas that support potential threatened and endangered species, migratory bird species, and Golden and Bald eagles. FHWA and PennDOT will also look to include consideration of wildlife crossings and pollinator species in any planting and future maintenance plans as best management practices or mitigation, as appropriate.</p> <p>FHWA and PennDOT will continue to coordinate with the United States Fish and Wildlife Service as the State College Area Connector Project advances through the environmental investigations and the development and circulation of the EIS</p>
FHWA-2024-0056-0025	8/23/24	ClearWater Conservancy	<p>ClearWater Conservancy is an accredited land trust and environmental organization with a mission to “conserve and restore our natural resources through land conservation, water resources stewardship, and environmental outreach across central Pennsylvania.” Our 1000+ members rightly expect ClearWater Conservancy to act in their best interest and to represent this mission effectively across Centre and surrounding counties.</p> <p>The potential expansion of existing Route 322, also known as the State College Area Connector Project, is likely to have significant impacts to the ecology of southern Penns Valley as it follows Tussey Ridge from Potters Mill in the east to Boalsburg in the west. Our comments are focused on information we expect to</p>	<p>FHWA and PennDOT will advance the proposed project and associated investigations in accordance with National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) of 1969, as amended (42 U.S.C. 4321, et seq.), 23 U.S.C. 139, FHWA regulations implementing NEPA (23 CFR 771.101-771.139) and all applicable Federal, State, and local governmental laws and regulations.</p> <p>FHWA and PennDOT will develop an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) to document the project findings. The EIS will identify the underlying purpose and need to which FHWA and PennDOT are responding in proposing the alternatives including the proposed action. The EIS will also document the range of alternatives considered, advanced, and dismissed, including a No Build. The EIS will also address effects to</p>

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			<p>see in the Environmental Impact Statement and some preliminary concerns.</p> <p>ClearWater Conservancy and our partner, the Centre County Farmland Trust, hold easements on three parcels that intersect potential alignments. Easements were placed on these properties to secure natural and agricultural values. It is our expectation that any degradation of conservation values would be compensated.</p> <p>An area with exceptional vulnerability is the intersection of Sinking Creek with 322. This is near a Centre County Farmland Trust Easement, extensive wetlands, and several Biodiversity Areas mapped in the Natural Heritage Inventory. With the south alignment, we are concerned about impacts to the headwaters of Spring Creek because the highway will bury the seeps along the toe of the slope on the side of Tussey Mountain. We are also concerned about remaining natural areas near Boalsburg where maintaining connectivity between Tussey Mountain and Mount Nittany is a high priority for our organization.</p> <p>Given the sensitive ecological communities in this corridor, and the recent Pennsylvania legislative report demonstrating the importance of wildlife under and overpasses, we expect the EIS to compare impacts of at-grade versus elevated roadway construction. These considerations may include a</p>	<p>the natural, cultural and socioeconomic environment and proposed mitigation measures, as appropriate. Wildlife crossings, corridors, and habitat, traffic analysis, and air quality will be considered in the investigations.</p>

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			<p>redesign of the existing 322 to improve landscape connectivity if traffic volumes remain high. We request that the following environmental impacts be investigated (current and projections):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •primary, secondary, and cumulative hydrologic impacts to surface, subsurface, seeps, springs, and wetlands, including mapping karst topography to minimize risk of significant hydrologic impacts •impacts to plants, animals, and habitats •wildlife mortality data •traffic data both for local and through traffic on old 322 and the new highway •a carbon budget for roadway construction and any changes in roadway use projected for the future •any changes in future emissions over a no-build scenario •design alternatives that enhance climate adaptation by supporting habitat connectivity <p>We appreciate the opportunity to comment on the Notice of Intent to prepare an Environmental Impact Statement for the 322 Connector in Centre County, PA. We hope that minimizing impacts to the ecology of Penns Valley is a high priority for the selection of the alignment and the design of the highway, however we recognize that other stakeholders, many of whom are our neighbors or our members, bring diverse and important perspectives to the decision making process.</p>	

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FHWA-2024-0056-0028	8/23/24	Nittany Valley Environmental Coalition – Dorothy Blair	See full comments Attachment B to this table.	<p>FHWA and PennDOT will advance the proposed project and associated investigations in accordance with National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) of 1969, as amended (42 U.S.C. 4321, et seq.), 23 U.S.C. 139, FHWA regulations implementing NEPA (23 CFR 771.101-771.139) and all applicable Federal, State, and local governmental laws and regulations.</p> <p>FHWA and PennDOT will develop an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) to document the project findings. The EIS will identify the underlying purpose and need to which FHWA and PennDOT are responding in proposing the alternatives including the proposed action. The EIS will also document the range of alternatives considered, advanced, and dismissed, including a No Build. The EIS will also address effects to the natural, cultural and socioeconomic environment and proposed mitigation measures, as appropriate.</p> <p>Additionally, the NOI initiates the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) process and is issued to inform the public, agencies, and stakeholders that FHWA and PennDOT are conducting an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS). FHWA’s decision to develop an EIS was based on the findings of the State College Area Connector Planning and Environmental Linkage (PEL) Study.</p> <p>Information reference in the comments about alternatives developed after the PEL Study are included as part of the EIS scoping phase. The EIS scoping phase</p>

Comment ID	Comment Date	Last Name, First Name City, State	Comment	Response
				<p>is an early and open process to determine the scope of issues for analysis in an EIS, including identifying the important issues and eliminating from further study unimportant issues. Scoping may include appropriate pre-application procedures or work conducted prior to publication of the NOI. As a result, the evaluation of alternatives developed post-PEL Study will be considered in the EIS. No changes to the NOI are proposed.</p>
FHWA-2024-0056-0027	8/23/24	Pennsylvania Farm Bureau	See Attachment C for full comments.	<p>FHWA and PennDOT will advance the proposed project and associated investigations in accordance with National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) of 1969, as amended (42 U.S.C. 4321, et seq.), 23 U.S.C. 139, FHWA regulations implementing NEPA (23 CFR 771.101-771.139) and all applicable Federal, State, and local governmental laws and regulations.</p> <p>FHWA and PennDOT will develop an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) to document the project findings. The EIS will identify the underlying purpose and need to which FHWA and PennDOT are responding in proposing the alternatives including the proposed action. The EIS will also document the range of alternatives considered, advanced, and dismissed, including a No Build. The EIS will also address effects to the natural, cultural and socioeconomic environment and proposed mitigation measures, as appropriate. Farmland is one of the many resources that will be considered during these investigations. Specific farm owner and operator interviews will be conducted to understand the farm operation and to better determine</p>

state college area CONNECTOR

PennDOT.gov/SCAC

Comment ID	Comment Date	Last Name, First Name City, State	Comment	Response
				<p>how to best avoid and minimize impacts to farmland and overall farm operations. Alternatives will be adjusted to balance overall environmental impacts.</p> <p>Following completion of the environmental and engineering processes, PennDOT will conduct any necessary right-of-way acquisitions in accordance with all governing laws, rules, regulations, and guidance.</p>
Mailed to FHWA and PennDOT	8/20/24	U.S. Environmental Protection Agency – Region 3	See Attachment D for full comments.	Thank you for your comments. FHWA and PennDOT will continue to coordinate with the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency – Region 3 as the State College Area Connector Projects advances through the environmental investigations and the development and circulation of the Environmental Impact Statement.

Attachment A – USFWS Comment Letter



United States Department of the Interior



FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE
Pennsylvania Field Office
110 Radnor Road, Suite 101
State College, Pennsylvania 16801-4850

August 22, 2024

Julia Moore
Federal Highway Administration
30 North Third Street, Suite 700
Harrisburg, PA 17101

RE: State College Area Connector Project, Centre County, PA
FWS Project #2022-0052504 (formerly 2020-1263)

Dear Ms. Moore:

We are responding to the Notice of Intent (NOI), published in the Federal Register on July 24, 2024, that the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and Pennsylvania Department of Transportation (PennDOT) are preparing a Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) for the State College Area Connector Project from Potters Mills, PA to Boalsburg, PA. The NOI solicits comments and suggestions from the public, agencies, and stakeholders on purpose and needs, potential alternatives and impacts, and the identification of any relevant information, studies, or analyses of any kind concerning impacts affecting the quality of the human environment.

We provide these comments under the authority of the Endangered Species Act of 1973 (87 Stat. 884, as amended; 16 U.S.C. 1531 *et seq.*), Fish and Wildlife Coordination Act of 1934 (48 Stat. 401, as amended; 16 U.S.C. 661 *et seq.*), as amended), the Migratory Bird Treaty Act of 1918 (16 U.S.C. 703-712; Ch. 128; July 13, 1918; 40 Stat. 755, as amended), and the Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act of 1940 (54 Stat. 250, as amended; 16 U.S.C. 668-668d). The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Service) is a cooperating agency, as defined in the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (42 U.S.C. 4321 *et seq.*), with the FHWA in developing the DEIS for the SCAC study.

PennDOT initiated the South Central Centre County Transportation Study in 1998 to evaluate and address transportation needs along the US 322, PA 144, and PA 45 corridors. In 2018, PennDOT sought to update the study, at which point we provided a letter of February 28, 2018 with comments regarding wetlands, streams, and threatened and endangered species in the study area. In 2020, PennDOT, FHWA, and the Centre County Metropolitan Planning Organization began the Planning and Environmental Linages (PEL) Study for the State College Area Connector (Connector). The PEL process aimed to promote early coordination with the public as well as Federal, State, and local agencies to identify and evaluate transportation needs in the area and develop and evaluate alternatives with consideration for local and environmental concerns.

PennDOT presented on the Connector at 8 Agency Coordination Meetings which we have attended and provided comments at those opportunities.

PennDOT and FHWA propose to construct an approximately 8-mile four-lane limited access facility from the end of US 322/Mount Nittany Expressway in Boalsburg to the newly constructed limited access portion of US 322 at Potters Mills in Centre County, PA. PennDOT and FHWA have identified four alternatives from a range of alternatives studied during the PEL Study. The four alternatives are a no build alternative and three build alternatives: the US 322-1OEX (North), US 322-1S (Central), and US 322-5 (South). Project designers should attempt to incorporate the least environmentally damaging, practicable alternatives that minimize or avoid encroachment into bat and migratory bird habitat, large contiguous blocks of forested areas, wetlands, streams, riparian areas, and floodplains.

Threatened and Endangered Species

Section 7(a)(1) of the Endangered Species Act (Act) requires Federal agencies to use their authorities to further the conservation of listed species while section 7(a)(2) requires such agencies to consult with the Service to ensure that their actions do not jeopardize listed species. The following comments are provided pursuant to the Act to ensure the protection of endangered and threatened species.

The Indiana bat (*Myotis sodalis*), northern long-eared bat (*Myotis septentrionalis*), and tricolored bat (*Perimyotis subflavus*) may occur within the identified study area. The Indiana bat and northern long-eared bat are federally listed as endangered, and the tricolored bat is proposed to be listed as endangered. On September 14, 2022 the Service published a proposal to list the tricolored bat as endangered under the Act. The bat faces extinction due to the impacts of white-nose syndrome, a deadly disease affecting cave-dwelling bats across the continent. Species proposed for listing are not afforded protection under the Act; however, as soon as a listing becomes effective, the prohibitions against jeopardizing its continued existence and “take” will apply. In cases where adverse effects to federally listed species cannot be avoided, further consultation with the Service would be necessary to avoid potential violations of section 9 (prohibiting “take” of listed species) and/or section 7 (requiring Federal agencies to consult) of the Act.

The Indiana bat, northern long-eared bat, and tricolored bat hibernate in caves and cave-like structures (e.g. mines and railroad tunnels) during the winter months (November through March). The tricolored bat may also hibernate in shallower, cave-like rock shelters¹. There are known bat hibernation sites to the north of the project area, which places the proposed alternatives within the spring staging and fall swarming area (i.e. within 5 miles of hibernacula). As proposed, all three build alternatives have impacts to these areas. For the DEIS we recommend minimizing the acreage of tree removal and habitat disturbance for each alternative where possible and exploring mitigation options to offset unavoidable impacts. For construction we recommend cutting trees during the inactive season (when most bats are hibernating and unlikely to be in forested habitat; for Pennsylvania this is typically November 16 through March 31).

¹ Lemen, C.A., Freeman, P.W., and White, J.A. 2016. Acoustic evidence of bats using rock crevices in winter: A call for more research on winter roosts in North America. Transactions of the Nebraska Academy of Sciences and Affiliated Societies 36:9-13. <http://digitalcommons.unl.edu/tnas/506>

Suitable summer habitat² for the three species of bats consists of a wide variety of forested/wooded habitats where they roost, forage, and travel. For these species, particularly the Indiana bat and tricolored bat, summer habitat may include some adjacent and interspersed non-forested habitats such as emergent wetlands and adjacent edges of agricultural fields, old fields, and pastures. These habitats are necessary to support the female bats' needs for food and shelter during the critical periods of pregnancy and lactation, and to support the juvenile bats' needs for food and shelter so they can quickly grow to a healthy body condition that will sustain them during fall migration. The PEL study has identified acreages of forest impacts, and numerous emergent wetlands, fields, and pastures within the limits of disturbance of each alternative. Impacts to wetlands and fields/pastures are typically considered in the context of water quality concerns and effects to agriculture. We request that the DEIS consider non-forested summer habitat into its study of impacts to the bats and minimize impacts to forested and non-forested habitats in the design of alternatives.

All three species may roost in human-made structures, such as buildings, barns, bridges, bat houses, and culverts (for the tricolored bat). Therefore, we recommend including structure demolition into the DEIS study of impacts to bats. To minimize the impacts of demolition, we recommend a survey of structures for bat use (such as an emergence survey) prior to demolition, or scheduling demolition for the species' inactive season.

Karst features have been identified in the study area of the three build alternatives. We recommend assessing whether impacts to karst features would result in effects to known hibernacula. A field assessment or mapping of portals may be needed to identify the effects of impacting karst features.

Tricolored bats have been observed roosting in rock crevices and vertical rock faces³. It appears that the PEL process did not investigate the presence of this habitat type. We recommend mapping, and if safely possible, surveying for the presence of rock crevices, walls, shelters, and cliffs, and assessing bat presence in these areas.

Migratory Birds

On October 5, 2021, the Service's Director signed Order No. 225, which clarified the Service's interpretation of the Migratory Bird Treaty Act to prohibit incidental take of migratory birds. The Service recognizes that a wide range of activities may result in incidental take of migratory birds and pursuing enforcement for all these activities would not be an effective or judicious use of the Service's law enforcement resources. Accordingly, the Service's primary focus for enforcement of the Act includes emphasis on specific types of activities that both foreseeably cause incidental take, and where project proponents fail to implement known beneficial practices to avoid or minimize incidental take. That said, we offer the following discussion and best management practices for the conservation of migratory birds for consideration and inclusion as project design decisions are made.

² See pages 11-13 of the *Range-wide Indiana Bat & Northern Long-eared bat Survey Guidelines (March 2024)*, accessible at <https://www.fws.gov/library/collections/range-wide-indiana-bat-and-northern-long-eared-bat-survey-guidelines>.

³ Johnson, L.E., Turner, G.G., Scafina, M.R., Anis, E., Johnson, J.S. 2024. Widespread Use of Rocky Outcrops by Hibernating Bats in Ohio and Pennsylvania. *Journal of North American Bat Research* 2:1-15.

Our Information for Planning and Consultation tool has identified eleven migratory birds of conservation concern⁴ that may occur in the study area. These are:

Black-billed Cuckoo (*Coccyzus erythrophthalmus*)
Black-capped Chickadee (*Poecile atricapillus praticus*)
Bobolink (*Dolichonyx oryzivorus*)
Canada Warbler (*Cardellina canadensis*)
Chimney Swift (*Chaetura pelagica*)
Eastern Whip-poor-will (*Antrostomus vociferus*)
Golden-winged Warbler (*Vermivora chrysoptera*)
Northern Saw-whet Owl (*Aegolius acadicus*)
Red-headed Woodpecker (*Melanerpes erythrocephalus*)
Rusty Blackbird (*Euphagus carolinus*)
Wood Thrush (*Hylocichla mustelina*)

The study area includes a portion of the Greater Tussey Mountain Important Bird Area (IBA) and is in the vicinity of the Rothrock State Forest (part) & Stone Mountain IBA. IBAs are designated by the Pennsylvania Ornithological Technical Committee. They are the most critical regions in the Commonwealth for conserving bird diversity and abundance, and are the primary focus of Audubon Pennsylvania's conservation efforts. The Greater Tussey Mountain IBA has been observed to have 209 species of birds, and the Rothrock State Forest (part) & Stone Mountain IBA have 270 species observations⁵.

The mission of the Service is to work with others to conserve, protect, and enhance fish, wildlife, plants, and their habitats for the continuing benefit of the American people. Migratory bird conservation remains an integral part of our mission. The Service works with any partner that is interested in reducing impacts to migratory birds and their habitats through voluntary conservation measures.

The potential exists for avian mortality from habitat destruction and alteration associated with vegetation clearing and fragmentation within the project boundaries. Site-specific factors can be considered in project siting to avoid and minimize the risk to birds, including avian abundance; the quality, quantity and type of habitat; geographic location; type and extent of bird use (*e.g.*, breeding, foraging, migrating, etc.); and landscape features.

We offer the following general conservation recommendations that may avoid and minimize impacts to migratory birds within and around the project area:

1. Where disturbance is necessary, clear natural or semi-natural habitats (*e.g.*, forests, woodlots, reverting fields, shrubby areas) and perform maintenance activities (*e.g.*, mowing) between September 1 and March 31, which is outside the nesting season for

⁴ The 1988 amendment to the Fish and Wildlife Conservation Act mandates the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to "identify species, subspecies, and populations of all migratory nongame birds that, without additional conservation actions, are likely to become candidates for listing under the Endangered Species Act (ESA) of 1973. "Birds of Conservation Concern 2021 (BCC 2021)" is the most recent effort to carry out this mandate. For more information about the list see <https://www.fws.gov/media/birds-conservation-concern-2021>.

⁵ Bird Observations for Greater Tussey Mountain, date range Jan-Dec 1900-2024. 2024. eBird: An online database of bird distribution and abundance [web application]. eBird, Cornell Lab of Ornithology, Ithaca, New York. Available: <http://www.ebird.org>. (Accessed: August 19, 2024).

most native bird species. Without undertaking specific analysis of breeding species and their respective nesting seasons on the project site, implementation of this seasonal restriction will avoid take of most breeding birds, their nests, and their young (*i.e.*, eggs, hatchlings, fledglings).

2. Minimize land and vegetation disturbance during project design and construction. To reduce habitat fragmentation, co-locate roads, fences, lay down areas, staging areas, and other infrastructure in or immediately adjacent to already-disturbed areas (e.g., existing roads, pipelines, agricultural fields) and cluster development features (e.g., buildings, roads) as opposed to distributing them throughout land parcels. Where this is not possible, minimize roads, fences, and other infrastructure.
3. Avoid permanent habitat alterations in areas where birds are highly concentrated. Examples of high concentration areas for birds are wetlands, State or Federal refuges, Audubon Important Bird Areas, private duck clubs, staging areas, rookeries, leks, roosts, and riparian areas. Avoid establishing sizable structures along known bird migration pathways or known daily movement flyways (e.g., between roosting and feeding areas).
4. To conserve area-sensitive species, avoid fragmenting large, contiguous tracts of wildlife habitat, especially if habitat cannot be fully restored after construction. Maintain contiguous habitat corridors to facilitate wildlife dispersal. Where practicable, concentrate construction activities, infrastructure, and man-made structures (e.g., buildings, cell towers, roads, parking lots) on lands already altered or cultivated, and away from areas of intact and healthy native habitats. If not feasible, select fragmented or degraded habitats over relatively intact areas.
5. Develop a habitat restoration plan for the proposed site that avoids or minimizes negative impacts to birds, and that creates functional habitat for a variety of bird species. Use only plant species that are native to the local area for revegetation of the project area.

Please be aware that because these are general guidelines, some of them may not be applicable to the current project development or they may have already been considered in the project design. Additional measures are available in our nationwide standard conservation measures⁶

Bald and Golden Eagles

Bald eagles (*Haliaeetus leucocephalus*) are protected under the Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act (Eagle Act). The Eagle Act protects eagles by prohibiting killing, selling, disturbing, or otherwise harming eagles, their nests or eggs. “Disturb” means to agitate or bother a bald or golden eagle to a degree that causes, or is likely to cause, based on the best scientific information available, 1) injury to an eagle; 2) a decrease in its productivity, by substantially interfering with normal breeding, feeding, or sheltering behavior; or 3) nest abandonment, by substantially interfering with normal breeding, feeding, or sheltering behavior.

⁶ <https://www.fws.gov/sites/default/files/documents/nationwide-standard-conservation-measures.pdf>

The locations of known bald eagle nesting sites may be viewed in our map⁷. One bald eagle nest is known within the study area, approximately 0.25 mile south of the Central Alternative. We recommend that you evaluate the project including its size, location, and layout using the National Bald Eagle Management Guidelines⁸ to determine whether bald eagles might be disturbed as a direct or indirect result of this project. The Service designed the Northeast Bald Eagle Project Screening Form⁹ as a voluntary self-certification tool to help in this evaluation process. If it appears that disturbance may occur, we recommend that you modify your project consistent with the Guidelines. If disturbance cannot be avoided, an eagle permit may be required¹⁰.

Pollinator Habitat

In 2019, PennDOT, with the support of FHWA, developed their Voluntary Pre-Listing Pollinator Conservation Program (Program)¹¹. The Program is voluntary, non-regulatory, and proactive for the conservation of pollinator species of special concern, including the monarch, regal fritillary, and frosted elfin butterflies; and the yellow-banded bumblebee. PennDOT's intent of developing the Program included implementing conservation actions that may preclude the need to list these pollinator species of concern under the Endangered Species Act (Act). If, in the future, the Service determines that these species do require protection under the Act, PennDOT's commitments through the Program enable them to provide advanced credits to offset impacts to these four species of special concern, which would result from transportation-related actions.

To fulfill PennDOT's commitment to pollinator conservation, we recommend that FHWA and PennDOT implementing conservation efforts to increase habitat for the four species of special concern described above, and other pollinator species in general. Principle conservation approaches that hold the greatest potential for pollinator habitat increases include, but are not limited to:

1. Increasing implementation of conservation mowing seasons and methods;
2. Promoting milkweed and nectar producing plant growth;
3. Implementing specific planted pollinator sites; and
4. Using seed mixes that are native to Pennsylvania in roadside and right-of-way plantings

We recommend that PennDOT and FHWA evaluate all proposed alternatives for opportunities to enhance pollinator habitat early-on in the planning process. Depending on the specific pollinator species (*i.e.*, bees, butterflies, beetles, etc.), PennDOT and FHWA should identify focal areas to target their conservation efforts; incorporate a certain percentage of native flowering plants into buffer planting specifications (*i.e.*, bumble bee "superfood plants," specialty monarch seed mixes, or wild indigo and lupine); encourage the maintenance and restoration of early successional habitats; encourage the replacement of plant losses during normal buffer

⁷ Please note that the map data was last updated in 2022 and may not include nests that have been built since then. The map is available at <https://gis-fws.opendata.arcgis.com/datasets/fws::bald-eagle-nesting-sites-pennsylvania-view-only/explore?layer=1&location=40.812386%2C-77.703705%2C12.31>

⁸ <https://www.fws.gov/media/national-bald-eagle-management-guidelines>

⁹ <https://www.fws.gov/media/northeast-bald-eagle-project-screening-form>

¹⁰ The Service revised the regulations for issuance of permits for eagle incidental take and eagle nest take in 2024.

More information is available at <https://www.fws.gov/story/do-i-need-eagle-take-permit>

¹¹ <https://www.penndot.pa.gov/ProjectAndPrograms/RoadDesignEnvironment/Environment/environmental-policy/Pages/Prelisting-Pollinator-Conservation-Program.aspx>

establishment activities (*e.g.* by herbicide kill or repeated mowing); create or protect nest sites (*e.g.*, establish native bunch grasses, build brush piles, and adjust mowing activities to avoid disturbance along forest edges and field buffers to allow for taller grass cover during the nesting season); and develop scenarios that integrate pollinator protection into pest management activities (*i.e.*, herbicide application and timing)¹². We fully support the inclusion of pollinator habitat and maintenance of that habitat into the design and planning of large roadway projects and look forward to working with PennDOT and FHWA on this matter.

Wetlands and Streams

The Fish and Wildlife Coordination Act directs the Service to investigate and report on proposed Federal actions that affect any stream or other body of water and to provide recommendations to minimize impacts on fish and wildlife resources.

Wetlands and streams provide important habitat for a variety of fish and wildlife resources. Streams within the study area that may be impacted by the project include Spring Creek, Little Fishing Creek, and Sinking Creek. The PEL process has identified the acreage of anticipated wetland impacts, linear feet of stream impacts, number of stream crossings, and acreage of 100-year floodplains. The majority of stream impacts are to streams designated as high quality coldwater fisheries¹³, and the South Alternative has highest number of stream crossings and linear feet of impacts due to its location spanning numerous high elevation headwater streams.

We recommend further evaluating impacts to wetlands and streams beyond the calculated acreages, linear feet of impact, and number of crossings. These calculations reflect where the alternatives physically cross wetlands and streams, but roadways impact aquatic resources far beyond the crossing locations. Roads adversely affect water quality due to faster rates of runoff, lower groundwater recharge rates, and increased erosion. Road usage and maintenance also supply pollutants in the forms of automotive particles (rubber from tires, fuel from vehicles, copper and heavy metals from brake pads, and antifreeze), salt or other de-icing substances, pesticides used in roadside vegetation management, paint from bridgework and highway re-striping, and road debris¹⁴. The roadway's effects to water quality may extend far beyond its physical crossing of wetlands and streams, and we recommend evaluating these extensive impacts in the DEIS.

To reduce adverse effects on streams, use best management practices when conducting in-stream construction, including working during periods of low flow; using sedimentation and erosion controls to prevent siltation and contaminants from entering waterways; conducting restoration efforts immediately after construction to reduce run-off into aquatic areas downstream; stabilizing new construction as the project progresses; conducting stream work from the streambanks; and, wherever possible, minimizing excursions into streambeds. Affected streams should be restored to pre-construction elevations, cross-sections, and contours. All excavated materials from any earthmoving activities should be stored at a predetermined, confined, upland site to avoid runoff into aquatic areas. Any vegetation in affected riparian areas should be re-established to pre-project conditions using only native plant species.

¹² Additional resources for pollinator conservation include FHWA guidance and publications, available at https://www.environment.fhwa.dot.gov/env_topics/ecosystems/pollinators.aspx

¹³ The Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection designates streams based on aquatic life use and water quality criteria.

<https://www.dep.pa.gov/Business/Water/CleanWater/WaterQuality/StreamRedesignations/Pages/default.aspx>

¹⁴ https://courses.washington.edu/gmforum/topics/trans_water/trans_water.htm

Riparian areas are valuable natural resources and impacts to these areas should be avoided whenever possible. Riparian vegetation plays an important role in protecting streams, reducing erosion and sedimentation, protecting water quality, maintaining the water table, controlling flooding, and providing shade and cover. Any encroachment into these areas should be avoided and minimized. Measures to compensate for unavoidable losses of riparian areas should be developed and implemented as part of the project.

We recommend designing stream and wetland crossings that facilitate aquatic organism passage. Structures should have a width greater than the bankfull channel width to accommodate wildlife crossings and floodplain connectivity. Structures should have a streambed that is similar to the natural streambed material to maintain habitat for fish, invertebrates, and other aquatic organisms. Additional resources for designing aquatic organism passage are available from the Service¹⁵ and from FHWA¹⁶.

Wildlife Crossings and Habitat Connectivity

As long linear features on the landscape, roads and highways have adverse effects on wildlife and wildlife habitat that are disproportionate to the area of land the projects occupy. In addition to the loss and fragmentation of habitats, road effects include habitat degradation (e.g., from stormwater and invasive species establishment); road avoidance by wildlife; increased human disturbance/exploitation; road mortality of wildlife; disruption of species social structure; reduced access to vital habitats; population fragmentation and isolation; and disruption of processes that maintain regional populations¹⁷.

Roads create barriers to wildlife movement. Studies have documented that several species of small mammals, reptiles, and amphibians are reluctant to cross even relatively small roads. Additionally, some wildlife species avoid areas adjacent to highways due to noise and human activity associated with roads. By creating distribution barriers, roads subdivide wildlife into smaller and isolated populations, which are more vulnerable to localized extirpation (Jackson 2000).

We recommend incorporating wildlife crossings into the build alternatives to maintain habitat connectivity and reduce wildlife-vehicle collisions. PennDOT already has wildlife crossings throughout Pennsylvania, including the culverts and underpasses on I-99 in Centre County. These crossings have been documented to allow deer, bear, and other species to travel between forest and valley habitats that would otherwise have been separated by the highway. As we understand, the public has contributed local knowledge to the design team of locations with frequent road mortality along the existing US 322. We support incorporating this local knowledge into the placement design of wildlife crossings. We also recommend consulting the guidelines included in Chapter 3 of FHWA's publication: *Wildlife Crossing Structure Handbook Design and Evaluation in North America*¹⁸ for appropriate methods for siting wildlife crossings.

¹⁵ https://www.fws.gov/alaska-culvert-design-guidelines#_Toc75597641

¹⁶ https://www.fhwa.dot.gov/engineering/hydraulics/culverthyd/aquatic/culvertaop_resources.cfm

¹⁷ Jackson, S.D. 2000. Overview of transportation impacts on wildlife movement and populations. pp. 7-20 In Messmer, T.A. and B. West, (eds.) *Wildlife and Highways: Seeking Solutions to an Ecological and Socio-economic Dilemma*. The Wildlife Society. <http://www.wildlifecrossings.info/sa004.htm>. Accessed October 27, 2006.

¹⁸ https://www.fhwa.dot.gov/clas/ctip/wildlife_crossing_structures/ch_3.aspx

To create a safe, effective travel-way for wildlife; to reduce wildlife-vehicle collisions and improve safety for the traveling public; and to encourage wildlife to use constructed crossings, we recommend including appropriate wildlife fencing in conjunction with wildlife crossings. Fences help guide animals to wildlife passage sites¹⁹ and can be as critical as the wildlife crossing structures themselves²⁰. Through a study conducted in north-central Pennsylvania, PennDOT concluded that maintaining fencing along roadways helps decrease the likelihood of wildlife entering the right-of way and directs them to underpasses²¹. Many species of wildlife are wary of unnatural situations and confinement. Given the choice between going through an unfamiliar wildlife crossing and crossing the highway pavement, many animals will choose the latter²², often leading to their demise. Fencing forces wildlife to use the crossings, improving the safety of the roadway for wildlife and the traveling public.

Acid Producing Rock

Acid producing rock (APR) is a prevalent issue for large transportation projects in Pennsylvania. Pyrite, a mineral composed of iron and sulfur, is often found in areas of coal and black shale geology in the state²³. When pyrite is exposed to the atmosphere, it weathers and produces iron and sulfuric acid, which dissolves additional elements from rocks including aluminum and manganese. If construction disturbs or exposes APR without proper handling of the rock, then streams and groundwater can become polluted by the leachate. This was nearly the case during the construction of I-99 in Centre County, approximately 10 miles northwest of the proposed State College Area Connector.

To prevent acid drainage pollution as a secondary impact of this project, we request that you map areas of APR in the study area using proper geotechnical studies before choosing a preferred alignment. If APR is found, FHWA and PennDOT should consider alternatives that minimize potential acid drainage pollution, and options to avoid and minimize impacts to APR. In addition, please develop an Acid Rock Management plan that includes acid rock handling and acid rock disposal, in case any unanticipated acid rock should be encountered during project construction.

¹⁹ Jackson, S.D. and C.R. Griffin. 2000. A Strategy for Mitigating Highway Impacts on Wildlife. Pp. 143-159 in Messmer, T.A. and B. West (eds), *Wildlife and Highways: Seeking Solutions to an Ecological and Socio-economic Dilemma*. The Wildlife Society.

²⁰ Ruediger, B. and DiGiorgio, M. 2007. *Safe Passage: A User's Guide to Developing Effective Highway Crossings for Carnivores and Other Wildlife*. Southern Rockies Ecosystem Project. 19 pp.

²¹ A.D. Marble and Company. 2004. *Wildlife Underpass Study: White-tailed deer use of Existing Culverts in North Central Pennsylvania. Phase II – Final Report*. Prepared for the Pennsylvania Department of Transportation. 23 pp.

²² Ruediger, B. and DiGiorgio, M. 2007. *Safe Passage: A User's Guide to Developing Effective Highway Crossings for Carnivores and Other Wildlife*. Southern Rockies Ecosystem Project. 19 pp.

²³ Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection (PADEP). 2018. *How to Avoid and Handle Acid-Producing Rock Formations Encountered During Well Site Development*. 1 p.

We appreciate the opportunity to provide comments and recommendations at this early stage of project planning. If you have any questions regarding this letter, please contact Sze Wing Yu of my staff at 814-206-7461.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Rob M Anderson".

Robert Anderson
Acting Project Leader

CC:
USFWS HQ Branch of Environmental Review
Eric Murnyack, PennDOT District 2-0

Attachment B - Nittany Valley Environmental Coalition

Response to Docket No. FHWA-2024-0056, Notice of Intent to prepare an Environmental Impact Statement for a Proposed highway project in Centre County, Pennsylvania.

From: Dorothy Blair, President, Nittany Valley Environmental Coalition (NVEC)
nvec2018@gmail.com

NVEC is a 501(c)4, with members directly impacted by the proposed US-322 expansion from Boalsburg to Potters Mills. Our bylaws specifically require us to work to protect our environment and require us to uphold the environmental provisions of the Pennsylvania Constitution (Article 1, Section 27, PA's Environmental Rights Amendment [ERA]) as it informs municipal charters and ordinances and guides state agencies. The ERA has been used successfully in multiple environmental law suits, including by former PA Governor Tom Wolf.

NVEC is cognizant of the danger posed by existing in-and-out-bound traffic on our two-lane US 322. Driver speeds are excessive due to habituation to speeds on the 4-lane feeder roads (including I-99 and I-80 and both ends of 4 lane US 322.) Truck traffic has increased due to the absence of tolls, direct-delivery retail business models, along with US 322's scenic qualities. Traffic is often heavy and slowed due to the movement of the 60,000-plus Penn State Students, faculty and workforce. The area is a popular destination for sports and cultural events; the out-of-doors here is quite beautiful. Therefore, many see the Centre Region as a desirable destination. More and more wish to call it home. Despite these traffic pressures, only minimal effort has been made reduce the number of vehicles on the road through demand side management and/or intermodal approaches.

NVEC appreciates the thoroughness of the vetting process undertaken by PennDOT, as well as the Federal NEPA process. However, the ultimate end-result of any completed four-lane US 322 – whether placed in Penns Valley or on the side of Tussey Mountain -- will be to increase housing development in Harris, Potter and other townships to the north, and from the resulting commute-assessable towns along the new 4-lane US 322 to the east. Traffic congestion will only increase. It almost seems comical for PennDOT to count limestone farmland as an asset, as former prime farmland will soon be sprouting houses and businesses.

What PennDOT and NEPA can successfully achieve is to preserve natural assets and processes on the Tussey Slope. Our major concerns pitting us against a Tussey Rd. are the following.

1. The water flowing down Tussey Mountain and into Penns Valley's subterranean waters has a high lime content and must stay so. Rain water makes its way slowly through Tussey's limestone soils and gravel, increasing its alkalinity, gathering into rivulets, collecting in sinkholes, flowing underground through more limestone, only to come to the surface again as a spring, gradually forming Galbraith Gap, Cedar Run, Spring Creek, and Sinking Creek. These limestone rich springs, sink holes, and creeks are huge assets far beyond the Centre County borders. As a limestone spring-fed creek, Spring Creek is a Class A trout stream; its springs buffer the waters of Bald Eagle Creek and de-acidify the

North Branch of the Susquehanna, allowing both of these to support not just trout, but all aquatic life as well as the wildlife dependent on those deacidified waters.

2. Highways present great danger to animals, especially birds. Though not yet endangered, millions of small bird species are killed by fast traffic on US highways, along with the predators attracted to dead or injured birds and small mammals. Our US bird population is sorely affected by dense and fast traffic. Game birds are the most vulnerable, which are common on Tussey Mt. Animal corridors spanning 4-lane limited access roads are crucial to reduce the millions of animal deaths on highways (US Fish and Wildlife Services). This fix is not included in PennDOT's plans for the US 322-5/South Alternative.
3. Tree-removal from the US 322-5/South Alternative is a major concern, due to the climate and habitat impacts. Trees cover about two thirds of the near-150ft corridor designated to be cut for the US-322-5/South Alternative. Tree ages are variable – from young closely spaced trees to mature forest – excellent habitat for avian, mammal and other forest creatures. These trees are actively sequestering carbon and will do so until their senescence: 100-200 years from now.
4. Noise is yet another concern. The mountainside route will amplify the ever-growing traffic noise, particularly from truck traffic, especially when brakes and gear-changes are necessitated by elevation change. Few noise barriers are planned; none of these beyond local barriers. Birds as well as humans are negatively impacted by noise.

NVEC feels there is no good limited access 4-lane choice on the side of Tussey Mt.: human safety has been pitted against natural beauty, historic icons, animal/bird welfare and trees. NVEC is, in particular, committed to the welfare of all species and against frivolous tree removal. Therefore, NVEC must, as its charter requires, side with the PA Constitution and reject the I-322-5/South Alternative. We hold that a minimum build, improved 4-lane road is better in the long run for our area. We continue to support a minimum build, 4-lane, combined alternative road with all safety features.

2. Traffic reducing options

Transportation Demand-Side Management (TDSM) and Intermodal approaches reduce traffic, but are only lightly employed in our area. Penn State must take on the responsibility of staggering events, worker hours, and class times. Buses for out-of-town transit can be scheduled to move students and others attending large events; also, to move University students at peak travel times to and from the Lewistown Amtrak Keystone Corridor. Increasing shuttle services for all commuting workers to and from adjacent towns and more and better bicycle routes will reduce congestion, CO2 pollution, and a family's need for a second car.

Because creating a convenient, highspeed road to meet development demands creates ever more development, and with it, the "necessity" to build more roads. It is not a traffic fix. To summarize, our reliance on the PA Environmental Rights Amendment informs and supports our

position. NVEC supports an improved, minimum-build US 322, using TDSM and intermodal approaches to reduce the number of vehicles on the road.

Thank you for your attention to our concerns.

Dorothy Blair, President
Nittany Valley Environmental Coalition

References:

https://issuu.com/stuckemanschool/docs/rethinking-322_booklet_final_version_4

<https://www.fws.gov/story/threats-birds-collisions-road-vehicles#:~:text=Collisions%20with%20vehicles%20are%20believed%20to%20be%20among,die%20annually%20in%20vehicle%20collisions%20on%20U.S.%20roads.>

Attachment: Appendix1_NVEC_Comments_Procedural_FHWA20240056.pdf

Federal Highway Administration [Docket No. FHWA–2024–0056]

The Nittany Valley Environmental Coalition (NVEC) very much appreciates the fact that the North and Central Alternatives presented by PennDOT at the August 15 public meeting are a considerable improvement over what was originally set forth in the 2023 PEL document.

We especially applaud the removal of the route 45 interchange and connector, and the consolidation by refinement of the old 322-1s into 322-OEX to form what is now called the North Alignment.

Of course, the NOI and the NOI Additional Project Information document should be formally revised to reflect PADOT's new naming conventions and refined alignments.

We also maintain that it is now legally warranted to remove the 322-5 (now called South) alignment from the NEPA alternatives analysis completely, since the Central Alternative was developed as a refinement of the PEL study's original 322-5 at the Harris Township end in response to site specific environmental and property impact factors. And moving east towards the Potters Mills end (starting at about where Neff Rd enters old 322), PADOT's South and Central are substantially the same. Any small differences within that shared alignment can be modified as needed since the deprecated 322-5 swing towards the mountain has been refined into the new Central alignment. The Southern Alignment is a redundant refinement of 322-5 and adds nothing meaningful to the NEPA Alternatives Analysis.

NVEC asserts that the NEPA Alternative Analysis slot occupied by the Southern Alignment should be filled by what NVEC has described in our 2023 PEL comments as the Combined Alternative. The Combined Alternative could also be added without removing anything.

Inclusion of the Combined Alternative will remedy what we have identified as a serious procedural flaw. Please consider once again the following paragraphs from NVEC's 2023 PEL Study comments which we resubmit here as NOI and NEPA comments.

<https://www.pennidot.pa.gov/RegionalOffices/district-2/ConstructionsProjectsAndRoadwork/SCAC/Documents/SCAC%20Draft%20PEL%20Public%20Comment%20Summary%20Report.pdf>

State College Area Connector Draft Planning and Environmental Linkages (PEL) Study Public Comment Summary Report Appendix E NVEC comments pages 84-107

The paragraphs excerpted are selected from pages 84-88

"As we maintained in our April 2022 and Nov. 2022 comments, a combination of DemandSide Management/ Transportation Systems Management/ Intermodal/ minimum build approaches is preferable under all the applicable criteria including NEPA.

For the purposes of these comments on the 2023 draft PEL study, NVEC will now refer to this combination of Demand-Side Management/ Transportation Systems Management/ Intermodal/ minimum build approaches as the 'Combined Alternative.'"

"The February 2023 Alternatives Analysis and Screening Report makes clear for the first time what the problem is. Rather than evaluate the type of Combined Alternative that NVEC and other commenters are now describing, the PADOT evaluators originally looked at each tool in that tool box separately, and then set each aside one by one.

Despite the preponderance of most public and municipal comments, we now know that the original piecemeal dismissal was never revisited and adapted into a Combined Alternative for evaluation before issuing this draft PEL.”

“NVEC maintains that by originally dividing up the individual systems management/ intermodal/minimum build elements in this way, the PEL Study drew attention and focus away from evaluating a potentially viable Combined Alternative, and shifted its resources entirely towards winnowing through alternate “maximalist” interstate alignments to add four restricted access lanes to the existing two 322 travel lanes.

The advantage of employing a combined management/intermodal /minimum build solution is exactly that its elements are not mutually exclusive, but synergistic.”

“For some reason the PEL Alternatives Screening procedure did not manage to weave these positive advantages into one coherent Combined Alternative after dismissing its potential components arbitrarily one by one so early in the process. There apparently was a fundamental flaw in this PEL Study workflow which did not enable PADOT to circle back and synthesize critical public comments into a new Combined Alternative for PEL evaluation prior to the start of NEPA review.

We can show then how this foundational limitation in the scope of the PEL study coupled with PADOT’s own perception of its lack of authority to implement some of the Combined Alternative elements has tilted the PEL alternatives analysis towards traditional maximalist interstate highway approaches.”

“Thus, there is insufficient legal basis for the categorical exclusion of a Combined Alternative from NEPA review. A combination TSM/DSM/Multimodal/ Minimum Build Alternative must be carried forward into the NEPA EIS process on an equal footing with 322-1OEX and 322– s1 and 322-5.”

*Excerpted from SCAC Draft PEL Public Comment Summary Report
Appendix E NVEC comments pages 84-88*

NVEC also resubmits to FHWA this PEL comment on “scoping”, which is also relevant in this NOI context (Also from NVEC’s 2023 PEL comments pg. 98)

“We maintain that mapping the Study Area onto a 70 sq. mile region that excluded Penn State and State College Borough has contributed to the early shift of focus away from a Combined Alternative approach. The two-dimensional map predisposed planners to consider only physical build alternatives which neatly fit within that sort of two-dimensional representation. The study area for a Combined Alternative should be set much wider and involve abstract jurisdictional – and not just physical map boundaries.” (End quote)

This inadequate Study Area scoping persists in the NOI and its Project Information Document, and consequently negatively affects PADOT’s Agency Coordination Meetings, the Agency Coordination Plan “living document”, and even the required Environmental Justice assessment since State College Borough qualifies as low income for most governmental purposes because of its student population.

From the NOI: Environmental Justice: Minority and/or low-income (environmental justice) populations have been identified within the vicinity of the Project, specifically within Harris Township. An

assessment of the potential for disproportionate and adverse effects on environmental justice populations will be conducted, as described in section 4 of the NOI Additional Project Information document.

The exclusion from the scoping area of local entities with Pennsylvania Constitution Section 27 environmental trusteeship responsibilities skews any multimodal, traffic demand side management feasibility, or "Combined Alternative" analysis. This limitation is especially consequential in the case of PSU, which is the source of most of the regional car traffic - and which is also an Instrumentality of the State.

The inclusion of the Combined Alternative in the revised NOI and associated documents to replace the now deprecated 322-5 would ensure that the NEPA Alternative Analysis process is fully compliant with Federal, Pennsylvania and municipal law, including the environmental trusteeship obligations of PADOT and other State Agencies under Section 27 of the Pennsylvania Constitution.

Rather than be further distracted by the 322-5 (or South alignment) which has already been refined for valid environmental reasons into the Central Alignment, Federal and State Agency resources can best be used to further explore the minimum build and traffic management options that public and township commenters have consistently raised throughout the PADOT input process.

Note that even if either the North or Central alignment is chosen, the environment would still benefit from such multimodal and Traffic Demand Management (TDM) mitigations including but not limited to 1) minimizing thru truck traffic by diverting it onto Route 80, the Turnpike, or onto intermodal freight rail well before trucks pass through Centre County 2) subsidizing frequent express bus or electric van transportation into State College to incentivize students, PSU visitors, and other tourists not to bring tens of thousands of cars into town 4) coordination of University events including scheduling, and 5) expansion of Harrisburg Keystone rail service to Lewistown in order to better serve as the hub for those new affordable student/ PSU visitor bus or van services.

Attention to these multimodal, TDM, and other minimum build tactics during the NEPA Alternatives Analysis would, regardless of the final alternative chosen, be an institutional asset. We also maintain that consideration of such techniques during a NEPA review is required under Federal and State law, including under the legislation which will be funding this 322 expansion project. But if no Combined Alternative using TDM, Traffic Systems Management and Operations (TSMO), Multimodal, and minimum build is advanced into the formal NEPA Alternative Analysis, then we contend that the intent of these statutes and funding mechanisms can't be implemented, and these benefits realized.

Systematic NEPA consideration of a coherent, synergistic Combined Alternative would be beneficial later during an extended construction phase as well, or even as a fall-back should funding for planned construction on some segment of an approved North or Central alignment become unavailable. And Traffic Demand Management, Traffic Systems Management (TDM) and Operations Management (TSMO) is particularly feasible in Centre County because, as we can't emphasize enough, PSU is an instrumentality of the State and is the primary source of car traffic congestion on 322.

The No Build Alternative as described in the NOI does not fulfill the regulatory and Constitutional requirements that this proposed Combined Alternative would address, since the current NOI wording excludes incremental minimal build safety improvements, or other elements of the PEL's Upgrade

Existing Alternative which were only rejected because they were viewed in isolation, and not in combination with multimodal, TDM and other minimum build techniques.

From the NOI:

The No Build Alternative involves taking no action, except routine maintenance and other small projects currently listed in the Centre County Transportation Improvement Program (TIP). The existing two-lane alignment of US 322 between Potters Mills Gap and Boalsburg, Pennsylvania would remain. No new alignments or roadway improvements would be constructed.

Conclusion

NVEC categorically rejects the PEL Study's 322-5 (now called South) Alternative for the reasons we set forth in our original PEL comments (which we incorporate by reference), and in the text to which this Appendix1_NVEC_Comments_Procedural_FHWA20240056.pdf is attached.

In fact, since the Central alignment is just a refinement of this old 322-5 (a.k.a. South), we assert that South should be removed altogether from the NEPA alternatives analysis and the NOI and Project Information Document should be revised accordingly.

We also assert that what we called in the PEL comments the Combined Alternative could and should replace the now deprecated 322-5 or South alignment which has, in effect, been rendered superfluous and redundant after it was refined into the Central Alignment.

While we appreciate and applaud PADOT's new refinements, NVEC cannot support any of the 4 lane maximalist build alternatives at this time. We are optimistic though that further refinements and mitigations can be developed.

For example, please consider (and include in the NEPA and NOI record), the following "Rethinking 322" document developed at Penn State:

https://issuu.com/stuckemanschool/docs/rethinking-322_booklet_final_version_4

On a less positive note, there are some caveats we must mention in closing. So, we resubmit as NOI comments here these quotes from our 2023 PEL comments:

"The behind-the-scenes lobbying of real estate speculators, potential road construction contractors, or so-called political actors attempting to skew the alignment and interchanges to favor special interests is illegitimate. Consideration of such factors is not allowed under NEPA, other environmental regulations, the charters of at least two local municipalities, and the Pennsylvania Constitution."

"It is because NVEC is a strong advocate of local farmland preservation, that we adamantly oppose the misuse of farmland protection programs to enable real estate speculators to quietly manipulate the planning process so as to promote taxpayer-built infrastructure which would eventually enable an equitable investor, through litigation or politics, to have farmland rezoned high density commercial. "

Dorothy Blair, President NVEC

David Stone, member, Executive Committee

Appendix1_NVEC_
Comments_Procedural_FHWA20240056.pdf

Attachment C - Pennsylvania Farm Bureau

Pennsylvania Farm Bureau

P.O. Box 8736 | Camp Hill, PA 17001-8736 | 717-761-2740 | www.pfb.com

August 23, 2024

Julia Moore
Senior Environmental Specialist
Federal Highway Administration, Pennsylvania Division
30 North Third Street, Suite 700
Harrisburg, PA 17101

Dear Ms. Moore:

Pennsylvania Farm Bureau (PFB) is pleased to offer its comments on the Notice of Intent (NOI) (Docket #FHWA-2024-0056) regarding the Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) that will be prepared to study potential improvements to U. S. Route 322 (also known as the State College Area Connector (SCAC) Project) from Potters Mills, PA to Boalsburg, PA.

PFB is the Commonwealth's largest general farm organization, representing over 27,000 members engaged in all manner of agricultural activities, including the production and processing of crops; the production and processing of animals; the production and processing of forestry products; landscaping and horticultural services; agriculture-related support services; and food manufacturing.

A reliable, efficient, and affordable transportation system is critical to Pennsylvania agriculture, and indeed to the Commonwealth's overall economy. The SCAC has the potential to provide tremendous improvement in each of those areas for the greater State College/Centre County region, but there are several concerns we believe must be addressed to protect agricultural operations (and more specifically, prime farmland) in the area as the project progresses, while recognizing the multiple, often competing factors that must be evaluated.

Specifically in reference to the immediately preceding, PFB is concerned about how the environmental impacts identified during the study process are tabulated and weighted. Pennsylvania Department of Transportation (PennDOT) staff have previously indicated that these resources were each identified independently, and that weighting would occur during a balancing in the subsequent National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) review. PFB's concern is that maps of the project have previously identified some areas as both wetlands and agricultural land. It is critical to know how each of those resources are weighted in such a case (especially considering the possibility of double counting).

On a related note, for PFB and its farmer members so impacted by the proposed (remaining) routing proposals, a shift of the project off their prime farmland onto marginal land that is often wet would preserve more of their farms. We believe that there are strategies available that can accomplish this goal while protecting important environmental features in the project area. PFB has previously raised this issue with PennDOT, asking how such a shift could occur and whether it was possible for compensating wetlands to be built elsewhere, as has been done with similar highway projects, most notably the development of the I-99 corridor in central Pennsylvania. PFB has a strong interest in participating in any such evaluation, in order to promote and expand options that protect prime farmland while mitigating impacts that must occur in an alternative fashion.

Pennsylvania Farm Bureau

P.O. Box 8736 | Camp Hill, PA 17001-8736 | 717-761-2740 | www.pfb.com

PFB also continues to have concerns about the potential use of eminent domain as part of the SCAC project. PFB supports strengthening the highway condemnation standard for land in an agricultural security area and for active farmland, as well as eliminating the condemnation exception for activities relating to existing highways. Given the significant impact possible in the study corridor, as well as the influence of this project on similar undertakings elsewhere in Pennsylvania, PFB urges officials to focus their attention on alternatives that minimize this course of action, perhaps by giving serious consideration to utilizing land parcels currently for sale as part of the project routing. We also believe that agricultural property owners affected by the SCAC should receive compensation not only for the loss of their land, but also to mitigate the entire cost of adjusting their operations as a result of that loss.

Finally, PFB recommends that attention be given to two other agriculture-specific issues that are likely to arise from any routing choice for the SCAC. The first is the issue of access to “stranded fields” that may be severed from direct attachment to other land owned by a given agricultural operator, while the other is the noise impact to animal agriculture operations (given the sensitivity of livestock to the loud and persistent noise of the type associated with a busy highway). Again, PFB stands ready to work with all parties to provide guidance and insight on alternatives that can minimize each of these concerns.

On behalf of PFB and its members, I thank you for this opportunity to provide comments on this important project. Our members will remain actively engaged in the process and continue to educate elected officials, agency personnel, other stakeholders, and the general public about the benefits of Pennsylvania agriculture and its reliance on a strong, smoothly functioning transportation network that protects prime agricultural land to the greatest possible extent.

Sincerely,



Grant R. Gulibon
Regulatory Affairs Specialist

Attachment D – U.S. Environmental Protection Agency – District 3



REGION 3 ADMINISTRATOR

PHILADELPHIA, PA 19103

August 20, 2024

VIA ELECTRONIC MAIL ONLY

Julia Moore
Senior Environmental Specialist,
FHWA Pennsylvania Division,
30 North Third Street,
Suite 700,
Harrisburg, PA 17101
Julia.Moore@dot.gov

Eric Murnyack, PE
Project Manager,
PennDOT Engineering District 2
70 PennDOT Drive,
Clearfield, PA 16830
emurnyack@pa.gov

RE: Notice of Intent to Prepare an Environmental Impact Statement for a Proposed Highway Project, Centre County, PA (Docket No FHWA-2024-0056)

Dear Ms. Moore and Mr. Murnyack,

The Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) in coordination with the Pennsylvania Department of Transportation (PennDOT) has issued a Notice of Intent (NOI) to solicit comments and advise the public, agencies, and stakeholders that an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) will be prepared to study potential improvements to US 322 also known as the State College Area Connector Project (Project) from Potters Mills, PA to Boalsburg, PA. Additionally, a NOI Additional Project Information document was available for review.

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has served as a Cooperating Agency on this project, assisting the lead agencies by providing feedback during pre NEPA technical resource document reviews, site visits, and agency coordination meetings. EPA plans to continue to provide comments, as needed, on general NEPA compliance of the EIS and specific comments pursuant to our responsibilities under Section 309 of the Clean Air Act (CAA), Sections 402(d) and 404(b), (c), and (q) of the CWA Clean Water Act (CWA), and Executive Orders 12898 and 14096 that address environmental justice. Due to the EPA's early involvement, the EPA does not have new comments to provide at this time.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide comments on the Project. We look forward to continuing to work with you to ensure that a robust EIS is developed by identifying and recommending appropriate measures to avoid and mitigate significant environmental impacts associated with the proposal. As you prepare your NEPA documents, please feel free to reach out to me at 215-814-5569 or davis.jamis@epa.gov or the Region 3 NEPA staff contact for this project, Joy Gillespie who can be reached at gillespie.joy@epa.gov or by phone at 215-814-2793.

Sincerely,

**JAMIE
DAVIS**

Jamie Davis
Acting NEPA Branch Manager
EJ, Community Health, & Environmental Review
Division

Digitally signed by
JAMIE DAVIS
Date: 2024.08.20
14:26:33 -04'00'

APPENDIX B – Agency Coordination Meeting

3. ACM Meeting Invitation/Distribution List
4. ACM Meeting Agenda
5. Presentation

Cole, Lori

Subject: FW: EXTERNAL: FW: July 24, 2024 Agency Coordination Meeting (ACM)
Location: Microsoft Teams Meeting

Start: Wed 7/24/2024 10:00 AM
End: Wed 7/24/2024 11:30 AM

Recurrence: (none)

Meeting Status: Accepted

Organizer: Giamarino, Madeline

Cyber Security Reminder: Please use caution - message originated outside JMT.

-----Original Appointment-----

From: Giamarino, Madeline <mgiamarino@pa.gov>

Sent: Thursday, July 11, 2024 3:35 PM

To: Giamarino, Madeline; abrumbaugh@collegetownship.org; Joe Stahlman; Franklin Harden; Davis, Jamie; jrcoslo@centrecountypa.gov; Ray Stolinis (rjstolinis@centrecountypa.gov); sbachor@delawaretribe.org; temple@delawaretribe.org; Wolfgang, Douglas; Seymour, Stephanie; Katherine Farrow; Plitt, Dennis; Deb Hoover; Abraham, Shaun; abrams@northerntier.org; Alcorn, Clarissa; Allen, Brian N.; Allison, Amanda; callison@co.cambria.pa.us; ealoiz; Ames, John A (Drew); Ammerman, Jeremy D; Anderson, Robert M; Anthony, David (PENNDOT); Augustine, Gregory; Auker, Nicole; baker@northerntier.org; Ball, Dean D; abaranski@nepa-alliance.org; melanie.barber@dot.gov; Bishop, Marie; Bishop, Ronnique (FHWA); Bohman, John D; abomberger@tcrpc-pa.org; jbox@nepa-alliance.org; Brooks, Hope; Brown, Corey; sbruch@pa.gov; Bucher, Jeffrey; Bunce, Kyle J; Burden, Donald; Burford, Brad; Wes Burket; Campbell, Kenneth R; Carson, Jacob H.; Cease, Kristen; Chapman, Christopher; Chappell, Mark; Chestney, Jamie; Chripczuk, Jonathan; Chuboy, Christina; sclayton@adamscounty.us; Cordek, Sarah (FHWA); Covert, Cristin; Crobak, Jennifer (FHWA); Crouch, Todd; Crum, Jonathan (FHWA); TCUNNINGH@pa.gov; mike.danko@usace.army.mil; Davies, Charles; Davis, Edward (PENNDOT); sdeck@tcrpc-pa.org; Diehl, Emma; Dogonniuck, Alexander; mike.dombroskie@usace.army.mil; Duda, Rachel; Ebur, Andrea (FHWA); allen.r.edris@usace.army.mil; Engle, Jeff (FHWA); Erickson, Michael; Ertel, Nina; Feliciano, Veronica (FHWA); Fischer, David (PENNDOT); Jon.Fitzkee@lebanoncountypa.gov; jillf@northwestpa.org; Franzen, Lucas A; Frederick, Barbara; Gardner, Kenda Jo; Genovese, Alexander; Gerling, Heather; john.gibble@usace.army.mil; Gillespie, Joy; michelle.goddard@dot.gov; Gonsman, Andy; rgordon; dgracenin; Gray, Gavin; Greenland, Vince; Grumbine, Frank; Guers, Sue; Guyton, Tyra; Hammert, Mark (FHWA); Hammond, Alice M; Haney, Susanne M; Hanson, Casey; Harrison, Emma; Harrower, Monica; benjamin.harvey@dot.gov; Harvey, Hannah; Hazelton, Susan; Heinrich, Keith; Herman, Steve; Highlands, Keith; Todd.A.Hoernemann@usace.army.mil; Jacobini, Jared; Jano, Steve J; Kagel, Jennifer; Kania, Pamela; Kawash, Peter; dkeane; Kelley, Autumn; amy; dkiel@seda-cog.org; skim@lebcnty.org; King, Christopher D.; Krobot, Nicholas; Kronz, George; Landis, Tiffany; Larzelere, Michael; Lightcap, Jay; Lolli, Amy M; Lorson, Benjamin; MacDonald, Andrea; Martin, Veronica; Mattern, Brian; Mausteller, Michael J.; jmay@crcog.net; McClelland, Thomas; McClellan, Sarah K; McCloskey, Anthony J; McDougal, Steven; McKeel, Justin; McLaughlin, Kristin; Melley, Allen; Mercer, J Tyler; Messner, Anne; Mock, Kevin W; Moon-Sirianni, Cheryl; Moore, Julia (FHWA); Neal, Elbert; Nepal, Dewakar; Okin, Sharon; Orsini, Chiara; Orwig, April; Patel, Mithun; Pavic, Richard T; Peacock, Christopher; bpeters@sapdc.org; nhan.phan@dot.gov; Piper, Alan; Podniesinski, Gregory; Porochniak, Gene (FHWA); Prestash, Thomas; mpritchard@ycpc.org; Radatti, Mark J; Rairigh, Elizabeth; Raskiewicz, Thomas J; Rebert, Ashley; Rickard, Marc C; Roberts, Dean; Roessing, Jason; Rostron, David; Ruhl, Bryon S; Russell, Kara; Ryndock, Jason; Sabitsky, Jesse U; Savage, William (Fish & Boat); Saylor, James; Scarr, Kristin; todd.a.schaible@usace.army.mil; Schrecengost, Jessica; Seeley,

Douglas; Shaffer, Scott (PENNDOT); Shiffler, Ryan R; Shunk, Brian E; Slagel, Katelyn; Smaroff, Dan; Smiles, Heather A; Smoker, Matt (FHWA); terrysnyde@pa.gov; Spangler, Christine; Squillario, Attilio S; Starks, Kipp; Suanlarm, Paul; Supel, Matthew; atimochenko@countyofberks.com; Thompson, Kristina L; nikolas.p.tranchik@usace.army.mil; Vautar, James G; Vankirk, Ryan; Velazquez, Jose A; Vivian, Nicholas A; Vlot, Christian; Walczesky, Kristen; christopher.d.walston@dot.gov; Ward, Richard (PENNDOT); glenn.r.weitknecht@usace.army.mil; Wertz, Gerald C.; Wisor, Joshua (Fish & Boat); witman.timothy@epa.gov; Wohlwill, Dave; Wolfgang, Christopher R; Yocum, Thomas R; Young, Mark; szewing_yu@fws.gov; jzerby@co.cambria.pa.us; Gall, Marion P CIV USARMY CENAB (USA); Beaulieu, Michelle; Chiaramonte, Stephen; Reilly, Christine; James, Kevin

Subject: EXTERNAL: FW: July 24, 2024 Agency Coordination Meeting (ACM)

When: Wednesday, July 24, 2024 10:00 AM-11:30 AM (UTC-05:00) Eastern Time (US & Canada).

Where: Microsoft Teams Meeting

EXTERNAL EMAIL

-----Original Appointment-----

From: Giamarino, Madeline <mgiamarino@pa.gov>

Sent: Thursday, July 11, 2024 1:21 PM

To: Giamarino, Madeline; Abraham, Shaun; abrams@northerntier.org; Alcorn, Clarissa; Allen, Brian N.; Allison, Amanda; callison@co.cambria.pa.us; ealoiz; Ames, John A (Drew); Ammerman, Jeremy D; Anderson, Robert M; Anthony, David (PENNDOT); Augustine, Gregory; Auker, Nicole; baker@northerntier.org; deball@pa.gov; abaranski@nepa-alliance.org; melanie.barber@dot.gov; Bishop, Marie; Bishop, Ronnique (FHWA); Bohman, John D; abomberger@tcrcp-pa.org; jbox@nepa-alliance.org; Brooks, Hope; Brown, Corey; sbruch@pa.gov; Bucher, Jeffrey; Bunce, Kyle J; Burden, Donald; Burford, Brad; Wes Burket; Campbell, Kenneth R; Carson, Jacob H.; Cease, Kristen; Christopher.chapman@luzernecounty.org; Chappell, Mark; Chestney, Jamie; Chripczuk, Jonathan; Chuboy, Christina; sclayton@adamscounty.us; Cordek, Sarah (FHWA); Covert, Cristin; Crobak, Jennifer (FHWA); Crouch, Todd; Crum, Jonathan (FHWA); TCUNNINGH@pa.gov; mike.danko@usace.army.mil; Davies, Charles; Davis, Edward (PENNDOT); Davis.Jamie@epa.gov; sdeck@tcrcp-pa.org; Diehl, Emma; Dogonniuck, Alexander; mike.dombroskie@usace.army.mil; Duda, Rachel; Ebur, Andrea (FHWA); allen.r.edris@usace.army.mil; Engle, Jeff (FHWA); Erickson, Michael; Ertel, Nina; Feliciano, Veronica (FHWA); Fischer, David (PENNDOT); Jon.Fitzkee@lebanoncountypa.gov; jillf@northwestpa.org; Franzen, Lucas A; Frederick, Barbara; Gardner, Kenda Jo; Genovese, Alexander; Gerling, Heather; john.gibble@usace.army.mil; gillespie.joy@epa.gov; michelle.goddard@dot.gov; Gonsman, Andy; rgordon; dgracenin; Gray, Gavin; Greenland, Vince; Grumbine, Frank; Guers, Sue; Guyton, Tyra; mark.hammert@dot.gov; Hammond, Alice M; Haney, Susanne M; Hanson, Casey; Harrison, Emma; Harrower, Monica; benjamin.harvey@dot.gov; Harvey, Hannah; Hazelton, Susan; Heinrich, Keith; sherman@seda-cog.org; Highlands, Keith; Todd.A.Hoernemann@usace.army.mil; Jacobini, Jared; Jano, Steve J; Kagel, Jennifer; Kania, Pamela; Kawash, Peter; Keane, Daniel L; Kelley, Autumn; amy@ncentral.com; dkiel@seda-cog.org; skim@lebcnty.org; King, Christopher D.; Krobot, Nicholas; Kronz, George; tilandis@pa.gov; Larzelere, Michael; Lightcap, Jay; Lolli, Amy M; Lorson, Benjamin; MacDonald, Andrea; Martin, Veronica; Mattern, Brian; Mausteller, Michael J.; jmay@crcog.net; McClelland, Thomas; McClellan, Sarah K; McCloskey, Anthony J; McDougal, Steven; McKeel, Justin; McLaughlin, Kristin; Melley, Allen; Mercer, J Tyler; amessner@crcog.net; Mock, Kevin W; CSIRIANNI@pa.gov; julia.moore@dot.gov; Neal, Elbert; Nepal, Dewakar; Okin, Sharon; Orsini, Chiara; Orwig, April; Patel, Mithun; Pavic, Richard T; Peacock, Christopher; bpeters@sapdc.org; nhan.phan@dot.gov; Piper, Alan; Podniesinski, Gregory; Porochniak, Gene (FHWA); Prestash, Thomas; mpritchard@ycpc.org; Radatti, Mark J; Rairigh, Elizabeth; Raskiewicz, Thomas J; Rebert, Ashley; Rickard, Marc C; Roberts, Dean; Roessing, Jason; Rostron, David; Ruhl, Bryon S; Russell, Kara; Ryndock, Jason; Sabitsky, Jesse U; Savage, William (Fish & Boat); jsaylor@crcog.net; Scarr, Kristin; todd.a.schaible@usace.army.mil; Schrecengost, Jessica; Seeley, Douglas; Shaffer, Scott (PENNDOT); Shiffler, Ryan R; Shunk, Brian E; Slagel, Katelyn; Smaroff, Dan; Smiles, Heather A; Smoker, Matt (FHWA); terrysnyde@pa.gov; Spangler, Christine; Squillario, Attilio S; Starks, Kipp; Suanlarm, Paul; Supel, Matthew; atimochenko@countyofberks.com; Thompson, Kristina L; nikolas.p.tranchik@usace.army.mil; Vautar, James G; Vankirk, Ryan; Velazquez, Jose A; Vivian, Nicholas A; Vlot, Christian; Walczesky, Kristen; christopher.d.walston@dot.gov; Ward, Richard (PENNDOT); glenn.r.weitknecht@usace.army.mil; Wertz, Gerald C.; Wisor, Joshua (Fish & Boat); witman.timothy@epa.gov;

Dwohlwill@PortAuthority.org; Wolfgang, Christopher R; Yocum, Thomas R; Young, Mark; szewing_yu@fws.gov; jzerby@co.cambria.pa.us; Gall, Marion P CIV USARMY CENAB (USA); Beaulieu, Michelle; Chiaramonte, Stephen; Norris, Christine; James, Kevin

Subject: July 24, 2024 Agency Coordination Meeting (ACM)

When: Wednesday, July 24, 2024 10:00 AM-11:30 AM (UTC-05:00) Eastern Time (US & Canada).

Where: Microsoft Teams Meeting

This meeting request is being sent on behalf of Drew Ames, Chief, Environmental Policy and Development Division:

The following topics will be presented:

1. SCAC Alternatives Updates

Enclosed are the 1) ACM Agenda, 2) 2024 Field View Reserved Dates, 3) 2024 ACM Schedule

Microsoft Teams [Need help?](#)

[Join the meeting now](#)

Meeting ID: 271 252 394 395

Passcode: pc8gx6

Dial in by phone

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Phone conference ID: 477 386 200#

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MEMO

DATE: July 11, 2024

SUBJECT: Wednesday, July 24, 2024 ACM Agenda

TO: ACM Member List

FROM: Drew Ames, Chief /s/
Bureau of Design and Delivery
Environmental Policy and Development Division

The next Agency Coordination Meeting (ACM) will be held on **Wednesday, July 24, 2024 at 10:00 a.m. through Teams**. Please respond through the meeting invite.

Enclosed are the 1) ACM Agenda, 2) 2024 Field View Reserved Dates, 3) 2024 ACM Schedule

Please direct questions or comments to Nicole Auker at nauker@pa.gov or Madeline Giamarino at mgiamarino@pa.gov.

Attachments

cc: Larry Shifflet, 8th Floor CKB
C. Norris, P.E. 8th Floor CKB
C. Spangler, P.E. 7th Floor CKB
M.J. Chappell, P.E., 7th Floor CKB
J.D. Bucher, P.E., 7th Floor CKB
Project Development Engineers, 7th Floor CKB
N.A. Vivian, 7th Floor CKB
K. Russell, 7th Floor CKB

AGENCY COORDINATION MEETING

AGENDA FOR WEDNESDAY, JULY 24, 2024

Teams Call

Call-In Number: 267-332-8737

Conference ID: 477 386 200#

1. General Business (10:00 am – 10:10 am)
 - a. Call to Order and Introductions
 - b. Review Agency Field View Reserved Dates
 - c. Next ACM – Wednesday, August 28, 2024
 - d. Other Topics
2. SCAC Alternatives Updates (10:10 am – 11:30 am)

state college area
CONNECTOR



STATE COLLEGE AREA CONNECTOR PROJECT

AGENCY COORDINATION MEETING

JULY 24, 2024

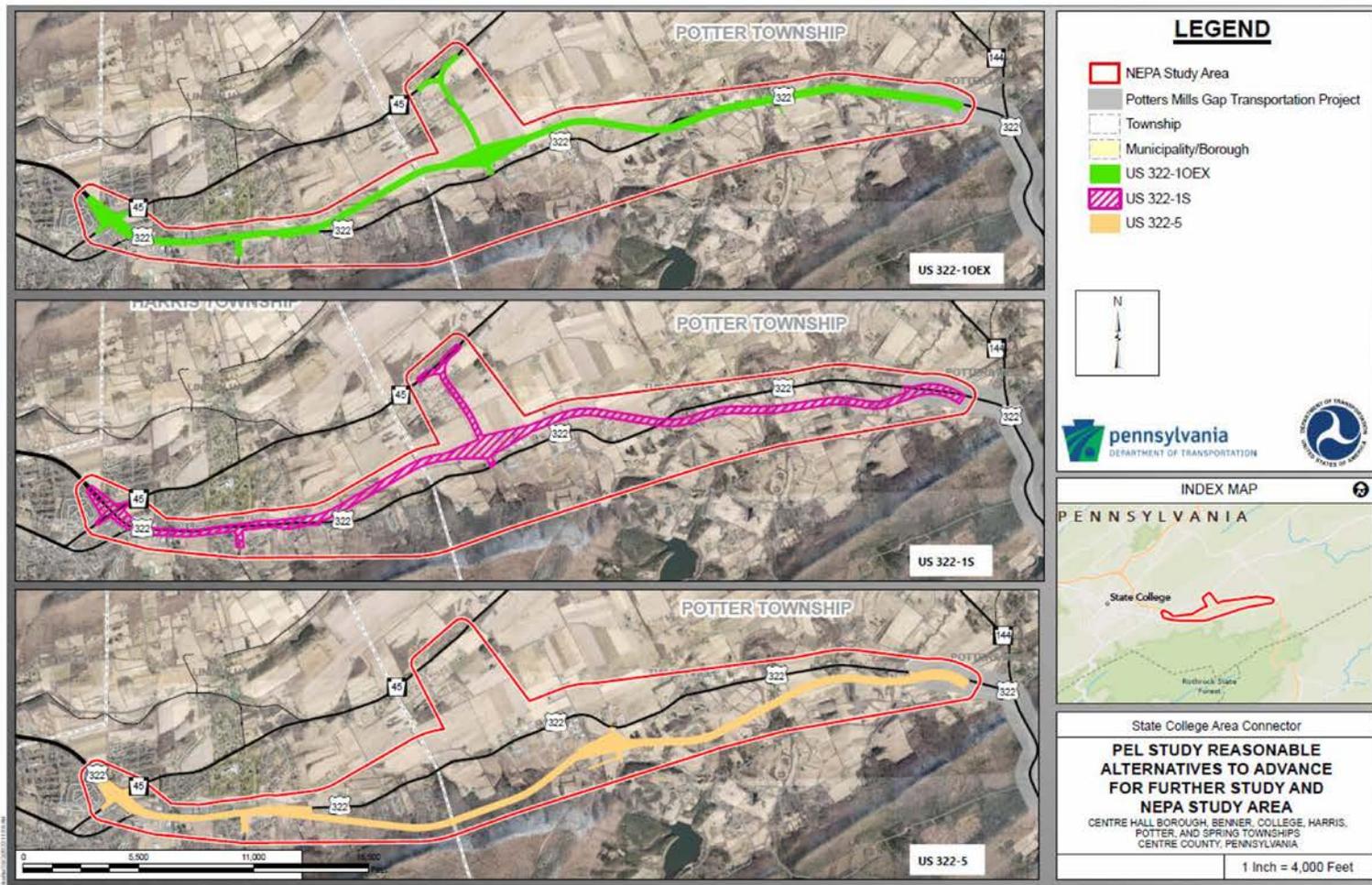


AGENDA

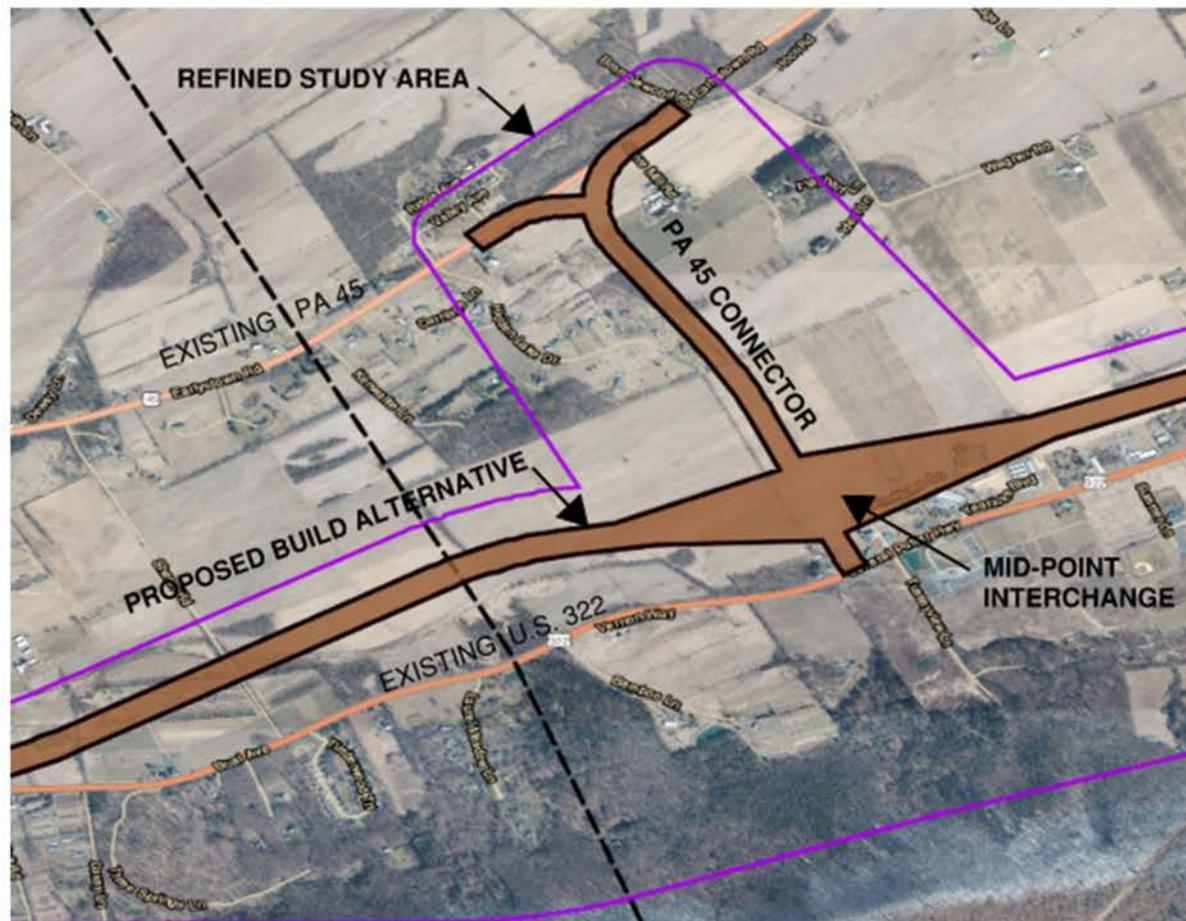
- Recap of January ACM Discussions
- Project Update
- Public Outreach/Agency Field View
- Anticipated Schedule

RECAP

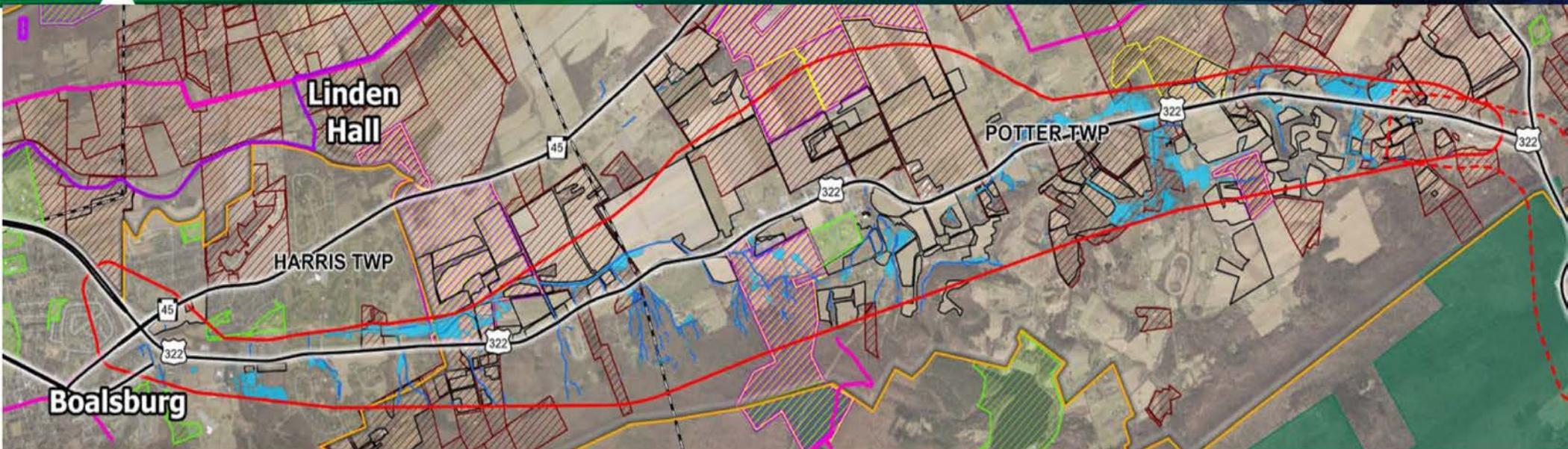
- Advanced 3 – PEL Alternative Corridors for Further Study and Refined Project Area



- Conducted Traffic Analysis –
Removed the PA 45 Connector



RECAP



Pre-NEPA Field Studies

- Above Ground Historic
 - *Reconnaissance Survey Complete*
 - *Eligibility Survey Fieldwork (50 properties/structures)*
- Agricultural Resources 33 Farmer Interviews
- Waters of the US/Wetland Delineations: 94 Watercourse channels & 222 Wetlands
- Terrestrial Habitat Assessment: Land Cover Map, Forested Bat Habitat, one eagle nest, and no bat hibernacula
- Waste: 39 potential waste sites
- Noise: 60 monitoring sites

RECAP

- Revised Project Area



RECAP

Project Purpose

The purpose of this project is to improve roadway congestion by achieving acceptable LOS and to address safety issues by reducing the predicted crash frequency along the US 322 corridor between Potters Mills and Boalsburg. Additionally, the project will aim to provide a transportation network that meets driver expectations.

Project Needs

- High peak hour traffic volumes cause congestion and result in unacceptable Level of Service (LOS) (LOS D [rural only], E, or F) on US 322 roadways and intersections.
- Existing roadway configurations and traffic conditions contribute to safety concerns in the project area.
- The roadway network and configuration in the project area lacks continuity and does not meet driver expectations.

RECAP

- Draft Agency Coordination Plan and Coordination Points

Coordination Point	Date of/Anticipated Date of Coordination	Information Included for Coordination
Project Initiation	February 26, 2020	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ PEL Process
Environmental Analysis Methodologies	July 22, 2020	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ PEL Study Process ■ Environmental Features ■ Purpose and Need ■ Coordination Plan ■ Agency participation
PEL Purpose and Need	December 9, 2020	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Study update ■ Purpose and Need ■ Cooperating and Participating Agency Status ■ Draft Coordination Plan and Consensus ■ Virtual Public Meeting Overview ■ Environmental Features
Range of Alternatives	May 26, 2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Environmental Overview ■ Range of Alternatives ■ Alternative Screening Process Methodology
Project Section 106 Initiation	March 27, 2023	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Project notification distributed via PennDOT's PATH
EIS Scoping Meeting	June 28, 2023	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ PEL Alternatives to advance ■ Environmental Analysis Methodologies
Project Purpose and Need	January 24, 2024	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ NEPA/EIS Draft Purpose and Need
Detailed Alternatives Analysis	July 2024	
Recommended Preferred Alternative/Conceptual Mitigation	February 2025	
Draft EIS Circulation	July 2025	
Public Hearing	August 2025	
Preferred Alternative/Mitigation	September 2025	
Jurisdictional Determination (JD) (if required)/ Pre-Application Meeting	September 2025	
Final EIS/ Record of Decision (ROD)/ Conceptual Mitigation	July 2026	

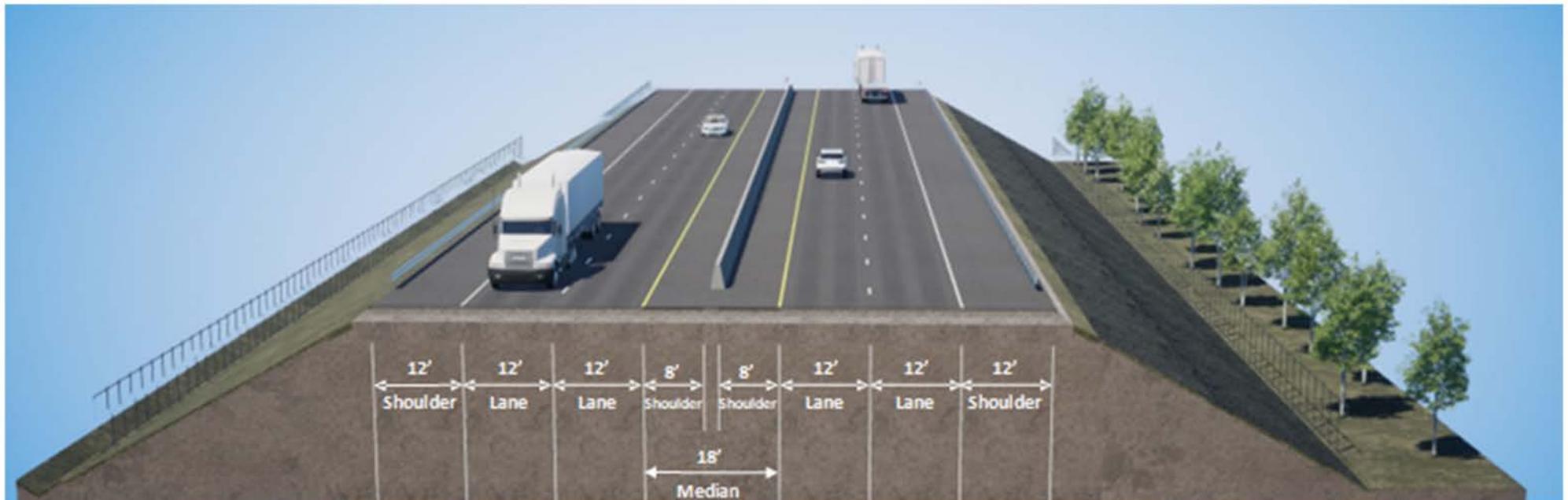
PROJECT UPDATE

Western End:

Mt. Nittany Expressway to
Bear Meadows Road

Eastern End:

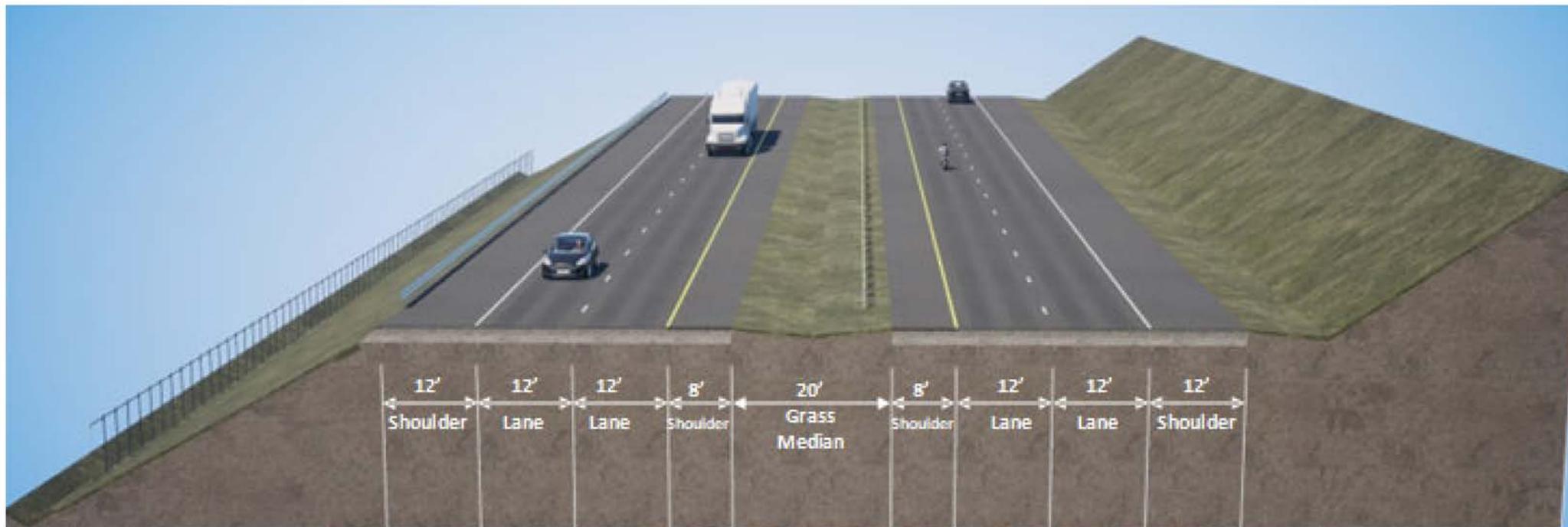
US 322 at Potters Mills Gap to Tusseyville Area



PROJECT UPDATE

Middle Area:

Bear Meadows Road to
to Tusseyville Area



- **Build Alternative – Alignment Development**
 - Avoiding and minimizing resources, including farm operations, Waters of the US, residential and commercial facilities, historic properties, etc.
 - Maintaining local access through the area
 - Coordinating with local officials regarding access, traffic, and resources
- Three specific Build Alternative alignments are being advanced for initial agency and public review

PROJECT UPDATE



NORTH ALTERNATIVE



NORTH ALTERNATIVE

CENTRAL ALTERNATIVE



CENTRAL ALTERNATIVE

SOUTH ALTERNATIVE



SOUTH ALTERNATIVE

Potential Environmental Effects

Feature		US 322 Corridor						
		US 322 North		US 322 Central		US 322 South		
Potential Limit of Disturbance Area (acres)		394		372		445		
NATURAL RESOURCES	Agriculture							
	Productive Agricultural Land (acres)		110		100		73	
	Agricultural Operations Affected (#)		19		19		18	
	Agricultural Conservation Easements (within Productive Agricultural Land) (acres)		19		13		5	
	Agricultural Security Areas (within Productive Agricultural Land) (acres)		59		33		35	
	Act 319 Clean and Green Areas (within Productive Agricultural Land) (acres)		98		98		65	
	Agricultural Zoning Districts (within Productive Agricultural Land) (acres)		82		74		45	
	Soil Capability Classes I-IV (within Productive Agricultural Land) (acres)		103		101		76	
	Other Land Preservation							
	Clearwater Conservation Easements (acres)		23		30		21	
	Water Resources							
	Wetlands (acres)		29		31		23	
	Total Streams (# of crossing linear feet)		21	6,148	24	8,127	41	10,073
	CWF-HQ/CWF Streams (# of crossings linear feet)		21	6,148	20	6,660	37	8,125
	Ponds/Lakes (# acres)		9	1.5	8	3.2	9	1.9
	100 Yr. Floodplains (acres)		24		18		23	
	Terrestrial Habitat and Threatened and Endangered Species							
	Forested/Wooded Habitats (acres)		26		25		99	
PA Natural Heritage Core Habitat (acres)		24		21		25		
Karst Features (#)		19		7		5		
Bat Swarming Area (Combined) (acres)		106		68		102		
Bat Swarming Area (Combined) (Forested) (acres)		13		9		13		
Rothrock State Forest (acres)		0		0		0		
Stone Mountain Important Bird Area (acres)		0		0		78		
CULTURAL RESOURCES	Historic Resources							
	NRHP Eligible Property (#)		6		5		6	
	Penns Valley/Brush Valley Rural Historic District Contributing Property (# acres)		66	182	41	174	73	198
	Archaeological Resources							
	Known Archaeological Sites (#)		3		4		4	
	Historic Period Archaeological Sensitivity Area (acres)		14		12		27	
Statewide Prehistoric/Pre-Contact Model - High Probability Area (acres)		104		107		83		
Statewide Prehistoric/Pre-Contact Model - Medium Probability Area (acres)		209		168		189		
SOCIOECONOMIC RESOURCES	Socioeconomic Resources							
	Residential Units (#)		30		15		38	
	Commercial (non-ag operations) (#)		5		3		5	
	Places of Worship (#)		0		1		0	
	HUD Subsidized Housing Units (#)		0		0		0	
	Community Facilities (acres)		2.34		2.14		2.34	
	Neighborhood/Community (# acres)		12	21	12	21	13	41
Parks (# acres)		0	0	1	7	0	0	
Waste Sites (#)		13		11		13		

PROJECT UPDATE

Natural Resources

Feature	US 322 Corridor					
	US 322 North		US 322 Central		US 322 South	
Potential Limit of Disturbance Area (acres)	394		372		445	
Agriculture						
Productive Agricultural Land (acres)	110		100		73	
Agricultural Operations Affected (#)	19		19		18	
Agricultural Conservation Easements (within Productive Agricultural Land) (acres)	19		13		5	
Agricultural Security Areas (within Productive Agricultural Land) (acres)	59		33		35	
Act 319 Clean and Green Areas (within Productive Agricultural Land) (acres)	98		98		65	
Agricultural Zoning Districts (within Productive Agricultural Land) (acres)	82		74		45	
Soil Capability Classes I-IV (within Productive Agricultural Land) (acres)	103		101		76	
Other Land Preservation						
Clearwater Conservation Easements (acres)	23		30		21	
Water Resources						
Wetlands (acres)	29		31		23	
Total Streams (# of crossing linear feet)	21	6,148	24	8,127	41	10,073
CWF-HQ/CWF Streams (# of crossings linear feet)	21	6,148	20	6,660	37	8,125
Ponds/Lakes (# acres)	9	1.5	8	3.2	9	1.9
100 Yr. Floodplains (acres)	24		18		23	
Terrestrial Habitat and Threatened and Endangered Species						
Forested/Wooded Habitats (acres)	26		25		99	
PA Natural Heritage Core Habitat (acres)	24		21		25	
Karst Features (#)	19		7		5	
Bat Swarming Area (Combined) (acres)	106		68		102	
Bat Swarming Area (Combined) (Forested) (acres)	13		9		13	
Rothrock State Forest (acres)	0		0		0	
Stone Mountain Important Bird Area (acres)	0		0		78	

PROJECT UPDATE

Cultural Resources

Feature		US 322 Corridor						
		US 322 North		US 322 Central		US 322 South		
Potential Limit of Disturbance Area (acres)		394		372		445		
CULTURAL RESOURCES	Historic Resources							
	NRHP Eligible Property (#)		6		5		6	
	Penns Valley/Brush Valley Rural Historic District Contributing Property (# acres)		66	182	41	174	73	198
	Archaeological Resources							
	Known Archaeological Sites (#)		3		4		4	
	Historic Period Archaeological Sensitivity Area (acres)		14		12		27	
	Statewide Prehistoric/Pre-Contact Model - High Probability Area (acres)		104		107		83	
Statewide Prehistoric/Pre-Contact Model - Medium Probability Area (acres)		209		168		189		

PROJECT UPDATE

Socioeconomic Resources

Feature	US 322 Corridor						
	US 322 North		US 322 Central		US 322 South		
Potential Limit of Disturbance Area (acres)	394		372		445		
Socioeconomic Resources							
SOCIOECONOMIC RESOURCES	Residential Units (#)	30		15		38	
	Commercial (non-ag operations) (#)	5		3		5	
	Places of Worship (#)	0		1		0	
	HUD Subsidized Housing Units (#)	0		0		0	
	Community Facilities (acres)	2.34		2.14		2.34	
	Neighborhood/Community (# acres)	12	21	12	21	13	41
	Parks (# acres)	0	0	1	7	0	0
	Waste Sites (#)	13		11		13	

PROJECT UPDATE

North Alternative

- Utilizes existing US 322 corridor in the east to minimize splitting productive agricultural land;
- Affects more wetlands along the northern side of existing US 322 in the east;
- Avoids headwaters of Spring Creek;
- Avoids many of the Spring Creek tributaries;
- Higher effects to productive agricultural land, including ASA, C&G, Easements, and Soils;
- Higher effects to contributing properties within Rural Historic District and National Register Eligible properties;
- Higher effects to residential displacements (30);
- Avoids the Stone Mountain Important Bird Area.

Central Alternative

- Utilizes existing US 322 corridor in the east to minimize splitting productive agricultural land;
- Avoids wetland complexes on the north side of US 322 in the east;
- Minimizes agricultural effects;
- Lower effects to contributing properties within Rural Historic District and National Register Eligible properties.
- Avoids headwaters of Spring Creek;
- Minimizes residential displacements (less than 20);
- Avoids the Stone Mountain Important Bird Area;
- Utilizes the Potter Township baseball fields (Section 4(f) – Net Benefit).

South Alternative

- Utilizes Existing US 322 corridor in the east to minimize splitting productive agricultural land;
- Lower effects to wetlands and productive agricultural land;
- Higher effects to individually eligible historic properties;
- Higher effects to contributing properties within Rural Historic District and National Register Eligible properties;
- Higher effects to high-quality streams, including the headwaters of Spring Creek;
- Higher effects to forest land;
- Higher residential displacements (over 30);
- Higher effects to the Stone Mountain Important Bird Area.

PROJECT UPDATE

- **Other Alignment Considerations**
 - **Multiuse Path – Discovery Drive to Bear Meadows Rd**



PROJECT UPDATE

Other Alignment Considerations

Single Point Urban Interchange (SPUI)

Safer – reduces the number of spots where vehicles could collide

Improved Mobility – handles large volumes of traffic and allows wider turns

Space-efficient – less land needed for construction

Model courtesy of MoDOT and HNTB

PROJECT UPDATE

• Notice of Intent (NOI) to Prepare an EIS

- NEPA process for an EIS project begins by publishing a NOI in the Federal Register.
- Public and Agency Coordination Plans included as part of the NOI package.
- Begins the two-year EIS clock for completing the project analysis.
- As part of this process, PHMC was redesignated from a participating agency to a cooperating agency.
- Comments on the NOI are due by August 23, 2024.

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Federal Highway Administration
[Docket No. FHWA-2024-0056]

Notice of Intent To Prepare an Environmental Impact Statement for a Proposed Highway Project, Centre County, PA

AGENCY: Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), Department of Transportation (DOT).

ACTION: Notice of intent to prepare an environmental impact statement.

SUMMARY: The FHWA, in coordination with the Pennsylvania Department of Transportation (PennDOT) is issuing the Notice of Intent (NOI) to solicit comments and advise the public, agencies, and stakeholders that an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) will be prepared to study potential improvements to US 322 also known as the State College Area Connector Project from Potters Mills, PA to Boalsburg, PA. The project identification number is 112784. This NOI should be reviewed together with the NOI Additional Project Information document, which contains important details about the proposed project and complements the information in this NOI.

DATES: Comments on the NOI or the NOI Additional Project Information document are to be received by FHWA through the methods below by August 23, 2024.

ADDRESSES: This NOI and the NOI Additional Project Information are also available in the docket referenced above at www.regulations.gov and on the project website located at www.penndot.pa.gov/SCAC. The NOI

• Next Steps

- Conduct public outreach for alignment feedback
- Conduct Consulting Party Meeting and Tribal Coordination as part of the Section 106 process
- Develop private access
- Determine remnant land areas
- Develop conceptual stormwater management facilities/strategies
- Finalize environmental investigations
- Agency field view

PUBLIC OUTREACH



state college area
CONNECTOR



Open House Public Meeting State College Area Connector Project

The Pennsylvania Department of Transportation (PennDOT), in cooperation with the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) invites you to participate in an Open House Public Meeting for the State College Area Connector Project. The project is conducting preliminary engineering and detailed environmental field investigations in accordance with the process outlined in the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). Investigations are underway and include conducting detailed field data collection and traffic analysis, refining the PEL Corridors into engineered alignment specific alternatives, and assessing potential effects of the refined alternatives. Meeting materials will be available Monday, August 12 for remote viewing prior to the Open House Public Meeting.

Meeting Purpose: The purpose of this meeting is to provide an opportunity to review and comment on refined alternatives, updated traffic, and collected environmental information and potential effects.

Details

WHEN: August 15, 2024, from 4P.M. to 8 P.M.

WHERE: Mount Nittany Middle School
655 Brandywine Drive
State College, PA

Meeting materials will be available at www.PennDOT.gov/SCAC

Agenda

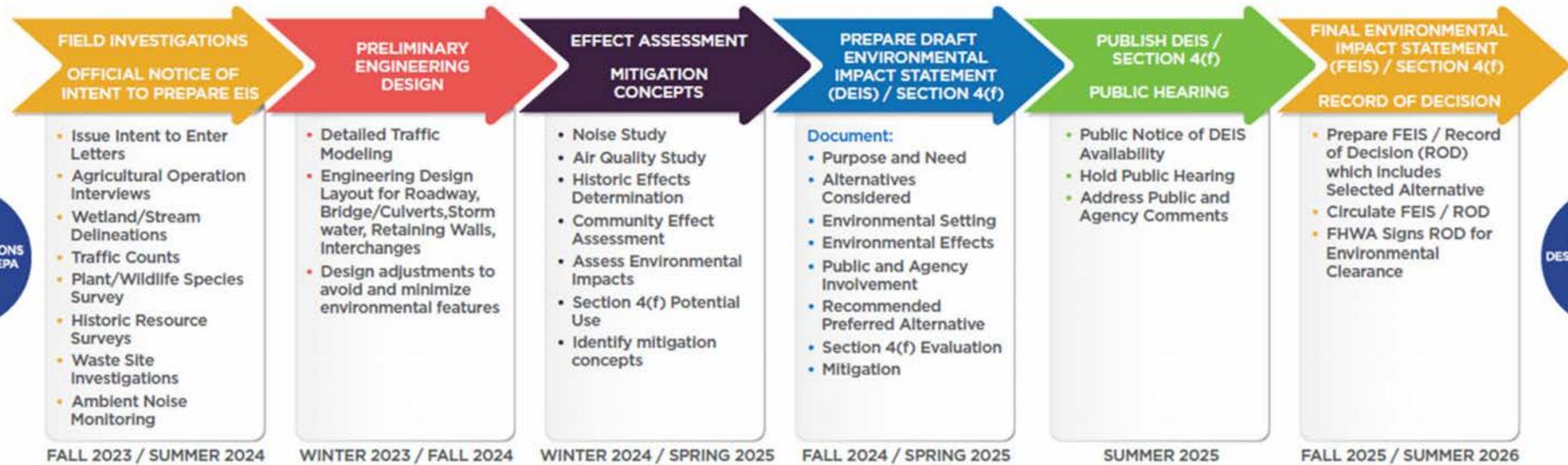
- ▶ Review environmental and traffic information
- ▶ Discuss the Alternatives with the Project Team
- ▶ Provide input and comments

For more information contact:

 Eric Murnyack, P.E.  814-765-0428
 70 PennDOT Drive  emurnyack@pa.gov
Clearfield, PA 16830  www.PennDOT.gov/SCAC

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SCHEDULE



PEL STUDY RECOMMENDATIONS INTO PE AND NEPA STUDIES

FINAL ENGINEERING DESIGN OF SELECTED ALTERNATIVE



PUBLIC MEETING:
Build Alternative corridor alignments and updated traffic and environmental data information

PUBLIC MEETING:
Revised Build Alternative corridor alignments and recommended preferred alternative, environmental and traffic effects

PUBLIC HEARING:
Comment on the Draft EIS and official recommended preferred alternative

SCHEDULE

		2 Years																												
Month	2024							2025												2026										
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	
	Jun	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	
EIS		EIS NOI 7/24											Official NOA of a DEIS published in the FR beginning the public comment period 7/30/25													Official NOA of a FEIS/ROD published in the FR beginning the public review period 7/30/26				
Section 106											Section 106 consultation concluded (PA drafted) 6/19/25																			
ESA										ESA consultation (request package submitted) 5/15/25		FWS determines ESA consultation is complete 6/30/25			FWS consultation concludes 11/12/25															
Section 404 Waterway Permit								PCN Form 4345/Joint Application Form received 6/2/25				Completed PCN Application received 6/17/25														Initial Offered 404 Permit 9/5/26				
													Publication of Public Notice & Hearing Ad 7/30/25												Final Verification/Permit Decision Rendered 9/20/26					
State, Local, or Tribal/ Other NFA									Initial 401 WQC Application submitted 6/2/25			Application 401 WQC completed 6/30/25													Conditional 401 WQC issued 8/5/26					

Consultation initiated with SHPO/THPO
1/15/20

Joint ACM Virtual Scoping Meeting was held on 6/28/23

In-Person & Virtual Scoping Meeting
8/15/24

In-Person & Virtual Scoping Meeting
2/10/25

Questions or Comments

APPENDIX C – Public Officials Public Meeting Briefing

1. Like Letter for - Elected Officials

- The Honorable Robert P. Casey, US Senate
- The Honorable John Fetterman, US Senate
- The Honorable Glenn Thompson, US House of Representatives, District 15
- The Honorable John Joyce, US House of Representatives, District 12
- The Honorable Wayne Langerhole, The Pennsylvania Senate
- The Honorable Judy Ward, The Pennsylvania Senate
- The Honorable Cris Dush, The Pennsylvania Senate
- The Honorable Paul Takac, Pennsylvania House of Representatives
- The Honorable Rich Irvin, Pennsylvania House of Representatives
- The Honorable H. Scott Conklin, Pennsylvania House of Representatives
- The Honorable Kerry Benninghoff, Pennsylvania House of Representatives

2. Like Letter for – Government Partners

- Mr. John Franek, Centre County Board of Commissioners
- Mr. Tom Fontaine, State College Borough manager
- Mr. Mark Boeckel, Harris Township
- Mr. Adam Brumbaugh, College Township
- Mr. Michael Danneker, Spring Township
- Ms. Sharon Royer, Benner Township
- Ms. Kathryn Long, Centre Hall Borough
- Ms. Lisa Kroner, Potter Township
- Mr. Robert Postal, Mifflin County Commissioners
- Ms. Centrice Martin, Ferguson Township
- Ms. Amy Farkas, Patton Township
- Mr. Steve Herman, SEDA-COG Regional Transportation Planning Comm.
- Mr. Jim Saylor, Centre County Metropolitan Planning Organization
- Mr. Steve Herman, SEDA-COG Regional Transportation Planning Comm.
- Mr. Benjamin Estell, Centre Region Council of Governments
- Mr. Eric Bernier, Centre County Metropolitan Planning Organization

3. Public Officials Meeting Sign-in Sheets

4. Public Officials Meeting Presentation



July 22, 2024

The Honorable Robert P Casey
United States Senate
817 East Bishop Street Suite C
Bellefonte PA 16823

Dear Senator Casey:

The Pennsylvania Department of Transportation (PennDOT), in cooperation with the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), invites you to participate in an open house public meeting for the State College Area Connector Project in Southern Centre County. The purpose of the State College Area Connector Project is to advance US 322 new location corridor recommendations outlined in the Planning and Environmental Linkages (PEL) with preliminary engineering and detailed environmental field investigations. The new studies will be conducted in accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). Investigations are underway and include conducting detailed field data collection and traffic analysis, refining the PEL Corridors into engineered alignment specific alternatives, and assessing potential effects of the refined alternatives.

In order to present refined alternative alignments, and updated traffic and environmental information, PennDOT would like to invite you to a meeting for elected officials to preview future public meeting information and materials. The elected official's meeting will be held **July 31, from 6 P.M. to 8 P.M.** at the Boalsburg Fire Company, 113 E. Pine St, Boalsburg, PA. Please RSVP to icole@jmt.com by July 29. The general public meeting will be scheduled in the near future.

Pursuant to Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, PennDOT does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, gender, age, or disability. If you believe that you have been denied the benefits of, or participation in a PennDOT program or activity, you may contact the PennDOT, Bureau of Equal Opportunity, DBE/Title VI Division at (717) 787-5891 or (800) 468-4201.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Thomas A. Prestash".

Thomas A. Prestash, P.E.
District Executive
Engineering District 2-0

020/TAP-EJM/klh

ecc: Elizabeth Kishbaugh, Elizabeth_Kishbaugh@casey.senate.gov



July 22, 2024

Centre County Board of Commissioners
Attn John Franek
Willowbank Office Building
420 Holmes Street Suite 151
Bellefonte PA 16823
jfranek@centrecountypa.gov

Dear Commissioners:

The Pennsylvania Department of Transportation (PennDOT), in cooperation with the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), invites you to participate in an open house public meeting for the State College Area Connector Project in Southern Centre County. The purpose of the State College Area Connector Project is to advance US 322 new location corridor recommendations outlined in the Planning and Environmental Linkages (PEL) with preliminary engineering and detailed environmental field investigations. The new studies will be conducted in accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). Investigations are underway and include conducting detailed field data collection and traffic analysis, refining the PEL Corridors into engineered alignment specific alternatives, and assessing potential effects of the refined alternatives.

In order to present refined alternative alignments, and updated traffic and environmental information, PennDOT would like to invite you to a meeting for governmental officials to preview future public meeting information and materials. The governmental official's meeting will be held **July 31, from 6 P.M. to 8 P.M.** at the Boalsburg Fire Company, 113 E. Pine St, Boalsburg, PA. Please RSVP to lcoble@jmt.com by July 29. The general public meeting will be scheduled in the near future.

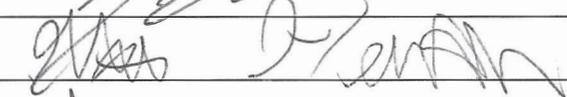
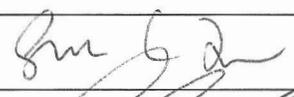
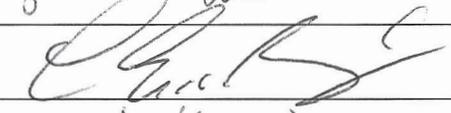
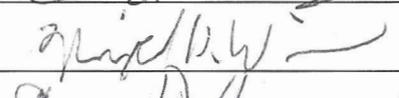
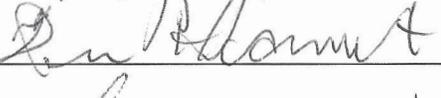
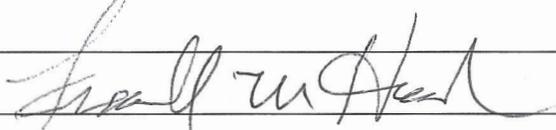
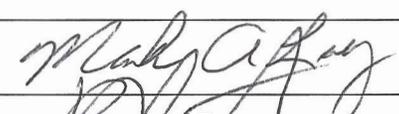
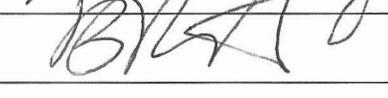
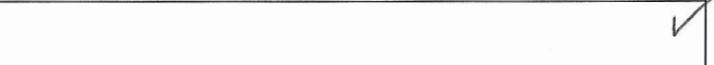
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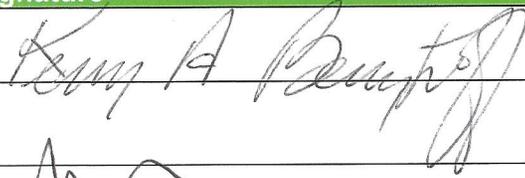
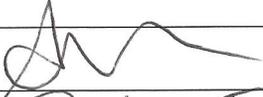
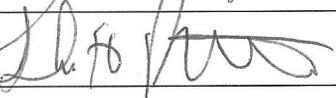
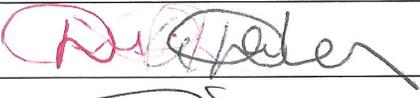
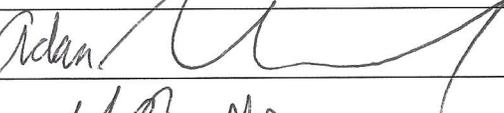
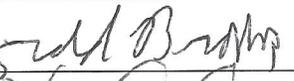
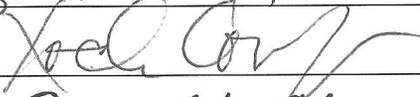
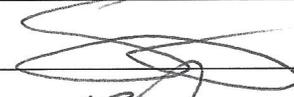
Sincerely,

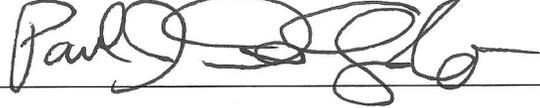
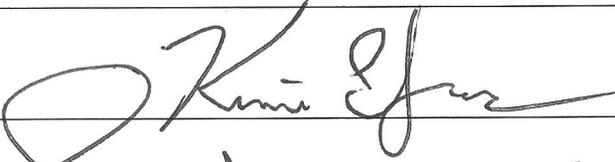
A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Thomas A. Prestash".

Thomas A. Prestash, P.E.
District Executive
Engineering District 2-0

020/TAP-EJM/klh

Name	Organization	Signature
Kevin Kassab	Borough of State College	
John Hayes	Borough of State College	
Matt Herndon	Borough of State College	
Jim Saylor	CCMPO	
Mark Higgins	Commissioner, Centre County	
Steven Dershem	Commissioner, Centre County	
Susan Trainor	College Township	
Eric Bernier	College Township/Centre County MPO	
Nigel Wilson	Harris Township	
Dennis Hameister	Harris Township	
Bruce Lord	Harris Township	
Frank Harden	Harris Township	
Tracey Moriarty	Harris Township	
Mark Long	Office of State Representative Kerry Benninghoff	
Brandy Reiter	Office of State Senator Cris Dush	
Juliet Harsbarger	Office of State Senator Wayne Langerholc, Jr.	

Name	Organization	Signature
Kerry Benninghoff	Representative, PA State Legislature – 171 st District	 ✓
Paul Takac	Representative, PA State Legislature – 82 nd District	 ✓
Amy Farkas	Patton Township	
Jake Tanis	Potter Township	
Glenn Roth	Potter Township	
Ryan Newman	Potter Township	
Dick Decker	Potter Township	
Nicolas Beiling	Representative Takac	
Adam Brumbaugh	College Township	
Todd Brown	Rep. Scott Conklin	
Xochi Conper	Centre Co	
Susan Chyczewski	Patton township	
Betsy Whitman	Patton Township	
Pamela Robb	Patton Township	
Sultan Magruder	Patton Township	
Bandy Kester	Sen. Dash	

Name	Organization	Signature
Lori Cole	Johnson, Mirmiran & Thompson, Inc.	
Matt Nulton, PE	Johnson, Mirmiran & Thompson, Inc.	
Megan Olivera	Quest Corporation of America, Inc.	
Paul DeAngelo	Skelly and Loy, Inc.,	
Alyssa Lynd	Skelly and Loy, Inc.,	
Kevin James, PE	Pennsylvania Department of Transportation	
Tom Pretash, PE	Pennsylvania Department of Transportation	
Eric Murnyack, PE	Pennsylvania Department of Transportation	
Leigh Woolridge, PE	Pennsylvania Department of Transportation	
BOB LEONARD	ERDMAN ANTHONY	

state college area
CONNECTOR

 **pennsylvania**
DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

**STATE COLLEGE AREA
CONNECTOR PROJECT**

PUBLIC OFFICIALS' MEETING

JULY 31, 2024

 U.S. Department of Transportation
Federal Highway Administration

1

AGENDA

 **pennsylvania**
DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

- Welcome
- Notice of Intent to Prepare an EIS
- Public Meeting Overview
- Public Meeting Materials
- Questions

 U.S. Department of Transportation
Federal Highway Administration

2

NOTICE OF INTENT TO PREPARE AN EIS



- NEPA process for an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) project begins by publishing a NOI in the Federal Register.
- Public and Agency Coordination Plans included as part of the NOI package.
- Begins the two-year EIS clock for completing the project analysis.
- Comments on the NOI are due by August 23, 2024.

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
Federal Highway Administration
[Docket No. FHWA-2024-0056]

Notice of Intent To Prepare an Environmental Impact Statement for a Proposed Highway Project, Centre County, PA

AGENCY: Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), Department of Transportation (DOT).

ACTION: Notice of Intent to prepare an environmental impact statement.

SUMMARY: The FHWA, in coordination with the Pennsylvania Department of Transportation (PennDOT) is issuing the Notice of Intent (NOI) to solicit comments and advise the public, agencies, and stakeholders that an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) will be prepared to study potential improvements to US 222 also known as the State College Area Connector Project from Potters Mills, PA to Boalsburg, PA. The project identification number is 112764. This NOI should be reviewed together with the NOI Additional Project Information document, which contains important details about the proposed project and complements the information in this NOI.

DATES: Comments on the NOI or the NOI Additional Project Information document are to be received by FHWA through the methods below by August 23, 2024.

ADDRESSES: This NOI and the NOI Additional Project Information are also available in this docket referenced above at www.regulations.gov and on the project website located at www.pennidot.pa.gov/SCAC. The NOI



3

PUBLIC MEETING OVERVIEW



state college area CONNECTOR



Open House Public Meeting State College Area Connector Project

The Pennsylvania Department of Transportation (PennDOT), in cooperation with the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) invites you to participate in an Open House Public Meeting for the State College Area Connector Project. The project is conducting preliminary engineering and detailed environmental field investigations in accordance with the process outlined in the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). Investigations are underway and include conducting detailed field data collection and traffic analysis, refining the PEL Corridors into engineered alignment specific alternatives, and assessing potential effects of the refined alternatives. Meeting materials will be available Monday, August 12 for remote viewing prior to the Open House Public Meeting.

Meeting Purpose: The purpose of this meeting is to provide an opportunity to review and comment on refined alternatives, updated traffic, and collected environmental information and potential effects.

Details

WHEN: August 15, 2024, from 4P.M. to 8 P.M.

WHERE: Mount Nittany Middle School
655 Brandywine Drive
State College, PA
Meeting materials will be available at www.PennDOT.gov/SCAC.

For more information contact:

Eric Murtyack, P.E.
70 PennDOT Drive
Clearfield, PA 16930

814-765-0428
emurtyack@pa.gov
www.PennDOT.gov/SCAC

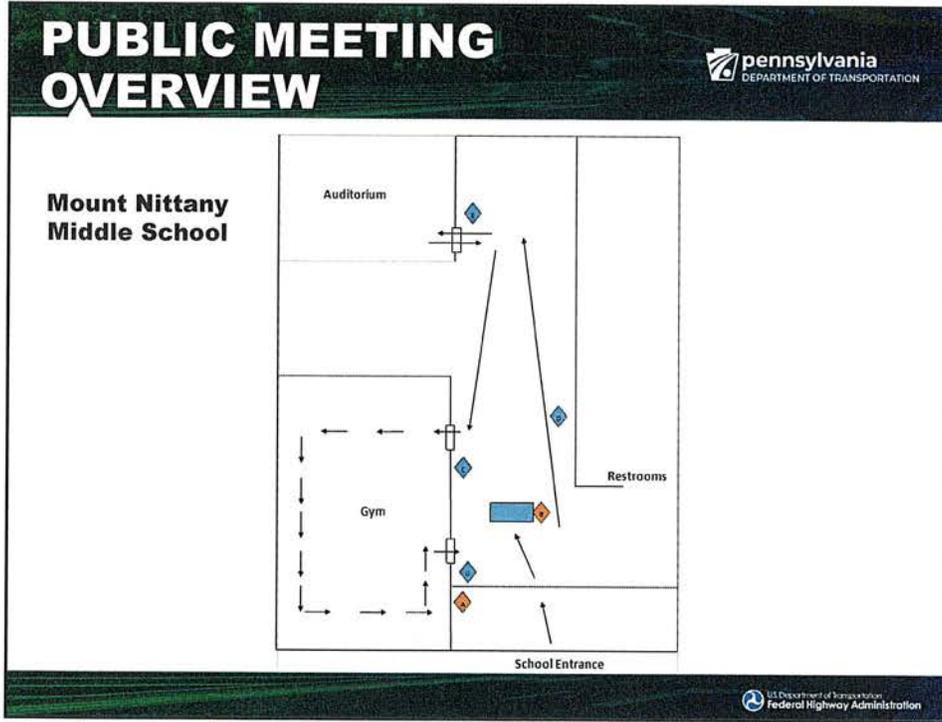
Agenda

- Review environmental and traffic information
- Discuss the Alternatives with the Project Team
- Provide input and comments.

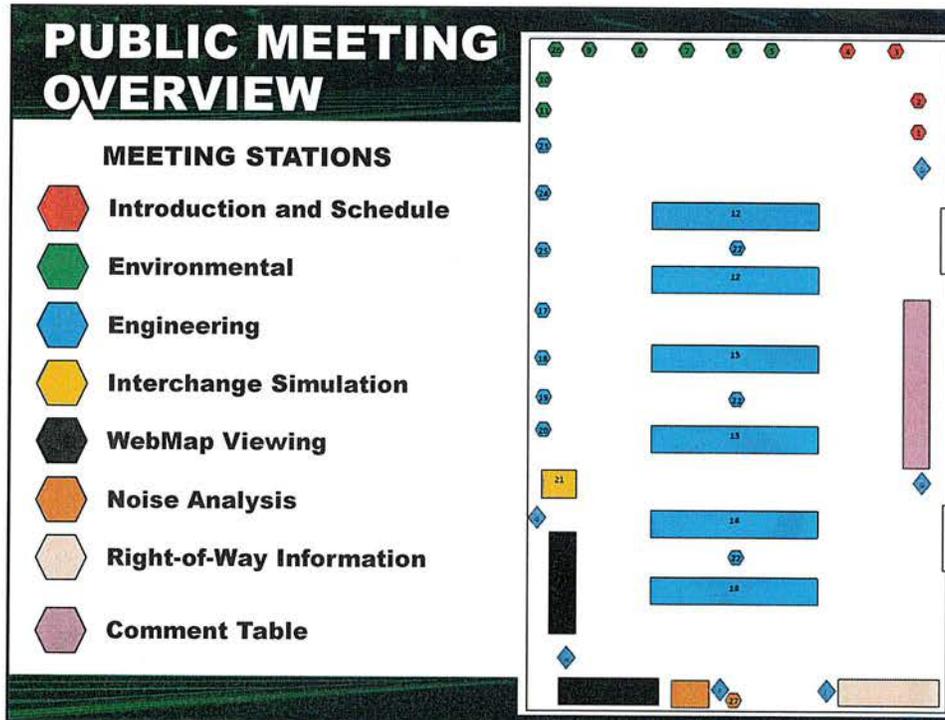
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4



5



6

PUBLIC MEETING OVERVIEW

state college area CONNECTOR

What is the Process for Advancing Transportation Proj

Transportation projects advance through five phases be able to be used by the traveling public.

Proposed Schedule

2020 2021 2022 2023 2024 2025 2026 2027 2028 2029 2030 2031 2032 2033 2034 2035

Transportation Development Process

Introduction and Schedule

7

PUBLIC MEETING OVERVIEW

state college area CONNECTOR

State College Area Connector EIS Process

We are here

Identify project need

Issue Notice of Intent

Conduct scoping

Refine purpose and need

Determine alternatives to carry forward in analysis

Prepare Draft EIS

Identify mitigation measures

Identify recommended preferred alternative (whenever practicable)

Evaluate effects for a range of reasonable alternatives

Define affected environment

Submit Draft Environmental Impact Statement for public and agency review and comment

45 day public comment period

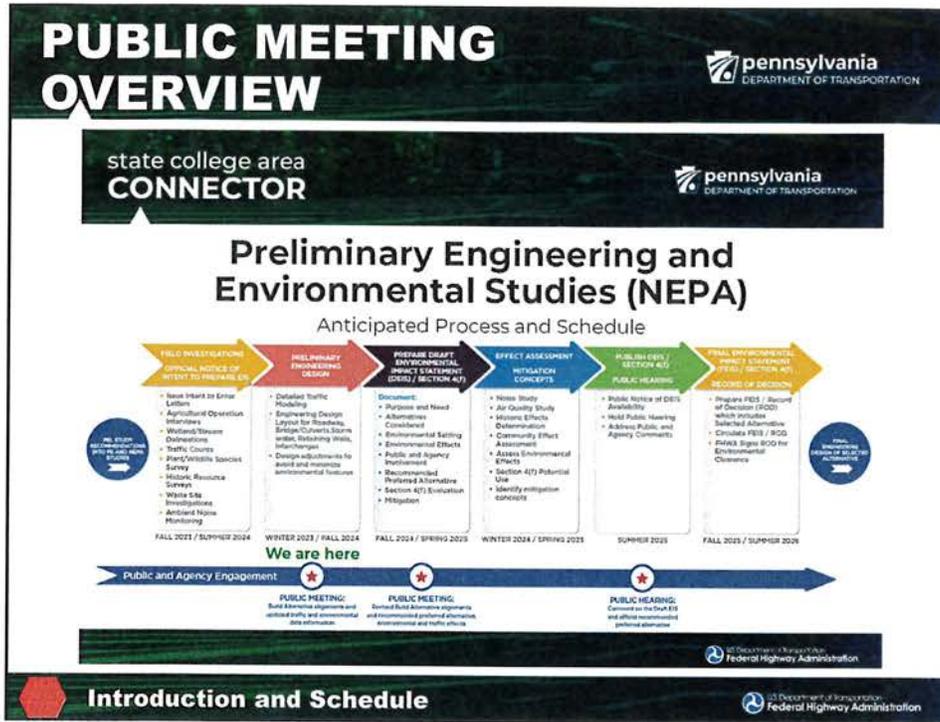
Compile and respond to comments

Prepare combined Final Environmental Impact Statement / Record of Decision

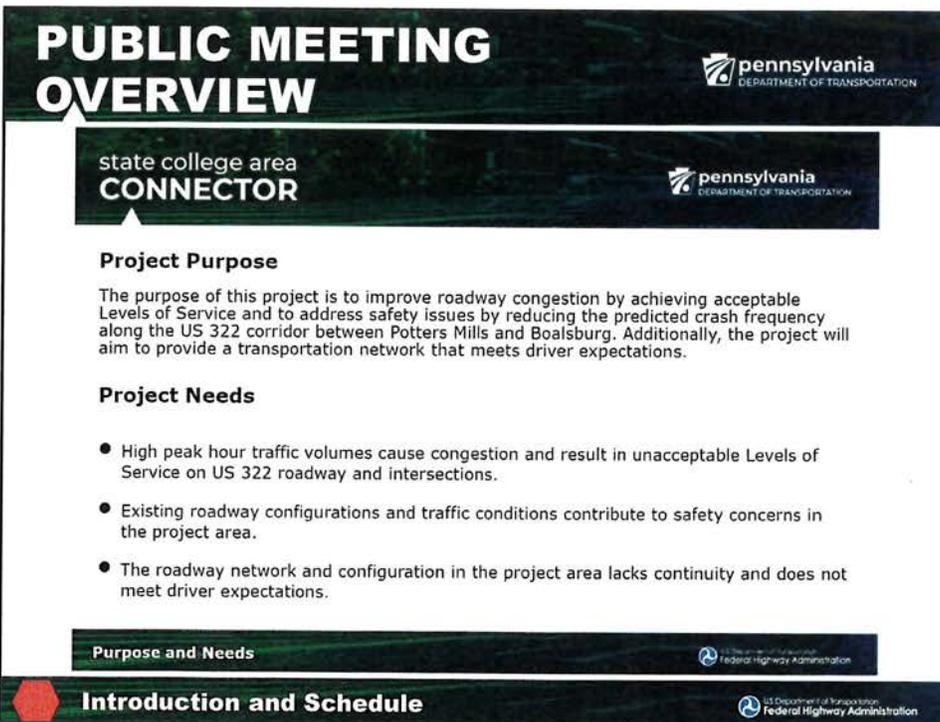
Issue combined FEIS / ROD

Introduction and Schedule

8



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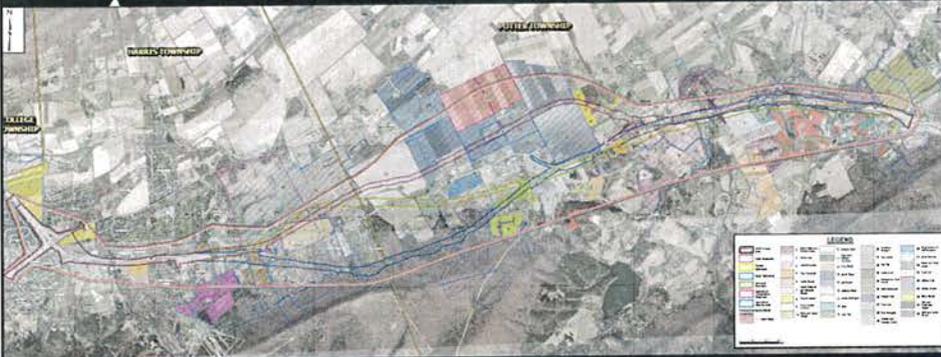


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PUBLIC MEETING MATERIALS



state college area CONNECTOR
Agricultural Resources






Environmental


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PUBLIC MEETING MATERIALS



state college area CONNECTOR




PA Act 100 of 1979 – established the Agricultural Lands Condemnation Approval Board (ALCAB) as an independent administrative board with approval authority over the condemnation of productive agricultural land for highway projects.



PA Act 43 of 1981 – enables landowners to propose the creation of Agricultural Security Areas (ASAs) to municipal governments. Under PA Act 43, an application for approval to condemn non-exempt ASA lands in agricultural production must be filed with ALCAB.



4 Pa Code Chapter 7, § 7.301 et seq, Agricultural Land Preservation Policy (ALPP) – outlines agricultural preservation standards that all state agencies must support. It is intended to protect and preserve the Commonwealth's "prime agricultural land." "Prime agricultural land" is categorized into five priority categories: preserved farmland; Agricultural Security Areas; farmland enrolled in Act 319 (Clean and Green); agricultural zoning; and farmland with soil capability classes I-IV.



7 U.S.C. § 4201, Farmland Protection Policy Act (FPPA) of 1981 – The purpose is to minimize the extent to which federal programs contribute to the unnecessary and irreversible conversion of farmland to nonagricultural use. The Act recognizes the four categories of farmland soils: Prime Farmland Soils; Unique Farmland Soils; Farmland Soils of Statewide Importance; and Locally Important Farmland Soils. Land does not have to be in active agricultural use for consideration under this program.

State and Federal Laws that Protect Farmland


Environmental


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PUBLIC MEETING MATERIALS

state college area CONNECTOR

The flowchart illustrates the Farmland Evaluation Process, which is divided into three main stages: Planning and Environmental Linkage Study (PEL), Preliminary Engineering / Environmental Studies, and Final Engineering Design. The process consists of seven sequential steps:

- Identify productive agricultural land
- Determine protections for productive agricultural land (preserved, ASA, C&G zoning, and capability I-IV)
- Interview farm owners and operators to determine the nature and extent of operations
- Design alternatives that avoid and minimize effects to productive agricultural land
- Identify the recommended preferred alternative - EIS/Record of Decision
- Prepare a Farmland Assessment Report (FAR)
- PennDOT requests an Agricultural Lands Condensation Approval Board (ALCAB) hearing

A callout bubble labeled "WE ARE HERE" is positioned above the fourth step, "Design alternatives that avoid and minimize effects to productive agricultural land".

Farmland Evaluation Process

Environmental

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PUBLIC MEETING MATERIALS

state college area CONNECTOR

Natural Resources

The map displays the project area with various colored overlays representing different land use zones and project boundaries. A legend in the bottom right corner provides a key for these zones, including categories like 'LULU' (Low Use/Low Density), 'Medium Density', 'High Density', 'Agricultural', 'Forest', 'Wetlands', and 'Waterways'. The map also shows major roads and the proposed project alignment.

Environmental

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PUBLIC MEETING MATERIALS

state college area CONNECTOR

What is Section 106?
Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (NHPA) requires federal agencies to consider the effects of federal undertakings on historic properties. If a federal or federally-assisted project has the potential to affect historic properties, a Section 106 review must take place.

How does Section 106 apply to this project?
This project is federally assisted and has the potential to affect historic properties. Therefore, the requirements of Section 106 must be met.

Section 106 Review Process

```

graph LR
    1[1] --> 2[2]
    2 --> 3[3]
    3 --> 4[4]
  
```

1 Initiate Process

- Determine whether the Project has potential to cause effects
- Coordinate the Section 106 review process with other reviewers
- Identify consulting parties
- Plan for public involvement

2 Identify Historic Properties

- Define area of potential effects (APE)
- Identify historic properties
- Evaluate properties for National Register Eligibility
- Determine whether eligible historic properties may be effected

↑ WE ARE HERE

3 Assess Effects

- Apply Criteria of Adverse Effect to eligible properties which will be affected
- Finding of Effect: either No Adverse Effect or Adverse Effect

4 Resolve Adverse Effects

- Compile documentation for consultation with consulting parties
- Invite the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation (ACHP) to participate
- Consult on resolving adverse effect
- Prepare an agreement document

Section 106

Environmental

PUBLIC MEETING MATERIALS

state college area CONNECTOR

What is Section 106 Consultation?
Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (NHPA) requires federal agencies to consider the effects on historic properties of projects they carry out, assist, fund, permit, license, or approve throughout the country. If a federal or federally-assisted project has the potential to affect historic properties, a Section 106 review will take place.

Section 106 gives the ACHP, interested parties, and the public the chance to weigh in on these matters before a final decision is made. This process is an important tool for citizens to lend their voice in protecting and maintaining historic properties in their communities.

What is a Consulting Party?
A Consulting Party is an organization or individual who has a demonstrated interest in a project, due to their legal or economic relationship to the undertaking or affected property(ies), or their concerns with the undertaking's effects on historic properties.

A landowner and a local preservation group are examples of an individual and organization with a demonstrated interest.

Goals of Section 106 Consultation
The goal of consultation is:

- ▶ to identify historic properties potentially affected by the undertaking,
- ▶ assess effects,
- ▶ and seek ways to avoid, minimize or mitigate any adverse effects on historic properties.

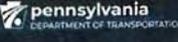
Consultation does not mandate a specific outcome. Rather, it is the process of seeking views on the project's effect on eligible historic properties and, if the effect is adverse, how project effects on historic properties should be resolved.

Section 106 Consultation

Environmental

PUBLIC MEETING MATERIALS



state college area CONNECTOR




Section used at western and eastern ends of the Build Alternative

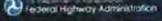
Western End:
Mt. Nittany Expressway to Bear Meadows Road

Eastern End:
US 322 at Potters Mills Gap to Tusseyville Area



Section used in the middle portion of the Build Alternative

Middle Area:
Bear Meadows Road to Tusseyville Area

Typical Build Alternative Roadway Sections


Engineering


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PUBLIC MEETING MATERIALS



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Rural Roadway Typical Section
in Harris and Potter Townships



Urban Roadway Typical Section
in Harris Township

Typical Rural and Urban Roadway Sections


Engineering


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PUBLIC MEETING MATERIALS

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PA 45 Urban Roadway Typical Section
PA 45 in Harris Township from Boal Avenue to proposed SPUI Interchange



Rendering of Urban Roadway Typical Section

PA 45 Urban Roadway Section

Engineering

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PUBLIC MEETING MATERIALS

state college area CONNECTOR



Urban Roadway Typical Section
Adjacent to Build Alternative
Local 322 in Harris Township from Discovery Drive to Bear Meadows Road showing shared used path with municipal agreement



Rendering of Urban Roadway Typical Section

Local 322 Urban Roadway Section

Engineering

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PUBLIC MEETING MATERIALS



Engineering



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PUBLIC MEETING MATERIALS



Engineering



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PUBLIC MEETING MATERIALS

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PUBLIC MEETING MATERIALS

Natural Resources

Feature	US 322 Corridor		
	US 322 North	US 322 Central	US 322 South
Potential Limit of Disturbance Area (acres)	394	372	445
Agriculture			
Productive Agricultural Land (acres)	183	100	73
Agricultural Operations Affecter (ft)	19	19	18
Agricultural Conservation Easements (within Productive Agricultural Land) (acres)	19	13	5
Agricultural Security Areas (within Productive Agricultural Land) (acres)	19	23	35
Act 319 Clean and Green Areas (within Productive Agricultural Land) (acres)	56	56	65
Agricultural Zoning Districts (within Productive Agricultural Land) (acres)	82	74	45
Soil Capability Classes 1-IV (within Productive Agricultural Land) (acres)	103	101	76
Other Land Preservation			
Disaster Conservation Easements (acres)	23	30	21
Water Resources			
Wetlands (acres)	29	31	23
Total Streams (# of crossing) (linear feet)	21	24	41
CWF RFD/CWF Streams (# of crossing) (linear feet)	21	20	37
Ponds/Lakes (#) (acres)	8	3	9
100 Yr. Floodplain (acres)	24	15	23
Terrestrial Habitat and Threatened and Endangered Species			
Forested/Wooded Habitats (acres)	26	25	59
PA Natural Heritage Core Habitat (acres)	24	21	25
Road Features (ft)	19	7	5
Rat Swarming Area (Combined) (acres)	106	68	92
Rat Swarming Area (Combined) (Permitted) (acres)	13	5	11
Roadback State Forest (acres)	0	0	0
Stone Mountain Important Bird Area (acres)	0	0	78

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PUBLIC MEETING MATERIALS

Cultural Resources

Feature	US 322 Corridor					
	US 322 North		US 322 Central		US 322 South	
Potential Limit of Disturbance Area (acres)	394		372		445	
Historic Resources						
NHP Eligible Property (P)	6		5		8	
Penns Valley/Buth Valley Rural Historic District Contributing Property (P) (acres)	60	182	41	174	73	198
Archaeological Resources						
Known Archaeological Sites (P)	3		4		4	
Historic Period Archaeological Sensitivity Area (acres)	14		12		27	
Statewide Professional/Pre-Contact Model - High Probability Area (acres)	104		107		83	
Statewide Professional/Pre-Contact Model - Medium Probability Area (APMS)	209		168		189	

Socioeconomic Resources

Feature	US 322 Corridor					
	US 322 North		US 322 Central		US 322 South	
Potential Limit of Disturbance Area (acres)	394		372		445	
Socioeconomic Resources						
Residential Units (P)	30		16		38	
Commercial (non-ag operations) (P)	6		3		5	
Places of Worship (P)	0		1		0	
HUD Substandard Housing Units (P)	0		0		0	
Community Facilities (acres)	2,34		2,14		2,34	
Neighborhood Community (P) (acres)	12	28	12	21	13	41
Parks (P) (APMS)	0	0	1	7	0	0
Waste Sites (P)	13		11		13	

Engineering

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PUBLIC MEETING MATERIALS

state college area CONNECTOR

North Alternative

- Utilizes existing US 322 corridor in the east to minimize splitting productive agricultural land;
- Affects more wetlands along the northern side of existing US 322 in the east;
- Higher effects to productive agricultural lands
- Higher effects to contributing properties within Rural Historic District and National Register Eligible properties;
- Avoids headwaters of Spring Creek and many of its tributaries;
- Higher effects to residential displacements (30+);
- Avoids the Stone Mountain Important Bird Area;
- Lower risk of encountering pyritic material.

Central Alternative

- Utilizes existing US 322 corridor in the east to minimize splitting productive agricultural land;
- Avoids wetland complexes on the north side of US 322 in the east;
- Minimizes effects to agricultural lands;
- Lower effects to contributing properties within Rural Historic District and National Register Eligible properties;
- Avoids headwaters of Spring Creek;
- Minimizes residential displacements (less than 20);
- Avoids the Stone Mountain Important Bird Area;
- Utilizes the Potter Township baseball fields;
- Lower risk of encountering pyritic material.

South Alternative

- Utilizes Existing US 322 corridor in the east to minimize splitting productive agricultural land;
- Lower effects to wetlands and productive agricultural land;
- Higher effects to individually eligible historic properties;
- Higher effects to contributing properties within Rural Historic District and National Register Eligible properties;
- Higher effects to high-quality streams, including the headwaters of Spring Creek;
- Higher effects to forest land;
- Highest residential displacements (30+);
- Higher effects to the Stone Mountain Important Bird Area;
- Higher risk of encountering pyritic material.

Alternative Observations

Engineering

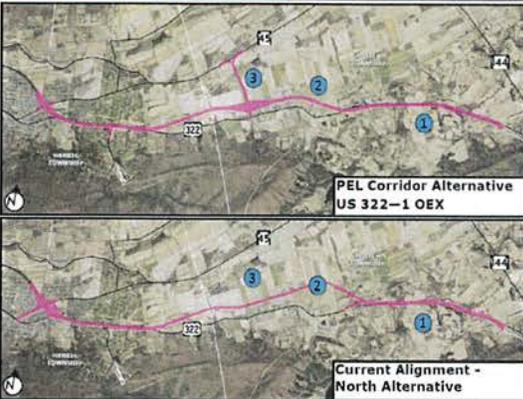
28

PUBLIC MEETING MATERIALS



state college area CONNECTOR





North Alternative vs. US 322-1OEX PEL Corridor

- 1 PEL corridor was centered on US 322. The North Alternative alignment shifts further north to minimize effects along the south side of existing US 322.
- 2 North Alternative departs from the PEL corridor by extending further north before turning to parallel existing US 322. Shift was incorporated to minimize effects to farm operations and other environmental features.
- 3 Removed the PA 45 Connector and interchange.




Engineering

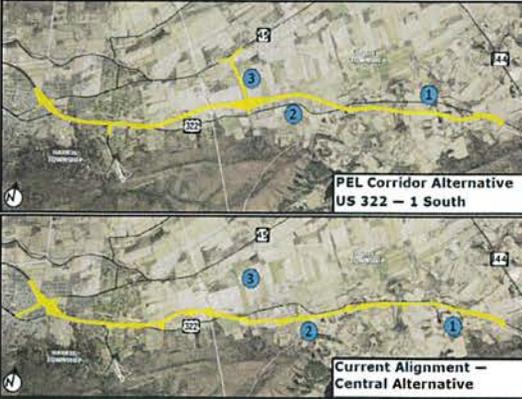

29

PUBLIC MEETING MATERIALS



state college area CONNECTOR





Central Alternative vs. US 322-1 South PEL Corridor

- 1 PEL corridor was further south of US 322 in the east. The current alignment remains closer to existing US 322 to minimize effects to farm operations and other environmental features south of US 322.
- 2 Central Alternative remains south of US 322 for a longer distance than was proposed in the PEL study. This modification was developed to minimize effects on farm operations and other environmental features along with local officials input.
- 3 Removed the PA 45 Connector and interchange.




Engineering


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PUBLIC MEETING MATERIALS

state college area CONNECTOR

1 PEL corridor was further south of US 322 in the east. The current alignment shifts north of existing US 322 to minimize effects to farm operations and other environmental features south of US 322.

2 Removed the interchange.

South Alternative vs. US 322-5 PEL Corridor

Engineering

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PUBLIC MEETING MATERIALS

Interchange Simulation

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PUBLIC MEETING MATERIALS

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

WebMap Viewing

U.S. Department of Transportation
Federal Highway Administration

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PUBLIC MEETING MATERIALS

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

state college area CONNECTOR

Sound Decisions About Highway Noise Abatement

The Noise Abatement Process

When Projects Are Eligible? Only certain highway improvement projects are eligible for noise mitigation at Pennsylvania. These projects have to be located in the noise-affected areas and are approved by the FHWA. It is important to know the noise-affected areas of your project, including any other projects, such as other highway projects, to ensure that noise mitigation is properly integrated into the project. Noise-affected areas are those areas that are within 200 feet of the highway and are within 100 feet of the highway.

Applying the Process to Eligible Projects

There is a specific process that must be followed for noise abatement. The process includes the following steps:

1. Determine if the project is eligible for noise abatement.
2. Conduct a noise study to determine the noise-affected areas.
3. Develop a noise abatement plan that includes the following:
 - Noise barriers
 - Sound walls
 - Noise shields
 - Noise curtains
 - Noise blankets
 - Noise curtains
 - Noise blankets
4. Obtain approval from the FHWA for the noise abatement plan.
5. Implement the noise abatement plan.

Noise Analysis

U.S. Department of Transportation
Federal Highway Administration

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PUBLIC MEETING MATERIALS

state college area CONNECTOR

RIGHT OF WAY Area

WHEN YOUR LAND IS NEEDED FOR TRANSPORTATION PURPOSES

SOME QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS ON THE PENNSYLVANIA DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION'S ACQUISITION PROCESS



Right-of-Way

35

PUBLIC MEETING MATERIALS

state college area CONNECTOR

How Can You Participate?

Options for Commenting

1. Fill out the online comment form
2. Fill out the comment form provided and mail to:
Eric Murnyack, P.E.
PennDOT District 2-0
70 PennDOT Drive, Clearfield PA 16830
3. Fill out comment form provided and email to Eric Murnyack, P.E. at emurnyack@pa.gov or Leigh Woolridge, P.E. at lwoolridge@pa.gov

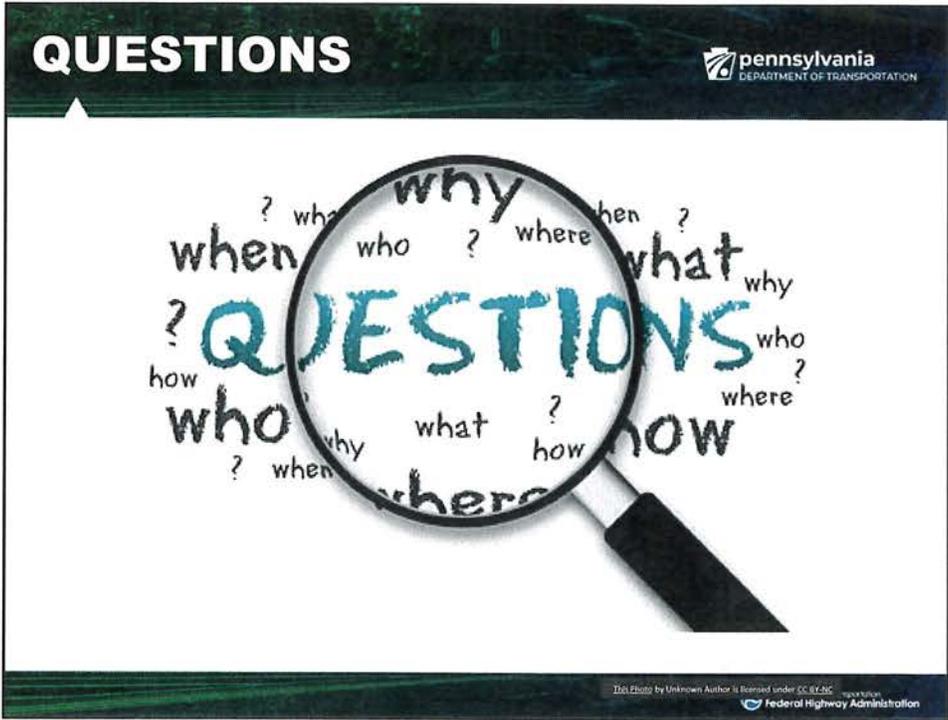
All comments received by Friday, August 30, 2024, will become part of the record for this meeting.

For more information
Go to the "Get Involved / Contact Us" section on the project website at www.pennidot.pa.gov/scac

Thank you for participating.
We look forward to hearing from you!

Comment Table

36



37

APPENDIX D – Email Invitation



Lori Cole <lori.cole31@gmail.com>

State College Area Connector Public Meeting - August 15

1 message

State College Ara Connector <sandee@fdotdistrictthree.ccsend.com>

Wed, Aug 7, 2024 at 12:35 PM

Reply-To: sandee.launch@qcausa.com

To: lori.cole31@gmail.com

The graphic features a dark green header with 'state college area CONNECTOR' on the left and the 'pennsylvania DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION' logo on the right. Below this, the title 'Open House Public Meeting' is centered in large blue font. To the left of the date is a calendar icon, and to the right is a location pin icon. The date 'Thursday, August 15, 2024 from 4 P.M. to 8 P.M.' is centered. The location 'Mount Nittany Middle School 656 Brandywine Drive State College, PA' is on the right. A dark blue footer contains the text: 'Meeting materials will be available on the project website beginning on August 12, 2024 at www.PennDOT.gov/SCAC'.

State College Area Connector Public Meeting - August 15

The Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) in coordination with the Pennsylvania Department of Transportation (PennDOT) announced the publication of a Notice of Intent to Prepare an Environmental Impact Statement for the proposed State College Area Connector Project. The document is available for public review online at the [Federal Register](#), the daily journal of the United States Government, and at www.PennDOT.pa.gov/SCAC.

PennDOT also announced that a public scoping meeting is scheduled for Thursday, August 15, at the Mt. Nittany Middle School located at [656 Brandywine Drive](#) in State College. Members of the design team will be at the school from 4:00 PM to 8:00 PM to field questions on the proposed project from the public. Additionally, PennDOT will be providing property owners within the project area a letter invitation allowing them early access (12 PM to 3 PM) to the same public meeting materials.

The venue for this meeting is accessible to persons with disabilities. Anyone requiring special assistance or seeking additional information regarding the meeting may email Eric Murnyack at emurnyack@pa.gov before August 15.

[Unsubscribe](#) | [Update Profile](#) | [Constant Contact Data Notice](#)



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APPENDIX E – Property Owner Letters

July 26, 2024

Re: Public Meeting
State College Area Connector Project

Dear Property Owners, Business Owners, and Interested Persons:

The Pennsylvania Department of Transportation (PennDOT), in cooperation with the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), invites you to participate in an open house public meeting for the State College Area Connector Project in southern Centre County. The purpose of the State College Area Connector Project is to advance US 322 new location corridor recommendations outlined in the Planning and Environmental Linkages (PEL) with preliminary engineering and detailed environmental field investigations. The new studies will be conducted in accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). Investigations are underway and include conducting detailed field data collection and traffic analysis, refining the PEL Corridors into engineered alignment specific alternatives, and assessing potential effects of the refined alternatives.

In order to present refined alternative alignments, updated traffic, and environmental information, and solicit public comments, PennDOT is hosting a public meeting on August 15 from 4 P.M. to 8 P.M. at the Mount Nittany Middle School, 656 Brandywine Drive, State College, PA. As a property owner within the project area, we would like to provide you early access to the meeting materials. This early access will be available from 12 P.M. to 3 P.M. prior to the public meeting on August 15. Additionally, meeting materials will be available on the project website beginning on August 12, 2024, at www.PennDOT.gov/SCAC.

The early access and public meeting will provide an opportunity for participants to sign in, tour meeting exhibits, meet with the study team to ask questions, and make comments. Written comments from the public regarding the State College Area Connector Project may be submitted by mail to PennDOT District 2-0, Attention: Eric Murnyack, P.E., 70 PennDOT Drive, Clearfield, PA 16830. Comments may also be submitted by email to Eric Murnyack, P.E. at emurnyack@pa.gov or Leigh Woolridge, P.E., at lwoolridge@pa.gov or online via the project webpage. All comments on the public meeting materials must be received by August 30, 2024.

PennDOT makes every reasonable effort to accommodate the needs of the public. If other accommodations are needed or you have any general questions or concerns regarding the State College Area Connector Project or the public meeting, please contact Eric Murnyack, Project Manager, at emurnyack@pa.gov. Additional information about the State College Area Connector Project may be found online at www.PennDOT.gov/SCAC.

The public meeting materials and exhibits will be presented in English. If you need accommodations or an interpreter, or have a disability or need assistance, special arrangements can be made to accommodate most needs. Please call PennDOT's District 2-0 Public Information Office at (814) 765-0598 by August 6 for assistance. Please be aware that advanced notice is requested as some accommodations may require additional time.

Pursuant to Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, PennDOT does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, gender, age, or disability. If you believe that you have been denied the benefits of, or participation in a PennDOT program or activity, you may contact the PennDOT, Bureau of Equal Opportunity, DBE/Title VI Division at (717) 787-5891 or (800) 468-4201.

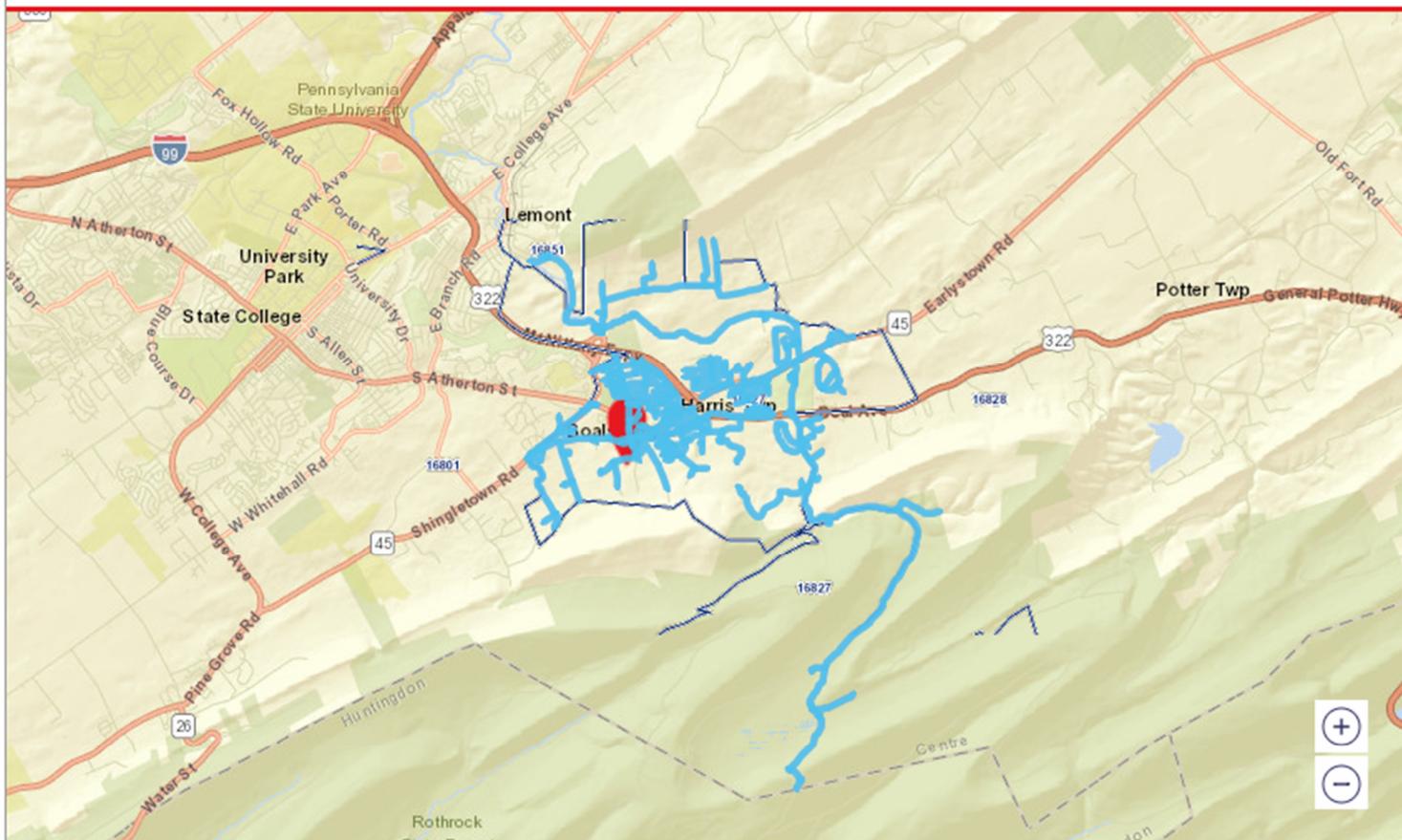
Appendix F – USPS Every Door Direct Mail Notification

1. Every Door Direct Mailing Delivery Route Maps
2. EDD Mailer

Refine Search

View as: **Map**  **Table** 

Route  Residential  Business  Total  Age: 25-34  Size  Income  Cost 



Map Key

[Show](#)

Order Summary

Selected Routes

3

[Post Office™ Drop-Offs](#)

1

Total Mailpieces

2221

Approximate Cost 

\$495.28

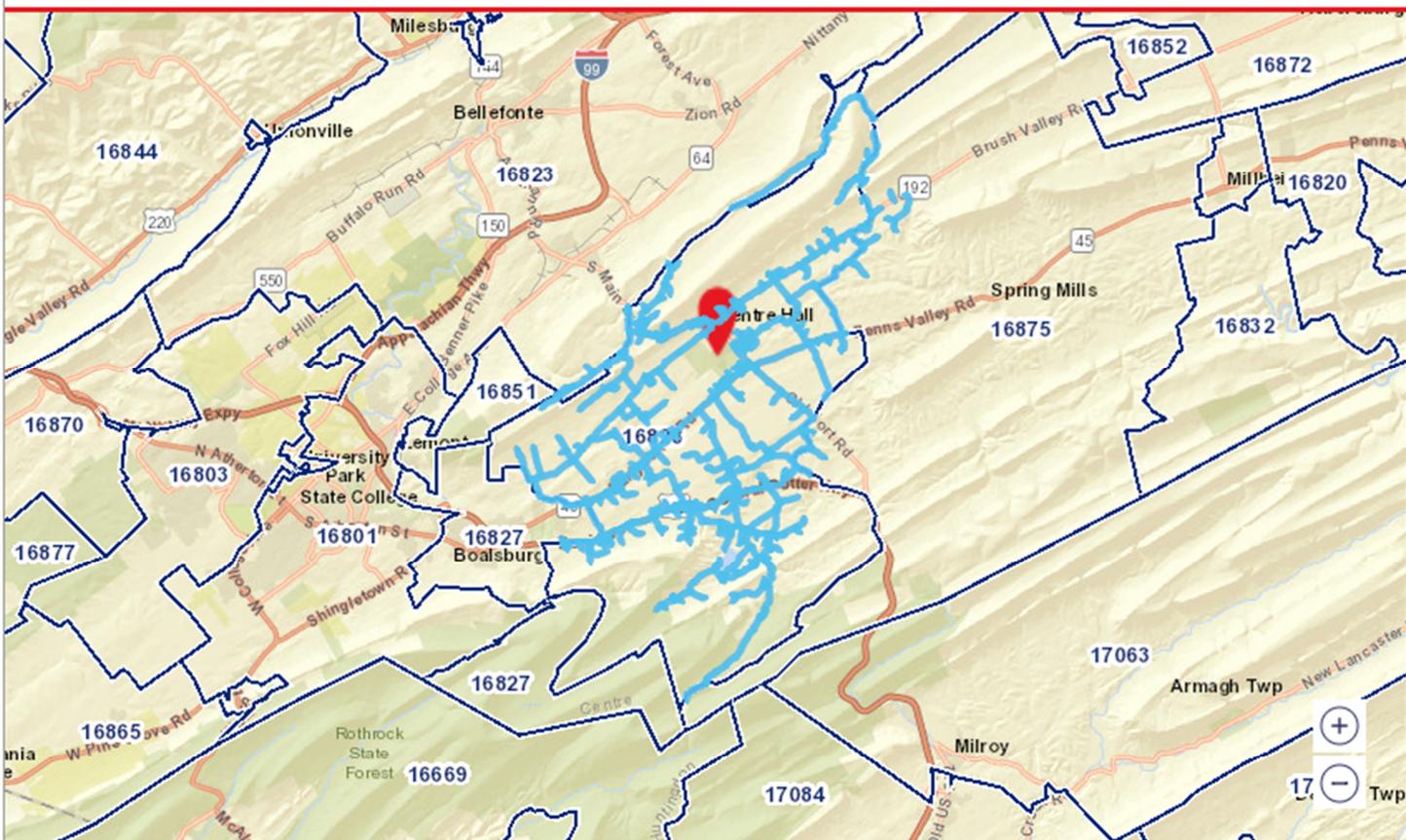
Next Step

Clear Routes

Refine Search

View as: **Map**  **Table** 

Route  Residential  Business  Total  Age: 25-34  Size  Income  Cost 



Map Key

[Show](#)

Order Summary

Selected Routes

3

[Post Office™ Drop-Offs](#)

1

Total Mailpieces

1509

Approximate Cost 

\$336.51

Next Step

Clear Routes

Open House Public Meeting

State College Area Connector Project

The Pennsylvania Department of Transportation (PennDOT), in cooperation with the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) invites you to participate in an Open House Public Meeting for the State College Area Connector Project. The project is conducting preliminary engineering and detailed environmental field investigations in accordance with the process outlined in the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). Investigations are underway and include conducting detailed field data collection and traffic analysis, refining the PEL Corridors into engineered alignment specific alternatives, and assessing potential effects of the refined alternatives. Meeting materials will be available Monday, August 12 for remote viewing prior to the Open House Public Meeting.

Meeting Purpose: The purpose of this meeting is to provide an opportunity to review and comment on refined alternatives, updated traffic, and collected environmental information and potential effects.

Details

WHEN: August 15, 2024, from 4 P.M. to 8 P.M.

WHERE: Mount Nittany Middle School
655 Brandywine Drive
State College, PA

Meeting materials will be available at www.PennDOT.gov/SCAC

Additionally, PennDOT provided property owners within the project area a letter invitation allowing them early access (12 PM to 3 PM) to the same public meeting materials.

For more information contact:

 Eric Murnyack, P.E.
 70 PennDOT Drive
Clearfield, PA 16830

 814-765-0428
 emurnyack@pa.gov
 www.PennDOT.gov/SCAC

Agenda

- ▶ Review environmental and traffic information
- ▶ Discuss the Alternatives with the Project Team
- ▶ Provide input and comments

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APPENDIX G – Amish Community Notification

1. Transmittal of Meeting Notification
2. Mailer



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A Terracon Company

(717) 232-0593 • FAX (717) 232-1799
www.terracon.com

LETTER OF TRANSMITTAL

DATE	JOB NO.
ATTENTION	
RE:	

TO: _____

WE ARE SENDING YOU Attached Under separate cover via _____ the following items:

- Shop drawings Prints Plans Samples Specifications
- Copy of letter Change order _____

COPIES	DATE	NO.	DESCRIPTION

THESE ARE TRANSMITTED as checked below:

- For approval Approved as submitted Resubmit _____ copies for approval
- For your use Approved as noted Submit _____ copies for distribution
- As requested Returned for corrections Return _____ corrected prints
- For review and comment _____
- FOR BIDS DUE _____ 20 _____ PRINTS RETURNED AFTER LOAN TO US

REMARKS _____

COPY TO _____ SIGNED Eric Bruggeman

If enclosures are not as noted, kindly notify us at once.



A Terracon Company

SKELLY AND LOY, Inc.
A Terracon Company

(717) 232-0593 • FAX (717) 232-1799
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RE:	

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- _____

COPIES	DATE	NO.	DESCRIPTION

THESE ARE TRANSMITTED as checked below:

- For approval
- For your use
- As requested
- For review and comment
- FOR BIDS DUE _____ 20 _____
- Approved as submitted
- Approved as noted
- Returned for corrections
- _____
- Resubmit _____ copies for approval
- Submit _____ copies for distribution
- Return _____ corrected prints
- PRINTS RETURNED AFTER LOAN TO US

REMARKS _____

COPY TO _____ SIGNED Eric Bruggeman

Open House Public Meeting

State College Area Connector Project

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Details

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WHERE: Mount Nittany Middle School
655 Brandywine Drive
State College, PA

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Additionally, PennDOT provided property owners within the project area a letter invitation allowing them early access (12 PM to 3 PM) to the same public meeting materials.

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- ▶ Review environmental and traffic information
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APPENDIX H – Media Notification

1. Lewistown Sentinel on 7/27/24
2. Lewistown Sentinel on 8/10/24
3. Centre Daily Times Affidavit for publication on 7/28/24 and 8/11/24

Volunteers, donations surge into Democratic campaigns

WASHINGTON (AP) — The day after Vice President Kamala Harris entered the race for the White House, Democratic Rep. Dan Kildee's Michigan campaign office saw 630 people sign up to volunteer.

The next night in Nevada, Rep. Steve Horsford had another 600 volunteers register in his Las Vegas-area district. Pennsylvania Rep. Madeleine Dean's constituents were "fired up," New Hampshire Rep. Annie Kuster felt "palpable" enthusiasm. And by week's end, Illinois Rep. Jan Schakowsky's team had 400 volunteers ready to "get on the bus" to campaign for Democrats in neighboring Michigan and Wisconsin.

"The theory of the case is proving true: There's a renewed enthusiasm within the Democratic Party for our candidate at the top of the ticket," said Rep. Angie Craig of Minnesota, who had been among Democrats calling for President Joe Biden to step aside.

Weeks of despair among Democratic lawmakers that Biden would not only lose the White House but take congressional candidates down with him disappeared in a blink. The 2024 campaign's static inertia was transforming into kinetic political energy after Harris took hold of the party, stunned the establishment and shook up the race against Republican Donald Trump.

Women, young people and voters of color started suddenly flocking to the Democratic campaigns. The congressional campaign committees for the House and Senate Democrats reported record-setting \$1 million days for online donations, among the highest in history. Lawmakers said

people showed up without prompting, asking what they could do to help.

The turnaround, just over 100 days from the election, revives the party's hope of winning back the House and fighting to hold its Senate majority. Rather than simply being seen as a last line of defense against Trump and the Project 2025 agenda, the potential for broader Democratic wins is coming into view, despite Republican assertions that the Harris boost is a blip that won't prove lasting.

Harris' rise quickly quelled, for now, the painful party revolt that had thrown Democrats into weeks of anguished anxiety.

"We're sort of right on the cusp of both existential dread and excitement for making history," said freshman Rep. Melanie Stansbury of New Mexico.

The House in particular has been reeling from the chaotic turn of events. The party angst over Biden's ability to lead the ticket spilled into the open after his disastrous debate performance called into question his age, 81, and his ability to serve another term.

Lloyd Doggett of Texas, the first Democratic lawmaker to call for Biden to withdraw from the race, said, "I think we were on a path to lose this election, and now we have a fighting chance to win it."

For some, the energy and enthusiasm they are witnessing reminds them of 2008, when a young U.S. senator, Barack Obama, powered his longshot White House bid with a new coalition of Democrats, fueled partly by young millennials.

Horsford, who was among Obama's earliest backers in Nevada, remembers the throngs of young people

who worked as part of a multiracial, multigenerational coalition. And that's what he sees now "coming out of the woodwork" to help Harris.

"It's actually more than a campaign now," Horsford said. "It's a movement."

Both the House and Senate are fiercely contested this election year, with razor-tight majorities heading into November, which means just a single seat can determine which party holds power.

In the House, some 40 seats are considered competitive, and any one of them could make or break the outcome, determining whether Republicans keep their slim majority or Democrats wrest control.

The Senate is tougher for Democrats, a candidate-versus-candidate contest less beholden to the top of the ticket. Senate Democrats hold the majority by a single seat, and among the most endangered incumbents, Montana's Sen. Jon Tester has yet to back Harris. A 50-50 Senate would give power to the party in the White House because the vice president can cast tie-breaking votes.

Republicans handling the House and Senate races are racing to redefine the presidential matchup with Trump, largely by defining Harris on their own terms.

"We have seen a night-and-day difference in every aspect of my campaign," said Democratic Rep. Pat Ryan of New York, who was

among some three dozen congressional Democrats who publicly called on Biden to pass the torch.

Fundraising, grassroots support and volunteer energy all soared "through the roof" since the hand-off to Harris, he said. "This is really electrifying our campaign."

But in another competitive New York district, Republican Rep. Nick LaLota predicted when "the dust settles, my constituents will understand that life would be even worse under a Harris administration."

To be sure, not all Democrats in Congress wanted to see Biden end his campaign for a second term.

Democratic Rep. Maxine Waters, a senior member of the Congressional Black Caucus, said she was disturbed by the calls for Biden to step aside after all she said he has done as president.

In particular, some law-

makers worried that Harris would be thrust into the fray without adequate party support or Speaker Emerita Nancy Pelosi and other prominent Democrats initially called for an open primary if Biden were to be replaced.

But once Biden decided it was "in the best interest of my party and the country" to end his bid, even some of those most resistant to the change welcomed the outcome.

Waters said there was such an outpouring of interest in Harris from her Los Angeles-area district that she was rushing home Friday to throw an organizing event. "We're going to be jamming," she said.

"He endorsed a woman — a woman of color — and it drew everybody into a new kind of possibility that could happen in this country," she said.

Mural

Continued from Page A1

The remainder of the mural details following events like the burning of Fort Granville to the Civil War and so on.

"We wanted to link it back to the cemetery," Kirkland said.

Those historical figures buried within Old Town Cemetery are prominently featured in the mural.

Kirkland accepted the "daunting" task of telling the stories of those who rest peacefully on the grounds when those improving the cemetery reached out to her due to her father Dwight Kirkland's past work in creating local murals.

Kirkland is a rising senior studying art education at Kutztown University. She said that this mural is her first outdoor piece.

"I thought it was a stable way to stay in the field," Kirkland said of her artwork for the cemetery restoration project.

Kirkland has painted three murals in her career and uses acrylic paints and paintbrushes for her current work.

Kirkland said that when she works at the cemetery, "there is always a crowd."

Locals are brimming with excitement to take in the brush strokes that remind them of their roots.

"It was a group effort on the design," Kirkland said.

Members of this group, namely, the historical society, took on the cost of materials from Sherwin Williams.

"It keeps me sane,"

Kirkland said. She plans to complete the project before she returns to college in August or at least in time for the Goose Day celebration.

state college area
CONNECTOR

Open House Public Meeting Notice

State College Area Connector Project

The purpose of the State College Area Connector Project is to advance US 322 new location corridor recommendations outlined in the Planning and Environmental Linkages (PEL) with preliminary engineering and detailed environmental field investigations. The new studies will be conducted in accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). Investigations are underway and include conducting detailed field data collection and traffic analysis, refining the PEL Corridors into engineered alignment specific alternatives, and assessing potential effects of the refined alternatives. The Project is being conducted by PennDOT in cooperation with the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA).

PennDOT is hosting an Open House Public Meeting on August 15 from 4 P.M. to 8 P.M. to provide refined alternative alignments, updated traffic and environmental information, and solicit public comment. The Open House Public Meeting will be held at Mount Nittany Middle School, 656 Brandywine Drive, State College, PA. Meeting materials will be available on the project website beginning on August 12, 2024, at www.PennDOT.gov/SCAC.

The Open House Public Meeting will provide an opportunity for participants to sign in, tour meeting exhibits, meet with the study team to ask questions and make comments. Written comments from the public regarding the State College Area Connector Project may be submitted by mail to PennDOT District 2-0, Attention: Eric Murnyack, P.E., or Leigh Woolridge, P.E., 70 PennDOT Drive, Clearfield, PA 16830. Comments may also be submitted by email to emurnyack@pa.gov or lwoolridge@pa.gov or online via the study webpage. All comments on the public meeting materials must be received by August 30, 2024.

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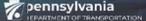
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Challenge seeks to keep RFK from appearing on Pa. ballots

BY MARK SCOLFORSO
The Associated Press

HARRISBURG — A legal challenge filed Thursday seeks to have third-party presidential candidate Robert F. Kennedy Jr. kept off Pennsylvania's fall ballot, an effort with ramifications for the hotly contested swing-state battle between Republican Donald Trump and Democrat Kamala Harris.

The petition argues the nominating papers filed by Kennedy and his running mate "demonstrate, at best, a fundamental disregard" of state law and the process by which signatures are gathered.

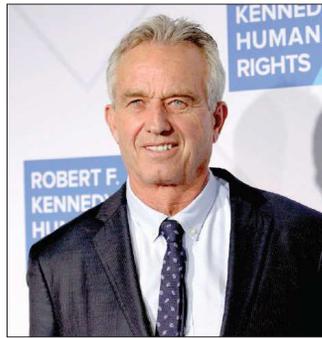
It claims Kennedy's paperwork includes "numerous illegible signatures and defects" and that documents are torn, taped over and contain "handwriting patterns and corrections suggestive that the indicated voters did not sign those sheets."

Kennedy faces legal challenges over ballot access in several states.

Kennedy campaign lawyer Larry Otter said he was filed in Pennsylvania on Thursday to the nominating papers for the Party for Socialism and Liberation presidential candidate Claudia De la Cruz, and an effort was filed seeking to have Constitution Party presidential candidate James N. Clymer kept of the state's ballot as well.

One challenge to De la Cruz, her running mate and her party's electors asks Commonwealth Court to invalidate the nomination papers, arguing that there are seven electors who "failed to disaffiliate" from the Democratic Party, a flaw in the paperwork the objectors say should make them ineligible.

A second challenge also raised that argument as well as claims there are



AP file photo

In this Dec. 12, 2019 photo, Robert F. Kennedy Jr. attends the Robert F. Kennedy Human Rights Riple of Hope Awards at the New York Hilton Midtown in New York.

three months away. In 2016, Trump won Pennsylvania by 44,000 votes over Democrat Hillary Clinton, and four years later President Joe Biden beat Trump by 81,000 votes.

Two separate challenges were also filed in Pennsylvania on Thursday to the nominating papers for the Party for Socialism and Liberation presidential candidate Claudia De la Cruz, and an effort was filed seeking to have Constitution Party presidential candidate James N. Clymer kept of the state's ballot as well.

One challenge to De la Cruz, her running mate and her party's electors asks Commonwealth Court to invalidate the nomination papers, arguing that there are seven electors who "failed to disaffiliate" from the Democratic Party, a flaw in the paperwork the objectors say should make them ineligible.

A second challenge also raised that argument as well as claims there are

ineligible signatures and other defects that make the nomination papers "fatally defective" and that the party did not submit a sufficient number of qualifying signatures.

Del la Cruz campaign Pennsylvania chairperson Stephanie Pavlick said in an emailed statement that hundreds of people spent months collecting nominal signatures, and the campaign "will be defending the validity of everything we submitted."

Pavlick said Democrats "are afraid of competing with a socialist campaign that isn't afraid to call for radical solutions to the dire crises facing working people."

The challenge to Clymer potentially appearing on the ballot claims he and his running mate should be disqualified because of an alleged failure to include required candidate affidavits. Messages seeking comment were left Thursday for party chairman Bob Goodrich.

Volunteers

Continued from Page A1

The operation has moved several times to accommodate its expansion. After outgrowing the parish house, it found a temporary home in the Lewistown Community Center at Rec Park. The location proved ideal because of its handicap accessibility and open floor plan.

"When you see grandparents coming in walkers or wheelchairs to pick up toys, it gives you a glimpse into the realities of the needy here," Harwood said. "There are lots of grandparents and great-grandparents raising children in Mifflin County."

Unlike some other charitable programs, Toys for Tots serves children up to age 18, focusing exclusively on toys and books. They even make exceptions for special needs individuals over 18 with the mental age of a young child. "We tell families to come and pick out gifts appropriate for the person they're raising," Harwood said.

The program's success hinges on community involvement. Local businesses play a crucial role by hosting collection boxes where customers can donate new, unwrapped toys.

"We need businesses to receive boxes during October and November," Harwood said. "Places where customers come in regularly, like dollar stores, often see great generosity."

Volunteers form the backbone of the operation. They sort donations, transforming the distribution site into a temporary toy store with sections for different age groups and toy types. On distribution day, helpers guide families through the selection process and assist with carrying toys to vehicles.

"We need businesses to receive boxes during October and November. Places where customers come in regularly, like dollar stores, often see great generosity."

Father John Hardwood

St. Mark's Episcopal Church, Lewistown

The entire process requires intense coordination. "There's a lot of intensive work for one week in December," Harwood said, "but there's also generous, hard work to be done beginning in the fall."

Weller, who coordinates the larger Centre County Toys for Tots campaign, explains how Mifflin County's program began as an extension of Centre County's efforts.

"When our Centre County campaign received additional support from the Marine Toys for Tots Foundation about five years ago, with Father Harwood's help, we were able to begin supporting needy families in Mifflin County," he said. "The program's reach continues to grow. Harwood notes an increase in requests from neighboring Juniata County, highlighting the need for expanded services in the region. While they currently focus on Mifflin County residents, Harwood hopes to help establish a separate program for Juniata County in the future."

Eligibility for the program aligns with other local assistance efforts. "We use the same income level cut-off as Mother Hubbard's Cupboard," Harwood explains, referring to the local food bank. The process remains self-declared without requiring formal documentation of need.

As the program grows, new challenges emerge. Finding a permanent, suitable location for toy distribution tops the list of concerns. "Last year was heaven on earth because it's the best building ever," Harwood says of

the Lewistown Community Center. "But I think the city council has put the rec building up for sale, so we may need to find a new building."

Despite these hurdles, Harwood remains optimistic. "I'm too old to be worried or discouraged," he said. "Things will work out. This is a generous community. Someone will step forward and say, 'Hey, I think we can help.'"

The program's impact extends beyond the toys themselves. For many families facing financial strain, Toys for Tots eases some of the stress associated with holiday gift-giving. "There are lots of people at this time of year," Harwood said. "We don't want to make Christmas shopping for kids an additional stressor."

Looking ahead, the program aims to increase its visibility and volunteer base in Mifflin County. Weller emphasizes the need for more collection points and volunteers to support the growing demand.

"For any business, church, or school wanting to become a collection point, we can provide a collection box, posters, and other support materials," Weller said. He encourages interested parties to contact St. Mark's Episcopal Church to coordinate efforts.

For those interested in volunteering or becoming a collection point, contact Harwood at St. Mark's Episcopal Church in Lewistown at (814) 571-0687 or jtharwood@comcast.net. Additional information can be found at <http://lemon-pa.toysfortots.org>.

Biden, Harris to make joint trip

To be first since Biden dropped out

WASHINGTON (AP) — President Joe Biden and Vice President Kamala Harris next week will make their first trip together since Biden ended his candidacy and Harris took over as the Democratic standard-bearer.

The White House announced Friday morning that Biden and Harris will head to Maryland on Aug. 15 for an official, non-campaign event to "discuss the progress they are making to lower costs for the American people." They did not disclose the location or more specifics.

Biden and Harris have appeared briefly together since the president ended his reelection bid on July 21, including an excursion to Joint Base Andrews last week to welcome home U.S. citizens who were wrongfully detained in Russia. They also participated in a Situation Room meeting together earlier this week to discuss the situation in the Middle East and had lunch together last week.

Taking additional steps to lower costs is one area Biden wants to focus on in the final months of his presidency. In repeated calls with White House chief of staff Jeff Zients shortly after ending his reelection campaign, Biden stressed that he wanted to continue work on reducing health care and housing costs and implementing his landmark bills such as the infrastructure law, while highlighting the importance of protecting U.S. democracy.

state college area
CONNECTOR

Open House Public Meeting Notice State College Area Connector Project

The purpose of the State College Area Connector Project is to advance US 322 new location corridor recommendations outlined in the Planning and Environmental Linkages (PEL) with preliminary engineering and detailed environmental field investigations. The new studies will be conducted in accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). Investigations are underway and include conducting detailed field data collection and traffic analysis, refining the PEL Corridors into engineered alignment specific alternatives, and assessing potential effects of the refined alternatives. The Project is being conducted by PennDOT in cooperation with the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA).

PennDOT is hosting an Open House Public Meeting on August 15 from 4 P.M. to 8 P.M. to provide refined alternative alignments, updated traffic and environmental information, and solicit public comment. The Open House Public Meeting will be held at Mount Nittany Middle School, 656 Brandywine Drive, State College, PA. Meeting materials will be available on the project website beginning on August 12, 2024, at www.PennDOT.gov/SCAC.

The Open House Public Meeting will provide an opportunity for participants to sign in, tour meeting exhibits, meet with the study team to ask questions and make comments. Written comments from the public regarding the State College Area Connector Project may be submitted by mail to PennDOT District 2-0, Attention: Eric Murnyack, P.E., or Leigh Woolridge, P.E., 70 PennDOT Drive, Clearfield, PA 16830. Comments may also be submitted by email to emurnyack@pa.gov or lwoolridge@pa.gov or online via the study webpage. All comments on the public meeting materials must be received by August 30, 2024.

PennDOT makes every reasonable effort to accommodate the needs of the public. If other accommodations are needed or you have any general questions or concerns regarding the State Area College Connector Project or the public meeting, please contact Eric Murnyack, Project Manager, at emurnyack@pa.gov. Additional information about the State College Area Connector Project may be found online at www.PennDOT.gov/SCAC.

The Open House Public Meeting materials and exhibits will be presented in English. If you need accommodations or an interpreter, or have a disability or need assistance, special arrangements can be made to accommodate most needs. **Please call PennDOT's District 2-0 Public Information Office at (814) 765-0598 by August 6 for assistance.** Please be aware that advance notice is requested as some accommodations may require additional time.

Pursuant to Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, PennDOT does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, gender, age, or disability. If you believe that you have been denied the benefits of, or participation in a PennDOT program or activity, you may contact the PennDOT, Bureau of Equal Opportunity, DBE/Title VI Division at (717) 787-5891.

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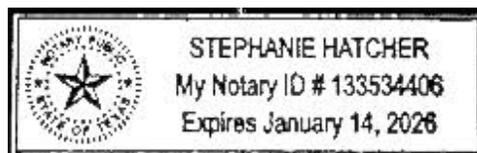
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Open House Public Meeting Notice

State College Area Connector Project

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APPENDIX I – Press Release



Pennsylvania
Department of Transportation

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
July 24, 2024

MEDIA CONTACT: Timothy Nebgen, tnebgen@pa.gov or 814-765-0598

Notice of Intent for State College Area Connector Published
Public scoping meeting scheduled for August 15

Clearfield, PA – The Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) in coordination with the Pennsylvania Department of Transportation (PennDOT) announced the publication of a Notice of Intent to Prepare an Environmental Impact Statement for the proposed State College Area Connector Project. The document is available for public review online at the [Federal Register](#), the daily journal of the United States Government, and at www.PennDOT.pa.gov/SCAC.

PennDOT also announced that a public scoping meeting is scheduled for Thursday, August 15, at the Mt. Nittany Middle School located at 656 Brandywine Drive in State College. Members of the design team will be at the school from 4:00 PM to 8:00 PM to field questions on the proposed project from the general public. Additionally, PennDOT will be providing property owners within the project area a letter invitation allowing them early access (12 PM to 3 PM) to the same public meeting materials.

The venue for this meeting is accessible to persons with disabilities. Anyone requiring special assistance or seeking additional information regarding the meeting may email Eric Murnyack at emurnyack@pa.gov before August 15.

Motorists can check conditions on major roadways by visiting www.511PA.com. 511PA, which is free and available 24 hours a day, provides traffic delay warnings, weather forecasts, traffic speed information and access to more than 1,000 traffic cameras. 511PA is also available through a smartphone application for iPhone and Android devices, by calling 5-1-1, or by [following regional X alerts](#).

Subscribe to PennDOT news in Cameron, Centre, Clearfield, Clinton, Elk, Juniata, McKean, Mifflin, and Potter counties at www.penndot.gov/District2.

Information about infrastructure in District 2, including completed work and significant projects, is available at www.penndot.pa.gov/D2Results. Find PennDOT's planned and active construction projects at www.projects.penndot.gov.

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###

APPENDIX J – Media Coverage

1. WPSU article on 7/26/24
2. StateCollege.com article on 7/26/24
3. WTAJ article on 7/26/24
4. Centre Daily Times 7/26/24
5. Centre County Gazette article on 8/1/24
6. WJAC news report and article 8/15/24
7. WTAJ Altoona article 8/15/24
8. WPSU article on 08/16/24
9. abc23 news report on 8/16/24

PennDOT to offer more detailed look at State College Area Connector options at public meeting

WPSU | By [Anne Danahy](#)

Published July 26, 2024 at 11:45 AM EDT



PennDOT

An overview of the three options under consideration for the State College Area Connector project in Centre County are shown in this file image. The new 8-mile section of U.S. Route 322 will run between Potters Mills Gap and Boalsburg, Harris Township. The connector between U.S. Route 322 and state Route 45 is no longer being considered as part of the project. New, more detailed images and information about the options will be available at a public meeting Aug. 15, 2024.

PennDOT will hold a public meeting Aug. 15 about plans for the U.S. Route 322 [State College Area Connector](#) project, giving the public a chance to see street-level details

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Eric Murnyack, PennDOT assistant district executive for design in District 2, said it's been almost two years since the last public meeting about the State College Area Connector project. Since then, PennDOT has been meeting with landowners, verifying what is at the sites and refining the options being considered.

"Now it's going to be at the point where you can see what the roadway is going to look like and how that impacts the surrounding properties throughout the corridors," Murnyack said.

The project involves overhauling the section of U.S. Route 322 between Potters Mills Gap and Boalsburg. PennDOT had already narrowed the project down to three choices.

"From here on out, the goal is to work from those three options down to one preferred alternative," Murnyack said.

That's expected to happen by the end of this year or early 2025.

SCHEDULE MILESTONES



PennDOT

An overview of the schedule for picking an option and reviewing the State College Area Connector Project, starting with a public open house in summer 2024.

Tags

Local News



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PennDOT Sets Next Public Meeting for State College Area Connector Project



The U.S. 322 transition to Mount Nittany Expressway at Boalsburg. Photo courtesy PennDOT

By [Geoff Rushton](#) - July 26, 2024

[Local News](#)

PennDOT has moved to the next phase for the planned State College Area Connector and will hold its first public meeting on the project since 2022 in August.

The department and the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) published on Wednesday a [Notice of Intent to Prepare an Environmental Impact Statement](#). The

notice initiates the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) phase of project development, which includes preliminary engineering and environmental studies.

An open house “scoping” meeting will be held from 4 to 8 p.m. on Aug. 15 at Mount Nittany Middle School, PennDOT wrote in a news release in Thursday. Attendees will have an opportunity to get an up-close look at the “refined alternatives,” or the proposed routes under consideration, as well as review environmental and traffic information, discuss the alternatives with the project team and provide input and comment.

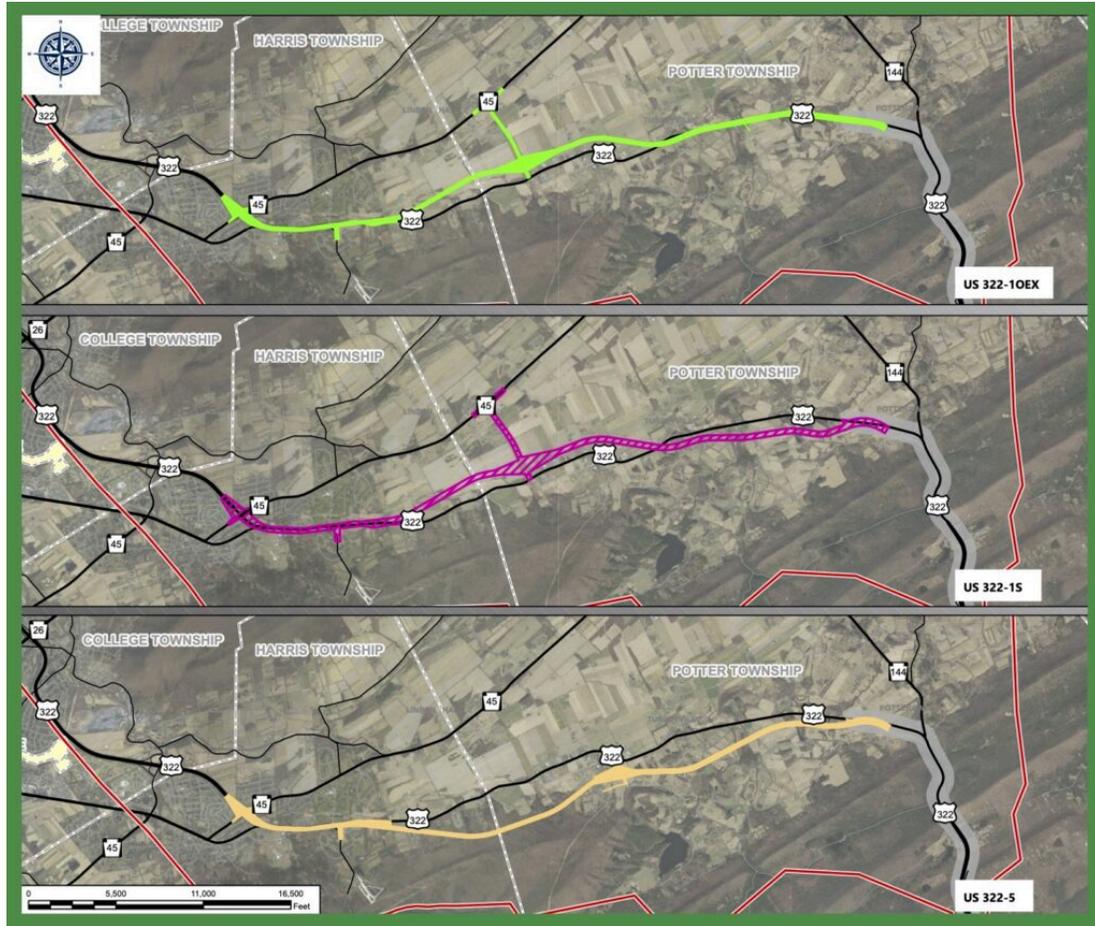
A word from our Ad partners

Property owners within the project area will receive a written invitation and early access between noon and 3 p.m. to view the meeting materials.

The connector project aims to construct an approximately 8-mile, four-lane limited access road connecting U.S. 322 at Potters Mills and the Mount Nittany Expressway near Boalsburg, addressing safety and congestion concerns and improving traffic flow into the State College area and Interstates 80 and 99.

ADVERTISING

PennDOT completed the first phase of project development in August 2023 with publication of the **final Planning and Environmental Linkages (PEL) report** for the SCAC study, which identified three “build alternatives” to move forward. Conducted with the FHWA, the study evaluated existing and projected transportation needs within a 70-square-mile area in the U.S. Route 322, state Route 45 and state route 144 corridor.



The potential alignment options for the State College Area Connector project. Image via PennDOT

Each of the three identified options – US 322-10EX, US 322-1S and US 322-5 – would connect U.S. 322 at the Mt. Nittany Expressway in Boalsburg and U.S. 322 at Potters Mills Gap, where a four-lane section of highway was completed in 2021. The link would essentially complete a four-lane highway from Harrisburg to State College and beyond.

All three would have service roads connecting to the local road network. Each is projected to divert nearly 53% of the total traffic and 73% of truck traffic from the local road network. Estimated costs range from \$432 million and \$517 million.

In January, PennDOT announced it was [removing a connection to Route 45](#) included in two of the three options. The connection [raised worries](#) about safety issues, pollution, damage to residential areas and Route 45 being ill-equipped to handle increased traffic.

Instead, PennDOT is allocating up to \$3 million to separately study and address safety concerns on Route 45 in Harris and Potter identified during the PEL study.

WHAT'S NEXT

Following the open house meeting in August, the project team will address comments and develop additional project refinements, according to PennDOT's spring [SCAC newsletter](#).

Refined alignments and a draft recommended preferred alignment will be presented at a second public meeting, tentatively expected to take place in early 2025. A public hearing will then be held after the release of the Draft Environmental Impact Statement for public and agency review.

The final Environmental Impact Statement and Record of Decision are anticipated in June 2026.

Pending approval by the FHWA, the project will then move into the final engineering design phase. That will be followed by right-of-way acquisition and, finally, construction, which is not expected to begin until 2030 and will take about five years to complete.

A word from our Ad partners



LOCAL NEWS

PennDOT: Next meeting for State College connector project set

by: [Tim Durkin](#)

Posted: Jul 26, 2024 / 05:49 PM EDT
Updated: Jul 26, 2024 / 05:49 PM EDT

SHARE    

STATE COLLEGE, Pa. (WTBJ) – PennDOT is taking the next step in the [State College Area Connector project](#) by hosting a public meeting in August.

The meeting will be on Aug. 15, from 4-8 p.m. at the Mt. Nittany Middle School.

The State College Area Connector project aims to connect the Mt. Nittany Expressway to Route 322 in Potters Mills. It was created for a couple of reasons, namely to “improve congestion” and “provide continuity.”



Events coming to Bryce Jordan Center to end 2024 >

PennDOT announced the publication of a Notice of Intent to prepare an environmental impact statement. Alongside this, it announced the date for its next public meeting regarding the project.

“We’re just encouraging everybody to come out and give us some input on the project,” Eric Murnyack, assistant district executive for PennDOT, said.

The meeting will detail the new maps and the cost of the project. The most recent publicly available estimation was between \$432 and \$517 million, but the numbers seem to have changed. When asked what the new cost is, Murnyack said that they’re still “working on refining estimates” and that the new number will have to wait until the meeting.

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Beyond the meeting, Murnyack said they hope to further refine the project down to one alignment by sometime next year, meaning there’s still a long road ahead before construction begins.

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STATE COLLEGE

Another public meeting for State College Area Connector project is planned. What to know

BY HALIE KINES
JULY 26, 2024 6:15 AM



An aerial photo of U.S. Route 322 running toward State College. ABBY DREY *Centre Daily Times*, file

The State College Area Connector is moving into the next step of the project with a public meeting scheduled for mid-August.

The Pennsylvania Department of Transportation and Federal Highway Administration on Wednesday announced the [Notice of Intent to Prepare an](#)

[Environmental Impact Statement](#) for the proposed project was published. The document is available online, www.PennDOT.pa.gov/SCAC, and includes background about the project and expected impacts identified during scoping activities.

TOP VIDEOS



During this next step in the process, the design team will develop the corridors that were identified in the Planning and Environmental Linkages Study into specific engineered alignments, a PennDOT spokesperson said.

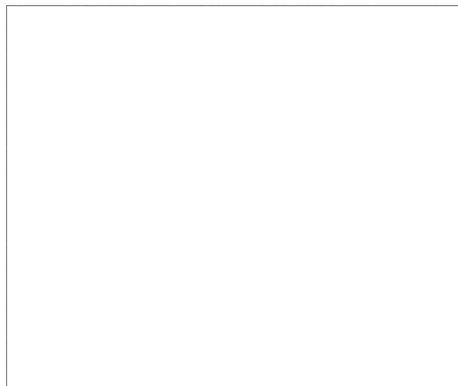
With that, PennDOT will host a scoping meeting from 4-8 p.m. Aug. 15 at Mount Nittany Middle School, 656 Brandywine Drive, State College. The public is invited to attend and the design team will be available to answer questions. Anyone who needs special assistance or additional information regarding the meeting can email Eric Murnyack at emurnyack@pa.gov before Aug. 15.

Property owners within the project area will receive a written invitation to a meeting earlier in the day to view the same materials, PennDOT said in a press release.

During the meeting, the refined engineering alignments and detailed environmental data will be presented for the first time.

The [PEL study was completed last August](#) and helped inform planning decisions, streamline the project delivery process, and served as a public platform to discuss and prioritize transportation issues, according to PennDOT.

Three corridors were identified in the final PEL Study report: US 322-1S, US 322-10EX and US 322-5. Main line construction would span about eight miles. The first two options would include a connection with state Route 45. The third option would run the project south of the existing highway. All would bring the project through the U.S. Route 322 corridor at a cost that ranges from \$432 million to \$517 million.



The goal of the SCAC project — which former Gov. Tom Wolf said in 2019 could cost about \$670 million — is to improve a 13-mile stretch of U.S. Route 322 from the Seven Mountains to State College. The project has been in the works for more than a decade.

The proposed schedule of the project shows the current phase, Preliminary Engineering/Environmental Studies (NEPA) will last until mid-2026. This phase ends with the selection of an alternative to advance into final design. That requires approval from the FHWA. Final engineering design is expected to take place between mid-2026 and the end of 2029.

Right-of-way acquisition will begin in 2029 through 2032. Construction is anticipated to begin in 2030 and end in 2035.

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Gastroparesis Awareness Month. Page 6



POW/MIA Veteran Tribute completed. Page 10



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AUGUST 1-7, 2024

Volume 16, Issue 31

PennDOT sets next public meeting for State College Area Connector project

By **GEOFF RUSHTON**
StateCollege.com

STATE COLLEGE — PennDOT moved to the next phase of the State College Area Connector project and in August will hold its first public meeting on the project since 2022.

The department and the Federal Highway Administration published on Wednesday, July 24, a Notice of Intent to Prepare an Environmental Impact Statement.

The notice initiates the National Environmental Policy Act phase of project development, which includes preliminary engineering and environmental studies.

An open house "scoping" meeting will be held from 4 to 8 p.m. on Thursday, Aug. 15, at Mount Nittany Middle School, PennDOT wrote in a news release.

Attendees will have the opportunity to get an up-close look at the "refined alternatives," or the proposed routes under consideration, as well as review environmental and traffic information, discuss the alternatives with the project team and provide input and comment.

Property owners within the project area will receive a written invitation and early access between noon and 3 p.m. to view the meeting materials.

The connector project aims to construct an approximately 8-mile, four-lane limited access road connecting U.S. 322 at Potters Mills and the Mount Nittany Expressway near Boalsburg, address safety and congestion concerns and improve traffic flow into the State College area and Interstates 80 and 99.

PennDOT, Page 3

PennDOT, from page 1

PennDOT completed the first phase of project development in August 2023 with publication of the final Planning and Environmental Linkages report for the SCAC study, which identified three “build alternatives” to move forward. Conducted with the FHWA, the study evaluated existing and projected transportation needs within a 70-square mile area in the U.S. Route 322, state Route 45 and state route 144 corridor.

Each of the three identified options — US 322-10EX, US 322-1S and US 322-5 — would connect U.S. 322 at the Mount Nittany Expressway in Boalsburg and U.S. 322 at Pottery Mills Gap, where a four-lane section of highway was completed in 2021. The link would essentially complete a four-lane highway from Harrisburg to State College and beyond.

All three options would have service roads connecting to the local road network. Each is projected to divert nearly 53% of the total traffic and 73% of truck traffic from the local road network. Estimated costs range from \$432 million to \$517 million.

In January, PennDOT announced it was removing a connection to Route 45 included

in two of the three options. The connection raised worries about safety issues, pollution, damage to residential areas and Route 45 being ill-equipped to handle increased traffic.

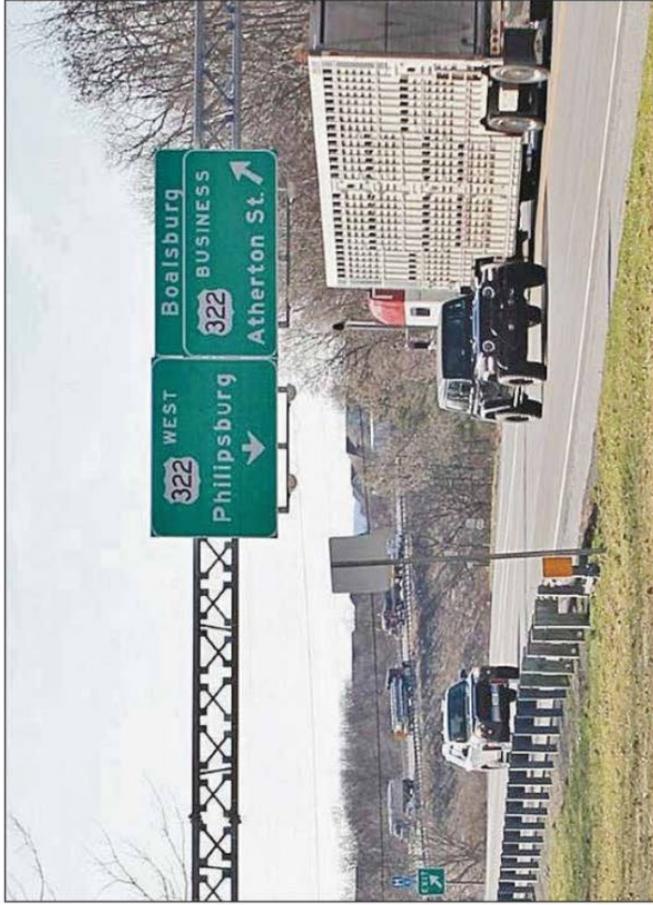
Instead, PennDOT is allocating up to \$3 million to separately study and address safety concerns on Route 45 in Harris and Potter townships identified during the PEL study.

Following the open house meeting in August, the project team will address commitments and develop additional project refinements, according to PennDOT’s spring SCAC newsletter.

Refined alignments and a draft recommended preferred alignment will be presented at a second public meeting, tentatively expected to take place in early 2025. A public hearing will then be held after the release of the Draft Environmental Impact Statement for public and agency review.

The final Environmental Impact Statement and Record of Decision are anticipated in June 2026.

Pending approval by the FHWA, the project will then move into the final engineering design phase. That will be followed by right of way acquisition and, finally, construction, which is not expected to begin until 2030 and will take about five years to complete.



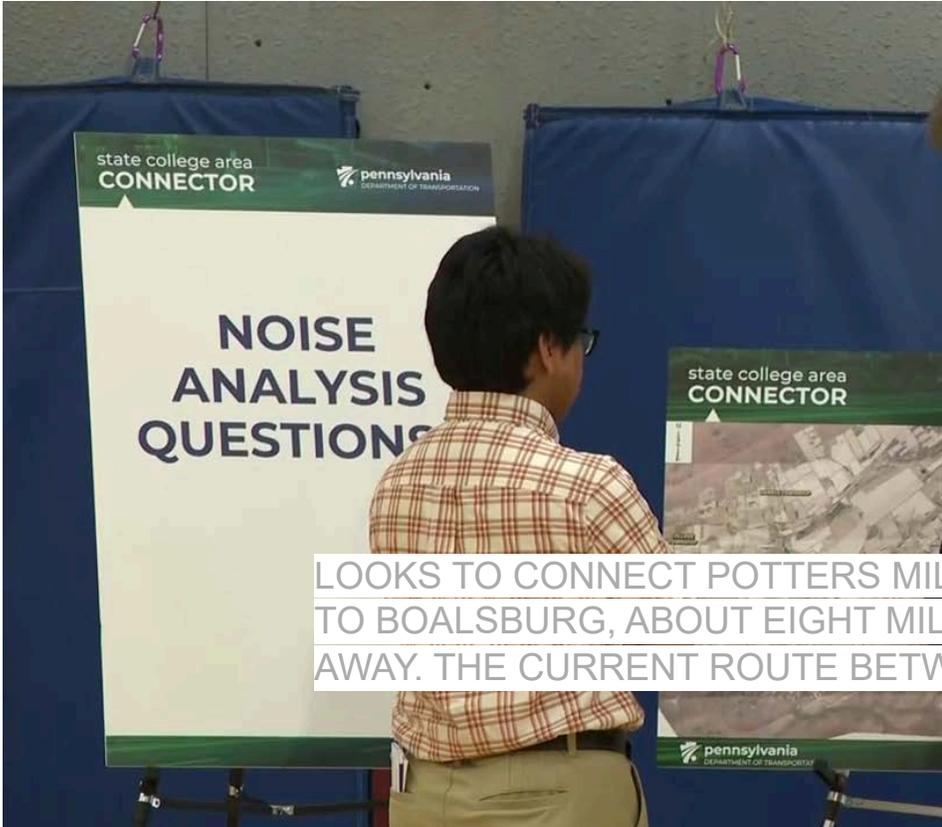
Courtesy of PennDOT

AN OPEN HOUSE “scoping” meeting about the State College Area Connector project will be held from 4 to 8 p.m. on Thursday, Aug. 15, at Mount Nittany Middle School.

ADVERTISEMENT

PennDOT to narrow down plans for State College Connector Project by

by WJAC staff
Thu, August 15th 2024 at 5:25 PM



LOOKS TO CONNECT POTTERS MIL
TO BOALSBURG, ABOUT EIGHT MIL
AWAY. THE CURRENT ROUTE BETW

State College Connector Project summer 2024 update

TOPICS: PENNDOT STATE COLLEGE CONNECTOR PROJECT TRAFFIC BOALSBURG POTTERS MILLS ROUTE 322 ENVIRO

CENTRE COUNTY, Pa (WJAC) — For the first time in about two years, PennDOT officials are out Connector Project.

The controversial highway project looks to connect Potters Mills to Boalsburg, which is about :

The current route between the two is Route 322, which sees a lot of traffic.

Locals have raised concerns about which pieces of land, like farms, would be impacted by the

Hello,



WTAJ Altoona

Residents continue to raise concerns over State College Area Connector project

Tim Durkin

Thu, August 15, 2024 at 9:15 PM EDT · 2 min read



✕

✕

Add to cart



Hello,



STATE COLLEGE, Pa. (WTAJ) – PennDOT is asking for comments on its newest update to the State College Area Connector project, but not all of them have been positive.

The project has drawn controversy since its inception, with several revisions along the way, including the [removal of Rt. 45](#) from it entirely. PennDOT says that the connector will help with congestion, but some residents are asking at what cost.



Fohringer said.

[Property dispute puts Elk County 9-1-1 tower on hold](#)

Since the last public meeting in 2022, PennDOT says it has discussed the potential impact with farmers, engineered three alternative routes and went out into the field to verify resources. The public meeting on Aug. 15 was meant to show where the project is heading, along with showing updated maps and the new estimated \$500-700 million price tag.

According to PennDOT Assistant District Executive Eric Murnyack, public comment has shaped the project.

“We want to hear people’s feedback,” Murnyack said. “We want to know what they thought we did right and what they thought we did wrong.”

While some residents like Fohringer are concerned for their homes, others have been looking more at the environmental impact – and one is not happy with what they see.

“I don’t think we need more highways in this world, especially with how we know that they are inefficient, they create more emissions, more VMT, and they also are very problematic for health needs of the residents who live nearby,” G4, a Penn State graduate student attending the meeting, said.

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PennDOT encourages everyone to [submit their comments](#) in person or online by Aug. 30. Murnyack says the next step in the project will be determining the final alignment which he hopes will come by the end of the year.

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Detailed PennDOT maps show impact of Route 322 connector options on properties

WPSU | By [Anne Danahy](#)

Published August 16, 2024 at 10:04 AM EDT



Anne Danahy / WPSU

Detailed maps and information about the three options PennDOT is reviewing for the U.S. Route 322 State College Area Connector project were on display for the public to review and ask questions about Thursday, Aug. 15, 2024, at the Mount Nittany Middle School, in State College.

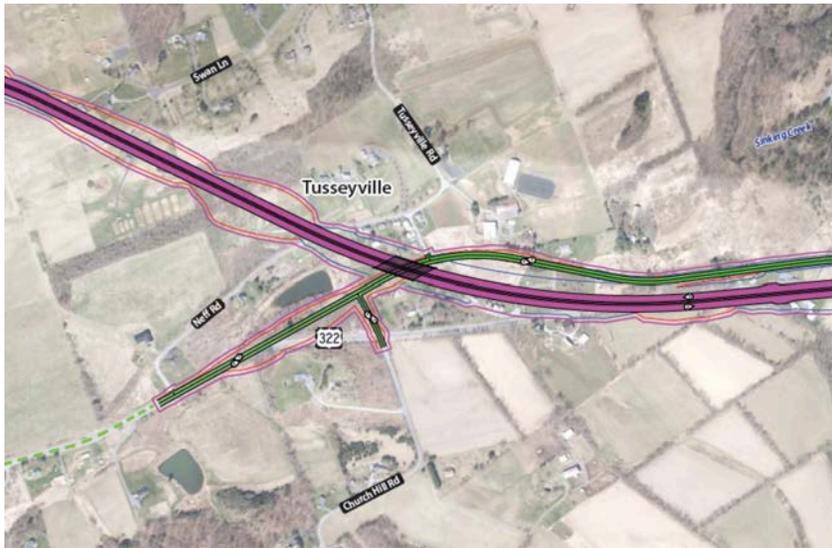
Centre County residents got to see [detailed maps of the State College Area Connector Project alternatives](#) during an open house Thursday, one step in the process for PennDOT to narrow down the options for overhauling U.S. Route 322 in Potter and Harris townships.

Karen Schuckman and her husband live in Tusseyville, in Potter Township, where some properties would be impacted directly by one of the options being considered. She said there's a lot of natural beauty in the area.

WPSU 1: News & Classical
Morning Edition

“Primarily loss of that quality of life and that neighborhood there,” Schuckman said of their concerns, along with noise. "We have a lot of natural peace and tranquility, right? I guess that’s a concern for everybody."

Schuckman and her husband were among the people to turn out to the open house at the Mount Nittany Middle School to get more details.



PennDOT SCAC Screenshot

A close-up of the North Alignment option being considered for the State College Area Connector Project.

Lisa Berkey, a resident of Harris Township, has environmental concerns, including how the new road could impact wetlands and forest lands.

“However, on the other hand, we think it’s really important that they build the road because it’s quite a safety concern," Berkey said.

PennDOT is looking at three options for the U.S. Route 322 project in Potter and Harris townships. All of them would have an impact on some homes and farmland in the area.



A close-up on the South Alignment option (in blue) being considered for the State College Area Connector Project.

Dave Koll, who lives in Linden Hall, in Harris Township, said he's been driving on the road since he was 16 – close to 50 years.

He said he won't be directly impacted by the project, but he wants access to the new road to be limited.

"Because wherever they put an intersection, that's where you see development," Koll said. "So, if we want to protect our farmlands, we have to keep the access to these limited access highways to the minimum."



PennDOT SCAC Screenshot

A close-up of the Central Alignment option (in yellow) being considered for the State College Area Connector Project.

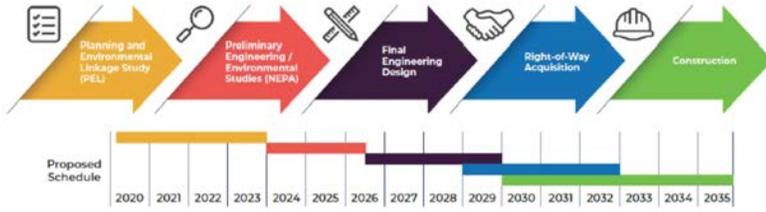
PennDOT's goal is to have one preferred option by early next year.

Eric Murnyack, PennDOT assistant district executive for design in District 2, said then the state will need to get what's known as the record of decision on the project from the federal government. That will take about two years.

"After that is when we can start working on the right-of-way plans and phases of the project," he said. "So, a little bit over two years from now is when that's all going to start happening."

Current estimates for the project are \$500 million to \$700 million. You can view [detailed maps and submit comments](#) on the project until Aug. 30. (To see the maps on the

PennDOT website, scroll down and click on "[North Alignment](#)," "[Central Alignment](#)" and "[South Alignment](#)," or click on them here.)



PennDOT

PennDOT's proposed schedule for the State College Area Connector Project.

Tags

[Local News](#)



Anne Danahy

Anne Danahy has been a reporter at WPSU since fall 2017. Before crossing over to radio, she was a reporter at the Centre Daily Times in State College, Pennsylvania, and she worked in communications at Penn State. She is married with cats.

[See stories by Anne Danahy](#)

Latest News From WPSU



State College Regional Airport announces more flights to Philadelphia, Chicago and Washington Dulles

17 hours ago



Some of Trump's 'fake' Pennsylvania electors from 2020 are back again

August 19, 2024

WPSU 1: News & Classical
Morning Edition



State College Area Connector Project Update

📅 August 16, 2024 ⌚ 11:03 am

ANSWER ANY QUESTIONS AND LISTEN
TO FEEDBACK THAT VISITORS HAD
FOR THE MOST PART EVERYBODY IS

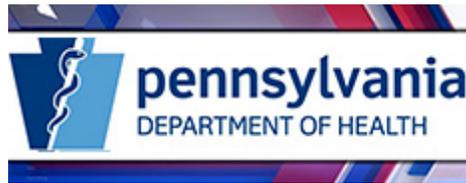
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For first time in about two years — PennDOT officials were out in public Thursday with plans for the State College Area Connector Project. The controversial highway project looks to connect Potters Mills to Boalsburg about 8 miles away. The current route between the two is 322, which sees a lot of traffic.

Locals have raised concerns about which pieces of land, like farms, would be impacted by the project. An Open House was held in Centre County, with three possible alignments that were displayed — and experts were available to answer questions and listen to feedback.

See video for comments from Eric Murnyack, Assistant District Executive for Design, PennDOT District 2.

Officials say they're hopeful to have the project narrowed down to one alignment by early next year. This followed by a couple years of environmental permitting. The construction phase itself is not expected to begin until around 2030.



APPENDIX K – Other Notification Efforts

1. Centre Region Council of Governments Website Post on 7/24/24
2. Centre County Metropolitan Planning Organization X post 7/29/24
3. Potter Township Website Post
4. Harris Township Website Post



CENTRE REGION COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS

CENTRE COUNTY, PENNSYLVANIA

State College Area Connector Project (Routes 322/144/45) Updates

July 24, 2024

Notice of Intent for State College Area Connector Published

Public scoping meeting scheduled for August 15

Clearfield, PA –The Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), in coordination with the Pennsylvania Department of Transportation (PennDOT), announced the publication of a Notice of Intent to Prepare an Environmental Impact Statement for the proposed State College Area Connector Project. The document is available for public review online at the [Federal Register](#), the daily journal of the United States Government, and at www.PennDOT.pa.gov/SCAC.

PennDOT also announced a public scoping meeting scheduled for Thursday, August 15, at the Mt. Nittany Middle School, 656 Brandywine Drive in State College. The design team will be at the school from 4:00 PM to 8:00 PM to field questions from the public on the proposed project. Additionally, PennDOT will provide property owners within the project area a written invitation allowing them early access between noon and 3:00 PM to view the same materials.

The venue for this meeting is accessible to persons with disabilities. Anyone requiring special assistance or seeking additional information regarding the meeting may email Eric Murnyack at emurnyack@pa.gov before August 15.



Centre County Metropolitan Planning Organization · Follow



July 29 at 7:39 AM · 🌐

Notice of Intent for State College Area Connector Published
Public scoping meeting scheduled for August 15

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PENNDOT.PA.GOV

State College Area Connector

The Pennsylvania Department of Transportation (PennDOT), in cooperation with the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), proposes construction of an approximately 8-mile four-lane limited access facility connecting the...



1 share



Like



Comment



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POTTER TOWNSHIP

Centre County, Pennsylvania

Office Hours: Aug 12 thru 14th (only open 2-5 pm), Closed Aug 30th and Sept 2nd – Labor Day
 Meeting agenda items must be submitted to secretary@pottertownship.org no later than deadline below to accommodate posting as required by law. No exceptions

- Board of Supervisors - 3:00 pm the Thursday before the scheduled meeting
- Planning Commission - 3:00 pm the Friday before the scheduled meeting
- Parks and Recreation - 3:00 pm the Thursday before the scheduled meeting

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Notice of Intent for State College Area Connector Published

August 8, 2024 | [State College Area Connector](#)

NEWS & INFORMATION

Parks & Rec Fall Events 2024

August 15, 2024

Proposed Ordinance: 03 of 2024

August 8, 2024

Proposed Ordinance: 04 of 2024

August 8, 2024

Public Hearing: September 3, 2024 7pm

August 8, 2024

[Notice of Intent for State College Area Connector Published](#)

August 8, 2024

MARK YOUR CALENDAR



Open House Public Meeting



**Thursday, August 15, 2024
from 4 P.M. to 8 P.M.**



Mount Nittany Middle School
656 Brandywine Drive
State College, PA

Meeting materials will be available on the project website beginning on August 12, 2024 at www.PennDOT.gov/SCAC

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

July 24, 2024

MEDIA CONTACT: Timothy Nebgen, tnebgen@pa.gov or 814-765-0598

Notice of Intent for State College Area Connector Published

Public scoping meeting scheduled for August 15

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[Click for full calendar page.](#)

Tuesday, August 20
7:00pm Tri-Municipal P
Thursday, August 22
7:00pm Zoning Hearing
Tuesday, September 3
7:00pm Board of Supen
Monday, September 9
7:00pm Parks & Recrea
Tuesday, September 10
7:00pm Planning Comr
Wednesday, September 11

PennDOT also announced that a public scoping meeting is scheduled for Thursday, August 15, at the Mt. Nittany Middle School located at 656 Brandywine Drive in State College. Members of the design team will be at the school from 4:00 PM to 8:00 PM to field questions on the proposed project from the general public. Additionally, PennDOT will be providing property owners within the project area a letter invitation allowing them early access (12 PM to 3 PM) to the same public meeting materials.

The venue for this meeting is accessible to persons with disabilities. Anyone requiring special assistance or seeking additional information regarding the meeting may email Eric Murnyack at emurnyack@pa.gov before August 15.

Motorists can check conditions on major roadways by visiting www.511PA.com. 511PA, which is free and available 24 hours a day, provides traffic delay warnings, weather forecasts, traffic speed information and access to more than 1,000 traffic cameras. 511PA is also available through a smartphone application for iPhone and Android devices, by calling 5-1-1, or by [following regional X alerts](#).

RICH IN HISTORY



Subscribe to PennDOT news in Cameron, Centre, Clearfield, Clinton, Elk, Juniata, McKean, Mifflin, and Potter counties at www.penndot.gov/District2.

Information about infrastructure in District 2, including completed work and significant projects, is available at www.penndot.pa.gov/D2Results. Find PennDOT's planned and active construction projects at www.projects.penndot.gov.

[VIEW AND SUBMIT HISTORIC PHOTOS](#)

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POTTER TOWNSHIP – CENTRE COUNTY – PA



The Potter Township Office
124 Short Road
Spring Mills, PA 16875
[[Map](#) | [Directions](#)]

Phone: (814) 364-9176
Secretary: Lisa Kroner
secretary@pottertownship.org
Hours: Monday–Friday 8am–Noon & 1–5pm

Public Works Supt: David Boliek
Public Works Phone: (814) 364-9314
roads@pottertownship.org

All Zoning issues are now handled by Penns Valley Code Enforcement Agency
Phone: 814-349-8177
info@PVCode.org



Notice of Intent - State College Area Connector Project

August 15, 2024 / in Headlines, Notifications /

PennDOT has scheduled a public scoping meeting for August 15, 2024 for the State College Area Connector Project. To see the news release and learn more, click [here](#).

Share this entry



AUGUST, 2024

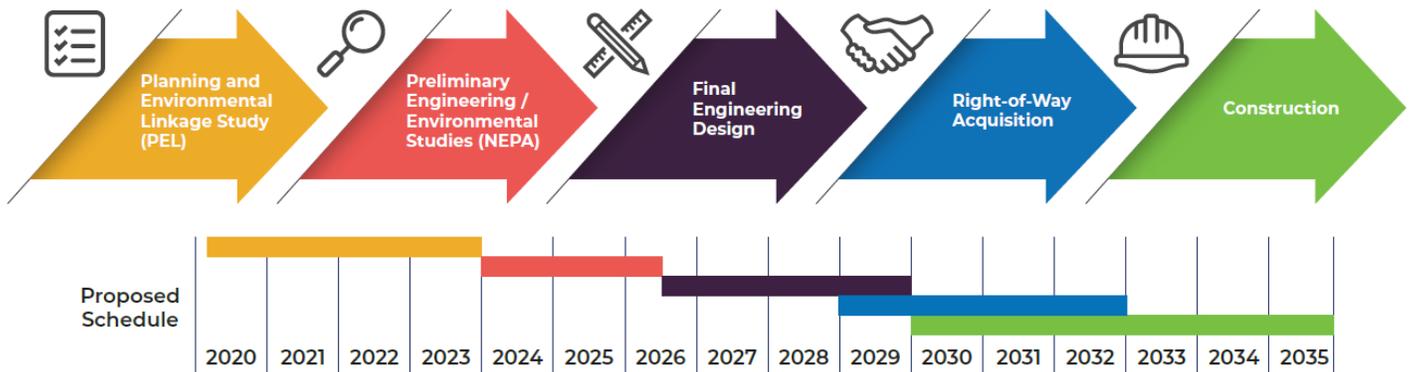
FILTER EVENTS

8 AUG	SHADE TREE COMMISSION MEETING
12 AUG	BOARD OF SUPERVISORS MEETING 2024
19 AUG	PLANNING COMMISSION 2024 MONTHLY MEETING
21 AUG	PARKS & RECREATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING
28 AUG	BOARD MEETING - (IF NEEDED)

APPENDIX L – Meeting Handouts

1. SCAC Transportation Process Handout
2. SCAC Comment Form
3. Noise Barrier Brochure
4. PennDOT ROW PUB83

What is the Process for Advancing Transportation Projects and the Proposed Schedule?



Planning and Environmental Linkage Study – A PEL Study is a high-level, early-planning process used for transportation decision making that considers environmental, community, and economic goals early in the planning stage, resulting in projects that can be carried through design and construction. Public and agency involvement is conducted throughout this phase. Overall, the PEL Study helps to inform planning decisions, streamline the project delivery process, and can serve as a public platform to discuss and prioritize transportation issues.

Preliminary Engineering/Environmental Studies (NEPA) – Preliminary engineering includes focused studies about traffic, safety, the environment, and the development of project specific alternatives. The information allows Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and PennDOT to make decisions about necessary transportation network improvements. Assessments also determine the benefits and effects the alternatives would have on natural, cultural, and socio-economic environments. Public and agency involvement is conducted through this phase. The preliminary engineering/environmental studies phase ends with the selection of an alternative to advance into final design. Approval from FHWA must be received to advance into final engineering design.

Final Engineering Design – During final engineering design, the selected project alternative design plans are refined to identify right-of-way requirements and are detailed enough to construct the project. During Final engineering design commitments made during the NEPA phase, to mitigate proposed environmental effects, will be fulfilled. Environmental permitting and detailed utility coordination occur during this phase.



Right-of-Way Acquisition – When project impacts to private property, including homes and businesses, are unavoidable, PennDOT will work with the owners to determine the property’s Fair Market Value and negotiate the acquisition of the property. When the acquisition of property results in the need for a property owner to relocate, PennDOT provides relocation assistance to those whose property is acquired (see the FAQ page on the study website for information on right-of-way acquisition).



Construction – Once final engineering design is complete and the right-of-way has been acquired, PennDOT will solicit bids and award construction contracts. Depending on the scale of the proposed improvements, multiple construction contracts may be developed to complete the overall project. Often, the first contracts awarded are smaller “early action” contracts that involve improvements that will help better accommodate traffic during subsequent construction projects. Staging of the subsequent contracts will also be developed to safely convey traffic through the work zone and minimize travel time delays through and around the project area. The newly constructed improvements to the transportation system will address the purpose and needs which were identified in the early stages of the process.

state college area CONNECTOR

(Please Print)

Name: _____

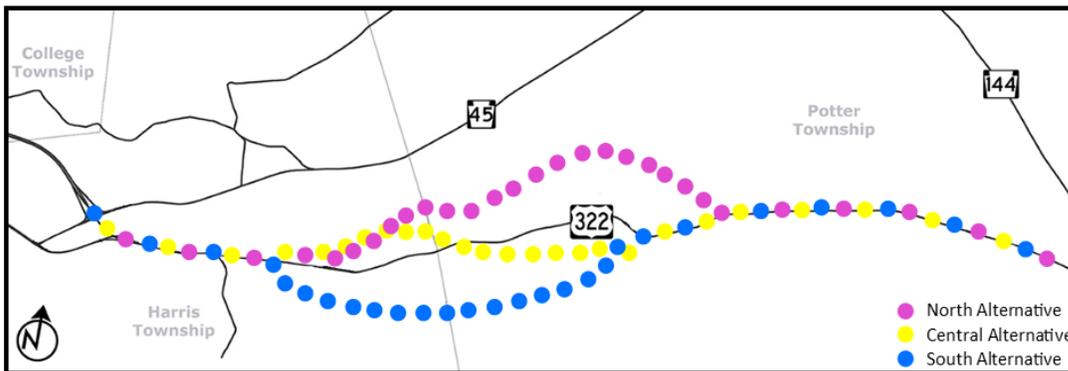
Email: _____

Please add me to your electronic mailing list

Address: _____

1. PennDOT has identified three US 322 Build Alternative alignments for detailed design and environmental evaluation. Using the map below, please tell us which corridor you prefer.

____ North (purple) ____ Central (yellow) ____ South (blue)



2. Why do you prefer the Build Alternative alignment you chose above?

3. Questions?

Online
Comment Form



If you were unable to ask PennDOT a specific question during the meeting today, please use the space above to provide your question that you would like PennDOT to specifically answer in the Meeting Summary Report.

All comments on the public meeting materials must be received by August 30, 2024.

Fold Here

Please
Paste
Postage
Here

PennDOT District 2-0
Attn: Eric Murnyack, P.E.
70 PennDOT Drive
Clearfield, PA 16830

Re: State College Area Connector Project

Fold Here

The Noise Abatement Process

What Projects Are Eligible?

Only certain highway improvement projects are eligible for noise mitigation in Pennsylvania. These projects have the potential to alter the acoustical environment and are analyzed for noise impacts and abatement is considered. The scope of these types of projects include highways on new locations, substantial alteration of either the vertical and/or horizontal alignment on existing highways, and various other improvement projects, including certain auxiliary lanes, weigh stations, rest areas, etc.

Applying The Process To Eligible Projects

There is a specific process that PennDOT uses to identify communities that will be considered for noise abatement and to determine whether noise abatement measures can be implemented within state or federal guidelines. This process includes the following steps.

The first step in the process is to determine which land-uses in the project could be affected by the project. The Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) has established noise abatement criteria for various land uses which PennDOT uses to determine impacts and where abatement consideration is warranted. Locations such as residences, libraries, houses of worship, hospitals, schools and parks are often the most common land uses that receive abatement consideration.

Monitor Noise Levels

After noise-sensitive locations that may be affected by the proposed highway project have been identified, existing traffic noise levels are monitored at locations that are representative of affected neighborhoods. The results of the monitoring sessions are used to ensure that the noise prediction model will provide accurate results. Many people ask why their house was not monitored and as-

sume that they were not considered if monitoring was not done on their property. The monitoring, however, is used only to set and verify the prediction model and not as a basis for noise abatement decisions.

Noise Modeling

Computer modeling is performed with the FHWA TNM Model to assess future conditions in light of the proposed improvements. Noise projections are made for the worst-case future build condition using forecasted traffic information 20 years in future when the highway is at its maximum capacity. The design details and terrain modifications are included in the computer model and additional locations are added to comprehensively delineate the impacted areas.



Noise Abatement Consideration

The next step is where noise abatement is considered at the noise-impacted locations. If you attend a public meeting for a highway project that includes a discussion of noise issues, you may hear people talking about warranted, feasible and reasonable. The terms describe the three steps PennDOT must take when considering noise abatement for noise-sensitive areas.

To determine whether abatement consideration is warranted, we compare the noise modeling projections to the noise impact criteria for the land use. Using criteria based on FHWA guidelines, abatement is warranted if the future noise levels ap-

proach or exceed the noise abatement criteria or are elevated by 10 decibels [dB(A)] above the existing conditions. PennDOT defines an impact for residential areas as 66 dB(A). For communities where noise abatement consideration is warranted, the next step is to consider whether the noise abatement would be feasible for each affected community. Traffic noise abatement is typically provided by using highway noise walls. Feasible noise walls are those that provide at least 5 dB(A) of noise reduction to noise sensitive locations and pose no safety, engineering, or access restrictions.

If a noise wall system is determined to be feasible, the next step is to determine whether or not the wall is reasonable for construction. For a wall to be reasonable it must be cost effective and maintenance, constructability, drainage and utility impacts, as well as the desires of the affected residents, must be considered.

Your Role in the Process

For some highway projects, more than one alternative design is considered. The design of noise walls begins when a final alignment has been selected for the highway. During noise wall design process, you will have opportunities to have your concerns addressed through public meetings. To fully participate, try to attend these meetings, fill out all project questionnaires, and voice your concerns and opinions. It is during these meetings that the affected community gets to choose the texture and color of the wall facing the residents.

When it is determined that a noise wall is warranted, feasible and reasonable, public preferences are considered. If the majority of affected residents do not want the noise wall, the wall will not be constructed.

Sound Principles About Traffic Noise

Keep in mind these decisions are final and if a community decides it does not want a wall, it cannot return at a later time to request a wall. PennDOT only recommends a noise wall if determined to be warranted, feasible and reasonable and desired by the affected community.



work the same as most other familiar scales. A sound that increases by 10 decibels is said to double in loudness. Therefore, a source will sound twice as loud if its level increases from 60 to 70 decibels and four times as loud if its level increases from 60 to 80 decibels.

When the number of sound sources is doubled – such as two honking horns instead of one – the noise level increases by 3 decibels. A 3 decibel change is barely noticeable to most people. Since we don't have the same sensitivity to all frequencies or pitches, the A-weighted scale was developed, and is used for highway traffic noise evaluation.

mally true for vehicular speeds over 30 miles per hour. Highways are typically dominated by tire noise while local streets are typically dominated by engine and exhaust noise. The overall noise level generated by vehicles on a highway depends on the number of vehicles, the speed of the vehicles, and the types of vehicles. The figures below show generally how these factors influence noise levels.



Traffic Noise Generation

When a sound source is stationary, it is called a point source and it radiates sound equally in all directions like a pulsing sphere. When many sound sources are moving in a line, the sound radiates like a pulsing cylinder from the sources. Traffic noise is generated in this fashion. It is important to distinguish point sources from line sources because each has different characteristics.

Noise is rated on a decibel scale. This scale was designed to match our hearing mechanism and does not

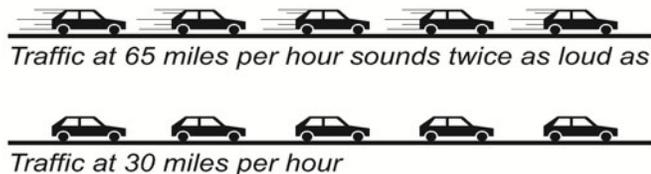
Traffic Noise Sources

The principal noise sources of highway vehicles are the exhaust system, engine, and tires. Exhaust noise is typically controlled by mufflers, assuming they are used and are functioning properly. Engine noise can only be controlled by vehicle manufacturers and proper maintenance, factors that PENNDOT has no control over. Tire noise is generated by the interaction of each vehicle's tires with the road surface. Engine and exhaust noise are usually louder than tire noise at vehicular speeds under 30 miles per hour. The reverse is nor-

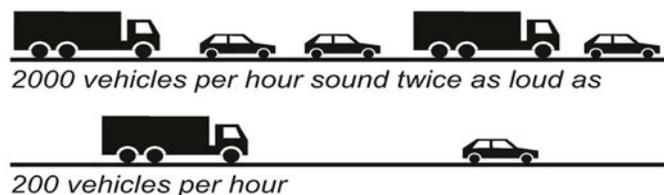
Traffic Noise Propagation

The travel, or propagation, of traffic noise depends mainly on three factors — atmospheric effects, ground effects, and spreading effects. Atmospheric conditions change the direction of sound travel and constantly change. Ground conditions also affect sound travel.

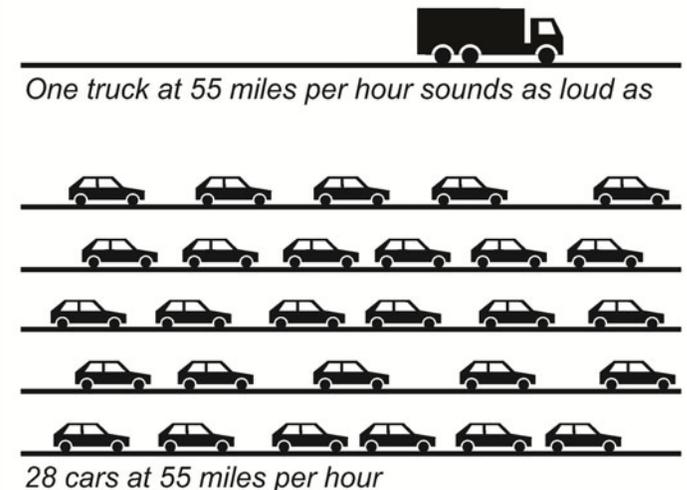
How Speed Affects Traffic Noise



How Traffic Volume Affects Noise



How Trucks Affect Traffic Noise



Managing Our Environment: Traffic Noise Abatement

Sound will travel farther over a hard reflective surface than one covered with vegetation. Spreading effects diminish sound at a constant rate as the sound travels away from its source. Sound from a line source – such as a highway – decreases at a rate of approximately 3 dB(A) per doubling of distance from the source.

Principles of Outdoor Sound Control

When trying to solve a noise problem, we look for practical solutions in terms of treating the source of the noise, and the path between the noise source and the listener. Since the source of traffic noise is the combination of vehicles on a highway, the only practical option is to try to reduce the noise along the path between the highway and the listeners.



The most common outdoor noise reduction method is the construction of noise barriers. These barriers can take different forms, as long as they break the line-of-sight between the vehicles on the highway and affected residential communities. Barriers can be in the form of walls or topographical changes. Topographical changes can occur by building earth berms or hills between the highway and the communities or by depressing the highway. To be effective, any noise barrier must be solid. Fences or vegetation have minimal effectiveness as barriers. Because noise walls are open to the air above and around them, sound bends over and around them – just as light bends around obstructions – through the principle of diffraction. Diffraction limits the effectiveness of any wall to a maximum noise reduction of 10 to 15 decibels,

independent of the material used. Typical reductions usually range from 5 to 10 decibels.

Highway Design Options

Highway design options to minimize traffic noise include building roadways as far as possible from noise-sensitive locations, depressing roadways, and avoiding steep inclines in roadways. Building highways several hundred feet from noise-sensitive locations will minimize noise exposure. Where this is impractical, highways can be built closer to areas that are not noise-sensitive, such as industrial areas. Building highways below ground level creates natural walls between the highways and any noise sensitive locations. Steep inclines in roadways cause more noise to be generated by vehicles, especially trucks, as they accelerate uphill and decelerate downhill. A level roadway elevation avoids this extra noise generation.

Noise Walls & Other Available Abatement Options

In Pennsylvania, the noise abatement options considered most often are alternative highway designs and noise wall construction. Designs that would minimize noise while not compromising safety and practicality are incorporated into highway plans. PENNDOT only uses noise walls that have been approved through a rigorous product evaluation process to ensure safety, integrity, longevity, and preservation of aesthetics. The pictures on the back page of this brochure show some of the different types of noise abatement options PENNDOT has available. Consult the local PENNDOT Engineering District for color and texture availability in your area.



Sound Pressure Levels for Common Sources

dB(A)	Perception of Loudness	Sound Sources
10	1/6 as loud as 50 dB(A)	Normal breathing
20	1/8 as loud as 50 dB(A)	Broadcast studio
30	1/4 as loud as 50 dB(A)	Library
40	1/2 as loud as 50 dB(A)	Refrigerator
50	Reference level	Clothes dryer
60	2 times louder than 50 dB(A)	Air conditioning unit
70	4 times louder than 50 dB(A)	Pick-up truck @ 50mph, 50'
80	8 times louder than 50 dB(A)	Medium truck @ 50mph, 50'
90	16 times louder than 50 dB(A)	Motorcycle @ 50mph, 50'
100	32 times louder than 50 dB(A)	Jet flyover @ 1000'

Sound Decisions About Highway Noise Abatement

Noise Walls in Your Backyard

Construction of Noise Walls

The actual cost of noise walls can often be more than \$2 million a mile under normal conditions and can become more than \$3 million a mile if noise walls have to be placed on bridges or involve other special designs, such as retaining walls. The costs to the impacted community for the installation of a noise wall may include some loss to back yard area due to the need to acquire right-of-way to construct the wall. If there are trees growing in the area where the noise wall will be constructed, it is most likely that they will have to be removed to accommodate the construction. However, efforts will be made to save as many trees as possible.

Generally speaking, it is best to locate noise walls as close as possible to either the highway or the impacted community to be most effective. Either way, the walls will be built on PENNDOT owned right-of-way and will be the property of the Department.

Maintenance of Noise Walls

The maintenance of noise walls is the responsibility of PENNDOT. There may be some restrictions to building permanent structures in the area between the noise wall and the homeowner property line, so that PENNDOT may gain access to the residential side of the wall to perform occasional maintenance or replace damaged panels.

Generally speaking, the Department does not provide landscaping on the residential side; however, if homeowners wish to maintain the area between the wall and the property line, they are encouraged to discuss their plans with PENNDOT.



OPTIONS FOR NOISE ABATEMENT



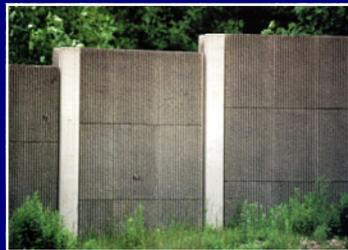
GRAPE STAKE



FUZZY RAKE



ASHLAR STONE



FRACTURE FIN



SHIP LAP



pennsylvania
DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

For more information about PennDOT's noise abatement policy and how it is applied, or about how noise is perceived, measured and controlled, contact your local PennDOT Engineering District or log on to PennDOT's website at www.dot.state.pa.us.

WHEN YOUR LAND IS NEEDED FOR TRANSPORTATION PURPOSES

SOME QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS ON THE PENNSYLVANIA DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION'S ACQUISITION PROCESS



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DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

PUB 83 (10-23)

FORWARD

This booklet has been prepared for the individual landowner. It has been designed to briefly outline and answer the most commonly asked questions pertaining to the land acquisition process used by the Pennsylvania Department of Transportation (PennDOT).

Should your property be needed for a transportation purpose, most commonly the construction of a highway, you may be assured that our Right-of-Way Representatives will gladly answer any questions you may have. They will also be available to assist you throughout the land acquisition process. The address and telephone number of the eleven PennDOT District Right-of-Way Offices appear on the last page of this booklet.

You may also be assured that it is our intention to achieve the best possible transportation facilities while maintaining your satisfaction as a private landowner. We will treat every claimant as fairly and courteously as possible.

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HOW IS HIGHWAY LOCATION DETERMINED?

It is PennDOT's goal to establish the most direct and useable highway facility at the least possible cost to the public. To accomplish this, PennDOT undertakes intensive studies on several possible routes in order to find the route that will result in the least possible inconvenience or impact to the public and the private landowner and to comply with environmental regulations.

Statistical data concerning the economy, population needs and traffic volume trends are analyzed for the area under study. Aerial and ground surveys are taken, and consideration is also given to such factors as safety, drainage and soil types. In addition, public meetings are held to discuss the proposed alternate locations.

WHAT IS HIGHWAY RIGHT-OF-WAY?

Right-of-Way is the term used to describe "right of passage" over another's land. When PennDOT acquires title to your land, PennDOT becomes the owner and it then gives the "right of passage" to the public. PennDOT also often acquires lesser easements that allow you to keep ownership of your land but in some manner restricts your usage of the area to activities that do not interfere with its needs. PennDOT also often acquires a right to use your land temporarily to complete its project, and after the project completion the land reverts back to your full control.

WHAT IS EMINENT DOMAIN?

Eminent Domain is the term used to describe the Commonwealth's Constitutional right to acquire privately owned land for public purposes. PennDOT executes this right only when it will benefit the public as a whole.

WHAT ARE MY RIGHTS?

According to Amendment V to the U.S. Constitution, no person shall be deprived of life, liberty or property without due process of law, nor shall private property be taken for public use without Just Compensation. In this situation it is your right to receive Just Compensation in exchange for your property.

Pennsylvania's Eminent Domain Legislation is considered the most liberal of its kind in the U.S. Your rights as a property owner are given primary consideration.

WHO WILL CONTACT ME?

You will be contacted several times throughout the acquisition process. Your first contact will usually be a letter informing you that your property will be affected by a highway project. Various Right-of-Way Representatives will also personally visit you. All appointments will be made at your convenience, within reason, of course. It is our desire to make this process run as smoothly as possible.

WHO DETERMINES THE AMOUNT OF JUST COMPENSATION?

The amount of Just Compensation for your property may be determined by PennDOT right-of-way staff, District Office Appraisers and/or by independent right-of-way consultants or real estate appraisers certified by the Pennsylvania State Board of Certified Appraisers which are hired by PennDOT. Just Compensation can be determined either through an appraisal process or through a process known as a waiver valuation as not all impacts to land may require an appraisal to estimate damages.

A waiver valuation will be used where damages do not exceed \$10,000 and PennDOT determines the valuation is uncomplicated.

Where damages exceed \$10,000, the property owner has the right to an appraisal. However, PennDOT may also use the waiver valuation process where damages are between \$10,001 and \$25,000. In this situation, you will be verbally contacted to discuss these options by a PennDOT representative.

You will receive a written offer letter and the letter will indicate whether the amount was determined by an appraisal or a waiver valuation.

WHAT WILL I BE PAID FOR MY PROPERTY?

Local real estate trends and the value of comparable properties will be taken into consideration when determining the value of your property which you will be offered as Just Compensation.

In addition to amounts offered as Just Compensation, you are also entitled to the following benefits:

1. All fees incidental to the transfer of your property to the Department.
2. Any mortgage prepayment penalty you would be required to pay as a result of the acquisition.
3. Reimbursement for up to a combined total of \$4,000.00 per property for reasonable expenses paid for an appraiser, engineer or attorney to evaluate PennDOT's offer.
4. In addition, if PennDOT acquires a residence or business that you occupy, you will be entitled to Relocation Benefits. These benefits are explained in Bulletin #47. You will receive a written 90-day notice prior to vacating any acquired property.
5. PennDOT requires clear title to the property it acquires. Any liens, mortgages, judgments, taxes or other obligations with regard to your property must be satisfied either prior to or at the time of settlement, or partial release obtained as applicable.

HOW WILL MY OFFER BE PRESENTED?

Usually a Right-of-Way Representative will personally present you with a written offer for your property. In some cases your offer will be mailed to you. Each owner is treated on the same basis, and each claim is settled on its merits.

WHAT IF I DISAGREE WITH THE OFFER?

If you do not believe that the offer provides “Just Compensation”, and if you can provide factual information pertaining to the value or damage of your property which was not available during the valuation process, please bring the information to PennDOT’s attention.

MUST I ACCEPT PENNDOT’S OFFER?

The vast majority of property acquisitions are settled on an amicable basis. Keep in mind, a careful procedure is used to arrive at an offer of Just Compensation for your property, and PennDOT cannot, by law or by our policy, offer you less than the written offer of Just Compensation.

If, however, an agreement cannot be reached through negotiations, PennDOT, in order to proceed with the project, will be forced to file a “Condemnation Proceeding” (Declaration of Taking) in the Court of Common Pleas. At the point of condemnation, you will be offered the full amount of the determined value for your property as Estimated Just Compensation. Although negotiations will be ongoing, you may elect to accept the Estimated Just Compensation without jeopardizing your right to contest the amount in court, or you can refuse the payment and it will be deposited in your name with the Prothonotary of the county in which the property is located.

Once a declaration of taking has been filed, either you or PennDOT may petition, within six years, for a Board of Viewers, or the amount paid will be considered payment in full, in accordance with the Statue of Limitations. At a Board of View, the Viewers will consider your testimony, as well as PennDOT’s, and make an award. If either party is still dissatisfied, an appeal may be made to the Court of Common Pleas. Under most circumstances, however, this procedure is not necessary.

WHEN WILL I BE PAID FOR MY PROPERTY?

For your convenience payments will be processed as quickly as possible and, once agreement is reached, payment can be expected within two to three weeks.

Before you receive payment, however, you are responsible for providing PennDOT with several things, such as:

A clear title to the property being acquired. Any liens, mortgages, judgments, taxes or other obligations with regard to your property must be satisfied either prior to or at the time of settlement.

A completed Form W-9, Request for Taxpayer Identification Number and certification.

Guidance on completing these requirements will be provided to you by your Right-of-Way Representative.

DISTRICT OFFICE ADDRESSES:

District 1-0
255 Elm Street
Oil City, Pa 16301
(814) 678-7069

District 2-0
70 PennDOT Drive
Clearfield, PA 16830
(814) 765-0444

District 3-0
715 Jordan Avenue
Montoursville, Pa 17754
(570) 368-4337

District 4-0
55 Keystone Indus. Park
Dunmore, Pa 18512
(570) 963-4071

District 5-0
1002 Hamilton Street
Allentown, Pa 18101
(610) 871-4100

District 6-0
7000 Geerdes Boulevard
King of Prussia, Pa 19406
(610) 205-6510

District 8-0
2140 Herr Street
Harrisburg, Pa 17103
(717) 787-4861

District 9-0
1620 North Juniata Street
Hollidaysburg, Pa 16648
(814) 696-7210

District 10-0
2550 Oakland Avenue
PO Box 429
Indiana, Pa 15701
(724) 357-4808

District 11-0
45 Thoms Run Road
Bridgeville, Pa. 15017
(412) 429-4853

District 12-0
PO Box 459
825 North Gallatin Avenue Ext.
Uniontown, Pa. 15401
(724) 439-7146

APPENDIX M – Meeting Video Script

Slide 1: NO VOICEOVER

Slide 2: Thank you for attending today's State College Area Connector public meeting. I would like to take a moment to welcome you to this event. My name is Eric Murnyack and I am the Assistant District Executive for PennDOT District Two Design. Tonight, you will have an opportunity to learn about the activities and work efforts we have been undertaking since the completion of the Planning and Environmental Linkages Study, also known as the PEL Study. These efforts include collecting additional traffic and environmental data, developing alignment alternatives from the PEL corridors, and coordination with local officials. In the open house portion of this meeting, we have numerous displays for your review, an interactive station to provide more detailed mapping of specific areas, project team members available to explain and answer questions on the project and a comment area for you to provide feedback on the project and the information presented. Thank you again for attending and have a good evening.

Slide 3: Following the PEL study, the team refined the 70 square miles PEL study area for conducting detailed environmental and engineering investigations. The refined project area was defined to encompass the PEL corridors approved to advance for additional study.

Slide 4: Following the development of the project area, property owners were sent letters informing them that Project Team Members may need to enter their land to conduct field investigations and data collection activities necessary for continued development of the project.

Slide 5: In December 2022 and April 2023, a comprehensive traffic data collection program was conducted to collect traffic volumes at numerous intersections along US 322 and PA 45 in Harris and Potter Townships. Data was also collected at numerous locations throughout the project area including along Boal Avenue, Warner Boulevard and South Atherton Street in the Boalsburg area, and at the Potters Mills Gap Interchange area including PA 144 and US 322. This traffic data was used to refine future year traffic volumes and evaluate operations and safety for the no-build scenario.

Slide 6: The project team conducted natural resource field studies which included completing wetland and stream delineations, landcover and habitat characterizations, identifying critical habitat, and identifying potentially hazardous waste sites. In addition, our team has conducted over 30 interviews with owners and operators of farmed land within the project area to understand what is being farmed; how the farm operates including farm building usages, crop location, and farm access needs; and understand critical features for the farms.

Slide 7: The project team also conducted baseline noise investigations to document the existing ambient noise level throughout the study area.

Slide 8: The project team has also looked at the existing community landscape and has updated the project mapping to reflect the most recent land use, residential communities, low-income housing areas, community demographics, community facilities and services, property ownership, and local planning initiatives.

Slide 9: The project team has been documenting and assessing properties 50 years or older to determine if they are eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places. The team has also

been working to determine or confirm if various properties and structures contribute to the existing Penns Valley Brush Valley Rural Historic District.

Slide 10: The PEL study concluded with a recommendation to advance three corridor alternatives for further engineering development. Several initiatives were undertaken to initiate the development of the engineered alignments. These initiatives included coordination with local officials, analysis of collected traffic and environmental data, and identification of engineering design criteria.

Slide 11: The first initiative was to coordinate with the local officials at a series of workshops to discuss traffic scenarios, potential design options, and access throughout the area. This information was used to inform the transportation needs in the project area and make recommendations for the design.

Slide 12: Based on these conversations, in conjunction with the updated traffic analysis, it was determined that the State College Area Connector Project should focus transportation needs along the 8-mile corridor of US 322 from Potters Mills Gap to Boalsburg.

Slide 13: This resulted in the determination that the transportation issues identified along PA 45 were independent of the US 322 corridor and should be studied separately. As a result, on January 19, 2024, PennDOT announced that the PA 45 Connector and proposed interchange would be removed from the State College Area Connector project and a separate study to evaluate the transportation issues along PA 45 would be undertaken.

Slide 14: Lastly, the engineering design criteria were confirmed which included identifying the number and width of travel lanes, shoulders and medians and other design criteria for not only the proposed new highway but also for local roadways that may be altered as a result of the project. The team also considered local access needs, various interchange and intersection configurations, and how to maintain access during construction.

Slide 15: Using the PEL corridors, the team then conducted working sessions to develop specific alignment alternatives that could provide some balance on the overall effects to the numerous natural, cultural, and socio-economic resources within the study area. This was an iterative process that resulted in three alignment alternatives that you will see this evening.

Slide 16: The US 322 – North Alternative was developed based on the recommended US 322-1 OEX PEL Corridor Alternative. Starting in the east, the North Alternative begins just west of the existing Potters Mills Gap interchange and extends along existing US 322 for 2.4 miles to the Tusseyville Road area. In this area, the new highway widens the existing corridor to the north and crosses Sinking Creek and its tributaries. Existing US 322 will be converted to a local road running parallel to the new highway and provide (or maintain) the connections and access to other local roads including Red Mill/Mountain Back, Dogtown, Church Hill and others would be provided throughout the project area. At Tusseyville Road, the North Alternative veers north off the existing US 322 corridor for approximately 4 miles crossing Neff and Wagner Roads, and the Harris/Potter Township Line. The alternative then turns back toward existing US 322 crossing Sharer Road, Spring Creek, and returns to the existing US 322 corridor near Somerset Drive. From Somerset Drive, the new highway alignment widens along the south side of existing US 322 corridor and connects to the Mount Nittany Expressway at the PA Route 45 partial interchange.

Slide 17: The existing PA 45 interchange would be replaced with a Single Point Urban Interchange or SPUI. A “SPUI”, is an interchange configuration where all off and on ramps come together at a common intersection with the cross street, in this instance PA 45. Unlike a conventional diamond interchange, where two intersections, often signalized, are needed, a SPUI requires only one. By eliminating one intersection, operational efficiencies, including reduced delay, congestion, and vehicle queuing, as well as enhanced safety, can be realized.

Slide 18: The North alternative had three key modifications from the PEL corridor. The first is that the PEL corridor was centered along US 322 in the east, but the current alignment shifts further north to minimize impacts along the south side of existing US 322 corridor. The second modification is its departure location from the existing US 322 corridor and how far north it extends before turning to parallel existing US 322. This shift was necessary to minimize impacts to farm operations. The third modification was the removal of the PA 45 Connector and interchange.

Slide 19: The US 322 – Central Alternative was based on the US 322 – 1 South recommended PEL Corridor Alternative. The Central Alternative begins just west of the existing Potters Mills Gap interchange and extends generally along the existing US 322 corridor for 2.4 miles through the Tusseyville area. In this area, the new highway expands the existing corridor to the south and crosses Mountain Back, Dogtown, and Church Hill Roads, Chopper Lane, and Sinking Creek streams. West of the Tusseyville area, instead of turning north like the previously discussed North Alternative or the US 322 1 South PEL Alternative, the Central Alternative remains south of the US 322 corridor and passes through the Potter Township Athletic Complex while crossing Taylor Hill and Tussey Sink Roads, and Tussey View Lane before turning northward and crossing over existing US 322, the township line, Spring Creek, and Sharer Road. The alternative then turns back toward US 322 before merging with the existing US 322 near Somerset Drive. The Central Alternative then proceeds on a similar path as the North Alternative to the proposed SPUI interchange at PA 45.

Slide 20: This alternative has three key modifications from the PEL corridor. The first is that the PEL corridor was further south of US 322 in the east, but the current alignment shifts further north to minimize impacts to farm operations south of US 322. The next key modification is that the Central Alternative remains south of US 322 for a longer distance than was proposed in the PEL study. This modification was developed to provide for a minimization of impacts on farm operations and based on coordination with local officials. The third modification was the removal of the PA 45 Connector and interchange.

Slide 21: The US 322 – South Alternative was based on the US 322 – 5 recommended PEL Corridor Alternative. The South Alternative begins just west of the existing Potters Mills Gap interchange and extends along existing US 322 for 2.4 miles through the Tusseyville area. In this area, the new highway is generally located on existing US 322 corridor with a local road paralleling the facility to the north. The new highway crosses Sinking Creek and its tributaries while providing local connections and access to Red Mill, Mountain Back, Dogtown, Church Hill Roads, Chopper Lane. West of the Tusseyville area, the South Alternative veers southward around the Potter Township Athletic Complex, and crosses Taylor Hill and Tussey Sink Roads and the Harris/Potter township line. The alternative then begins to turn northward crossing Coxe Lane before it returns to the existing US 322 corridor near Somerset Drive. From Somerset Drive, the South Alternative proceeds on a similar path as the North and Central alternatives to the proposed SPUI interchange at PA 45.

Slide 22: This alternative had two key modifications from the PEL corridor. The PEL corridor was further south of US 322 in the east, but the current alignment shifts further north to minimize impacts to farm operation south of US 322. The second modification was the removal of the internal interchange.

Slide 23: For the State College Area Connector Project, the Federal Highway Administration and PennDOT are working together to conduct preliminary engineering and environmental investigations in support of the development of an Environmental Impact Statement, also known as an EIS. This is to meet the requirements of the National Environmental Policy Act – known as NEPA. FHWA has officially published the Notice of Intent to Prepare an EIS. This publication starts the 2-year window for completing the environmental investigations and engineering that allows FHWA to provide a Decision or approval for the Preferred Alternative to advance for final design, right-of-way acquisition, and construction. This summer we will be updating the alternatives based on comments received from today's meeting and further assessing the potential environmental effects. A public meeting is anticipated this fall or early spring to inform the public of the recommended preferred alternative. The summary of all the investigations, outreach efforts, and project recommendations will be outlined in the Draft EIS which is anticipated to be released for review in the Summer of 2025. Following the publication of the DEIS, a public hearing will be held to receive public comments on the document. The Final EIS is anticipated to be a combined document with the FHWA's Record of Decision providing environmental clearance to advance the project. This is anticipated by July 2026.

Slide 24: This evening in the open house area, we have numerous displays that document the collected environmental data, show the proposed alignment alternatives and their potential effects on the area resources, project schedules, and other supporting information that you can review at your leisure.

Slide 25: In addition, we have provided several computer stations in the WebMap viewing area, where staff can help you navigate the computer containing relevant project information and current alignment alternatives to focus on specific areas of interest. In this area, we also have staff that are looking to capture very specific information from property owners that may be close to or potentially affected by the alignment alternatives, including locational information specific to on-lot septic and water wells as well as discuss individual property access needs.

Slide 26: In the comment area, we have provided places for you to sit and complete your comment forms.

Slide 27: Throughout the open house area, project team staff are available to answer any questions you may have regarding the information being presented and we have PennDOT right-of-way staff available to answer your acquisition process questions.

Slide 28: Thank you again for attending today's meeting and please join us in the open house area for more information.

Slide 29: NO VOICEOVER

APPENDIX N – Display Boards

1. Non-Discrimination Statements
2. Welcome
3. Transportation Process
4. SCAC EIS Process'
5. NEPA Process and Schedule
6. Purpose and Need
7. Agricultural Resources
8. State and Federal Laws that Protect Farmland
9. Farmland Evaluation Process
10. Natural Resources
11. Above Ground Historic Resources
12. Section 106 Review Process
13. Section 106 Consultation
14. Socioeconomic Resources
15. Noise Resources
16. Alternative Roadway Sections
17. Alternatives Rural and Urban Roadway Sections
18. PA 45 Urban Roadway Section
19. Local 322 Urban Roadway Section
20. North Alternative
21. Central Alternative
22. South Alternative
23. Potential Environmental Effects
24. Alternative Observations
25. North Alternative vs. US 322-10EX PEL Corridor
26. Central Alternative vs. US 322-1 South PEL Corridor
27. South Alternative vs. US 322-5 PEL Corridor
28. How Can You Participate?

Non-Discrimination Statements

Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)

The Pennsylvania Department of Transportation (PennDOT) does not discriminate based on age, sex, race, color, national origin, religious creed, disability, family status, English proficiency, or income.

PennDOT does not discriminate on the basis of disability in admission to, access to, or operations of its programs, services, or activities and has established a grievance procedure to meet the requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act.

For further information on Title VI Programs or to make a complaint, you can contact the Bureau of Equal Opportunity located on the fifth floor of the Commonwealth Keystone Building, Harrisburg PA., by telephone at 717.787.5891.

state college area
CONNECTOR

 **pennsylvania**
DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

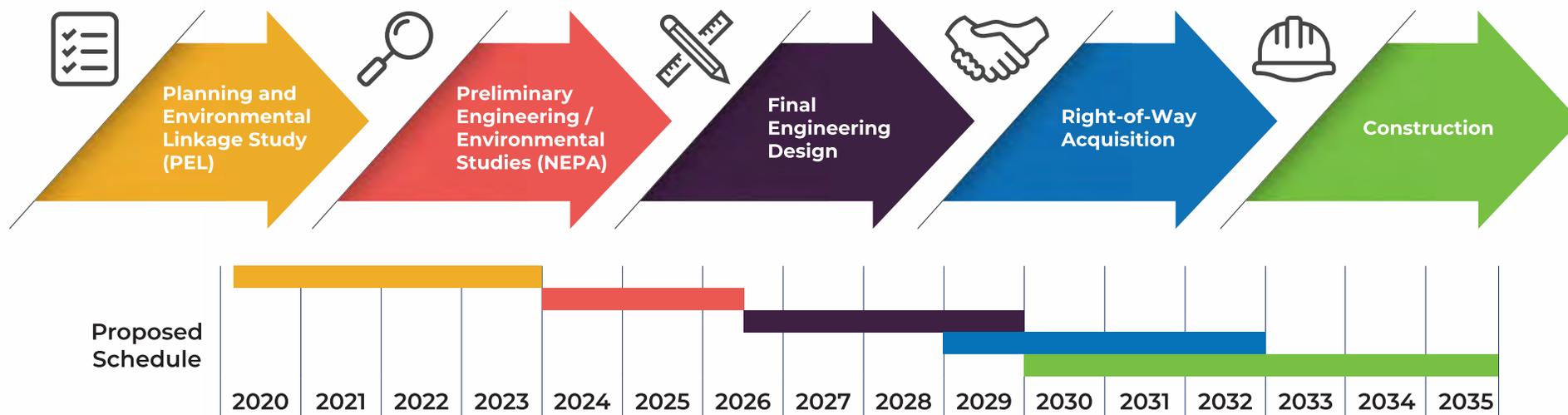
WELCOME

**Open House
Public Meeting**

**State College
Area Connector
Project**

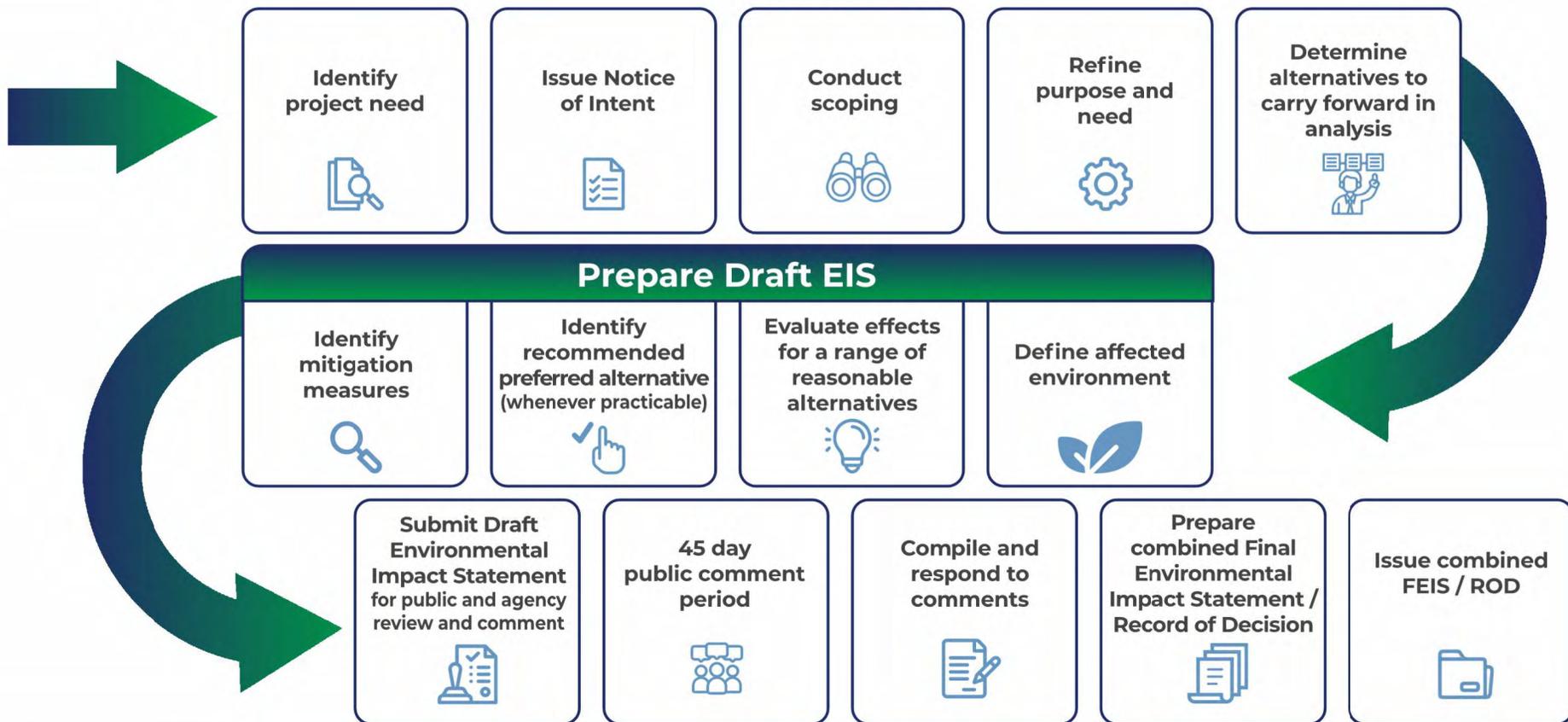
What is the Process for Advancing Transportation Projects?

Transportation projects advance through five phases before they are able to be used by the traveling public.



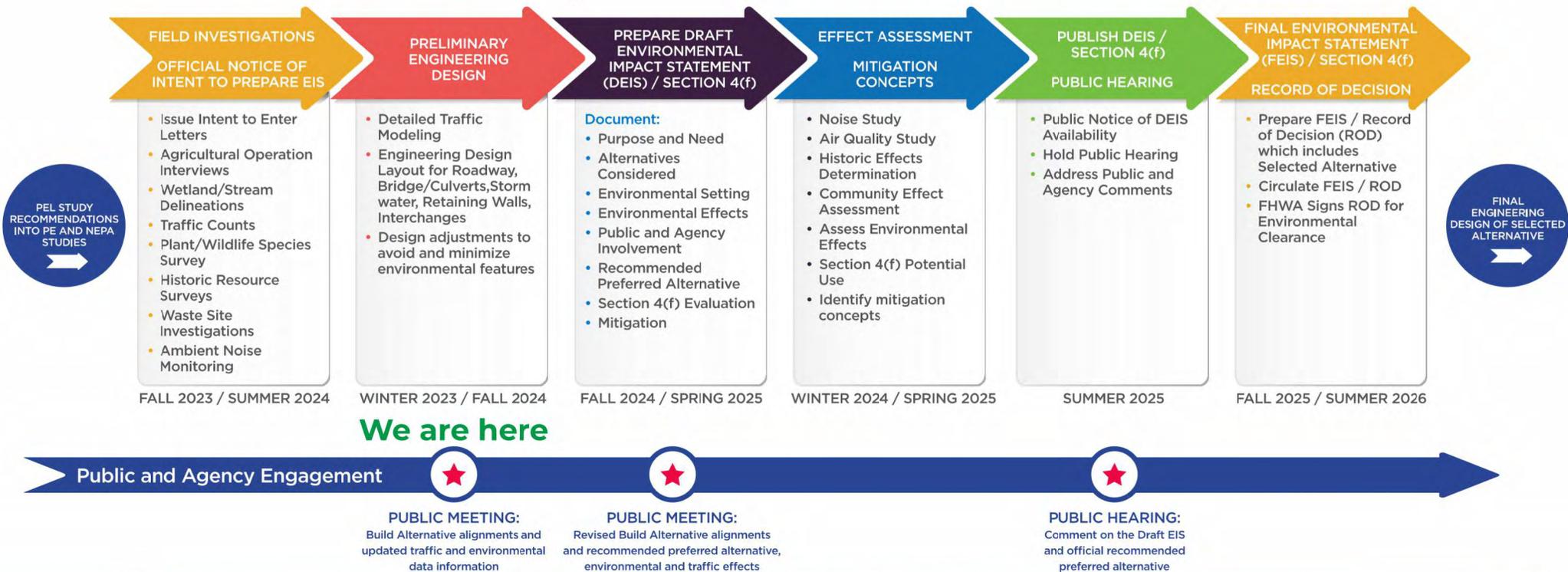
State College Area Connector EIS Process

We are here



Preliminary Engineering and Environmental Studies (NEPA)

Anticipated Process and Schedule



Project Purpose

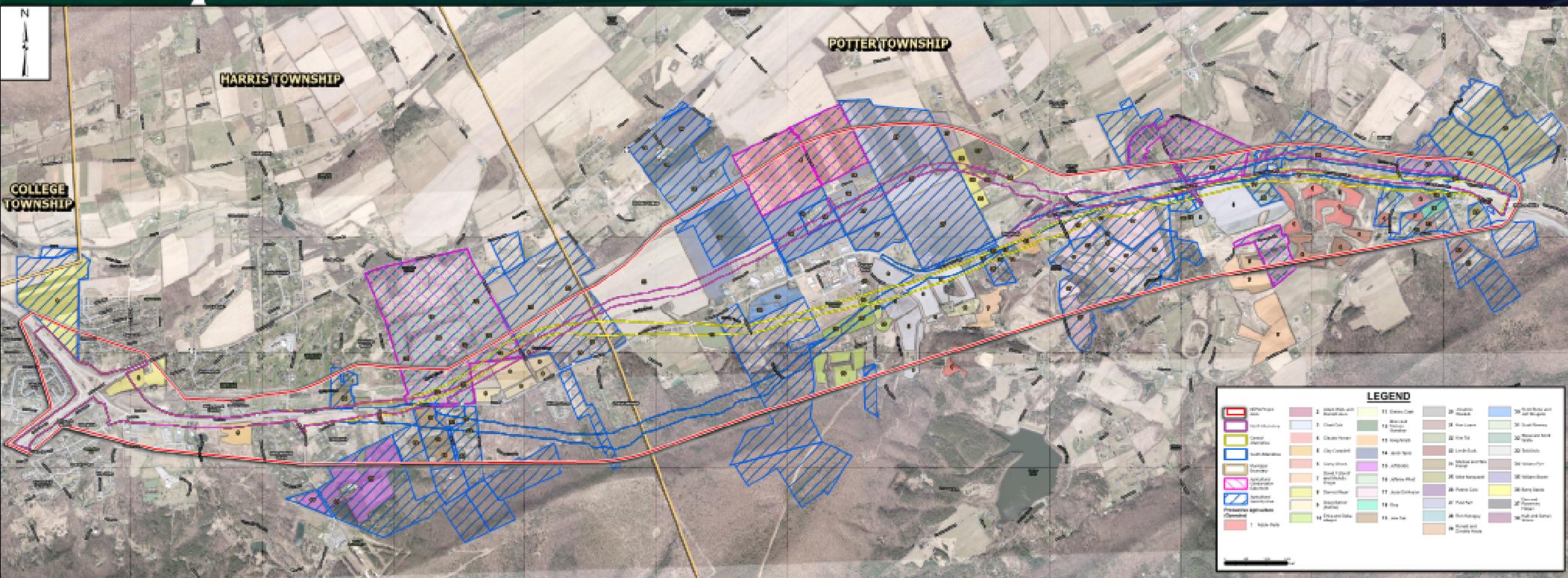
The purpose of this project is to improve roadway congestion by achieving acceptable Levels of Service and to address safety issues by reducing the predicted crash frequency along the US 322 corridor between Potters Mills and Boalsburg. Additionally, the project will aim to provide a transportation network that meets driver expectations.

Project Needs

- High peak hour traffic volumes cause congestion and result in unacceptable Levels of Service on US 322 roadway and intersections.
- Existing roadway configurations and traffic conditions contribute to safety concerns in the project area.
- The roadway network and configuration in the project area lacks continuity and does not meet driver expectations.

state college area CONNECTOR

Agricultural Resources





PA Act 100 of 1979 – established the Agricultural Lands Condemnation Approval Board (ALCAB) as an independent administrative board with approval authority over the condemnation of productive agricultural land for highway projects.



PA Act 43 of 1981 – enables landowners to propose the creation of Agricultural Security Areas (ASAs) to municipal governments. Under PA Act 43, an application for approval to condemn non-exempt ASA lands in agricultural production must be filed with ALCAB.

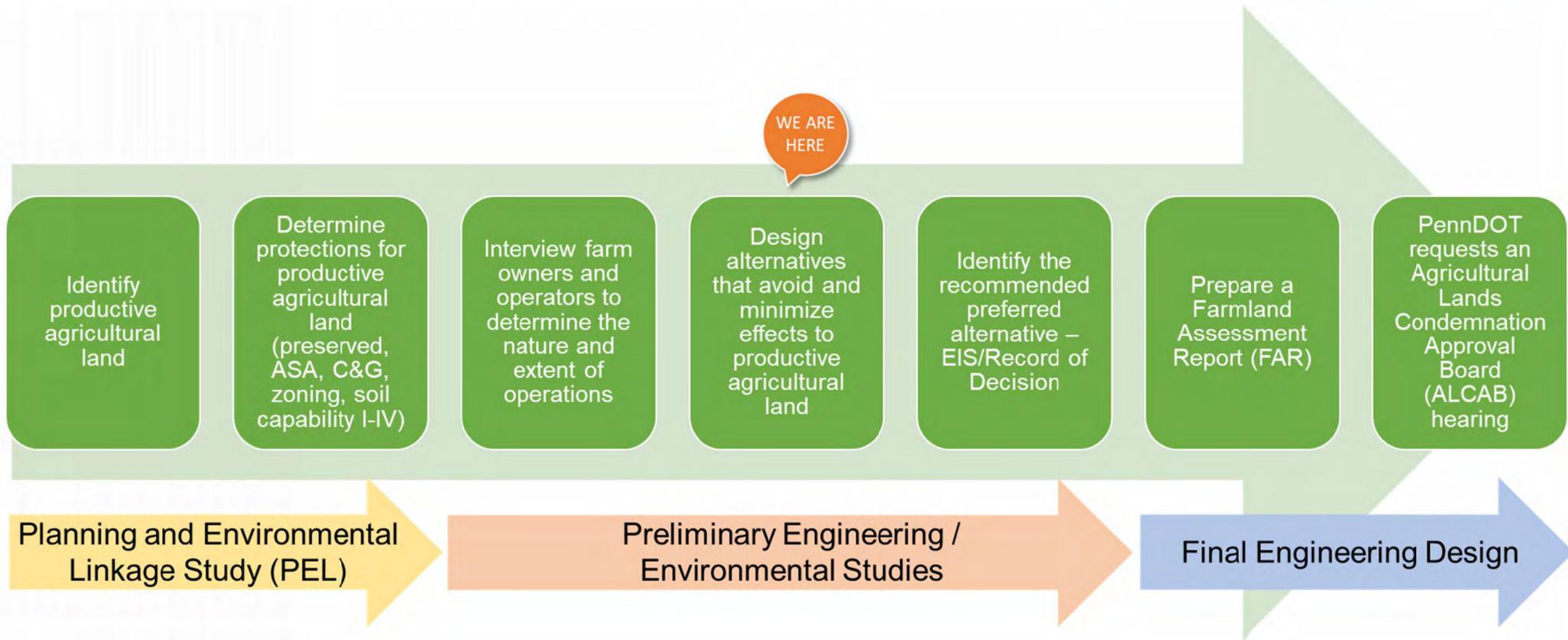


4 Pa Code Chapter 7, § 7.301 et seq. Agricultural Land Preservation Policy (ALPP) – outlines agricultural preservation standards that all state agencies must support. It is intended to protect and preserve the Commonwealth's "prime agricultural land." "Prime agricultural land" is categorized into five priority categories: preserved farmland; Agricultural Security Areas; farmland enrolled in Act 319 (Clean and Green); agricultural zoning; and farmland with soil capability classes I-IV.



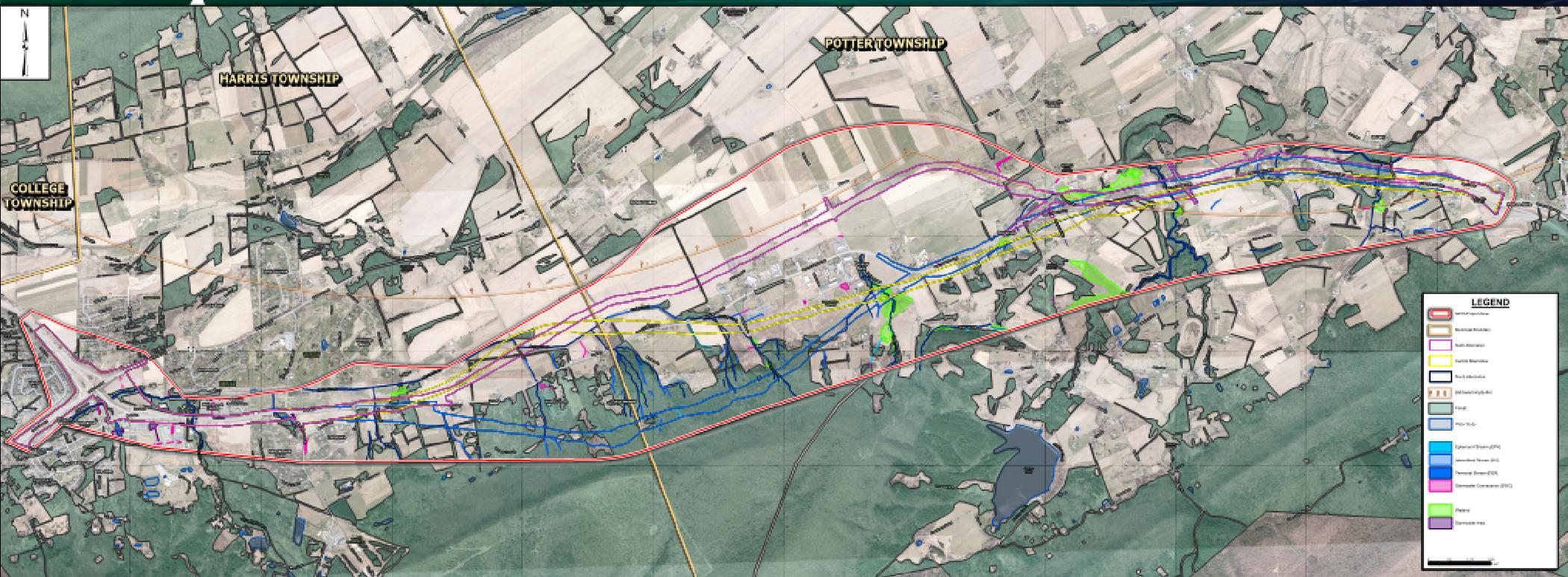
7 U.S.C. § 4201, Farmland Protection Policy Act (FPPA) of 1981 – The purpose is to minimize the extent to which federal programs contribute to the unnecessary and irreversible conversion of farmland to nonagricultural use. The Act recognizes the four categories of farmland soils: Prime Farmland Soils; Unique Farmland Soils; Farmland Soils of Statewide Importance; and Locally Important Farmland Soils. Land does not have to be in active agricultural use for consideration under this program.

state college area CONNECTOR



state college area CONNECTOR

Natural Resources



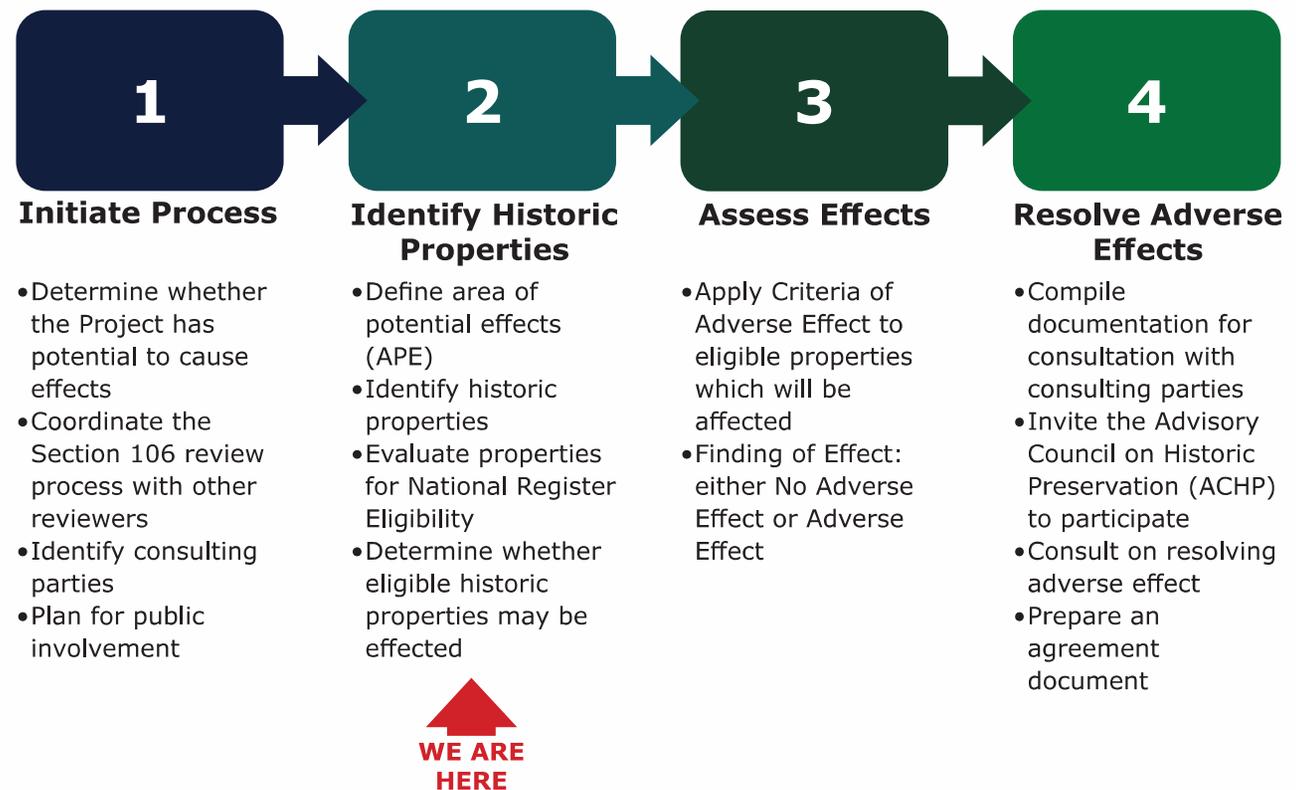
Section 106 Review Process

What is Section 106?

Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (NHPA) requires federal agencies to consider the effects of federal undertakings on historic properties. If a federal or federally-assisted project has the potential to affect historic properties, a Section 106 review must take place.

How does Section 106 apply to this project?

This project is federally assisted and has the potential to affect historic properties. Therefore, the requirements of Section 106 must be met.



What is Section 106 Consultation?

Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (NHPA) requires federal agencies to consider the effects on historic properties of projects they carry out, assist, fund, permit, license, or approve throughout the country. If a federal or federally-assisted project has the potential to affect historic properties, a Section 106 review will take place.

Section 106 gives the ACHP, interested parties, and the public the chance to weigh in on these matters before a final decision is made. This process is an important tool for citizens to lend their voice in protecting and maintaining historic properties in their communities.

What is a Consulting Party?

A Consulting Party is an organization or individual who has a demonstrated interest in a project, due to their legal or economic relationship to the undertaking or affected property(ies), or their concerns with the undertaking's effects on historic properties.

A landowner and a local preservation group are examples of an individual and organization with a demonstrated interest.

Goals of Section 106 Consultation

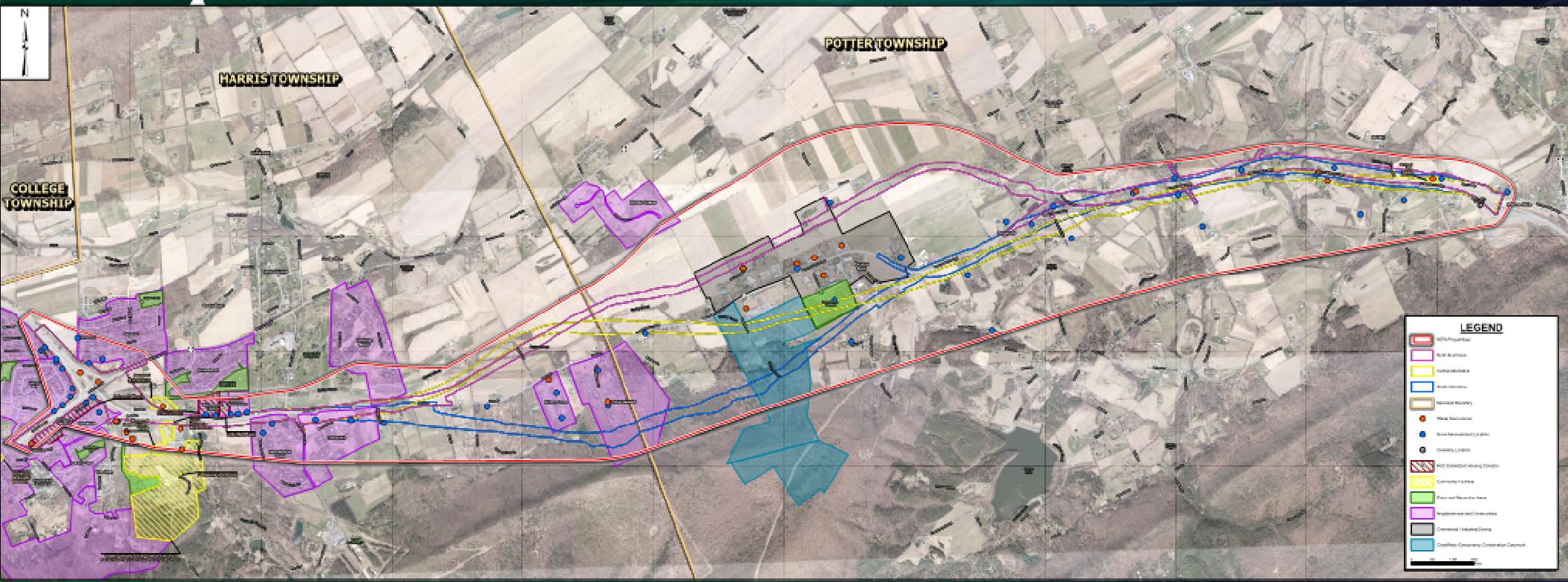
The goal of consultation is:

- ▶ to identify historic properties potentially affected by the undertaking,
- ▶ assess effects,
- ▶ and seek ways to avoid, minimize or mitigate any adverse effects on historic properties.

Consultation does not mandate a specific outcome. Rather, it is the process of seeking views on the project's effect on eligible historic properties and, if the effect is adverse, how project effects on historic properties should be resolved.

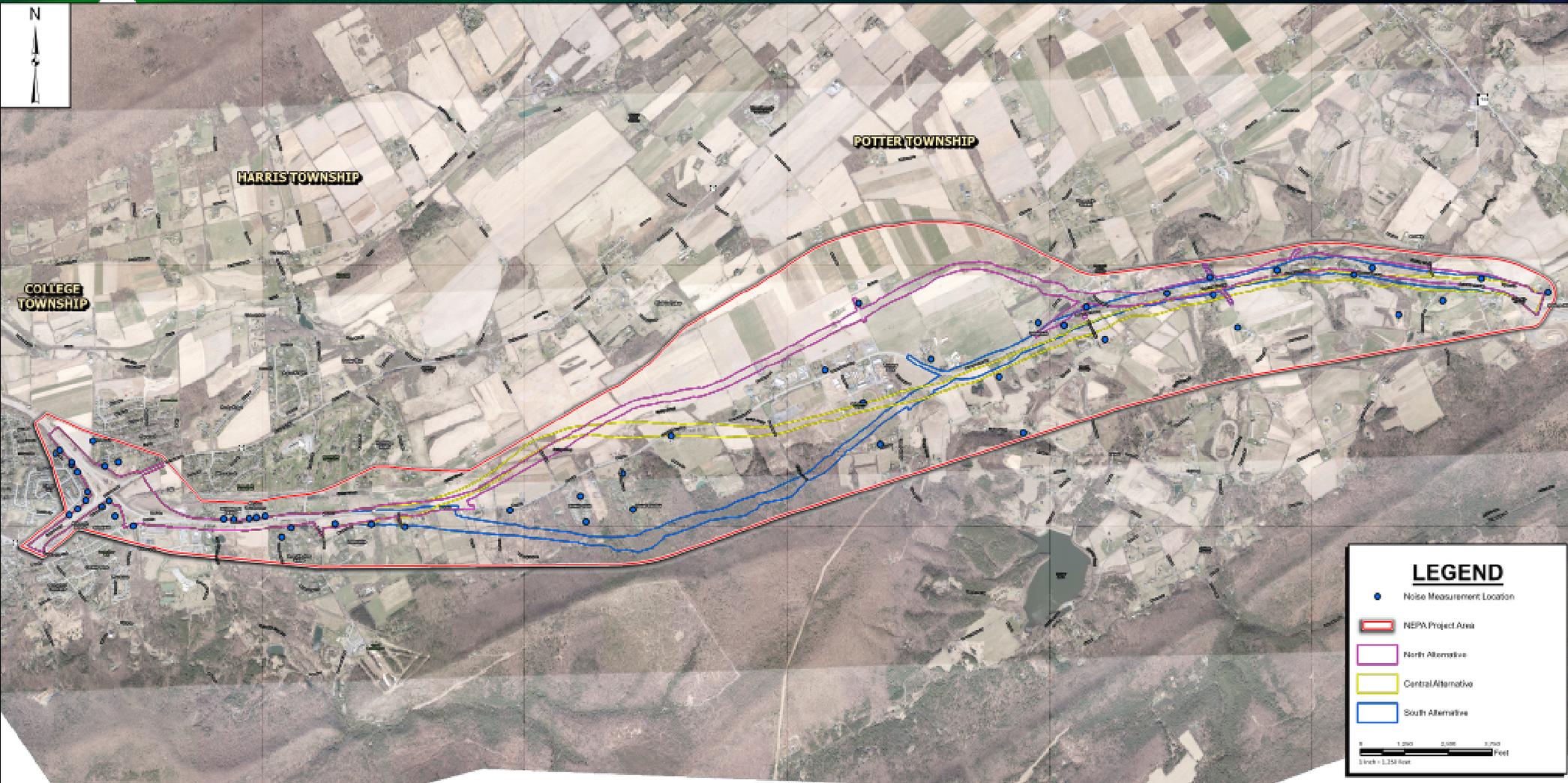
state college area CONNECTOR

Socioeconomic Resources



state college area CONNECTOR

Noise Resources



state college area CONNECTOR



Section used at western and eastern ends of the Build Alternative

Western End:

Mt. Nittany Expressway to Bear Meadows Road

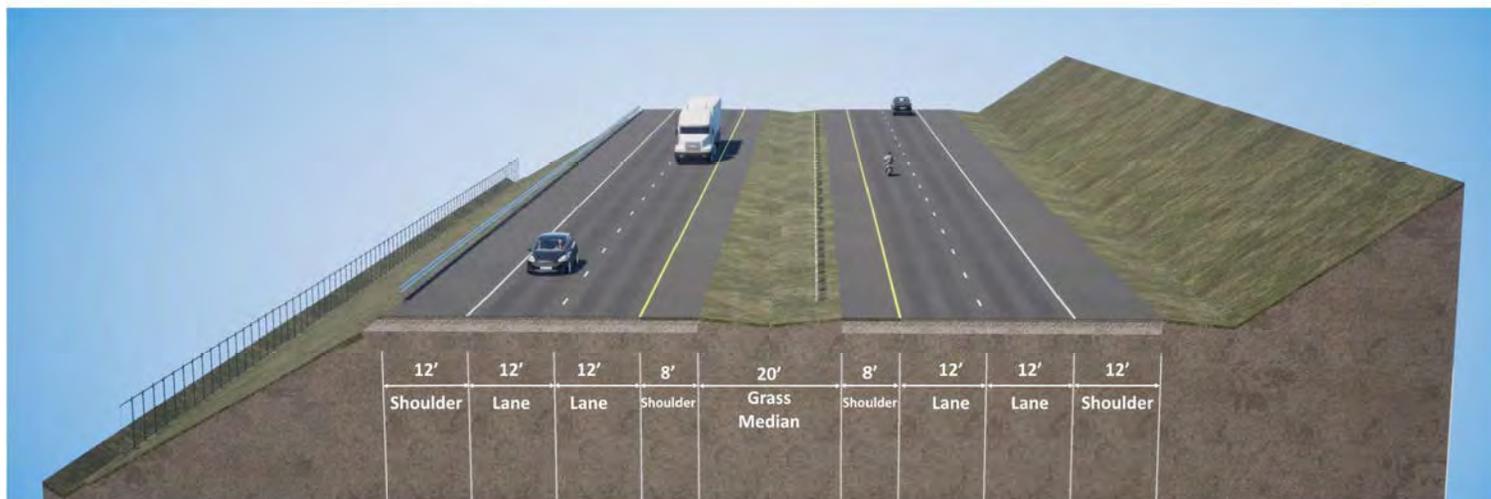
Eastern End:

US 322 at Potters Mills Gap to Tusseyville Area

Section used in the middle portion of the Build Alternative

Middle Area:

Bear Meadows Road to Tusseyville Area



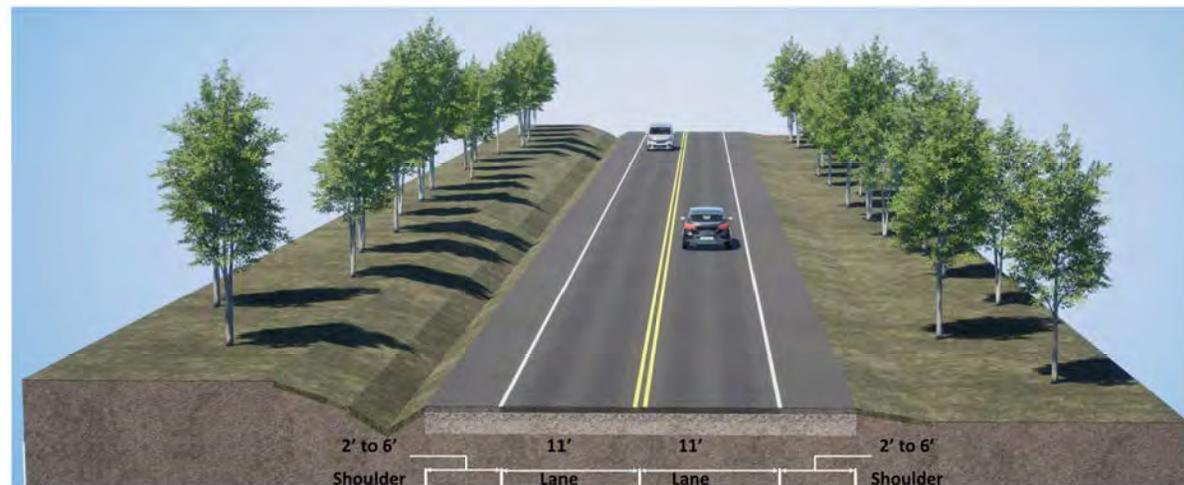
Typical Build Alternative Roadway Sections

state college area **CONNECTOR**



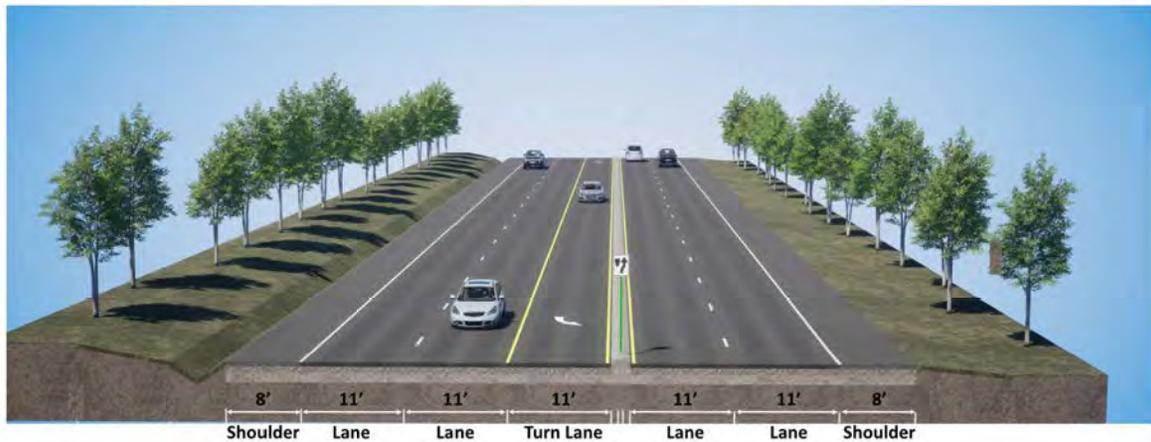
Rural Roadway Typical Section
in Harris and Potter Townships

Urban Roadway Typical Section
in Harris Township



Typical Rural and Urban Roadway Sections

state college area CONNECTOR



PA 45 Urban Roadway Typical Section

PA 45 in Harris Township from Boal Avenue to proposed SPUI Interchange



Rendering of Urban Roadway
Typical Section

PA 45 Urban Roadway Section

state college area **CONNECTOR**



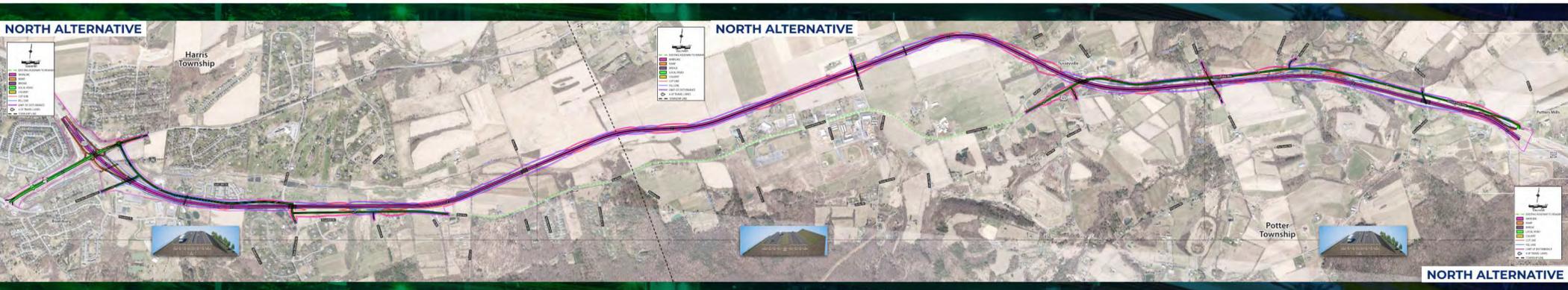
Urban Roadway Typical Section Adjacent to Build Alternative

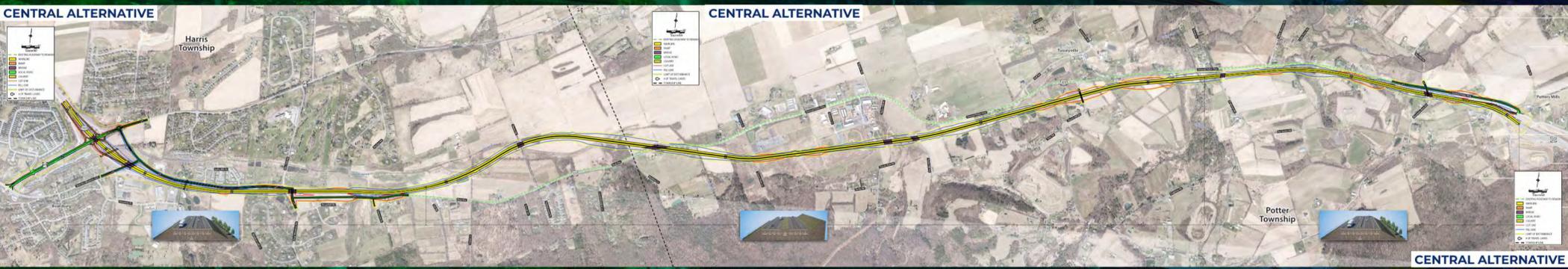
Local 322 in Harris Township from Discovery Drive to Bear Meadows Road showing shared used path with municipal agreement

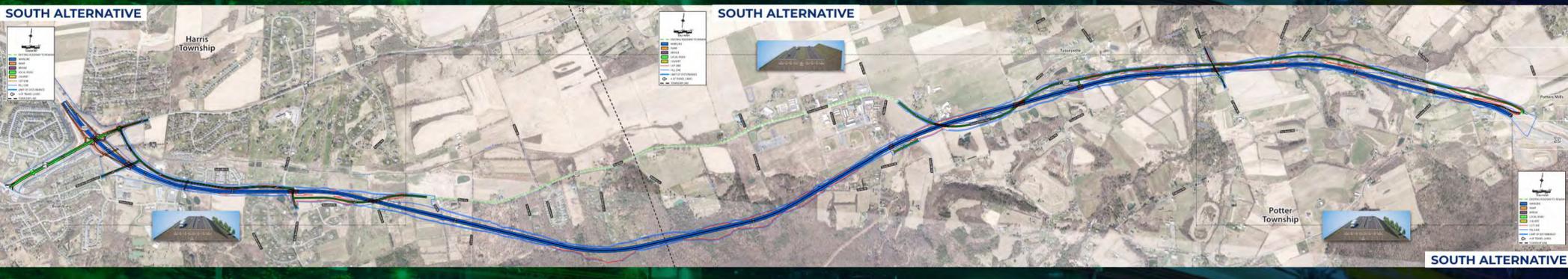
**Rendering of Urban Roadway
Typical Section**



Local 322 Urban Roadway Section







Feature		US 322 Corridor						
		US 322 North		US 322 Central		US 322 South		
NATURAL RESOURCES	Potential Limit of Disturbance Area (acres)	394		372		445		
	Agriculture							
	Productive Agricultural Land (acres)	110		100		73		
	Agricultural Operations Affected (#)	19		19		18		
	Agricultural Conservation Easements (within Productive Agricultural Land) (acres)	19		13		5		
	Agricultural Security Areas (within Productive Agricultural Land) (acres)	59		33		35		
	Act 319 Clean and Green Areas (within Productive Agricultural Land) (acres)	98		98		65		
	Agricultural Zoning Districts (within Productive Agricultural Land) (acres)	82		74		45		
	Soil Capability Classes I-IV (within Productive Agricultural Land) (acres)	103		101		76		
	Other Land Preservation							
	Clearwater Conservation Easements (acres)	23		30		21		
	Water Resources							
	Wetlands (acres)	29		31		23		
	Total Streams (# of crossing linear feet)	21	6,148	24	8,127	41	10,073	
	CWF-HQ/CWF Streams (# of crossings linear feet)	21	6,148	20	6,660	37	8,125	
	Ponds/Lakes (# acres)	9	1.5	8	3.2	9	1.9	
	100 Yr. Floodplains (acres)	24		18		23		
	Terrestrial Habitat and Threatened and Endangered Species							
	Forested/Wooded Habitats (acres)	26		25		99		
	PA Natural Heritage Core Habitat (acres)	24		21		25		
	Karst Features (#)	19		7		5		
	Bat Swarming Area (Combined) (acres)	106		68		102		
	Bat Swarming Area (Combined) (Forested) (acres)	13		9		13		
	Rothrock State Forest (acres)	0		0		0		
	Stone Mountain Important Bird Area (acres)	0		0		78		
	OTHER	Acid Producing Rock (Potential Risk)	Low		Low		High	
CULTURAL RESOURCES	Historic Resources							
	NRHP Eligible Property (#)	6		5		6		
	Penns Valley/Brush Valley Rural Historic District Contributing Property (# acres)	66	182	41	174	73	198	
	Archaeological Resources							
	Known Archaeological Sites (#)	3		4		4		
	Historic Period Archaeological Sensitivity Area (acres)	14		12		27		
	Statewide Prehistoric/Pre-Contact Model - High Probability Area (acres)	104		107		83		
Statewide Prehistoric/Pre-Contact Model - Medium Probability Area (acres)	209		168		189			
SOCIOECONOMIC RESOURCES	Socioeconomic Resources							
	Residential Units (#)	30		15		38		
	Commercial (non-ag operations) (#)	5		3		5		
	Places of Worship (#)	0		1		0		
	HUD Subsidized Housing Units (#)	0		0		0		
	Community Facilities (acres)	2.34		2.14		2.34		
	Neighborhood/Community (# acres)	12	21	12	21	13	41	
	Parks (# acres)	0	0	1	7	0	0	
Waste Sites (#)	13		11		13			

state college area CONNECTOR



North Alternative

- Utilizes existing US 322 corridor in the east to minimize splitting productive agricultural land;
- Affects more wetlands along the northern side of existing US 322 in the east;
- Higher effects to productive agricultural lands
- Higher effects to contributing properties within Rural Historic District and National Register Eligible properties;
- Avoids headwaters of Spring Creek and many of its tributaries;
- Higher effects to residential displacements (30+);
- Avoids the Stone Mountain Important Bird Area;
- Lower risk of encountering acid producing rock.

Central Alternative

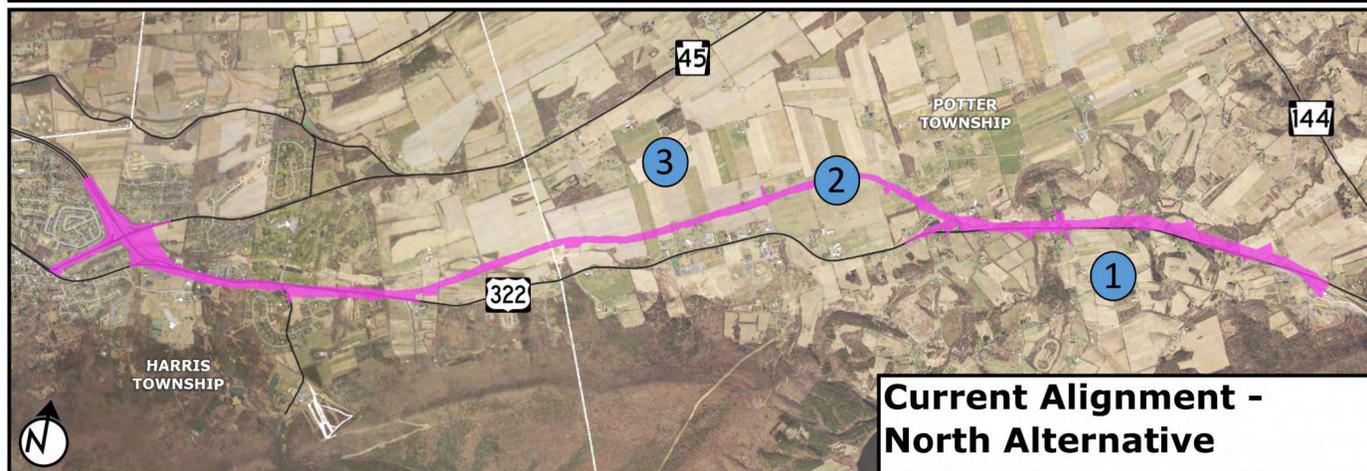
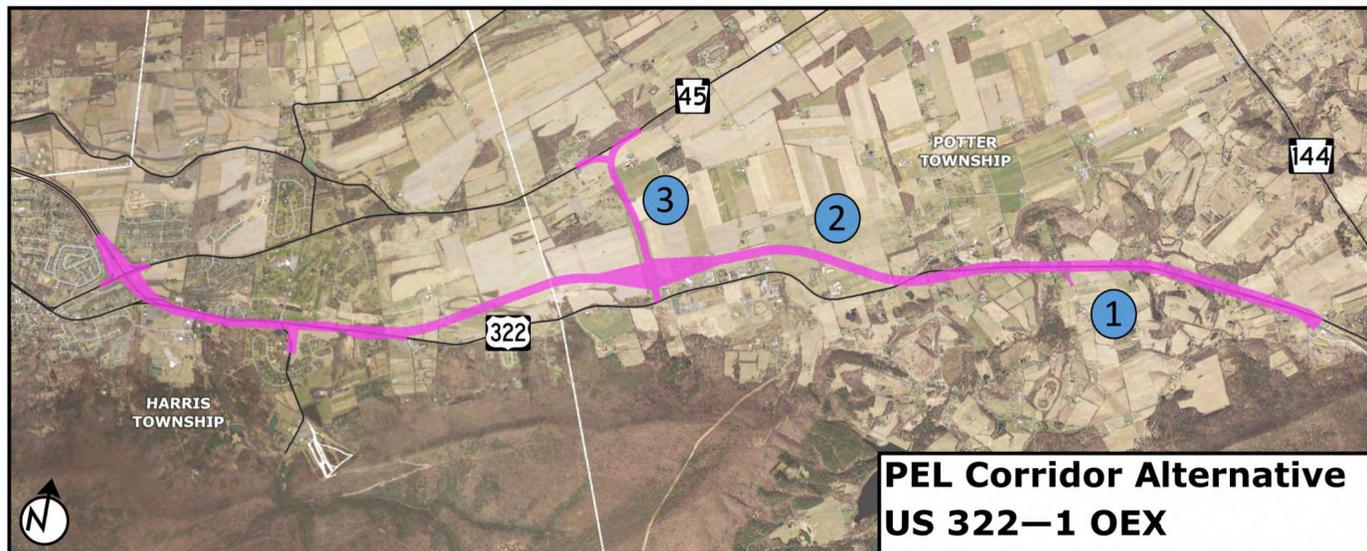
- Utilizes existing US 322 corridor in the east to minimize splitting productive agricultural land;
- Avoids wetland complexes on the north side of US 322 in the east;
- Minimizes effects to agricultural lands;
- Lower effects to contributing properties within Rural Historic District and National Register Eligible properties;
- Avoids headwaters of Spring Creek;
- Minimizes residential displacements (less than 20);
- Avoids the Stone Mountain Important Bird Area;
- Utilizes the Potter Township baseball fields;
- Lower risk of encountering acid producing rock.

South Alternative

- Utilizes Existing US 322 corridor in the east to minimize splitting productive agricultural land;
- Lower effects to wetlands and productive agricultural land;
- Higher effects to individually eligible historic properties;
- Higher effects to contributing properties within Rural Historic District and National Register Eligible properties;
- Higher effects to high-quality streams, including the headwaters of Spring Creek;
- Higher effects to forest land;
- Highest residential displacements (30+);
- Higher effects to the Stone Mountain Important Bird Area;
- Higher risk of encountering acid producing rock.

Alternative Observations

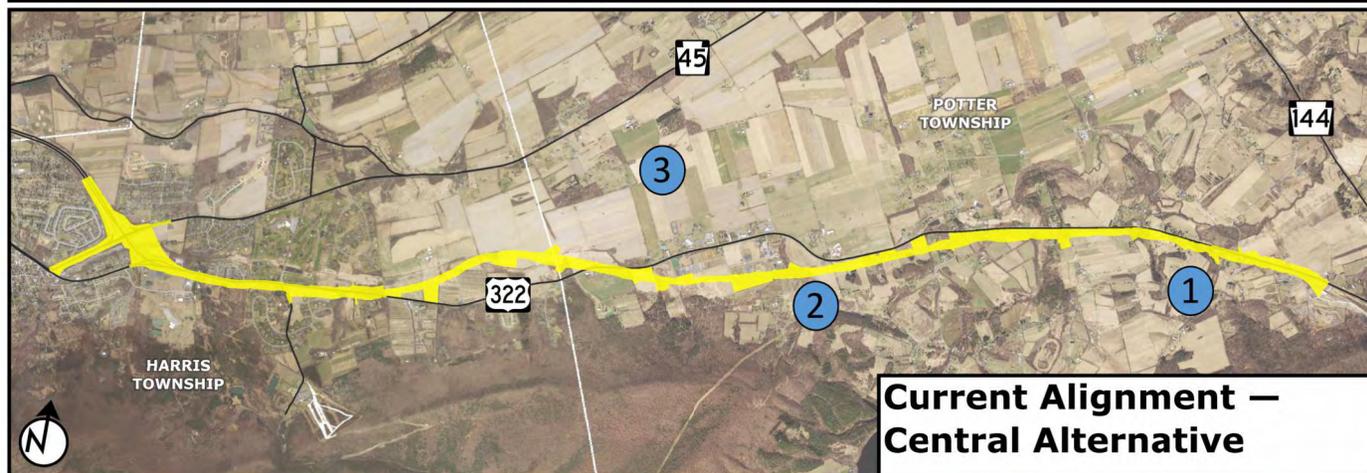
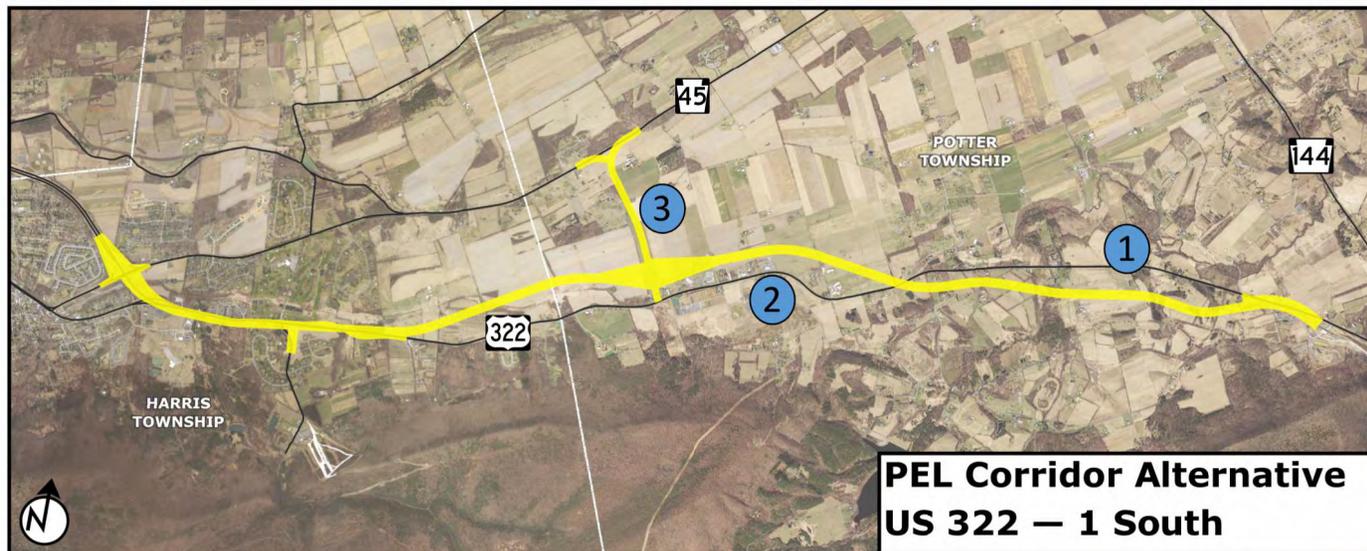
state college area CONNECTOR



- 1 PEL corridor was centered on US 322. The North Alternative alignment shifts further north to minimize effects along the south side of existing US 322.
- 2 North Alternative departs from the PEL corridor by extending further north before turning to parallel existing US 322. Shift was incorporated to minimize effects to farm operations and other environmental features.
- 3 Removed the PA 45 Connector and interchange.

**North Alternative vs.
US 322-1OEX PEL Corridor**

state college area CONNECTOR



- 1 PEL corridor was further south of US 322 in the east. The current alignment remains closer to existing US 322 to minimize effects to farm operations and other environmental features south of US 322.
- 2 Central Alternative remains south of US 322 for a longer distance than was proposed in the PEL study. This modification was developed to minimize effects on farm operations and other environmental features along with local officials input.
- 3 Removed the PA 45 Connector and interchange.

**Central Alternative vs.
US 322-1 South PEL Corridor**

state college area CONNECTOR



- 1 PEL corridor was further south of US 322 in the east. The current alignment shifts north of existing US 322 to minimize effects to farm operations and other environmental features south of US 322.
- 2 Removed the interchange.



South Alternative vs. US 322-5 PEL Corridor

How Can You Participate?

Options for Commenting

1. Fill out the online comment form
2. Fill out the comment form provided and mail to:



Online Comment Form

Eric Murnyack, P.E.
PennDOT District 2-0
70 PennDOT Drive, Clearfield PA 16830

3. Fill out comment form provided and email to Eric Murnyack, P.E. at emurnyack@pa.gov or Leigh Woolridge, P.E., at lwoolridge@pa.gov

All comments received by Friday, August 30, 2024, will become part of the record for this meeting.

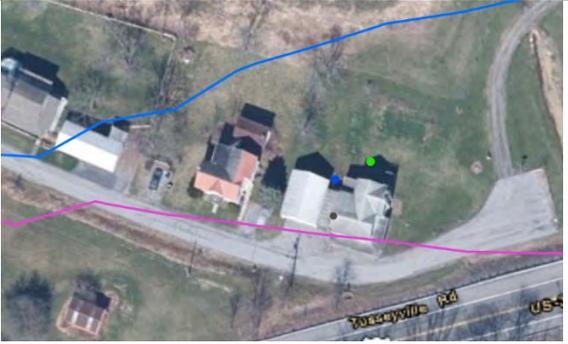
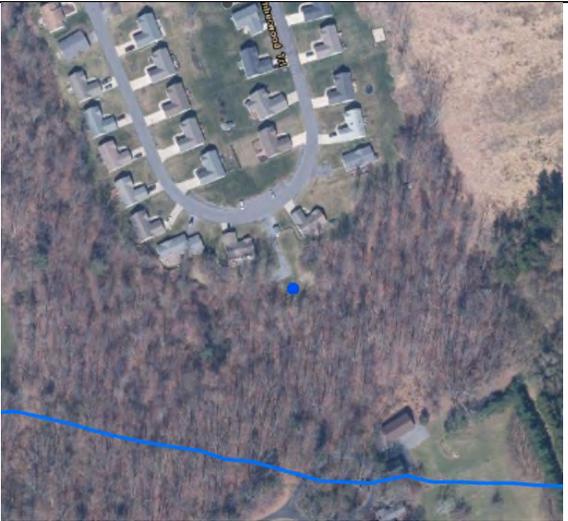


For more information

Go to the “Get Involved / Contact Us” section on the project website at www.penndot.pa.gov/scac

Thank you for participating.
We look forward to hearing from you!

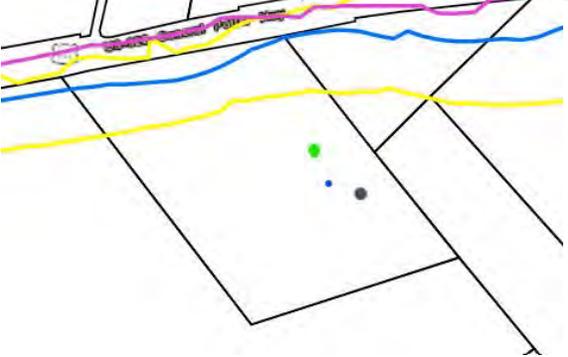
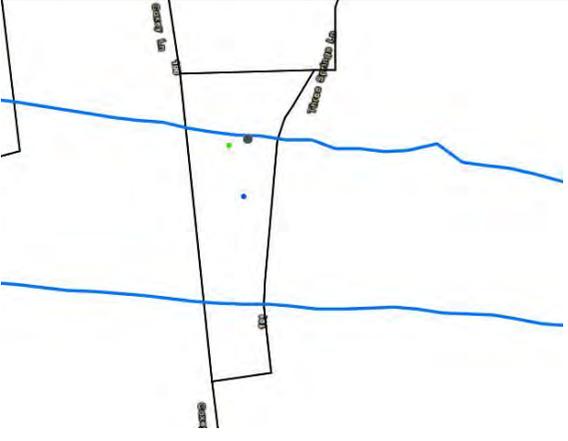
Computer/ Operator	Information Recorded	General Comment	File Identifier	Pic
A/LDT	Well and Septic, sinkhole, drainage, bald eagle nest	<p>-Tusseyville hit with new north, prefers the old OEX</p> <p>- What factors determined the change</p> <p>-PJD photo of old blue prints – covenants on property</p> <p>-Does not like new north alignment (bald eagle nest)</p> <p>-3 families, sinkholes, people building along Roundhill Rd (new developments going in)</p> <p>-Shuman 155 Neff Rd, Neff Estates</p>	<p>A_SCAC_Shuman_155 Neff Road.jpg</p> <p>A- SCAC_Shuman_155 Neff-1.jpg</p> <p>A- SCAC_Shuman_155 Neff-3 bald eagle.jpg</p>	 <p>Bald eagle nest location (above)</p>  
A/LDT	Well	<p>-Speed on 322 by Potters Mills I issue. People don't slow to 45 mph</p> <p>- Houtz 273 Anabell (2516 General Potter Highway)</p>	A-SCAC_Houtz_273 Annabel.jpg	

Computer/Operator	Information Recorded	General Comment	File Identifier	Pic
A/LDT	Well and Septic	-Central not in - Stachowski 62 Tusseyville Rd	A_SCAC_Stachowski_62 Tusseyville Rd.jpg	
A/LDT	Water source for community	-Water source at southern end of complex - Kepler 188 Timberwood Trail	A-SCAC_Kepler_188 Timberwood Trail – water source for dev.	
A/LDT	Well and Septic	-Prefers north - Smith 117 Chopper Lane	A-SCAC_Smith_117 chopper.jpg	

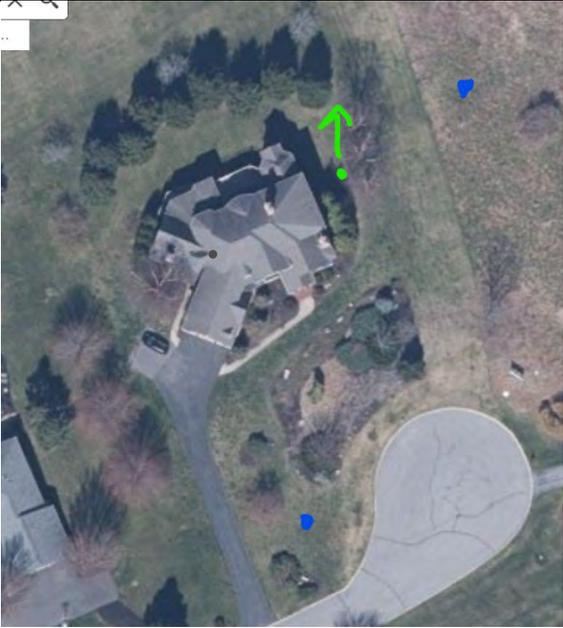
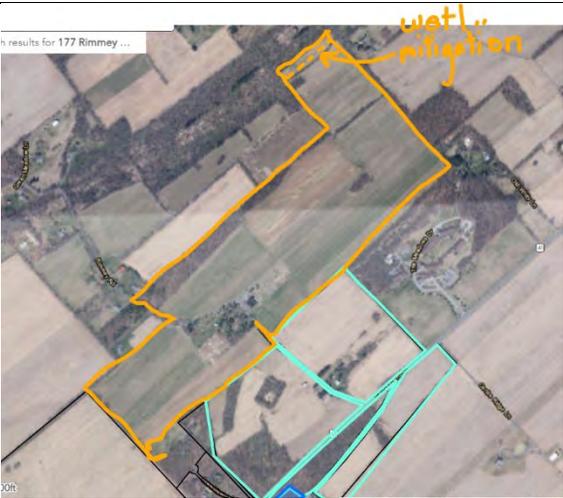
Computer/Operator	Information Recorded	General Comment	File Identifier	Pic
A/LDT	3 wells and septic dump area	<p>-Prefers central</p> <p>- Ripka 2571 General Potter Highway</p>	<p>A_SCAC_Ripka_2571 general potter dump area</p> <p>A_SCAC_Ripka_2571 general potter.jpg</p>	
A/LDT	Well and septic	- Myers 2413 General Potter Highway	A_SCAC_Myers_2413 general potter.jpg	
A/LDT	Wildlife corridor	<p>-Ayssa – Logan relayed info.</p> <p>- King 180 Meadowlark Lane</p>	A-SCAC_King_180 Meadowlark Lane-wildlife corridor	

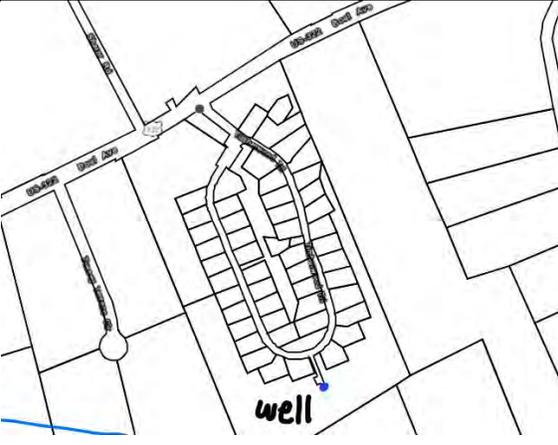
Computer/Operator	Information Recorded	General Comment	File Identifier	Pic
A/LDT	Well and septic	<p>-If central alignment – take the whole property than have the hwy in their backyard</p> <p>- Myers 2414 General Potter Highway</p>	A-SCAC_Myers_2414 general potter.jpg	
A/LDT	3 septic systems, public water	<p>-Wants to know how the road will go – over existing 322 off Bear Meadow</p> <p>-Huber 100 Bear Meadow</p>	A-SCAC_Huber_100 Bear Meadow.jpg	
--	Blue/South	<p>-500' elevation gain</p> <p>-5 breaks</p> <p>-drainage for Spring Creek and seepage, fishing good</p> <p>-Study the impacts to wildlife</p> <p>-Why not go thru golf course</p> <p>- Flemming 271 Timberwood Trail resident</p>	--	No snippet

Computer/Operator	Information Recorded	General Comment	File Identifier	Pic
--	--	<p>-Wells at structures along 322 and septic but didn't know where</p> <p>-Septic and well at house that's set back</p> <p>- Tait 292 Tait Rd</p>	--	No snippet
--	--	<p>Access concerns to house if driveway taken – house set back</p> <p>- Tait 121 Tait Road</p>	--	No snippet
A/LDT	Well and septic	<p>-Most likely full take</p> <p>- Brouse 2466 General Potter Highway</p>	A_SCAC_Brouse_2466 general potter.jpg	
A/LDT	--	<p>-Tussey Pond Park off Discover Drive</p> <p>-East of Disc. Dr. – Farm for food bank, ponds for irrigation</p> <p>- Diane Farr</p>	--	No snippet
A/LDT	Don't know	<p>-Nittany Valley Farms, bridge height a concern to access farm, farm equip.</p> <p>-28 Dec. (?)</p> <p>-Don't know well or septic</p>	--	No snippet

Computer/Operator	Information Recorded	General Comment	File Identifier	Pic
		- Higbee/Welldoroth(?) Sharer Road		
B/AJR	Septic tank and field, water well	<p>-Concerned about losing part of his prop. He uses it as a B&B rental property for income</p> <p>-Very concerned about impact to wildlife, migration, eagles, etc</p> <p>- Ron Kanagy 2516 General Potter Highway</p>	B-SCAC_Kanagy_2516 Gen Pott Hwy.jpg	
B/AJR	No well (city) No septic	<p>-Concerned about noise from SPUI</p> <p>- Jeanne Smith 508 Belle Ave Boalsburg</p>	--	No snippet
B/AJR	Wanted to talk to wetland person, I took him to LZ	<p>-wanted to get a copy of the wetland delineation of his property. No other comments for me</p> <p>- Matthew McCaskey 411 Mountain Back Rd</p>	--	No snippet
B/AJR	Septic tank and field Water well	<p>-biggest concern is the length of time it is taking to get an answer</p> <p>-don't know what to do with their house</p> <p>- Terry Stephens 182 Three Springs Lane</p>	B-SCAC_Stephens_182 Three Springs Ln.jpg	

Computer/Operator	Information Recorded	General Comment	File Identifier	Pic
B/AJR	Septic tank and field Water well Access he needs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -project would remove most of hist plots that he grows food on for Food Bank. He's the main supplier -concerned about his access to his property -concerned about noise -wants to save the pine trees at N end of property -wants a service road - Ken Lipson 1302 Boal Ave 	B-SCAC_Lipson_1302 Boal Ave.jpg	
B/AJR	Septic tank and field Water well (access could remain as is)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -don't want to lose ¼ of their property. Used for hayfields -very concerned that neighbors (2) will lose their houses - Hagens 164 Swan Lane 	B_SCAC_Hagen_164 Swan Ln.jpg	

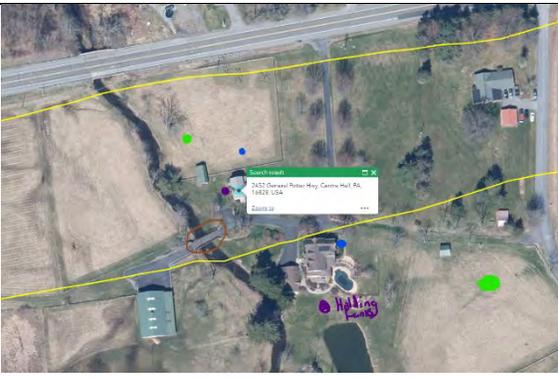
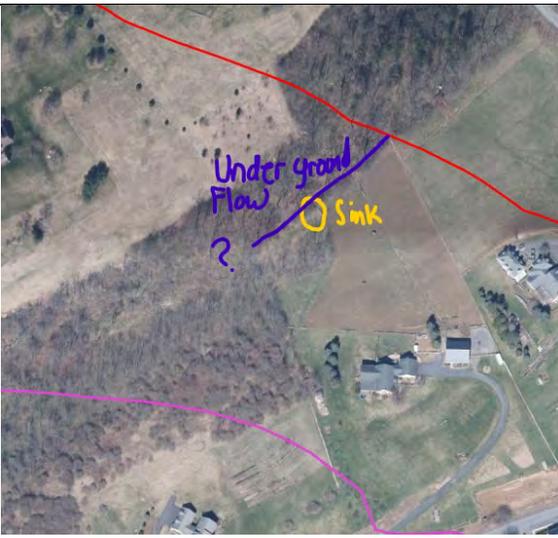
Computer/ Operator	Information Recorded	General Comment	File Identifier	Pic
B/AJR	<p>Sump pump pumps sewage north to city line Well is recorded</p>	<p>-asked why we're going through Laurel Heights and Bear Meadows and taking so many homes when we could route it to the N through the golf course (country club) instead</p> <p>-there's a housing shortage of homes with 1+ acres in the school district already as it is. The route will take out 20 homes in the subdivision</p> <p>-He's concerned that people currently building in Laurel Heights don't know about it. Is anyone telling them? I sent him over to the engineers.</p> <p>- Robert Drass 261 Mt. Pleasant Drive</p>	B_SCAC_Drass_261 Mt. Pleasant.jpg	
B/AJR	<p>Would save, took photo and sent it to Brad</p>	<p>-concerned about property Rhoneymeade and wants help with wetland mitigation, if possible</p> <p>- Zoe Boniface</p>	SCAC_Zoe Boniface_Rhoneymeade_wetland easement help	

Computer/Operator	Information Recorded	General Comment	File Identifier	Pic
B	--	Nittany Grove 210 Timberwood Trail Community well location	SCAC_Nittany Grove_210 Timberwood Trail_community well location	
C/BSR	Water runoff issues in red shape Well Septic	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -water runoff flooding -natural spring was covered by Potters Gap section -safety is good though - Gray 112 Gray Circle 	C_SCAC_Gray_112GrayCircle.jpg -	
C/BSR	Access Spring house	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -black-existing driveway access -yellow circle – spring house location -headwaters to spring Creek/EV Sheetz was interested in her property -Gamelands and Hunting at south end - Hamsher 1870 General Potter Highway 	C_SCAC_Hamsher_1870GenPotter_A.jpg C_SCAC_Hamsher_1870GenPotter_B.jpg	

Computer/Operator	Information Recorded	General Comment	File Identifier	Pic
				
C/BSR	Well Septic Seep-Spring	<p>-Natural seep – purple dot Comes out of ground naturally after rain</p> <p>- Ream 207 Somerset Drive</p>	C_SCAC_Ream_207SomersetDr.jpg	
C/BSR	Well Septic Brown	<p>-U5T = brown, 1,000 gallon</p> <p>-Territo 2601 General Potter Highway</p>	C_SCAC_Territo_2601GenPottHWY.jpg	

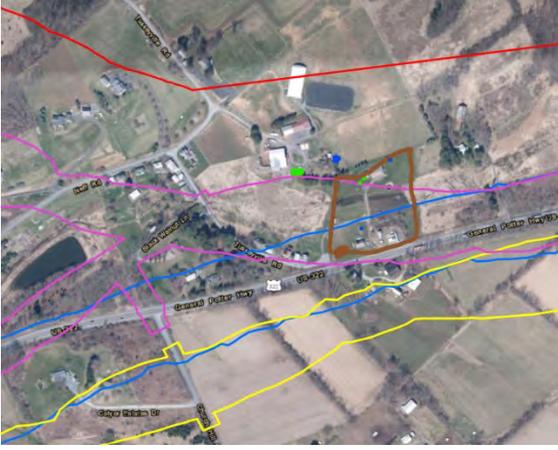
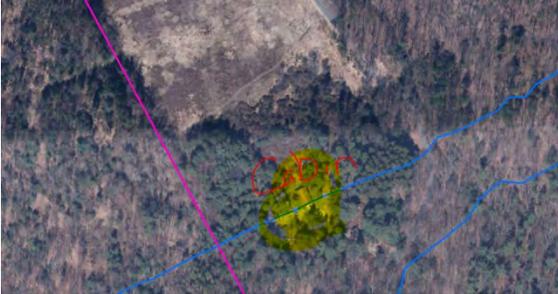
Computer/Operator	Information Recorded	General Comment	File Identifier	Pic
C/BSR	Noise	-Thick/Traffic Noise -open spot in vegetation/need trees - Hartranft 214 Beacon	C_SCAC_Hartranft_214Beacon.jpg	
C/BSR	PA Farm Bureau Shift south to central (?)	-Bater, Andy - Farmland Shift	Farmland_Shift.jpg	
C/BSR	Septic Field Well	- Tusar 126 Tussey Meadow	C_SCAC_Tusar_126TusseyMeadow.PNG	

Computer/Operator	Information Recorded	General Comment	File Identifier	Pic
D/DTM	Cemetery	-Be aware of cemetery in east end	D_SCAC_Marshall_Cemetery	
D/DTM	Spring Well Septic	<p>-Pond on property is fed by spring</p> <p>-Rodney Shreckengast</p> <p>-well is 636 (?)ft depth</p>	<p>D_SCAC_Shreckengast_WellSeptic_2668_General_Potter_Hwy</p> <p>D_SCAC_Shreckengast_2668_General_Potter_Hwy</p>	

Computer/Operator	Information Recorded	General Comment	File Identifier	Pic
D/DTM	Well Septic	-Well 24ft depth -Raymond Struble, Mountainback Rd	D_SCAC_Struble_MountainBackRd	
D/DTM	Historic bridge Well/septic Holding tanks	-bridge is from 1904, original Lewis town pike -House, log house building in 1850s -Kayra and Allan Darr 2452 and 2454 (1880s house) General Potter Highway	D_SCAC_Darr_2452_2454_GeneralPotterW hy	
D/DTM	Underground water Large sinkhole	Large sinkhole in corner Large underground flow	D_SCAC_Shuman_155NeffRd	

Computer/Operator	Information Recorded	General Comment	File Identifier	Pic
D/DTM	Septic Well Pump Tanks Closing Tanks	Partial impact, takes her out of CNG and American Homestead Act Kelli Simco	D_SCAC_Simco_167SwanLn	
5/PJD	--	-Location of Local Road -Berm and Noise -Robert and Marjorie Gustafson -108 Banner Way	E_SCAC-108 Banner Way.png	
5/PJD	--	-Public water and public sewer -don't mind being taken -Daniel and Barb McIntyre -146 Roundhill Road	--	No snippet
5/PJD	--	-undeveloped, perc (?) in upper -Kerr cuts hay on the property -Tusseyville 12.15 Acres -Lot 18, Willow Lane	E_SCAC-Willow Lan.png	

Computer/Operator	Information Recorded	General Comment	File Identifier	Pic
5/PJD	--	<p>-Central alignment, move to the north side of 322, or move as close to Foringer, across the street wants to sell. Central puts out business</p> <p>-Jess Darlington</p>	E_SCAC-Darlington.png	
5/PJD	--	<p>-concerned with noise, Jake-Brakes</p> <p>-Mary Holland -182 Beacon Circle</p>	--	No snippet
5/PJD	--	<p>Former Lewistown Pike that traverses his property, bridge built 1904, there was a log house in 1850s.</p> <p>I identified two watering access areas for his horses</p> <p>Darr 2454 General Potter Highway, Centre Hall</p>	E-SCAC-Darr – Horse Watering Access.png	
5/PJD	--	<p>“Avoided” and happy to be <u>avoided</u></p> <p>Note a Nate Greenlord up to the north and west, would like to be taken, “belief”</p> <p>Brenda Geary 397 Muontainback Rd</p>	--	No snippet

Computer/Operator	Information Recorded	General Comment	File Identifier	Pic
5/PJD	--	<p>Horse operation "entire livelihood"</p> <p>Affected by north alt</p> <p>Encore Farms, LLC</p> <p>Shira Houser (717-756-3019) 108 Tusseyville Rd</p>	E-SCAC-Houser Encore Farms.png	
5/PJD	--	<p>Commercial building/mechanic shop</p> <p>Raise own animals, open a farm stand (Fohringer Market)</p> <p>Nurse that have (?)</p> <p>Diane Fohringer (717-265-3685) 58 Tusseyville Rd</p>	--	No snippet
5/PJD	--	<p>Concerned with noise, since the completion of PMG they hear all the trucks come down ?</p> <p>Lori Cowell 162 Goodhart Road</p>	--	No snippet
1/MAT	Conservation	<p>Deer exclusions</p> <p>Headwaters for Creek (spring)</p> <p>Conservation easement drain field to left of cabin</p> <p>162 Tusseyview Lane</p>	162 TusseyviewLane.JPG	

Computer/ Operator	Information Recorded	General Comment	File Identifier	Pic
2/MAT	Tree Farm	Kuhn's Tree Farm Prefers Central Alt 2101 Boal Ave	2101 Boal Avenue.JPG	
3/MAT	--	ROW and acquisition from constr./ Loss of Fields How much acreage will be required? Potential to build a wall? Ken Lipson 1302 Boal Ave	--	No snippet
4/Lori	Septic and well	Close proximity 140 Dove	140 dove.JPG	
5/Sara	--	Will there be noise barriers Swales, Gayle <3 1999 General Potter Highway	--	No snippet

Computer/ Operator	Informatio n Recorded	General Comment	File Identifier	Pic
6/Sara	--	Depression and fault line north of 322 according to 1992 sinkhole map of Centre County Mary Carol Frier 151 Neff Road	--	No snippet



NORTH ALTERNATIVE

Summary of Public Concerns:

- Noise impacts to livestock
- Impacts to current agricultural operations

CENTRAL ALTERNATIVE

Summary of Public Concerns:

- Personal property effects
- Historic resource effects
- Access concerns
- Impacts to aquatic and natural resources
- Impacts to agricultural operations

SOUTH ALTERNATIVE

Summary of Public Concerns:

- Personal property effects (landlocking properties)
- Access concerns
- Impacts to birds

OTHER COMMENTS

Summary of Public Concerns:

- Roadway accommodations for large farm equipment
- Walkability/bikeability
- Tractor trailer clearance
- Business impacts
- Safety of current roadway
- Sink holes due to fault line

APPENDIX O – Public Comments and Responses

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This table documents the questions submitted during the official comment period via the public meeting comment form as shown below, and general comments received via email and the project website. Please note that responses to Question 2 on the public meeting comment form are summarized in Public Comments section of the Public Meeting Summary Report. (Copies of the actual comment forms and comments submitted during the official comment period are located in the project technical files and can be made available upon request.)

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pennsylvania
DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

(Please Print)
Name: _____
Email: _____ Please add me to your electronic mailing list
Address: _____

1. PennDOT has identified three US 322 Build Alternative alignments for detailed design and environmental evaluation. Using the map below, please tell us which corridor you prefer.
 _____ North (purple) _____ Central (yellow) _____ South (blue)

2. Why do you prefer the Build Alternative alignment you chose above?

3. Questions?

Online Comment Form

If you were unable to ask PennDOT a specific question during the meeting today, please use the space above to provide your question that you would like PennDOT to specifically answer in the Meeting Summary Report.
All comments on the public meeting materials must be received by August 30, 2024.

U.S. Department of Transportation
Federal Highway Administration

To review specific individual questions/comments and associated responses, locate the name (last name, first name) of the interested commenter in the following table.

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State College Area Connector
August 2024 Public Meeting Comment Response Table

NAME (LAST, FIRST)	ZIP CODE	QUESTIONS/COMMENTS	RESPONSES
Adleman, Larry	16828	I live right along 322 in the connector section. I couldn't make the August meeting. Is one of the three 3 routes have my property listed as possibly being taken yet.	The property address listed on the comment form lies within the corridor of both the North and South US 322 Build Alternative alignments as shown at the August 2024 public meeting.
Aguer, Kirk Sr.	16827	When will construction begin?	Based on the current schedule, right-of-way acquisition will begin at the end of 2028. However, PennDOT will try to identify those parcels that are full acquisitions and advance their purchase as soon as possible, once the FHWA has issued the Record of Decision for the project (confirmed the alternative and the mitigation concepts to advance). Construction is anticipated to begin in 2030.
Ankney-Wrye, Shane	16801	Why are we in of an alternative path on US 322?	Alternatives were developed to best balance the transportation needs with the potential effects to the natural, cultural, and socioeconomic environment.
Au, James	16827	Does PennDOT have estimated costs for the three alternatives? And which alternative would be the least disruptive to 322 traffic?	<p>The proposed three alternative alignments would range from \$500 to \$700 million for construction cost and \$50 to \$100 million for right-of-way cost. Cost is not a differentiator for aiding in identifying a recommended preferred alternative. The construction cost range includes inflation of material and labor costs from now until the start of construction. As the design is further developed, the design team will continue to look for opportunities to reduce/minimize the cost of the project.</p> <p>Each of the proposed three alternatives would remove traffic from existing US 322 similarly as they all have the same endpoints. Additionally, construction of any of the alternatives would have temporary disruptions to existing US 322.</p>
Bhattarai, Nelie	16827	Please consider. Thank you!	Thank you for your comment.
Bigatel, Alan		<p>Thank you for considering my comments on the Planning and Environmental Linkages (PEL) for the State Collate Area Connector project. Because I was out of town, I was unable to attend the August 15, 2024, public meeting. Please add my comments to those from the meeting. My comments relate to the PEL process, the detailed field environmental investigations, and the preliminary alignments alternatives that are necessary for evaluating compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA).</p> <p>The two main areas of concern are the Spring Creek watershed, and the Sinking Creek watershed. Both streams are classified as High Quality-Cold Water Fisheries with naturally reproducing wild trout. Both Spring Creek headwaters in Potter and Harris Townships and the Sinking Creek corridor in Potter Township are perennial streams with healthy macroinvertebrate communities and unimpacted cold water. This provides for ideal ecosystems that support wild trout reproduction. Because of the stream classifications, the wetlands and unnamed tributaries to both streams are considered Exceptional Value and must be protected by avoiding environmental impacts.</p> <p>Spring Creek The overriding environmental fact concerning the recharge to the Spring Creek headwaters is that it all flows from the south, from Tussey Ridge, to the north to the main stem of Spring Creek. From Spring Creek's headwaters near Taylor Hill Road to Blue Spring Run in Boalsburg, these cold water recharges flow from the south. There are many large and small wetlands along these unnamed tributaries. By federal and state statutes and regulations, the</p>	<p>As you noted, this area is rich with high quality and exceptional value streams/watercourses and wetland. As part of the NEPA process, a team of scientists conducted field investigations within the project area to identify, document, and evaluate wetlands and watercourses. These resources are protected under Section 404 of the Clean Water Act (CWA) by the US Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) and the Chapter 105 regulatory program (e.g., Water Obstruction and Encroachments in Streams, Floodways, Wetland, and Bodies of Water) by PA Department of Environmental Protection (DEP). Each of these laws require avoidance and minimization efforts occur prior to impacting these protected resources. PennDOT and FHWA are working with the resource agencies to further refine design that will better avoid and minimize impacts. Design changes may include minor shifts in the alternative alignment, spanning the resource, and water collection and filtration from the proposed roadway prior to releasing into area streams. Mitigation will be identified and implemented in cooperation with the USACE and DEP to address any proposed impact to wetland and waterways. If a resource cannot be avoided, impacts to that resource will be mitigated.</p> <p>When developing the proposed alternatives these resources along with other regulated and valued resources were considered. All applicable federal and state environmental</p>

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NAME (LAST, FIRST)	ZIP CODE	QUESTIONS/COMMENTS	RESPONSES
		<p>wetlands and unnamed tributaries associated with Spring Creek are considered Exceptional Value and should be avoided. Also, many unnamed tributaries drop into the limestone geology when they flow off the shale layer below Tussey Ridge and flow to Spring Creek in underground channels.</p> <p>There is evidence of the subsurface flows in a line of sinkholes that extends from Loop Road in Boalsburg, Harris Township to Tussey Sink in Potter Township. Tussey Sink is an important recharge to Cedar Run in the Linden Hall area. This underground cold water recharge to Cedar Run is an important contribution to the fly-fishing section of Spring Creek at Oak Hall. Heavy truck traffic, which PennDOT expects to increase, over these subsurface channels could cause collapse and damage to the roadway as well as disruption of the recharge to Spring Creek.</p> <p>Because the cold water recharges to the headwaters of Spring Creek all flow from the south, any alignment to the north of the Spring Creek's main channel would avoid impacts to the recharge from unnamed tributaries, Exceptional Value wetlands, and subsurface flows.</p> <p>Sinking Creek Sinking Creek is also fed by underground flows, wetlands, and unnamed tributaries that are protected under federal and state laws. From the surface divide, east of Taylor Hill Road, the alignment to the east will need to avoid the Exceptional Value wetlands tributary to Sinking Creek and will need to cross Sinking Creek at a well channelized location. The flow of Sinking Creek from south to northeast presents a slightly different problem from a protection aspect. An east-west route that avoids wetlands and crosses Sinking Creek at a narrow channelized reach would provide an alignment that avoids environmental impact. The older pre-US 322 Road alignment flowed from Tusseyville across the present US 322, to an iron bridge that is still present upstream of the former SPCA, and then used the Old Lewistown Pike to cross the unnamed tributary that recharges the large wetland near Red Mill Road. Impact to the large wetland near Red Mill Road should be avoided as this is a very important wetland and is noted on the National Wetland Inventory (NWI). This is an example of such an alignment, while others could be found, which would stay away from the Exceptional Value wetlands associated with Sinking Creek and would cross it near the terminus of the four-lane section of US 322.</p> <p>There are many wetlands along unnamed tributaries to both Spring Creek and Sinking Creek that have been field verified by Skelly and Loy and are not shown on Figure 3 of the Wetlands and Watercourses Technical Memorandum. Several of these wetlands have been the subject of enforcement actions by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, PA Dept. of Environmental Protection, and the Centre County Conservation District.</p> <p>Choosing alignments based on avoiding environmental impacts to Spring Creek and to Sinking Creek is very achievable and avoids environmental impacts as required by NEPA. These alignments could be chosen, engineered, and built without causing environmental harm to the Spring Creek watershed or to the Sinking Creek watershed. Choosing other alignments, which impact unnamed tributaries, Exceptional Value wetlands, and subsurface recharge, could produce lengthy delays and bring about challenges from entities such as The U. S. Army Corps of Engineers, PA DEP, and several local watershed groups.</p> <p>Thank you for considering my comments.</p>	<p>laws, executive orders, and regulations will be considered and addressed prior to the final project decision in an effort to identify alternatives that provide the best balance (avoid and minimize) of impacts to protected and valued resources.</p>
Boniface, Zoe	16801	<p>I am affiliated with Rhoneymeade, a non-profit historical/environmental/agriculturally conserved art center at 177 Rimney Rd., Centre Hall. We have an area we want to conserve as a wetland and we would like to be considered as a site for wetland mitigation. As the new 322 is constructed, we understand that mitigation for wetlands may be needed. This property is 3 miles from the intersection of Rt 45 and Boalsburg Rd.</p>	<p>Thank you for your comment.</p>

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NAME (LAST, FIRST)	ZIP CODE	QUESTIONS/COMMENTS	RESPONSES
Brown, Jeremy	16827	I wish the widening around the 45 and 322 interchange and Kaywood neighborhood added some accessibility for walking and biking to/from the Kaywood neighborhood and Boalsburg proper area.	Currently, the State College Area Connector does not offer any specific bicycle and pedestrian facilities along PA 45 between the PA 45/US 322 interchange and Boal Avenue. Coordination with Harris Township identified a shared use path for inclusion in this project along Boal Avenue from Discovery Drive to Bear Meadows Road. However, the State College Area Connector design would not preclude the ability to implement future improvements along PA 45.
Bushyeager, Gene/Higbee, Dane	17754	<p>A. What is the bridge height from road grade to underside of the bridge? Must be able to accommodate tractor trailers or large farm equipment.</p> <p>B. What are the future utility replacement locations on the north end of the Nittany Farms property? We would prefer utility easements under the proposed highway rather than along Sharer Road.</p> <p>C. What will the turning radius be at the end of Sharer Road and Old Route 322 intersection? We would like it to accommodate turning movements for tractor trailers and large farm equipment.</p>	Any proposed Build Alternative will be developed in accordance with PennDOT design standards and specifications as outlined in various manuals approved by FHWA for the design features of a transportation facility. PennDOT design standards include requirements for minimum bridge underclearance and turning radius based on road type and traffic considerations. In addition, potential utility relocations will be identified as preliminary engineering plans advance.
Carina, Pamela	16827	<p>I was unable to attend the August 15th meeting. Please provide answers to my questions below in terms of each of the three options still being considered. Thank you.</p> <p>All three options show a larger intersection/interchange at Route 45 and Route 322 than exist currently and apparently a widening of Route 45 from the interchange to the intersection with Business Route 322.</p> <p>a) Approximately how long is construction on the interchange and the widening of Route 45 expected to take? Will the work be simultaneous or separate? Will construction of these areas commence on day one of the connector project or being nearer to the end of the connector project?</p> <p>b) There are only two ways in in two ways out of the Liberty Hill community and construction on Route 45 seems like it will take away one of the ways in and one of the ways out. Is that correct?</p> <p>c) Will a traffic light be installed at the intersection of Commonwealth Drive and Ashworth Lane?</p> <p>d) Will the existing ramp from Route 320 to east at the Old Fort exit be modified to come closer to the Liberty Hill properties that abut Route 322 today? How much closer will it get in when will it be determined if a wall is needed to mitigate noise? Could trees be planted in lieu of a wall?</p> <p>e) With this project, will Route 322 traffic be routed down Route 45 to meet up with Business Route 322? Will the existing entrance to get on 322 eastbound from Business 322 to get to Business Route 322 go away? Will the existing exit to leave 322 westbound to get to Business Route 322 go away?</p> <p>f) Will the intersection of Route 45 and Business Route 322 be altered in any way? If so, how?</p> <p>Again, thank you for your time and addressing my questions.</p>	<p>A. PA 45 between the proposed PA 45/US 322 interchange and Boal Avenue is proposed to be a 5 lane roadway, two lanes east and west and a center turn lane. Currently, the project is still in preliminary engineering and many of the specific details you are requesting will not be addressed until we advance further into final design. Specifically, we are not able to answer at this time how long or when exactly construction would occur for this area.</p> <p>B. & C. Each of the proposed alternatives would maintain access between Commonwealth Drive/Ashworth Lane and PA 45 in both the east and west direction. At this time, a traffic signal warrant analysis has not been completed to determine if a traffic signal would be warranted in this location. This analysis will be completed as part of final design activities.</p> <p>D. The current design for all the proposed alternatives has the proposed US 322 eastbound exit ramp moving further east away from the Liberty Hill community.</p> <p>Noise analyses are currently being conducted. This process includes the following steps:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Identify land uses within the project area that are sensitive to noise, such as homes and parks (e.g., Liberty Hill community). This step has been completed. 2. Monitor existing noise levels and develop acoustic models to predict future conditions. This step has been completed. 3. Evaluate predicted future noise levels after the highway project is constructed and identify locations where noise levels exceed identified FHWA standards. This step is currently underway. 4. Consider noise abatement (e.g., barriers/walls) where noise impacts are anticipated. This step will be conducted after step 3 is completed. 5. Identify areas where preliminary noise abatement is potentially warranted, feasible, and reasonable. This step will be conducted after step 4 is completed.

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NAME (LAST, FIRST)	ZIP CODE	QUESTIONS/COMMENTS	RESPONSES
			<p>If noise abatement is determined to be warranted and feasible, during final design noise specific community meetings will be conducted with the impacted receivers to discuss the type of abatement to be implemented (e.g., walls).</p> <p>The Noise Assessment will be reevaluated in the Final Design process before final determinations regarding potential noise abatement designs are made for the project.</p> <p>PennDOT does include a planting plan as part of the final design activities.</p> <p>E. The existing partial PA 45/US 322 interchange (eastbound exit and westbound entrance ramps) will be replaced with a fully directional interchange (eastbound entrance and exit ramps and westbound entrance and exit ramps). As a result, motorists that want to access properties in the area would utilize the interchange and PA 45 accordingly. Conversely, with the full interchange in this location, the partial interchange access to eastbound US 322 or westbound to Business 322 near Technology Drive would be removed.</p> <p>F. Current preliminary design plans show minimal changes at the PA 45/Boal Avenue intersection. As the traffic analysis progresses, should any issues be noted with congestion or safety at the intersection, design changes would be developed to address the issue.</p>

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State College Area Connector
August 2024 Public Meeting Comment Response Table

NAME (LAST, FIRST)	ZIP CODE	QUESTIONS/COMMENTS	RESPONSES
Collins, John	16828	<p>Filed electronically to www.regulations.gov and www.PennDOT.PA.gov/SCAC August 23, 2024. 1. :</p> <p>1. SUMMARY: The petitioner supports improving transportation facilities in the Centre County, PA project area. PennDOT is to be congratulated for improving the SCAC concept by deleting the Route 144 Alternatives and the Route 45 Connector that would have created new safety, congestion, and environmental issues. However, as described below, as PennDOT, FHWA and other agencies move forward with the NEPA and 4(f) analysis, section 404 wetlands permits, design and engineering studies, and the construction of the SCAC, I urge you to use the SCAC as a catalyst to broadly improve transportation services in the SCAC corridor rather than merely serve narrow highway needs. The project should incorporate transportation system management and operations (TSMO) investments in the corridor during its entire life cycle that will benefit residents such as a fringe parking lot with electric vehicle (EV) stations and solar power, intelligent transportation system (ITS) improvements (message signs for the fringe lot and traffic), bus transit service, and bike routes that allow bikes to avoid traffic.</p> <p>2. MY BACKGROUND: I have lived in the SCAC project area since 2004 and travel the roads (Routes 322, 45, and 144) daily. I am a retired engineer and lawyer. I worked for the US Environmental Protection Agency reviewing PennDOT NEPA statements and for USDOT reviewing and approving transit and highway projects. I wrote 4f statements for the DC Metro system. I began my transportation career working for the Philadelphia MPO. I was President of ITS America and on the Board of ITS PA, and an ITS contractor for PennDOT. I have testified as an expert witness in highway litigation.</p> <p>3. SCAC PROBLEM: The Purpose and Need given in the NOI for the SCAC is all highway oriented. It says: "The purpose of this project is to improve roadway congestion by achieving acceptable LOS and to address safety issues by reducing the predicted crash frequency along the US 322 corridor between Potters Mills and Boalsburg. Additionally, the project will aim to provide a transportation network that meets driver expectations. (emphasis added). These are good goals but too narrowly focused on just the highway user.</p> <p>4. PEL WAS BROADER: In PennDOT's Planning and Environmental Linkages (PEL) study for the SCAC, PennDOT said "Multi-modal improvements could be included as part of the Build Alternative, where appropriate or programmed as new projects or upgrade facilities to improve multi-modal connectivity throughout the study area. * * * TCM and TSM Alternatives could also be included as part of the Build Alternative, where appropriate, or programmed as new projects or upgrade facilities." Instead, in the NOI, PennDOT punted and merely referenced other studies and is not proposing to use the SCAC to advance other transportation opportunities. This would be analogous to not building bridges that are needed by the SCAC to cross business 322 or wetlands and instead punting and referring to a separate study of bridges. PennDOT needs a comprehensive approach to TSMO and building the capital infrastructure to support it.</p> <p>5. CONCEPT: Make the SCAC an end-to-end showcase for a system of Transportation System Management Opportunities (TSMO). Include TSMO as part of "purpose and need" of SCAC and include specific commitments and funding in the Draft and Final EISs and Record of Decision (ROD). WHY: The SCAC is a once in a lifetime \$500 million plus project. It is highly visible: it is just 100 miles from the state capital in Harrisburg. Over one million visitors travel annually to Penn State University in State College with 108,000 sitting in the stands for each football game. These events are on national TV more than seven times each fall and so traffic can be a national issue.</p> <p>RISK OF NARROWER APPROACH: A narrow approach has the potential for massive bottlenecks and crashes, because all traffic from the south must funnel through Seven Mountains on US 322. The existing 322 already has safety issues (108 crashes 2014-18). OPPORTUNITY: This is an opportunity to demonstrate management skills, problem solving, customer service, and government competence. It is an opportunity like PennDOT's I-95 Philadelphia Bridge reconstruction.</p> <p>6. SPECIFIC ELEMENTS FOR TSMO INFRASTRUCTURE As PennDOT develops the Draft and Final Environmental Impact and 4f Statements and the ROD, I urge you make specific commitments to improve the environmental impact of the build option and mitigate damage by incorporating the following TSMO elements into the Preferred Alternative. The PEL Study has already determined that these kinds of measures could improve</p>	<p>Thank you for your comments and recommendations.</p> <p>As noted, the PEL study provided a broad transportation needs analysis for a 70-square mile study area. The needs were broad in nature to allow for an evaluation of a range of alternatives to accommodate transportation throughout the entire area. Ultimately, the first project identified to be studied in further detail in the PEL and NEPA phase of project development, focused on the US 322 corridor. As a result, the needs study was refined in the NEPA phase and the key needs for the US 322 corridor centered on addressing safety, congestion, and driver expectations for road users.</p> <p>While the NEPA phase will focus on a build alternative to address the needs, PennDOT is committed to enhancing the overall corridor to travel and will include TSMO enhancements to support any of the alternatives advanced. Inclusion of these features will be noted in the engineering reports and referenced in the EIS.</p> <p>Additionally, PennDOT is working to identify areas where park and ride facility(ies) could be included in the project design but must remain diligent in avoiding and minimizing impacts to area natural, cultural, and community resources. Planning for these facilities will also be included in the engineering reports and referenced in the EIS. Final design will confirm if, where, and when these facilities would be constructed. This would include use of a fringe parking area in the maintenance and protection of traffic plans.</p> <p>PennDOT routinely coordinates with CATA regarding transit service and will continue to do so including coordination necessary for the State College Area Connector project. CATA is the party responsible for determining where, when, and how service is provided throughout the region. As the project advances and specific improvements are identified such as fringe parking area, PennDOT will ensure that CATA is aware of new infrastructure opportunities. Regarding funding for transit services in the area, allocating funding for transit specific improvements and services is beyond the purview of PennDOT District 2-0 and specifically the State College Area Connector Project. Transit funding in Pennsylvania is allocated by the Governor and Legislature and then by the planning organizations such as the Centre County Metropolitan Planning Organization.</p> <p>PennDOT has coordinated bicycle and pedestrian accommodations with the local townships. As a result of this coordination, a shared use path has been included in each of the proposed alternatives from Discovery Boulevard to Bear Meadow Road.</p> <p>Future maintenance (e.g., bicycle facilities) agreements that need to be executed between PennDOT and another party will be determined during final design and executed accordingly. This could include maintenance or emergency service agreements with local entities.</p>

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NAME (LAST, FIRST)	ZIP CODE	QUESTIONS/COMMENTS	RESPONSES
		<p>operations along roadway segments and at intersections and could enhance safety for all modes of travel, although they could not fully meet the study's needs.</p> <p>ELEMENT #1: Fringe Parking Lot DISCUSSION: A fringe parking lot in the project area with direct access to/from the new SCAC would be a valuable transportation improvement that would give something back to the neighbors who will bear the brunt of the facility. Ideally, the land would be acquired as part of Uniform Relocation Act requirements that discourage landlocked parcels so it would not require an additional taking. Hopefully, the lots can be opened even before construction of the SCAC is completed, so it can benefit travelers during construction congestion and disruption.</p> <p>RECOMMENDATION: The fringe parking lot should incorporate new USDOT/USDOE policies to foster electric vehicle (EV) charging stations and have solar panels that also provide cover and shelter from weather and a bus shelter. PennDOT should work with public and private transit providers to extend existing bus service to the lot and provide secure bicycle facilities for alternative modes of transportation.</p> <p>ELEMENT #2: Intelligent Transportation System (ITS) Features</p> <p>Discussion: Please incorporate ITS features in the planning and subsequent phases of the SCAC and in the Project as built. Often ITS features are done as add-ons which can lead to poorer location choices and higher costs. The sections of 322 north of Boalsburg already have cameras, VMS signs, and curve speed installations. They should be integrated into a 322 regional system.</p> <p>RECOMMENDATION: For example, there should be an ITS message sign and CCTV installation south of Boalsburg advising motorists of traffic congestion ahead with real time information and advice on alternative routes (for example, Business 322 versus limited access 322.) There should be real time information on variable message signs (VMS) telling travelers on the SCAC about the fringe parking lot described in Element #1 including: number of parking spots available, number of EV stations available, and time of next transit bus. The ITS system should also provide real time camera coverage in the lot for security.</p> <p>ELEMENT #3: Transit improvements DISCUSSION: CATA, the area transit provider, currently has service in Boalsburg and in Pleasant Gap, but no service in Centre Hall or on Route 45. This project offers an opportunity to expand service both as a demonstration project during construction and as a permanent commitment. There are also other public and private transit operators serving the project area.</p> <p>RECOMMENDATION: Please include transit opportunities in the project planning and implementation and make concrete transit funding and purchase of service commitments in the draft and final EISs as part of the Build Project.</p> <p>ELEMENT #4: Bicycle improvements DISCUSSION: The public hearing materials for the October Public Hearing and the PEL Study included discussions of the bicycle routes in the project area and safety problems with existing resources. In the area, there is a lack of separate lanes and wide, paved shoulders and a lack of connectivity to existing bike routes.</p> <p>RECOMMENDATION: Please include bicycle improvement opportunities (such as along Brush Valley Road, Route 322 and at the fringe parking lot) in the project planning and implementation and make concrete commitments in the draft and final EISs to fund the improvements as part of the SCAC Build Project.</p> <p>7. TIMING OF TSMO INFRASTRUCTURE The TSMO infrastructure should be planned and designed for, and implemented during, the entire life cycle of the SCAC project.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pre-construction: Get ITS cameras and message signs in place for work zone safety, incident response, and traveler information. Build a fringe lot at the south end with solar and electric vehicle (EV) and transit connections. Get travelers used to alternative transportation. Solar panels could be built on structure to provide covered parking. • Construction: Use cameras to show challenges and ongoing construction (like PHL I-95 bridge reconstruction.) Support CATA and other providers van and transit service. (Like I-95 DC Shirley Highway bus lanes .) Use message signs for bus, van, and fringe parking information. Coordinate with Penn State Task Force for special events. • Operation: Use lessons learned to refine transportation system operations and improvements. Use message signs for ongoing bus, van, and fringe parking information. Promote EV and bus alternatives. <p>8. THANK YOU FOR YOUR CONSIDERATION.</p> <p>If you have further comments or questions, you can contact me at TransBLS@gmail.com.</p>	

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NAME (LAST, FIRST)	ZIP CODE	QUESTIONS/COMMENTS	RESPONSES
		<p>Why has PennDOT narrowed the purpose and need from the PEL study? On page 88, PennDOT said "Multimodal improvements could be included as part of the Build Alternative, where appropriate or programmed as new projects, or upgrade facilities to improve multi-modal connectivity throughout the study area." TCM and TSM Alternatives could also be included as part of the Build Alternative, where appropriate, or programmed as new projects or upgrade facilities. The Purpose and Need is now all highway oriented: "The purpose of this project is to improve roadway congestion by achieving acceptable LOS and to address safety issues by reducing the predicted crash frequency along the US 322 corridor between Potters Mills and Boalsburg. Additionally, the project will aim to provide a transportation network that meets driver expectations." (Fed. Reg. Vol No 142, p. 59956) (emphasis added)</p>	
Cowell, Lori/ Mayich, John	16828	<p>Ref: High Decibel Jake Brake Disruptive Noise Since you completed the Potter's Mill Gap project we are experiencing disruptive noise 4:30 a.m. to 9 a.m. and 5 p.m. to 10 p.m. This was not a problem before. Disrupting sleep, not able to open windows, cannot sit outside!</p>	<p>Noise related to 'Jake Brakes' or the use of compression release brakes is not effectively reduced using concrete noise barriers. It has been found that compression release brake noise is best addressed by local legislation and strict enforcement of that legislation. However, major transportation improvements that accommodate truck traffic patterns, reduce traffic congestion, minimize steep grades, and better manage traffic exiting and entering the roadway may reduce the need for truckers to use compression release brakes to slow down and therefore indirectly reduce the noise caused by their use.</p> <p>Noise analyses are currently being conducted. This process includes the following steps:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Identify land uses within the project area that are sensitive to noise, such as homes and parks (e.g., Liberty Hill community). This step has been completed. 2. Monitor existing noise levels and develop acoustic models to predict future conditions. This step has been completed. 3. Evaluate predicted future noise levels after the highway project is constructed and identify locations where noise levels exceed identified FHWA standards. This step is currently underway. 4. Consider noise abatement (e.g., barriers/walls) where noise impacts are anticipated. This step will be conducted after step 3 is completed. 5. Identify areas where preliminary noise abatement is potentially warranted, feasible, and reasonable. This step will be conducted after step 4 is completed. <p>If noise abatement is determined to be warranted and feasible, during final design noise specific community meetings will be conducted with the impacted receivers to discuss the type of abatement to be implemented (e.g., walls).</p> <p>The Noise Assessment will be reevaluated in the Final Design process before final determinations regarding potential noise abatement designs are made for the project.</p>
Crispell, Maggie	16827	<p>Any access to or thru Huntridge Manor development is unacceptable to the citizens who live there, with trucks inside the development, it is an impossible solution. See you planning to have access to or thru Huntridge Manor or along its perimeters. This is a fairly quiet, other than the noise from 322 as it exists. Please don't change that.</p>	<p>At the time of the public meeting in August 2024, there has not been any changes to official access to individual properties. During the public meeting, property owners were invited to discuss private access and recommendations. Information collected from the public at that station will be used during the evaluation process. As preliminary</p>

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NAME (LAST, FIRST)	ZIP CODE	QUESTIONS/COMMENTS	RESPONSES
			<p>engineering plans advance, access to individual properties will be evaluated, developed, and presented at the next public meeting.</p>
Darlington, Bonnie	16828	<p>1. How many times can eminent domain take property from the same family in Pa? 2. Where can we go to find and replace what we have and how can we afford? 3. How do we escape this imprisoned limbo we are forced into?</p>	<p>Unfortunately, there are no rules or guidance on how many times eminent domain can be used for property acquisition in Pennsylvania. Pennsylvania only executes the use of Eminent Domain when it will benefit the public as a whole (such as for infrastructure projects - roadways). Additionally, eminent domain can be used for property acquisition in Pennsylvania if an amicable agreement cannot be reached between PennDOT and the property owner.</p> <p>During the right-of-way acquisition process, representatives will outline the services and just compensation which is afforded to property owners. This may include relocation assistance, mortgage prepayment penalty, and reimbursement for reasonable expenses.</p>
Darlington, Jesse & Lynn	16828	<p>Why wouldn't the existing road stay where it is and the new road follow the path in green on the map? If you are willing to take our farm (our business), why are you not willing to take new businesses which were built recently along 322? It took us a much longer time to grow our business. How will our family be compensated for the loss of income if our land is taken? Will PennDOT provide us with hay and grain to feed our animals since we won't have fields to grow our own anymore? Will PennDOT find and buy us a comparable farm in the Penns Valley area? We noticed that the road gets wider when it hits our property. Why is that? (You would think you would try to keep it narrower where there are productive farms.) Why is our farm the point where the road starts to deviate from the existing 322 in all of the options?</p>	<p>Alternatives were developed to best balance the transportation needs with the potential effects to the natural, cultural, and socioeconomic environment including agricultural properties and businesses.</p> <p>There are many benefits that PennDOT can offer to Property Owners. However, each property will need to be evaluated separately to establish which benefits each owner would be entitled to. PennDOT will also assist owners in searching for a comparable property during the acquisition process if your property is affected/acquired.</p> <p>Based on concerns raised at the public meeting, PennDOT is working to evaluate the median widths through critical areas. The revised design will be presented at the next public meeting.</p>
Davidson, Jeff	16827	<p>1. Concern about noise from an expanded roadway into Bear Meadow and into affordable housing near current highway. 2. Concerned about 90 degree angle turn to go under new roadway at Bear Meadow. Seems like it will ensure traffic problems. 3. Think it is important to build a good bike path to enable safe bike access to State College.</p>	<p>1. Noise analyses are currently being conducted. This process includes the following steps:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Identify land uses within the project area that are sensitive to noise, such as homes and parks (e.g., Liberty Hill community). This step has been completed. 2. Monitor existing noise levels and develop acoustic models to predict future conditions. This step has been completed. 3. Evaluate predicted future noise levels after the highway project is constructed and identify locations where noise levels exceed identified FHWA standards. This step is currently underway. 4. Consider noise abatement (e.g., barriers/walls) where noise impacts are anticipated. This step will be conducted after step 3 is completed. 5. Identify areas where preliminary noise abatement is potentially warranted, feasible, and reasonable. This step will be conducted after step 4 is completed. <p>If noise abatement is determined to be warranted and feasible, during final design noise specific community meetings will be conducted with the impacted receivers to discuss the type of abatement to be implemented (e.g., walls).</p>

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			<p>The Noise Assessment will be reevaluated in the Final Design process before final determinations regarding potential noise abatement designs are made for the project.</p> <p>2. Proposed local 322 in the Bear Meadow Road area is being evaluated to address concerns raised at the public meeting.</p> <p>3. PennDOT has coordinated bicycle and pedestrian accommodations with the local townships. As a result of this coordination, a shared use path has been included in each of the proposed alternatives from Discovery Boulevard to Bear Meadow Road.</p>
Dawson, Mark	16823	Why have we given up our ability to transport ourselves to the automobile industry?	Thank you for your comment.
Dean, Ethan	16801	<p>I am saddened by the expansion of 322 connector path and want to express that I think the project is a waste of funds and has little to no justification for its initiation. First, ask anyone who lives in the area, like me, and they know there is no reason to waste funds expanding it, unless you want it for football games which is only a few weeks a year and is a waste of funds. Second, most road projects expected growth is not real and is fabricated, as you probably know being the ones handling the data https://www.nytimes.com/2023/01/06/us/widen-highways-traffic.html. We should be focusing on maintaining our crumbling infrastructure, and not further burdening ourselves with future costs that future generations will have to pay.</p> <p>Please take a second to actually think of the future of a changing climate, and if this project will help ANYONE. There are many projects that could be done here, like using it to upgrade to regional rail service or actually changing the roads to be more safe. I hope I am not the first person to say this, but you understand that doing this will only bring more cars because of induced demand. Focusing on car centric development only leads to classiest division of transportation for those who can afford private vehicles and will lead to only those who can afford it being able to travel freely in arguable the least safe way to travel long distances. https://yaleclimateconnections.org/2023/10/american-society-wasn't-always-so-car-centric-our-future-doesn't-have-to-be-either/ Put the money towards literally anything else and don't steal land from people to plow over natural zones. You are adding the problem, not fixing it if you continue this expansion. Lastly, as an entomologist, its obvious no actual environmentalists were taken seriously when this project was discussed. Please stop this project, do you want this to be you? https://dailyreporter.com/2024/08/20/milwaukee-groups-sue-to-stop-interstate-94-expansion/</p>	<p>The project is being advanced to address transportation issues identified along the US 322 corridor from Potters Mills Gap area to Boalsburg. In summary, the project will be advance to address safety, congestion, and driver expectations along the US 322 corridor. More information can be found in the final purpose and need report https://www.penndot.pa.gov/RegionalOffices/district-2/ConstructionsProjectsAndRoadwork/SCAC/Documents/3-SCAC%20Purpose%20And%20Need-NEPA_07182024.pdf.</p> <p>Traffic volume forecasts were developed utilizing the Centre County Regional Travel Demand Model (TDM) that is developed and maintained by the Centre County Metropolitan Planning Organization (CCMPO). This TDM is a trip-based model comprised of links (roadways), nodes (intersections), and zones (development) within the region. To develop the model future year (2050) traffic volume forecast, the CCMPO and municipalities in the region anticipate future growth in population and employment demographics relative to current zoning and approved or anticipated development. (Growth and development are handled at the local level, not controlled by PennDOT.) Using the anticipated growth and development forecasts, the MPO provides an associated traffic forecast for a no build scenario in the year 2050. Any transportation project developed would evaluate how to address the identified 2050 no-build traffic scenario.</p> <p>While transit provides a great opportunity to transport large volumes of people in an efficient manner, it does not solve rural roadway capacity or safety issues. In addition, transit would not address the trucking or freight related travel concerns within the US 322 corridor. Thus, it would not address the purpose and needs for the US 322 corridor.</p> <p>The State College Area Connector Planning and Environmental Linkage Study and the associated State College Area Connector project's Environmental Impact Statement are being conducted by a team of engineering, environmental scientists, historians, archaeologists, community planners, and farmland specialists. In addition, continual coordination is being conducted with federal, state, and local resource agencies to ensure that that project is advanced in compliance with all the rules, regulations, and guidance designed to protect area resources.</p>

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Derstein, Mary G.	16827	All road options lead to Boalsburg at the Route 322 bypass. From there, trucks shift gears up and down to make the grade. This noise pollution disrupts indoor and outdoor activities. The bypass wraps around the Boalsburg Hill District so truck noise is heard from the Route 45 overpass to Warner Boulevard overpass. I believe one of the goals of this project is to improve truck and auto safety. At the very least, please consider adjusting the grade to reduce the noise in the Boalsburg Hill District. I've been told that this 322 Bypass stretch of road is not a consideration of this project, however, the increased traffic from the highway project will definitely impact truck traffic and noise created for this adjacent community. I've also been told the grade of the road at this point does not warrant signage to control engine braking. I believe the noise pollution is significant enough to warrant correction of the highway grade from Route 45 overpass to Warner Boulevard overpass while a four-lane highway is being added to the Route 322 bypass. This project significantly affects the Boalsburg Hill District noise pollution with increased truck traffic and the elements of the existing highway and should be included in the noise sensitive study. Thank you for your consideration.	<p>Noise related to 'Jake Brakes' or the use of compression release brakes is not effectively reduced using concrete noise barriers. It has been found that compression release brake noise is best addressed by local legislation and strict enforcement of that legislation. However, major transportation improvements that accommodate truck traffic patterns, reduce traffic congestion, minimize steep grades, and better manage traffic exiting and entering the roadway may reduce the need for truckers to use compression release brakes to slow down and therefore indirectly reduce the noise caused by their use.</p> <p>Noise analyses are currently being conducted. This process includes the following steps:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Identify land uses within the project area that are sensitive to noise, such as homes and parks (e.g., Liberty Hill community). This step has been completed. 2. Monitor existing noise levels and develop acoustic models to predict future conditions. This step has been completed. 3. Evaluate predicted future noise levels after the highway project is constructed and identify locations where noise levels exceed identified FHWA standards. This step is currently underway. 4. Consider noise abatement (e.g., barriers/walls) where noise impacts are anticipated. This step will be conducted after step 3 is completed. 5. Identify areas where preliminary noise abatement is potentially warranted, feasible, and reasonable. This step will be conducted after step 4 is completed. <p>If noise abatement is determined to be warranted and feasible, during final design noise specific community meetings will be conducted with the impacted receivers to discuss the type of abatement to be implemented (e.g., walls).</p> <p>The Noise Assessment will be reevaluated in the Final Design process before final determinations regarding potential noise abatement designs are made for the project.</p>
Drass, Robert	16827	I went to the public form this past week and was alarmed by that all three proposals ran a feeder road right through Laurel Hills neighborhood. This seems uncalled for while the road could go on the north side of the extension as there is only a golf course that would be impacted instead of people's actual homes. Many of these people in the neighborhood are building homes still. One of the new homes going up is right in the middle of this proposed road. Clearly you have not done a good job of notifying all parties. Shame on you and looking for the best option to protect existing properties. This change would also delete the need for a bridge and allow if needed do move the bridge to allow access somewhere else.	Following the public meeting and as preliminary engineering plans advance, relocation of local roads and access are being re-evaluated. Proposed changes will consider how US 322 traverses through the study area. All changes will be presented at our next public meeting.
Edwards, Mike	16823	Quit wasting time and get this done. Pay landowners properly. I watched 322 grow over past 50 years, it's time to complete it.	Thank you for your comment.
Eklund, Karen	16827	What can be done to make traffic on the access road at the T on Bear Meadows Rd. There can be lots of traffic when Tussey Mountain have their many events. A roundabout could be possible.	Proposed local 322 in the Bear Meadow Road area is being evaluated to address concerns raised at the public meeting.

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Ellison, David	16801	Sound abatement - regardless of chosen option, recommend maximize nice looking sound barriers and liberally provide owners with trees.	<p>Noise analyses are currently being conducted. This process includes the following steps:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Identify land uses within the project area that are sensitive to noise, such as homes and parks (e.g., Liberty Hill community). This step has been completed. 2. Monitor existing noise levels and develop acoustic models to predict future conditions. This step has been completed. 3. Evaluate predicted future noise levels after the highway project is constructed and identify locations where noise levels exceed identified FHWA standards. This step is currently underway. 4. Consider noise abatement (e.g., barriers/walls) where noise impacts are anticipated. This step will be conducted after step 3 is completed. 5. Identify areas where preliminary noise abatement is potentially warranted, feasible, and reasonable. This step will be conducted after step 4 is completed. <p>If noise abatement is determined to be warranted and feasible, during final design noise specific community meetings will be conducted with the impacted receivers to discuss the type of abatement to be implemented (e.g., walls).</p> <p>The Noise Assessment will be reevaluated in the Final Design process before final determinations regarding potential noise abatement designs are made for the project.</p> <p>Additionally, PennDOT does include a planting plan as part of the final design activities.</p>
Evano, Raya	16601	Why not invest in Pennsylvania's sustainable future? Why not improve traffic conditions along 322 by investing in projects that will also benefit other parts of the state like transit connections and infrastructure?	<p>While transit provides a great opportunity to transport large volumes of people in an efficient manner, it does not solve rural roadway capacity or safety issues. In addition, transit would not address the trucking or freight related travel concerns within the US 322 corridor. Thus, it would not address the purpose and needs for the US 322 corridor.</p>

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Ferstl, Evan	16801	<p>I went to the open house on 8/15 to talk with community members and PennDOT engineers, as well as to get a better sense of what is happening with this project.</p> <p>Unfortunately, everything I heard at the meeting reinforced my belief that this project is extremely fiscally irresponsible. As Americans, we are used to complaining about the poor condition of our roads. It's a fact of life here. Therefore, it's astonishing to me that, when PennDOT can't even maintain the roads that it currently has, it would continue to build more. This road won't solve our congestion problems. All it will do is make our existing roads worse and contribute to the endless backlog of construction projects that taxpayers can't pay for.</p> <p>As for the supposed safety improvements, that's a blatantly obvious tack-on to the real reason this highway is being expanded. If PennDOT cared about safety, their solution to this problem wouldn't be more car infrastructure. Additionally, the current road will still exist in this project, so I really fail to see what safety improvement this will have.</p> <p>Then we come to what will be lost with this expansion. All three options will destroy at least 70 acres of farmland split between almost 20 different agricultural operations, as well as potentially dozens of homes. There's also the consideration of natural resources that will be lost, including wetlands and woodland habitats. Sometimes, in the service of a project for the public good, there really is no choice but to pave over private property and natural resources. But, given the financial insolvency and irresponsibility of continuing to expand our highways, is it really fair to call on our neighbors to make these sacrifices?</p> <p>I don't think this project is necessary for the continued prosperity of the Centre County area. All it will do is introduce headaches on multiple fronts, and I strongly suspect it will instead be actively detrimental to the region.</p>	<p>The proposed project is being advanced to address the transportation needs identified along the US 322 corridor. Specifically, there is a need to address congestion, safety, and driver expectation. All of the proposed Build Alternatives will improve safety by providing a high-speed facility to remove regional travelers from local 322 thus removing potential conflicts between slower moving local traffic and higher speed regional through traffic including large trucks. In addition, it will provide a modern roadway that meets all the current design standards for the speeds at which the traffic is moving.</p> <p>Alternatives were developed to best balance the transportation needs with the potential effects to the natural, cultural, and socioeconomic environment including agricultural properties and residential properties.</p>
Fitzgerald III, Langston J	16827	<p>First of all, I would like to know if PennDOT made a study concerning the Noise Level that this Project would Render & the Impact of the Value of the Homes Near the State College Connector? Has Penn DOT Made Any Plans to Construct a Sound Barrier Wall Near Our Established Neighborhoods?</p>	<p>Noise analyses are currently being conducted. This process includes the following steps:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Identify land uses within the project area that are sensitive to noise, such as homes and parks (e.g., Liberty Hill community). This step has been completed. 2. Monitor existing noise levels and develop acoustic models to predict future conditions. This step has been completed. 3. Evaluate predicted future noise levels after the highway project is constructed and identify locations where noise levels exceed identified FHWA standards. This step is currently underway. 4. Consider noise abatement (e.g., barriers/walls) where noise impacts are anticipated. This step will be conducted after step 3 is completed. 5. Identify areas where preliminary noise abatement is potentially warranted, feasible, and reasonable. This step will be conducted after step 4 is completed. <p>If noise abatement is determined to be warranted and feasible, during final design noise specific community meetings will be conducted with the impacted receivers to discuss the type of abatement to be implemented (e.g., walls).</p>

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Fohringer, Diane	16828	Why disturb wetlands and an historic village such as Tusseyville?	Alternatives were developed to best balance the transportation needs with the potential effects to the natural, cultural, and socioeconomic environment. Additionally, the roadway location is being evaluated to address concerns raised at the public meeting. Results will be presented at the next public meeting.
Foster, Jeanne	16827	1. Will you consider non-silver guardrail (earthen) for ambiance? 2. Will you consider using noise reduced rubberized asphalt in any highly populated area? (Harris Twshp). 3. Will you plant trees along both sides of the Harris Twshp sector?	PennDOT will utilize the current PennDOT approved construction materials (guiderail and pavement material) which will be determined in final design. Aesthetic treatments will also be considered as design progresses. Additionally, PennDOT does include a planting plan as part of the final design activities.
Foster, Patrick	16827	How can you connect Nittany Meadows Farm to 322 without going through Huntridge Manor?	At the time of the public meeting in August 2024, there has not been any changes to official access to individual properties. During the public meeting, property owners were invited to discuss private access and recommendations. Information collected from the public at that station will be used during the evaluation process. As preliminary engineering plans advance, access to individual properties will be evaluated, developed, and presented at the next public meeting.
Franzetta, Jean & Chuck	16827	Why would there be consideration of an access road being added, running through Huntridge Manor, that would significantly introduce commercial, agricultural and other traffic in a quiet neighborhood, with no sidewalks, and no lighting, with kids on bikes and skateboards, walkers, some with pets, and joggers often using the street at all hours. It makes no sense.	At the time of the public meeting in August 2024, there has not been any changes to official access to individual properties. During the public meeting, property owners were invited to discuss private access and recommendations. Information collected from the public at that station will be used during the evaluation process. As preliminary engineering plans advance, access to individual properties will be evaluated, developed, and presented at the next public meeting.
Frier, Mary Carol	16828	Why are you even considering the North alternative? It makes no sense. Imagine your construction equipment opening up a sinkhole and then disappearing inside it! Or the construction destabilizing the fault line and the fault starts sliding. Are you crazy? Do you want destruction of lives and property to be your legacy? Remember mountaintop!	PennDOT is aware of the underlying geology throughout the project area. Detailed geological testing will be conducted to determine what measures and precautions are necessary to stabilize the proposed design.
Fuller, Debra		I assume you understand that you have kept all of us in the project area on hold. We can't make improvements to our properties, or sell, because this looming project keeps us in limbo. If you have to do this project, please decide as quickly as possible to so we can all move forward. Years of this process is ridiculous.	Thank you for your comment. PennDOT is working to advance the schedule while meeting all the rules, regulations, and guidance required as part of the National Environmental Policy Act. PennDOT will make every effort to inform the public of changes on the project as soon as possible.
Fuller, Roana	16868	I am against expanding the State College Area Connector Project (SCCAC). I see no reason to ruin a beautiful valley. By expanding the road to 4 lanes you are going to have to take away someone's property including taking away valuable farmland which we really need. What is to be gained by this? Saving maybe 5-10 minutes to get to State College or for trucks to get to route 80. It won't make the road safer with less accidents. What causes most accidents – bad weather and careless drivers. Those causes won't change regardless of if it 2 or 4 lanes and maybe the road is safer with 2 lanes and slower speeds.	The proposed project is being advanced to address the transportation needs identified along the US 322 corridor. Specifically, there is a need to address congestion, safety, and driver expectation. All of the proposed Build Alternative will improve safety by providing a high-speed facility to remove regional travelers from local 322 thus removing potential conflicts between slower moving local traffic and higher speed regional through traffic including large trucks. In addition, it will provide a modern roadway that meets all the current design standards for the speeds at which the traffic is moving.

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Fuzi, Aurora	16803	What is your plan for non-drivers/pedestrians.	PennDOT has coordinated bicycle and pedestrian accommodations with the local townships. As a result of this coordination, a shared use path has been included in each of the proposed alternatives from Discovery Boulevard to Bear Meadow Road.
Gardiner, John H.	16803	Cars are disproportionately burdensome on lower classes so building more highway is inequitable. For pity's sake, the train tracks come within two miles of campus! Improve frequency between Harrisburg and Pittsburgh, build a DMU from Altoona to Tyrone, Bellefonte, and State College like NJT's River Line and never build a highway again.	While transit provides a great opportunity to transport large volumes of people in an efficient manner, it does not solve rural roadway capacity or safety issues. In addition, transit would not address the trucking or freight related travel concerns within the US 322 corridor. Thus, it would not address the purpose and needs for the US 322 corridor.
Gould, Tom	NA	With all three options the stretch between Somerset Rd. and Bear Meadow Rd. needs the access road flipped to the north side to maximize input on neighborhoods and to make the access road (Boal Ave.) a straighter road.	Following the public meeting and as preliminary engineering plans advance, relocation of local roads and access are being re-evaluated. Proposed changes will consider how US 322 traverses through the study area. All changes will be presented at our next public meeting.
Gustafson, Marjorie	16827	When I met with a Penn Dot expert at the August 15, 2024, meeting about the problem of increased noise next to Laurel Hills subdivision, where my house is located. the expert said that a noise wall would not be efficient in our case. I was disappointed to hear that there is really no way to mitigate a vast increase in noise. If trucks traveling at 45-55 miles per hour make noise now, (our current readings for noise are 47-51), how much more noise will the trucks make when the traffic volume increases (if you build it, they will come ... in droves!) and the speeds almost double from 45 miles per hour to 80 miles per hour? This increased noise will make living in Laurel Hills extremely unpleasant, to say the least. All of us in Laurel Hills (and in Bear Meadows) will be stuck in homes that we can't sell, and we will be forced to put up with a constant roar from the new highway and the service road. Instead of putting up with 3 lanes of traffic, as we do now, we will be putting up with 6 lanes of traffic (4 lanes for the new expressway, 2 lanes for the service road). If a wall will not mitigate sound, what will you offer instead? We need mitigation for increased noise and mitigation for spoiled beauty, What will you offer?	<p>Noise analyses are currently being conducted. This process includes the following steps:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Identify land uses within the project area that are sensitive to noise, such as homes and parks (e.g., Liberty Hill community). This step has been completed. 2. Monitor existing noise levels and develop acoustic models to predict future conditions. This step has been completed. 3. Evaluate predicted future noise levels after the highway project is constructed and identify locations where noise levels exceed identified FHWA standards. This step is currently underway. 4. Consider noise abatement (e.g., barriers/walls) where noise impacts are anticipated. This step will be conducted after step 3 is completed. 5. Identify areas where preliminary noise abatement is potentially warranted, feasible, and reasonable. This step will be conducted after step 4 is completed. <p>If noise abatement is determined to be warranted and feasible, during final design noise specific community meetings will be conducted with the impacted receivers to discuss the type of abatement to be implemented (e.g., walls).</p> <p>The Noise Assessment will be reevaluated in the Final Design process before final determinations regarding potential noise abatement designs are made for the project.</p> <p>In addition, the grade and elevation of the roadway will also aid in dictating how sound travels through the area. These features are still being refined as the project advances.</p>
Habecker, Dorothy	16828	I noticed on the maps that there is no access road to my property - 292 Tait Rd., which is adjacent to Tait Farm. Is there a possibility of acquisition of our 292 Tait Rd. property?	<p>Thank you for the additional input and information about your property, your concerns are being considered as the alternatives are being refined and further developed. The team will continue to coordinate with you as the design changes.</p> <p>At the time of the public meeting in August 2024, there has not been any changes to official access to individual properties. During the public meeting, property owners were</p>

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Hale, Terry	16827	What happened to the 322-4 design which I thought was the best since it did not interfere with the existing traffic on 322 during construction and was less involved with disruptions to driveways, houses, farms and kept the truck noise up on the hill. The existing 332 road needs to be used as is and should not be interrupted by the new road, before, during or after construction.	<p>The US 322-4 was dismissed from further consideration in the PEL Study. It was dismissed based on the environmental and planning analyses.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Environmental Screening – higher potential effects to three of the five comparative environmental regulatory resources <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ higher comparative effects on regulated Waters of the US including 6 acres of wetlands and 9,124 linear feet of Cold Water Fishes (CWF)-High Quality (HQ)/ CWF streams ○ displaces four commercial facilities ○ highest effect on the Rothrock State Forest (part) and Stone Mountain Important Bird area (125 acres) • Planning Screening – affects the only remaining industrially zoned land in Harris Township and displaces existing businesses with no potential to relocate locally. Effects on a community facility, Harvest Fields, which raised substantial community concerns
Hamilton, Paul		Please stop the trucks jake brakes. Thank you!	Noise related to ‘Jake Brakes’ or the use of compression release brakes is not effectively reduced using concrete noise barriers. It has been found that compression release brake noise is best addressed by local legislation and strict enforcement of that legislation. However, major transportation improvements that accommodate truck traffic patterns, reduce traffic congestion, minimize steep grades, and better manage traffic exiting and entering the roadway may reduce the need for truckers to use compression release brakes to slow down and therefore indirectly reduce the noise caused by their use.
Hamsher, Melissa		Why did you spring the central route alternative on us at the 11th hour? It was never in play until now. It is discouraging that PennDot would slide this idea into the fray at the last minute. Shame on PennDot!	The PEL Corridor Alternative US 322-1S developed into the Central Alternative. Based on detailed environmental investigations, shifts were developed to minimize environmental impacts. These changes included: a shift closer to US 322 in the east to minimize farm operations and other environmental effects south of US 322; remains south of US 322 for a longer distance before crossing north over US 322 northward to minimize effects to farmlands and other environmental features and addresses local official input; and the removal of the midpoint interchange and PA 45 connector. This board can be found on the project website for more information. https://www.penndot.pa.gov/RegionalOffices/district-2/ConstructionsProjectsAndRoadwork/SCAC/Documents/Aug-2024%20Public%20Meeting/25%20-%20SCAC%20PEL%201S%20and%20Central%20Alternative%20Comparison.pdf
Hanlen, Harvey	16827	I do not see any access road to Nittany Meadow Farm from the northern side of 322. My understanding is that a project engineer said they were going to access the farm through our development (Huntridge Manor) which is ridiculous and not acceptable. Hopefully better minds will prevail prior to any construction.	At the time of the public meeting in August 2024, there has not been any changes to official access to individual properties. During the public meeting, property owners were invited to discuss private access and recommendations. Information collected from the public at that station will be used during the evaluation process. As preliminary engineering plans advance, access to individual properties will be evaluated, developed, and presented at the next public meeting.

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Hicks, Nicole & James	17011	We have property on Par Sonics Rd. (no 911 address yet) which is a private road. We can only access the road by the existing 322. We are concerned about how we will access our land. We are also concerned about noise levels since the road will be much higher and if a noise wall will be built.	<p>Thank you for the additional input and information about your property, your concerns are being considered as the alternatives are being refined and further developed. The team will continue to coordinate with you as the design changes.</p> <p>At the time of the public meeting in August 2024, there has not been any changes to official access to individual properties. During the public meeting, property owners were invited to discuss private access and recommendations. Information collected from the public at that station will be used during the evaluation process. As preliminary engineering plans advance, access to individual properties will be evaluated, developed, and presented at the next public meeting.</p> <p>Noise analyses are currently being conducted. This process includes the following steps:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Identify land uses within the project area that are sensitive to noise, such as homes and parks (e.g., Liberty Hill community). This step has been completed. 2. Monitor existing noise levels and develop acoustic models to predict future conditions. This step has been completed. 3. Evaluate predicted future noise levels after the highway project is constructed and identify locations where noise levels exceed identified FHWA standards. This step is currently underway. 4. Consider noise abatement (e.g., barriers/walls) where noise impacts are anticipated. This step will be conducted after step 3 is completed. 5. Identify areas where preliminary noise abatement is potentially warranted, feasible, and reasonable. This step will be conducted after step 4 is completed. <p>If noise abatement is determined to be warranted and feasible, during final design noise specific community meetings will be conducted with the impacted receivers to discuss the type of abatement to be implemented (e.g., walls).</p> <p>The Noise Assessment will be reevaluated in the Final Design process before final determinations regarding potential noise abatement designs are made for the project.</p>
Higbee, Dane	17011	<p>A. What is the bridge height from road grade to the underside of the bridge along Sharer Road and the bridge along old 322 directly west of Sharer Road? We want to ensure that those bridges can accommodate tractor trailers and large farm equipment.</p> <p>B. What are the future utility line placement locations on the north end of the Nittany Valley Farms property (bounded by 322 and Sharer Road)? We would prefer that there be some kind of utility right-of-way placed under the proposed 322 alignment rather than having to use Sharer Road as a utility right-of-way. The Nittany Valley Farm property will be bisected by a potential 322 alignment. The property is currently being master planned for potential development, so it is vital that a clearly delineated utility right-of-way be available to the property owner.</p> <p>C. What will the turning radius be at the end of Sharer Road and the old U.S. Route 322 interchange? We would like to make sure the appropriate infrastructure and turning radius is in place for movement of tractor trailers and large farm equipment. As it currently exists, this is a tight turn for larger vehicles.</p>	<p>Any proposed Build Alternative will be developed in accordance with PennDOT design standards and specifications as outlined in various manuals approved by FHWA for the design features of transportation facility.</p> <p>PennDOT design standards include requirements for minimum bridge underclearance and turning radius based on road type and traffic considerations. In addition, potential utility relocations will be identified as preliminary engineering plans advance.</p>

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Houser, Shira	16828	Why disturb wetlands and a historic farm?	Alternatives were developed to best balance the transportation needs with the potential effects to the natural, cultural, and socioeconomic environment. If a resource cannot be avoided, impacts to that resource will be mitigated.
Houser Jr, Tim	16828	Why disturb wetlands and a historic farm?	Alternatives were developed to best balance the transportation needs with the potential effects to the natural, cultural, and socioeconomic environment. If a resource cannot be avoided, impacts to that resource will be mitigated.
Hurst, Jackson	30144	I have no questions.	Thank you for your comment.
Immel, Michael	16828	<p>My wife and I own Nittany Meadow Farm, located on 322 just outside of Boalsburg. We're concerned about all of the proposed paths. As of the meeting on 8/15/24, our farm has NO ACCESS, meaning there is no entrance or exit for our property.</p> <p>Our farm has been in existence for over 200 years, and we've had nearly a dozen different consultants and others on the property to discuss environmental, historical, and business impacts, yet PennDOT has put forth plans to the public with no way to enter or exit our property. After speaking with Eric Murnyack at the meeting, we learned that the initial option discussed with us to bridge the new road to provide access was no longer being considered because of cost. We also were informed that PennDOT is considering providing access through Huntridge Manor development (by using eminent domain to acquire the last empty lot in the development) or buying our farm, leaving us without a place to live or the business we run here to make a living. Neither are viable options.</p> <p>In regard to the proposed access from Huntridge -- this plan does not take into consideration how visitors to the farm would find us by having to snake through a development (right now we are directly on 322); the volume of traffic that comes to our farm for daily activities for our agricultural/agritainment business, for our farm stays, and also our meat and upcoming dairy sales; the weekly feed trucks that make deliveries; our fellow farmers that deliver us wagons of hay and straw; our livestock trailer hauling animals in and out; and other situations that PennDOT has not considered. We're sure our neighbors in Huntridge would not appreciate the uptick in traffic and noise in their relatively low-traffic neighborhood with the addition of thousands of people driving through it annually. Our neighbors didn't think the 322 connector would affect them, but now it is a possibility, and they are not happy about it. Additionally, this road would cut through our 5-acre building lot and fields we use for growing animal feed and produce (that we sell and donate to local organizations helping those with food insecurity), diminishing the land's monetary and use values. This access would hurt our future business, as it would make it much more difficult to find our farm and then actually get to it through the development.</p> <p>In regard to the proposal of buying our farm -- this is a totally ridiculous proposition. Our farm, which has been in existence since 1816, is not an afterthought. It has been meticulously preserved for 200 years by stewards who appreciate its historical value in the community, and for PennDOT to suggest buying it and taking it from us without considering other engineering options is absurd. We have owned the farm for over 3 years, and plan to spend our lives here. We have painstakingly worked since we moved here to build an agricultural business, where we provide meat and produce; farm stays in our cottages; and agritainment activities, like goat yoga and goat visits, that provide fun and educational opportunities to community members. Additionally, this fall we will begin selling goat milk, cheese, and yogurt -- and we will be the first farm in Centre County with a dedicated goat dairy. To consider all of these things, and for PennDOT to simply say they would buy us out rather than making a real effort to identify reasonable access, is incomprehensible.</p> <p>Since the beginning of the project we knew our farm would be impacted, but it appeared that we would 'only' lose some acreage in the front of our property, so it would be minimal. We would be able to maintain our business operations and make a living. We are now facing huge business implications with the access at Huntridge option</p>	<p>Thank you for the additional input and information about your property, your concerns are being considered as the alternatives are being refined and further developed. The team will continue to coordinate with you as the design changes.</p> <p>At the time of the public meeting in August 2024, there has not been any changes to official access to individual properties. During the public meeting, property owners were invited to discuss private access and recommendations. Information collected from the public at that station will be used during the evaluation process. As preliminary engineering plans advance, access to individual properties will be evaluated, developed, and presented at the next public meeting.</p> <p>Acquisition of a farm parcel would only be advanced if there was no way to provide access to the property. At this time, sufficient analysis has not been completed to make that determination at the Nittany Meadow Farm property.</p>

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		<p>and losing our farm entirely with the other. We hope that PennDOT will truly consider the implications of either potential 'solution' and realize that neither is acceptable for us or the community.</p>	

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Immel, Tara	16828	<p>My husband and I own Nittany Meadow Farm, located on 322 just outside of Boalsburg. We're concerned about all of the proposed paths. As of the meeting on 8/15/24, our farm has NO ACCESS, meaning there is no entrance or exit for our property.</p> <p>Our farm has been in existence for over 200 years, and we've had nearly a dozen different consultants and others on the property to discuss environmental, historical, and business impacts, yet PennDOT has put forth plans to the public with no way to enter or exit our property. After speaking with Eric Murnyack at the meeting, we learned that the initial option discussed with us to bridge the new road to provide access was no longer being considered because of cost. We also were informed that PennDOT is considering providing access through Huntridge Manor development (by using eminent domain to acquire the last empty lot in the development) or buying our farm, leaving us without a place to live or the business we run here to make a living. Neither are viable options.</p> <p>In regard to the proposed access from Huntridge -- this plan does not take into consideration how visitors to the farm would find us by having to snake through a development (right now we are directly on 322); the volume of traffic that comes to our farm for daily activities for our agricultural/agritainment business, for our farm stays, and also our meat and upcoming dairy sales; the weekly feed trucks that make deliveries; our fellow farmers that deliver us wagons of hay and straw; our livestock trailer hauling animals in and out; and other situations that PennDOT has not considered. We're sure our neighbors in Huntridge would not appreciate the uptick in traffic and noise in their relatively low-traffic neighborhood with the addition of thousands of people driving through it annually. Our neighbors didn't think the 322 connector would affect them, but now it is a possibility, and they are not happy about it. Additionally, this road would cut through our 5-acre building lot and fields we use for growing animal feed and produce (that we sell and donate to local organizations helping those with food insecurity), diminishing the land's monetary and use values. This access would hurt our future business, as it would make it much more difficult to find our farm and then actually get to it through the development.</p> <p>In regard to the proposal of buying our farm -- this is a totally ridiculous proposition. Our farm, which has been in existence since 1816, is not an afterthought. It has been meticulously preserved for 200 years by stewards who appreciate its historical value in the community, and for PennDOT to suggest buying it and taking it from us without considering other engineering options is absurd. We have owned the farm for over 3 years, and plan to spend our lives here. We have painstakingly worked since we moved here to build an agricultural business, where we provide meat and produce; farm stays in our cottages; and agritainment activities, like goat yoga and goat visits, that provide fun and educational opportunities to community members. Additionally, this fall we will begin selling goat milk, cheese, and yogurt -- and we will be the first farm in Centre County with a dedicated goat dairy. To consider all of these things, and for PennDOT to simply say they would buy us out rather than making a real effort to identify reasonable access, is incomprehensible.</p> <p>Since the beginning of the project we knew our farm would be impacted, but it appeared that we would 'only' lose some acreage in the front of our property, so it would be minimal. We would be able to maintain our business operations and make a living. We are now facing huge business implications with the access at Huntridge option and losing our farm entirely with the other. We hope that PennDOT will truly consider the implications of either potential 'solution' and realize that neither is acceptable for us or the community.</p>	<p>Thank you for the additional input and information about your property, your concerns are being considered as the alternatives are being refined and further developed. The team will continue to coordinate with you as the design changes.</p> <p>At the time of the public meeting in August 2024, there has not been any changes to official access to individual properties. During the public meeting, property owners were invited to discuss private access and recommendations. Information collected from the public at that station will be used during the evaluation process. As preliminary engineering plans advance, access to individual properties will be evaluated, developed, and presented at the next public meeting.</p> <p>Acquisition of a farm parcel would only be advanced if there was no way to provide access to the property. At this time, sufficient analysis has not been completed to make that determination at the Nittany Meadow Farm property.</p>
Jackson, Rick	16801	We do not need to move this road.	Thank you for your comment.
Justice, William		Plans for future boarding kennel on property between Cider Press Rd. and 322 to west of barn/pond on property. Concerned about available land size/shape especially with the north alternative.	As preliminary engineering plans advance, potential impacts to individual properties will be further developed and presented at the next public meeting.

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Kelly, Chris	16827	<p>What does the potential road options look like for Bear Meadow Rd.? Are there any currently planned noise abatement options for the last 2 miles from Bear Meadows area to 322 highway since there are some close neighborhoods and existing high value homes right there.</p>	<p>Proposed local 322 in the Bear Meadow Road area is being evaluated to address concerns raised at the public meeting.</p> <p>Noise analyses are currently being conducted. This process includes the following steps:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Identify land uses within the project area that are sensitive to noise, such as homes and parks (e.g., Liberty Hill community). This step has been completed. 2. Monitor existing noise levels and develop acoustic models to predict future conditions. This step has been completed. 3. Evaluate predicted future noise levels after the highway project is constructed and identify locations where noise levels exceed identified FHWA standards. This step is currently underway. 4. Consider noise abatement (e.g., barriers/walls) where noise impacts are anticipated. This step will be conducted after step 3 is completed. 5. Identify areas where preliminary noise abatement is potentially warranted, feasible, and reasonable. This step will be conducted after step 4 is completed. <p>If noise abatement is determined to be warranted and feasible, during final design noise specific community meetings will be conducted with the impacted receivers to discuss the type of abatement to be implemented (e.g., walls).</p> <p>The Noise Assessment will be reevaluated in the Final Design process before final determinations regarding potential noise abatement designs are made for the project.</p>
Kerr, Paul	16801	<p>I'm Paul Kerr with Kerr Land and Cattle Co. at 2165 General Potter Highway. We have a beef cattle operation with over 200 head of cattle. We prefer the Central Alternative as it shows to have the least amount of impact to farmlands, wetlands, residential dwellings, and historical sites. It also aligns well with Route 322 causing minimal disruption to the current road. Below are my issues with the North and South Routes.</p> <p>The North Route goes through four of our cattle pastures and would effectively eliminate 35 to 40 percent of our herd size. We sell our feeder cattle to Whole Foods and it would significantly impact our revenues and relationship with them. The farm is self-sufficient. We use our crops for feed so we can't take crop land to create new pastures to maintain herd size. The highway cuts off our main crop fields on the north side of the highway. How would we get access to that with large equipment and potentially cattle? It also goes through a major water paddock out in the pastures. There is also an existing natural gas pipeline that would go through the highway that needs to be considered.</p> <p>The South Route cuts off our main entry way into the farm and farm house. We really don't see any alternative way to get in. We need to have access to those barns in an efficient manner to attend to cattle and move equipment. We also have big cattle transport trailers that would need to get in to pick up feeder cattle. Also, it's very tight to the barns and the sloped easement cuts into the pasture of the front calving bard where we have cows in late fall through early spring calving. We need this space for cows and calves to move around outside the barn to access grass and hay rings for feed. The sloped easement and/or highway appears to go over the septic for the house and possible the electric as well. Access to the house is totally cut off. Any other way created through the farm would be</p>	<p>Thank you for the additional input and information about your property, your concerns are being considered as the alternatives are being refined and further developed. The team will continue to coordinate with you as the design changes.</p>

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		<p>extremely long and inefficient cutting through fields and pastures and disrupting their use. The highway is also closer to the house creating more noise from the traffic.</p> <p>Please see my concerns and issues with the North and South Routes in Question 2 above.</p>	
King, Lee & Michael		<p>Our concerns are: #1 Can the roads be shifted more toward the Elks Club? This would allow us more backyard and mitigate the harm to wetlands. Every year there is a doe that births her fawns in them. We also have a significant red-wing blackbird population. As the lines are drawn now, it is hard to imagine living there.</p>	<p>Following the public meeting and as preliminary engineering plans advance, relocation of local roads and access are being re-evaluated. Proposed changes will consider how US 322 traverses through the study area. All changes will be presented at our next public meeting.</p>
Kittle, John & Joann	16827	<p>1. Please consider using a rubberized asphalt throughout Harris Township area in the densely populated areas. 2. Please consider a noise barrier.</p>	<p>Noise analyses are currently being conducted. This process includes the following steps:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Identify land uses within the project area that are sensitive to noise, such as homes and parks (e.g., Liberty Hill community). This step has been completed. 2. Monitor existing noise levels and develop acoustic models to predict future conditions. This step has been completed. 3. Evaluate predicted future noise levels after the highway project is constructed and identify locations where noise levels exceed identified FHWA standards. This step is currently underway. 4. Consider noise abatement (e.g., barriers/walls) where noise impacts are anticipated. This step will be conducted after step 3 is completed. 5. Identify areas where preliminary noise abatement is potentially warranted, feasible, and reasonable. This step will be conducted after step 4 is completed. <p>If noise abatement is determined to be warranted and feasible, during final design noise specific community meetings will be conducted with the impacted receivers to discuss the type of abatement to be implemented (e.g., walls).</p> <p>The Noise Assessment will be reevaluated in the Final Design process before final determinations regarding potential noise abatement designs are made for the project.</p>
Knaub, Norm		<p>Please speed up the decision process to allow people that will be affected to make their decisions.</p>	<p>PennDOT is working to advance the schedule while meeting all the rules, regulations, and guidance required as part of the National Environmental Policy Act. PennDOT will make every effort to inform the public of changes on the project as soon as possible.</p>

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Knaub, Pam	16828	I wish the route decision could be made earlier, for the impact it has on people's lives is harder the longer the decision takes.	PennDOT is working to advance the schedule while meeting all the rules, regulations, and guidance required as part of the National Environmental Policy Act. PennDOT will make every effort to inform the public of changes on the project as soon as possible.
Lane, Aaron	92551	As a future resident of the region, you really shouldn't build a dramatically destructive money hole. Why not rebuild the rail and improve transit instead?	While transit provides a great opportunity to transport large volumes of people in an efficient manner, it does not solve rural roadway capacity or safety issues. In addition, transit would not address the trucking or freight related travel concerns within the US 322 corridor. Thus, it would not address the purpose and needs for the US 322 corridor.
Logue, Sheree	16824	Would it be possible to locate the local Boal Ave. route to the north of the expressway between Somerset Road and Bear Meadow Rd. to reduce the impact on neighborhoods currently south of 322?	Following the public meeting and as preliminary engineering plans advance, relocation of local roads and access are being re-evaluated. Proposed changes will consider how US 322 traverses through the study area. All changes will be presented at our next public meeting.
Lunkenheimer, Carol	16827	I am mostly concerned about the noise volume that I hear now from the brake retardation by trucks on 322. My windows even rattle occasionally. I use a white noise machine at night to sleep. Are there any plans to alleviate the noise in the future? Could low noise asphalt be used to reduce noise near heavy residential areas.	<p>Noise related to 'Jake Brakes' or the use of compression release brakes is not effectively reduced using concrete noise barriers. It has been found that compression release brake noise is best addressed by local legislation and strict enforcement of that legislation. However, major transportation improvements that accommodate truck traffic patterns, reduce traffic congestion, minimize steep grades, and better manage traffic exiting and entering the roadway may reduce the need for truckers to use compression release brakes to slow down and therefore indirectly reduce the noise caused by their use.</p> <p>Noise analyses are currently being conducted. This process includes the following steps:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Identify land uses within the project area that are sensitive to noise, such as homes and parks (e.g., Liberty Hill community). This step has been completed. 2. Monitor existing noise levels and develop acoustic models to predict future conditions. This step has been completed. 3. Evaluate predicted future noise levels after the highway project is constructed and identify locations where noise levels exceed identified FHWA standards. This step is currently underway. 4. Consider noise abatement (e.g., barriers/walls) where noise impacts are anticipated. This step will be conducted after step 3 is completed. 5. Identify areas where preliminary noise abatement is potentially warranted, feasible, and reasonable. This step will be conducted after step 4 is completed. <p>If noise abatement is determined to be warranted and feasible, during final design noise specific community meetings will be conducted with the impacted receivers to discuss the type of abatement to be implemented (e.g., walls).</p> <p>The Noise Assessment will be reevaluated in the Final Design process before final determinations regarding potential noise abatement designs are made for the project.</p> <p>PennDOT will utilize the current PennDOT approved construction materials including pavement material which will be determined in final design.</p>
Matthews, John	16827	Would it be possible to put in "No Air Brakes" signs along Hwy 45 on the approach to the roundabout near 322?	Noise related to 'Jake Brakes' or the use of compression release brakes is not effectively reduced using concrete noise barriers. It has been found that compression release brake

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		<p>Could you install "NO AIR BRAKES" signs along 45 on the approach to 322? Trucks are extremely noisy through there, very disturbing.</p>	<p>noise is best addressed by local legislation and strict enforcement of that legislation. However, major transportation improvements that accommodate truck traffic patterns, reduce traffic congestion, minimize steep grades, and better manage traffic exiting and entering the roadway may reduce the need for truckers to use compression release brakes to slow down and therefore indirectly reduce the noise caused by their use.</p> <p>Noise related to 'Jake Brakes' or the use of compression release brakes is not effectively reduced using concrete noise barriers. It has been found that compression release brake noise is best addressed by local legislation and strict enforcement of that legislation. However, major transportation improvements that accommodate truck traffic patterns, reduce traffic congestion, minimize steep grades, and better manage traffic exiting and entering the roadway may reduce the need for truckers to use compression release brakes to slow down and therefore indirectly reduce the noise caused by their use.</p>
McElhinney, Amanda	16827	There is a lot of construction on Roundhill Road right now. Three houses are being built, two have broken ground.	Thank you for your comment. Comment noted.
McIntire, Dan		Can PennDot consider early property acquisition for elderly property owners? I am 74, there is a difference in relocating at age 74 than age 80, financially, emotionally and health wise. This presentation was very well done!	Federal law (23 USC § 108) allows property acquisition by states prior to the completion of the review National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) approval when certain terms and conditions are met. Detailed coordination would be necessary to confirm applicability. All acquisitions, regardless of the timing of the acquisition, will comply with the Uniform Relocation Assistance and Real Property Acquisition Act of 1970, as amended, 23 CFR 710 and 23 CFR 771.
Miller, Howard	16827	<p>Just feedback regarding this problem once possible.</p> <p>Excerpt from comment form Question 2: There has been discussion of an access road to Nittany Meadows Farm through the Huntridge Manor neighborhood due to a lack of access on the current plans. This plan is unacceptable to the residents of the Huntridge Manor development. The increase in traffic would pose an active risk to the children and foot traffic in our neighborhood. There are no sidewalks, and the abundance of young families means there is often foot traffic sharing the road with motor vehicles. In addition, the slope of the access road from Earlstown Road can cause an increased risk of blockage or accident, especially in winter weather. The lack of street lighting is also a risk factor for walkers and pets at dusk or at night. The owners of the farm are also against this route. The connector was pitched as a solution to improve safety and traffic flow and this access road would achieve neither. In addition this route was not on any of the previous maps nor was it in any discussions I attended. It seems like a rushed afterthought and would be very detrimental to the residents of the Huntridge Manor community.</p>	At the time of the public meeting in August 2024, there has not been any changes to official access to individual properties. During the public meeting, property owners were invited to discuss private access and recommendations. Information collected from the public at that station will be used during the evaluation process. As preliminary engineering plans advance, access to individual properties will be evaluated, developed, and presented at the next public meeting.
Nittany Valley Environmental Coalition		<p>NVEC Comments on PADOT's Aug 15, 2024 meeting and meeting materials [Docket No. FHWA-2024-0056] for the Proposed highway project in Centre County, Pennsylvania.</p> <p>Submitted by email on August 30, 2024 on behalf of NVEC</p> <p>From: Dorothy Blair, President, Nittany Valley Environmental Coalition (NVEC)</p> <p>nvec2018@gmail.com<mailto:nvec2018@gmail.com></p> <p>NVEC is a 501(c)4, with members directly impacted by the proposed US-322 expansion from Boalsburg to Potters Mills. Our bylaws specifically require us to work to protect our environment and require us to uphold the environmental provisions of the Pennsylvania Constitution (Article 1, Section 27, PA's Environmental Rights</p>	<p>1. Land Use Decisions - The traffic analysis identified a 2050 no build forecast that was used to determine the design requirements (e.g., number of lanes) for the Build Alternative. The intent of the new facility is to draw regional trips off of the local roadway network and on to the new roadway to improve both local and regional traffic mobility.</p> <p>While changing travel patterns could influence local land uses, future land development and land use regulations are controlled by the local government through zoning and other development restrictions/requirements.</p> <p>Additionally, the PEL Study proposed a mid-point interchange with a connection to PA 45. As part of the evolution of the traffic analysis and alternative design following the PEL Study, traffic analysis determined that the mid-point interchange and</p>

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		<p>Amendment [ERA]) as it informs municipal charters and ordinances and guides state agencies. The ERA has been used successfully in multiple environmental law suits, including by former PA Governor Tom Wolf.</p> <p>NVEC is cognizant of the danger posed by existing in-and-out-bound traffic on our two-lane US 322. Driver speeds are excessive due to habituation to 70 mph+ speeds on the 4-lane feeder roads (including I-99 and I-80 and both ends of 4 lane US 322.) Truck traffic has increased due to various factors: absence of tolls on those roads, direct-delivery retail business models, along with preference for US 322's scenic qualities. Traffic on these roads is often heavy and slowed due to the movement of the 60,000-plus Penn State Students, faculty and workforce. The area is a popular destination for sports and cultural events; the out-of-doors here is quite beautiful. Therefore, many see the Centre Region as a desirable destination. More and more wish to call it home. Despite these traffic pressures, only minimal effort has been made to reduce the number of vehicles on the road through demand side management and/or intermodal approaches.</p> <p>NVEC appreciates the thoroughness of the vetting process undertaken by PennDOT, as well as the Federal NEPA process. However, the ultimate end-result of any completed four-lane US 322 – whether placed in Penns Valley or on the side of Tussey Mountain -- will be to increase housing development in Harris, Potter and other townships to the north, and from the resulting in ease of commuting from population centers along the new 4-lane US 322 to the east. Traffic congestion will only increase. It almost seems comical for PennDOT to count limestone farmland as an asset, as former prime farmland will soon be sprouting houses and businesses.</p> <p>What PennDOT and NEPA can successfully achieve is to preserve natural assets and processes on the Tussey Slope by eliminating the Southern Alternative. We are against the Southern Alternative for the following reasons:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The water flowing down Tussey Mountain and into Penns Valley's groundwater has a high lime content and must stay so. Rain water makes its way slowly through Tussey's limestone soils and gravel, increasing its alkalinity, gathering into rivulets, collecting in sinkholes, flowing underground through more limestone, only to come to the surface again as a spring, gradually forming Galbraith Gap, Cedar Run, Spring Creek, and Sinking Creek. These limestone rich springs, sinkholes, and creeks are huge assets far beyond the Centre County borders. As a limestone spring-fed creek, Spring Creek is a Class A trout stream; its springs buffer the waters of Bald Eagle Creek and de-acidify the North Branch of the Susquehanna, allowing both of these to support not just trout, but all aquatic life as well as the wildlife dependent on those deacidified waters. These waters of the Commonwealth are a protected natural resource for all the people under Article I, section 27 of the Pennsylvania Constitution. 2. Highways present great danger to animals, especially birds. Though not yet endangered, millions of small bird species are killed by fast traffic on US highways, along with the predators attracted to dead or injured birds and small mammals. Our US bird population is sorely affected by dense and fast traffic. Game birds, common on Tussey Mountain, are the most vulnerable. Animal corridors spanning 4-lane limited access roads are crucial to reduce the millions of animal deaths on highways (US Fish and Wildlife Services). This fix is not included in PennDOT's plans for the US 322-5/South Alternative. 3. Tree-removal from the US 322-5/South Alternative is a major concern, due to both our warming climate and habitat impacts. Trees cover about two thirds of the huge corridor designated to be cut for the US-322-5/South Alternative. Tree ages are variable – from young closely spaced trees to mature forest -- excellent habitat for avian, mammal and other forest creatures. These trees are actively sequestering carbon and will do so until their senescence, 100-200 years from now. 4. Noise is yet another concern. Birds and animals, as well as humans, are negatively impacted by noise. The 	<p>associated connector road was not necessary to meet the US 322 project purpose and needs. As a result, the interchange and associated connector road were removed from further development. The removal of this specific access point may also help to reduce any indirect changes to local land use patterns.</p> <p>2. Opposition to the South Alternative - PennDOT and FHWA recognize NVEC's opposition to the South Alternative for environmental reasons including water resources, wildlife mobility, deforestation and habitat loss, and noise pollution. When developing the proposed alternatives these resources, along with other regulated and valued resources, were considered. The South Alternative was specifically developed to provide avoidance and minimization efforts to two specific resources, productive agricultural land and archaeological resources. PennDOT and FHWA are working with the specified resource agencies to refine the alternatives to further avoid and minimize environmental effects, and design refinements are underway for all alternatives under consideration (North, Central, and South Alternative). For unavoidable impacts, PennDOT will again work with the agency with jurisdiction on the resource to develop mitigation measures and strategies to address the proposed impacts. All applicable federal and state environmental laws, executive orders, and regulations will be considered and addressed prior to the final project decision in an effort to identify alternatives that provide the best balance (avoid and minimize) of effects to protected and valued resources.</p> <p>For the key concerns noted:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Water Resources – PennDOT acknowledges that the South Alternatives has the highest potential to affect the streams and waterways and specifically Cold Water Fishes CWF-High Quality CWF. We also recognize that South Alternative is located at the headwaters of Spring and Sinking Creeks. PennDOT is committed to working with the resources agencies to identify Stormwater Management (SWM) to address roadway run-off and advance Best Management Practices to minimize any harm to area water resources. As design advances, PennDOT will strive to maintain existing drainage patterns to the streams and waterways with the proposed drainage and SWM components. In addition, PennDOT is working the state and federal resource agencies to further identify ways to minimize harm to the resources and maintain stream flow through that area. • Wildlife/Highway Conflicts – To address wildlife concerns, PennDOT is working with state and federal agencies to identify wildlife crossings throughout the corridor. This includes addressing concerns to migratory birds in consultation with the US Fish and Wildlife Service and other state agencies and advancing best management practices to the greatest extent possible. • Tree Removal - PennDOT acknowledges that nearly 23% of the South Alternative is Forested/Wooded Habitats which is the highest among the proposed alternatives. PennDOT will work with the state and federal resource agencies to identify mitigation measures to address the habitat loss. This may include tree planting in the area.

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		<p>mountainside route will amplify the ever-growing traffic noise, particularly from truck traffic, and especially when brakes and gear-changes are necessitated by elevation change, which does not exist on the other alternatives. Few noise barriers are planned; only the one protecting low-income housing.</p> <p>NVEC has determined that there is no good limited access 4-lane choice on the side of Tussey Mountain: human safety has been pitted against natural beauty, historic icons, animal/bird welfare and trees. NVEC is, in particular, committed to the welfare of all species and against frivolous tree removal. Therefore, NVEC must, as its charter requires, side with the PA Constitution and reject the I- 322-5/South Alternative. We hold that a minimum build, improved 4-lane road is better in the long run for our area. We continue to support a minimum build, 4-lane, combined alternative road with all safety features.</p> <p>Furthermore, PennDOT has not included either Transportation Demand-Side Management (TDSM) or Intermodal Approaches required by PEL to reduce traffic. PennDOT's error was to exclude the State College Borough and Penn State University from the study area. These are the traffic-generators who must take on the responsibility for staggering events, worker hours, and class times. Penn State and CATA have the power to arrange shuttle services for out-of-towners attending large events and transporting workers and students to and from population areas beyond the current US 322 two-lane. Students should also have adequate bus access when traveling to and from the Lewistown Amtrak Keystone Corridor. Increasing shuttle services for all commuting workers to and from adjacent towns, access to bus transport to rail, along with more and better bicycle routes will reduce congestion, CO2 pollution, and a family's need for a second car.</p> <p>Because creating a convenient, high-speed road to meet development demands creates ever more development, and with it, the "necessity" to build more roads, it is not a traffic fix. To summarize, our reliance on the PA Environmental Rights Amendment informs and supports our position. NVEC supports an improved, minimum-build US 322, using TDSM and intermodal approaches to reduce the number of vehicles on the road.</p> <p>Thank you for your attention to our concerns.</p> <p>Dorothy Blair, President</p> <p>Nittany Valley Environmental Coalition</p> <p>References:</p> <p>https://issuu.com/stuckemanschool/docs/rethinking-322_booklet_final_version_4 https://www.fws.gov/story/threats-birds-collisions-road-vehicles#:~:text=Collisions with vehicles are believed to be among, die annually in vehicle collisions on U.S. roads.</p> <p>Attachment: PADOT_NVEC_Comments_PADOTAug15meeting_FHWA20240056.pdf</p> <p>David Stone, Executive Committee</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Noise - It should also be noted that NVEC states "Few noise barriers are planned; only the one protecting low-income housing." We would like to point out that this is not accurate. Noise analyses are currently being conducted and barrier/wall determinations have not been identified at this time. The noise analysis process includes the following steps: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Identify land uses within the project area that are sensitive to noise, such as homes and parks. <i>This step has been completed.</i> 2. Monitor existing noise levels and develop acoustical models to predict future conditions. <i>This step has been completed.</i> 3. Evaluate predicted future noise levels after the highway project is constructed and identify locations where noise levels exceed identified FHWA standards. <i>This step is currently underway.</i> 4. Consider noise abatement (e.g., barriers/walls) where noise impacts are anticipated. <i>This step will be conducted after step 3 is completed.</i> 5. Identify areas where preliminary noise abatement is potentially warranted, feasible, and reasonable. <i>This step will be conducted after step 4 is completed.</i> <p>If noise abatement is determined to be warranted and feasible during final design, noise specific community meetings will be conducted with the impacted receivers to discuss the type of abatement to be implemented (e.g., walls).</p> <p>3. Minimum Build/Combined Alternative – NVEC has commented that a Minimum Build/Combined Alternative would address the project purpose and needs to improve safety, address congestion, and meet driver expectations and should be considered in the State College Area Connector Project. NVEC has defined this alternative as "...a synergistic...combination of Transportation Demand Management (TDM), multimodal, minimal build features, Upgrade Existing Alignment Alternative elements, incremental safety upgrades and so forth". The following provides an overview of the traffic and safety analysis that provided the foundation for the purpose and needs and evaluation of the range of alternatives.</p> <p><u>Traffic Analysis Overview</u></p> <p>Prior to determining any alternative to advance for further development, PennDOT conducted a thorough traffic study as part of the purpose and needs evaluation for the study area (<i>Traffic Analysis Technical Memorandum for the State College Area Connector Planning and Environmental Linkages Study (February 2023)</i>). The traffic investigations utilized the Centre County MPO's Travel Demand Model which takes into account local land use and growth patterns for the region to determine existing traffic patterns and volumes on area roadways. The MPO then used growth rates determined from the travel demand model to predict traffic for 2050. PennDOT supplemented the original PEL traffic investigations with updated traffic counts to validate the existing traffic volumes. Along US 322, the 2023 traffic volumes range from 9,400 Annual</p>

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			<p>Average Daily Traffic (AADT) to 14,900 AADT with 24% to 36% trucks. By 2050, traffic will increase to 13,650 AADT to 22,700 AADT with 23% to 29% truck. These traffic volumes cause the Level of Service (LOS) – a means of quantitatively measuring the quality of service (e.g. speed, density, congestion, delay, etc.) being provided along a roadway or intersection – to function at unacceptable levels for a majority of US 322 in 2023. Currently (2023), the 2-lane roadway portion of US 322, from the end of the 4-lane Mount Nittany Expressway to the Bear Meadow Road/Elks Club Road intersection and from the Harris/Potter Township line to the 4-lane US 322 section at Potters Mills, operates at unacceptable LOS. By 2050, the entire section of US 322, from the 2-lane roadway portion at the end of the 4-lane Mount Nittany Expressway to the 4-lane section of US 322 at Potters Mills, will operate at unacceptable LOS.</p> <p>PennDOT also conducted an origin and destination study to understand the types of trips being made through the area. The study was conducted for passenger vehicles and trucks by type of travel (e.g., local or regional trips). Regional trips were defined as trips which entered and passed through the study area without stopping. Local trips were defined as trips beginning and/or ending within the study area. Along US 322, the origin and destination study revealed that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> heavy truck (e.g., tractor trailer) traffic was primarily regional trips. Almost 90% of heavy trucks had a starting and ending point outside the study area. Furthermore, nearly 70% of all westbound US 322 and 79% of eastbound project area truck traffic originated from/or was destined to I-80 or US 322 western destinations.
NVEC Email Attachment		<p>NVEC Comments on PADOT's Aug 15,2024 meeting and meeting materials [Docket No. FHWA-2024-0056]</p> <p>The Nittany Valley Environmental Coalition (NVEC) very much appreciates the fact that the North and Central Alternatives presented by PennDOT at the August 15 public meeting are a considerable improvement over what was originally set forth in the 2023 PEL document.</p> <p>Of course, the NOI and the NOI Additional Project Information document should be formally revised to reflect PADOT's new naming conventions and refined alignments.</p> <p>We especially applaud the removal of the Route 45 interchange and connector, and the consolidation by refinement of the old 322-1s into 322-OEX to form what is now called the North Alignment. We realize though that how we described this refinement process in our NEPA NOI comments differs from PADOT's narrative.</p> <p>Here is why: The PEL Study's 322-1s and 322-OEX were the same for much of their alignments, except that 322-1S veered away from the current 322 at the Potter Township end. As we said in our 2023 PEL Comments : "NVEC opposes 322-1s since it is simply a variation of 322-1OEX with much more environmental and farm impacts at the Potters Mills end."</p> <p>It was only logical for PADOT to remedy this by refining the 322-1s alignment back onto the 322- OEX Potter Township alignment in order to cause less environmental and farmland damage. The consolidated 322-OEX/322-1s Alternative can now be adjusted as needed. So North can more accurately be described then as a refinement of</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 65% of medium size truck (e.g., delivery vehicles) traffic were regional trips. Only 30% of medium size trucks originated from/or were destined to I-80 or US 322 western destinations. Passenger vehicles traveled more locally with 74% having either a starting or ending point, or both within the study area. <p>The origin and destination information provided an understanding of how people and freight travel through the study area and aided in understanding travel conditions.</p> <p>A safety analysis was also conducted using the Highway Safety Manual (HSM). The analysis determined that between 2017 and 2021 a total of 144 reportable crashes were documented along US 322 with 42% of the crashes having injuries and 2% involving a fatality. Using design elements (e.g., roadway geometry), traffic volumes, and historic crash data, the HSM analysis specifically evaluated the safety performance of US 322. The HSM analysis showed that there is potential safety concern from west of Elks Club Road/Bear Meadows Road near Jacks Mill Road to Tusseyview Lane and from Taylor Hill Road to Red Mill Road/Mountain Back Road.</p> <p>Future Capacity</p> <p>PennDOT further analyzed the 2050 traffic to determine the capacity needed to accommodate future traffic in the corridor. This analysis indicated that to achieve an acceptable level of service in 2050 for a two-lane US 322 facility, substantial reductions in traffic volumes would be needed. This is true for traffic in both directions of travel,</p>

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		<p>322-1s and 322-OEX which merges them so as to form one alignment which stays closer to the old 322 at the Potter Township end.</p> <p>PADOT renamed this solution the North alignment.</p> <p>On other hand, here and in our NOI comments, NVEC maintains that the Central Alignment is not actually a refinement of 322-1s, as it is described as being in the Aug 15 PADOT meeting materials. Rather the new Central Alternative should be regarded primarily as a refinement of 322-5.</p> <p>In refining 322-5 PADOT removed the bulge in the alignment formed when the 322-5 Alternative swerved south away from old 322 towards the mountainside. As one moves towards Potters Mills, the rest of the 322-5 alignment has also been refined to remain closer to existing 322. PADOT has done this for specific reasons, which include potential excavation impacts, a whole litany of wildlife and forest consequences, farm impacts, and less obviously, the results of productive discussions with Harris Township.</p> <p>NVEC understands that it is important to proceed systematically and logically within the PEL and NEPA framework. It would be problematic if a new build alignment would just be inserted into the menu of NEPA choices “de novo” after the PEL Study and later within the NEPA review itself.</p> <p>But any sort of “de novo” introduction is not an issue here as long as the Central Alternative is rightfully considered to be a refinement of 322-5 made in response, as was said elsewhere in the August 15 meeting materials, to environmental and township input.</p> <p>Since 322-5 has already been improved in this way, NVEC contends that PADOT and FHWA are now legally warranted to remove the 322-5 (now called South) alignment from the NEPA Alternatives Analysis completely, since the Central Alternative is most accurately characterized as a refinement of the PEL study’s original 322-5 at the Harris Township end developed in response to site specific environmental and property impact factors. And moving east towards the Potters Mills end (starting at about where Neff Rd enters old 322), PADOT’s South and Central are substantially the same. Any small differences within that shared alignment can be modified as needed since the deprecated 322-5 swing towards the mountain has been refined into the new Central alignment. The Southern Alignment is redundant.</p> <p>Now, we understand why FHWA and PADOT may not want to pare the NEPA alternatives down to just two discrete Build Alternatives going into the full fledged NEPA review by removing the South Alternative outright, but we would note that the PEL study itself only really advanced two Build Alternatives since 322-OEX and 322-1s were so similar, and so readily refined into one alignment alternative - that is, the North Alignment. Consequently, 322-1s has now been removed by PADOT from consideration.</p> <p>So of the original PEL Study finalists, just two are left. We can only surmise that the retention of South is a consequence of the intention to have at least three Build alternatives to consider during the NEPA analysis. This is despite the fact that its precursor 322-5 has, like the now removed 322-1s, been already refined into a superior option.</p> <p>So realizing this, NVEC went beyond advocating for the South Alternative’s removal in our NOI comments, and asserted that PADOT and FHWA should ensure that the slot occupied by the effectively deprecated Southern Alignment is filled by what NVEC described in our 2023 PEL comments as the “Combined Alternative”. We defined this Combined Alternative in those PEL comments to be a synergistic “all of the above” combination of</p>	<p>particularly during the afternoon hours of the day. During the PM peak period this would include reductions of nearly 40% of traffic traveling in the peak direction and more than 10% of traffic in the off-peak direction.</p> <p>Based on the traffic analysis, it was determined that to accommodate predicted travel, additional capacity (e.g., four lane roadway) was necessary.</p> <p><u>Upgrade Existing US 322 Alternative</u></p> <p>With the capacity determination completed, an Upgrade Existing US 322 Alternative was developed to accommodate the traffic volumes (e.g., 4 lanes 2 in each direction) and minimize potential conflict points along the corridor by managing and restricting driveway and side road access to right-in and right-out movements with jughandle intersections at select locations to accommodate left turn and U-turn movements. This scenario maintained local and regional traffic in the same corridor. Using the PennDOT HSM tools, the safety study for an Upgrade Existing US 322 Alternative indicated a predicted crash frequency higher than the No Build Alternative meaning there is still a need for potential safety improvements. This is due to the mix of local and regional trips using the corridor coupled with numerous conflict points (e.g. driveways and intersections) and the increase in overall traffic volumes along the corridor. This alternative was fully evaluated and documented in the PEL Study. The results indicated that the alternative would not meet the safety needs for the project and was dismissed from further study (<i>Alternatives Analysis and Screening Report for the State College Area Connector Planning and Environmental Linkages Study (February 2023)</i>).</p> <p><u>TDM Alternative</u></p> <p>According to FHWA’s <i>Integrating Demand Management Into The Transportation Planning Process</i> (FHWA-HOP-12-035), “...TDM can be highly effective at a relatively low cost when applied in the right place, at the right time for the right travel market. ... However, TDM, in and of itself, is not adequate to solve congestion.... TDM is most effective, or at least most measurable, at the localized level. The impact of TDM at a corridor or regional level is very hard to evaluate.” TDM strategies/concepts that could be used for this area may include: expanded transit service to park and ride lot(s), some multimodal improvements, and enhanced linkages with ITS and traffic operations/parking management.</p> <p>While it is expected that some of the traffic would shift modes with the implementation of TDMs in the corridor, it is not expected to significantly reduce traffic volumes in the peak or off-peak directions of travel to sufficiently (a 40% reduction) address congestion levels or safety concerns along a two-lane US 322 roadway. Additionally, with a large portion of the trips on US 322 being commercial vehicles (23-29% trucks) and the lack of adjacent and attractive alternate roadways capable of handling traffic diversions during congested conditions, it further limits the TDM strategies effectiveness at reducing traffic volumes through the corridor and improving safety.</p> <p><i>Bicycle and Pedestrian Improvements</i></p>

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		<p>Transportation Demand Management (TDM), multimodal, minimal build features, Upgrade Existing Alignment Alternative elements, incremental safety upgrades, and so forth. This flexible combination goes well beyond the No Build Alternative already included in the NEPA review as a baseline.</p> <p>But how could this Combined Alternative be added without raising the “de novo” issue we alluded to earlier? That is, how could a Combined Alternative procedurally be swapped in for the now deprecated and redundant South Alternative (formerly 322-5) ; or if South is retained , added as if dropped in “out of the blue”?</p> <p>Well, in the same way that the North and Central Alignments were generated. That is, through refinement. The post-PEL introduction of a Combined Alternative into the range of Build candidates already included in the NEPA Alternatives Analysis can, and should, be achieved by refining, all or in part, the Central Alternative.</p> <p>NVEC’s proposed Combined Alternative can and should be introduced as a refinement of the Central Alignment. A change of name might not be necessary.</p> <p>That is, 322-5 has already been moved so close to the existing 322 during its refinement into Central, that it is now possible to further refine the Central Alternative to fit even more tightly within the old 322 footprint. Various minimum build and TDM/multimodal/minimum build techniques could meet the project need without building a fully 4 lane limited access highway along the entire corridor. Any cost savings achieved by this could be applied to generous compensation for any adjacent commercial property which would be adversely affected, or need to be purchased.</p> <p>Another way to do this is to leave the South Alternative in the NEPA Alternatives Analysis, but then immediately refine it once again into what would be essentially a Combined Alternative, just as 322-5 was previously refined into the Central Alternative. There is a continuum of possibilities which ought to be analyzed as part of the NEPA review. The PEL Study, for reasons we will detail below, neglected to do that, and therefore does not pre-empt using this approach within the NEPA Alternatives Analysis itself.</p> <p>“Where there is a will there is a way.” NVEC maintains that Pennsylvania law and regulations, Federal environmental law and regulations, administrative due process, and the applicable highway funding legislation provisions when viewed in light of the trustee obligations of PADOT under PA Section 27 of the Pennsylvania Constitution require that PADOT find the proper legal means to facilitate the inclusion of a “Combined Alternative” into the NEPA Alternatives Analysis under whatever name the refinement process makes most appropriate.</p> <p>While NVEC argues that this should be done during a NOI revision that also updates in its accompanying document the new North, Central, and South names and alignments, there is no reason that it couldn’t also be done early in the NEPA process itself.</p> <p>Additional Background for Context</p> <p>Unfortunately the PEL Study analysis workflow was seriously flawed with respect to its consideration of the TDM/ multimodal/minimum build alternatives. The synergistic combination of those alternatives is what we NVEC in our PEL Study comments called the Combined Alternative. We note too that public input throughout the PEL Study, the NOI comments posted online , and, as far as we know, at the Aug 15 meeting, favored elements of this Combined Alternative approach and generally opposed, as does NVEC, the traditional maximalist 4 lane limited access Interstate with its associated frontage roads; which involves in many places, the retention of the existing 322 lanes as well.</p>	<p>PennDOT is evaluating the inclusion of bicycle and pedestrian improvements (a type of TDM strategies) in conjunction with the Build Alternatives being evaluated. Specifically, PennDOT is planning a shared use path that extends from Boal Avenue/Discovery Drive along a new local US 322 to a connection with Bear Meadows Road. This shared use path was coordinated with the Harris Township officials to accommodate the recreational travel to Tussey Mountain. In addition, PennDOT is considering the inclusion of park and ride lots within the corridor which could accommodate future transit services and will coordinate with local municipalities on their inclusion in future design plans. Should local municipalities agree with their inclusion, site location(s) will be identified in preliminary engineering and fully engineered in final design. Final design will also consider the inclusion of enhanced linkages with ITS and traffic operations/parking management to alert motorists to travel conditions within the corridor.</p> <p><i>Transit</i></p> <p>Centre County has transit service (i.e., shared ride service) provided by CATA and Centre County Office of Transportation. When looking to compare transit service options in rural areas, the analysis approach considers that rural transit yields X riders per hour on fixed-route bus service as reported in the Federal Transit Administration’s National Transit Database (2022). Assuming a national average of 4.37 passengers per revenue hour, one-hour headways, and a rural auto occupancy of 1.7 (https://www.fhwa.dot.gov/tpm/guidance/avo_factors.pdf), it equates to 2.6 cars per hour removed from the roadway with rural fixed-route transit. By comparison, a 55-mph rural un-signalized arterial can handle about 950 vehicles per hour per lane (https://www.fhwa.dot.gov/policyinformation/pubs/pl18003/hpms_cap.pdf, pdf page 44) while operating at a level-of-service (LOS) C (i.e., free flow conditions). Higher truck trip percentages will worsen the LOS at a given traffic flow, but those trips cannot use public transit.</p> <p>Microtransit can handle about 4 passengers per revenue hour (i.e., less than three cars per hour), and shared ride service is even lower (i.e., about 2.5 passengers per revenue hour).</p> <p>Based on coordination, CATA is contracted to provide transit services for Harris Township. They only offer microtransit (on-demand transportation service via CATAGO!) in this area. They do not currently have a transit service contract with Potter Township. CATA noted that transit services into rural areas is difficult as these areas have lower population densities to support higher ridership and make transit services sustainable. CATA noted that prior bus service was provided to the Tussey Mountain area but was eliminated because of low demand and concern for travel safety on the local roadway. CATA noted that following the implementation of the State College Area Connector project, they may consider reactivating this bus route if requested and it is supported by ridership. Overall, transit will not solve rural roadway capacity or safety issues regardless of the rural density.</p>

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		<p>For context with respect to this PEL workflow issue, we incorporate by reference our 2023 PEL Study comments; and explicitly resubmit these excerpts as comments once again here.</p> <p>https://www.penndot.pa.gov/RegionalOffices/district2/ConstructionsProjectsAndRoadwork/SCAC/Documents/SCAC%20Draft%20PEL%20Public%20Comment%20Summary%20Report.pdf</p> <p>State College Area Connector Draft Planning and Environmental Linkages (PEL) Study Public Comment Summary Report Appendix E NVEC comments pages 84-107</p> <p>The paragraphs excerpted are selected from pages 84-88.</p> <p>“As we maintained in our April 2022 and Nov. 2022 comments, a combination of Demand-Side Management/ Transportation Systems Management/Intermodal/minimum build approaches is preferable under all the applicable criteria including NEPA.</p> <p>For the purposes of these comments on the 2023 draft PEL study, NVEC will now refer to this combination of Demand-Side Management/ Transportation Systems Management/Intermodal/ minimum build approaches as the ‘Combined Alternative’.”</p> <p>“The February 2023 Alternatives Analysis and Screening Report makes clear for the first time what the problem is. Rather than evaluate the type of Combined Alternative that NVEC and other commenters are now describing, the PADOT evaluators originally looked at each tool in that tool box separately, and then set each aside one by one.</p> <p>Despite the preponderance of most public and municipal comments, we now know that the original piecemeal dismissal was never revisited and adapted into a Combined Alternative for evaluation before issuing this draft PEL.”</p> <p>“NVEC maintains that by originally dividing up the individual systems management/intermodal/ minimum build elements in this way, the PEL Study drew attention and focus away from evaluating a potentially viable Combined Alternative, and shifted its resources entirely towards winnowing through alternate “maximalist” interstate alignments to add four restricted access lanes to the existing two 322 travel lanes.</p> <p>The advantage of employing a combined management/intermodal /minimum build solution is exactly that its elements are not mutually exclusive, but synergistic.”</p> <p>“For some reason the PEL Alternatives Screening procedure did not manage to weave these positive advantages into one coherent Combined Alternative after dismissing its potential components arbitrarily one by one so early in the process. There apparently was a fundamental flaw in this PEL Study workflow which did not enable PADOT to circle back and synthesize critical public comments into a new Combined Alternative for PEL evaluation prior to the start of NEPA review.</p> <p>We can show then how this foundational limitation in the scope of the PEL study coupled with PADOT’s own perception of its lack of authority to implement some of the Combined Alternative elements has tilted the PEL alternatives analysis towards traditional maximalist interstate highway approaches.”</p> <p>“Thus there is insufficient legal basis for the categorical exclusion of a Combined Alternative from NEPA review. A</p>	<p><i>Intermodal Facilities</i></p> <p>Large-scale intermodal facilities which accommodated freight and/or passenger movement require statewide and even national initiatives which are beyond the scope of the current project. These types of initiatives are typically identified, evaluated, and advanced through the Pennsylvania Long Range Transportation Plan, Pennsylvania Freight Movement Plan, Pennsylvania State Rail Plan, and the area metropolitan planning organizations (MPO) such as the Centre County MPO transportation plans. None of these documents currently identify a future intermodal facility for freight. Some of the local transit agencies in the more urban areas have intermodal sites for buses and trains. No new passenger intermodal sites were identified.</p> <p>Conclusion</p> <p>PennDOT is committed to including TDM elements and bicycle and pedestrian facilities in conjunction with any of the proposed Build Alternatives (e.g., North, Central, South Alternatives). While combining TDM improvements with the proposed Upgrade Existing Alternative (as defined in the PEL Study) would address the congestion issues along the US 322 corridor, safety would remain unimproved and even be degraded. As a result, a Combined Alternative (TDM/Upgrade Existing Alternative) would not meet the identified purpose and needs and will not be further considered as part of this project.</p> <p>4. Traffic Analysis is Flawed as it Excluded Penn State and State College Borough</p> <p>NVEC has commented that the traffic analysis for the project is flawed because it excludes Penn State University and State College Borough. The following summarizes the traffic analysis that provided the foundation for the alternative evaluations.</p> <p>Traffic volume forecasts for the PEL and NEPA Studies were developed using the Centre County Regional Travel Demand Model and traffic volume data contained in the 2019 Data Refresh Report for the Route 322/144/45 Corridors, Centre County, Pennsylvania. In addition, supplemental traffic volume data was collected in Fall 2022/Spring 2023.</p> <p>The Centre County Metropolitan Planning Organization (CCMPO) maintains the Centre County Regional Travel Demand Model, which includes traffic analysis zones for Penn State and State College Borough. The CCMPO completed an update of this model using the 2019 Data Refresh data; the model update included updated trip tables for all traffic analysis zones encompassed in the model, based on recent Origin-Destination data obtained from Streetlight Data.</p> <p>The updated travel demand model was then used in developing the future year (2050) traffic volume projections (ADT and peak hour) for the project No-Build and</p>

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		<p>combination TSM/DSM/Multimodal/ Minimum Build Alternative must be carried forward into the NEPA EIS process on an equal footing with 322-1OEX and 322-s1 and 322-5.”</p> <p>Excerpted from SCAC Draft PEL Public Comment Summary Report Appendix E NVEC comments pages 84-88</p> <p>Again for context: NVEC resubmits to PADOT this PEL comment on “scoping”, which is also relevant in the NOI context and was also offered as comments on the NOI (Also from NVEC’s 2023 PEL comments pg 98)</p> <p>“We maintain that mapping the Study Area onto a 70 sq. mile region that excluded Penn State and State College Borough has contributed to the early shift of focus away from a Combined Alternative approach. The two dimensional map predisposed planners to consider only physical build alternatives which neatly fit within that sort of two dimensional representation. The study area for a Combined Alternative should be set much wider and involve abstract jurisdictional - and not just physical map boundaries.”(End quote)</p> <p>This inadequate Study Area scoping persists in the NOI and its Project Information Document, and consequently negatively affects PADOT’s Agency Coordination Meetings, the Agency Coordination Plan “living document”, and even the required Environmental Justice assessment since State College Borough qualifies as low income for most governmental purposes because of its student population.</p> <p>Also directly relevant to PADOT is this: The exclusion from the scoping area of local entities with Pennsylvania Constitution Section 27 environmental trusteeship responsibilities skews any multimodal, traffic demand side management feasibility, or “Combined Alternative” analysis. This limitation is especially consequential in the case of PSU, which is the source of most of the regional car traffic - and which is also an Instrumentality of the State.</p> <p>NVEC Fig. 1 (screenshot from SCAC PEL Report pg 43)</p> <p>And so we contend that if the Upgrade Existing Alternative rejected early in the PEL process had been combined with TDM/multimodal etc , and the appropriate jurisdictional, not just geographical scoping had been applied then the Upgrade Existing Alternative as described above (fig-1) would meet the project need.</p> <p>So since the Central Alignment can be refined using these TDM/minimum build techniques so as to move even closer to the existing alignment; a change made possible by forgoing full limited access and incorporating minimum build techniques, the reduced build alternative becomes much closer to the No build and to the high volume yet non-interstate categories such as items 2 and 3 in the Table 2-1 excerpt below. (NVEC Fig. 2)</p> <p>NVEC NVEC Fig. 2 (excerpt screenshot from Table 2-1 in SCAC PEL Report pg 11)</p> <p>There is, in fact, no reason that the PEL Study’s piecemeal dismissal of each of the minimum build and TDM type alternatives viewed in isolation can or should preclude the consideration of such techniques as a way to reduce one of the NEPA Build Alternatives’ alignment footprint so as to cause less environmental damage and farmland loss. So, for example, the Central Alignment can be refined using these minimum build/TDM techniques to fall more tightly within the existing 322 footprint, if environmental and farmland conditions warrant that the “straitjacket” of building a traditional 4 lane Interstate is loosened or removed.</p>	<p>Build Alternatives. Therefore, the traffic analysis considers Penn State and State College Borough.</p> <p>5. Shuttle Services – NVEC is correct, CATA and Penn State can contract to provide shuttle and busing services from various destinations throughout the region. This would also be true of any large entity (e.g., employer, entertainment venue) within proximity to the CATA service area. However, CATA would need to have service agreements with the municipality in which the services are being provided. PennDOT does not typically get involved in these private contracting endeavors or municipality agreements.</p> <p>NVEC noted providing bus services to and from the Lewistown Amtrak Station and State College/Penn State. In 2020, a study was completed by the Bureau of Public Transportation on the Lewistown Amtrak Station Facility and Operations. A desire for this connection was documented in that study. The study also documented the need for several improvements at the station (larger parking lot, safety improvements for boarding and alighting) as well as roadway improvements to accommodate bus vehicles and provide future bus connections. To date, those improvements have not been planned or programmed for funding. Nor has a service extension from CATA been planned.</p> <p>Currently, daily bus service is provided from Lewistown by Greyhound Bus. Service departs from 10 W. Market Street, Lewistown, PA which is 0.8 miles from the existing train station. The bus picks up in Lewistown at 12:30 PM and arrives at State College at 1:15 PM. AMTRAK does not arrive at the Lewistown Station until 3:45 PM daily which is not conducive to schedule for the Greyhound connecting bus service to State College.</p> <p>6. Notice of Intent (NOI) to Prepare an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) – The NOI serves as the formal announcement of intent to prepare an EIS. This marks the start of the public scoping period; the scoping process will be used to identify the purpose and need, the range of alternatives and impacts, and the significant issues to be addressed in the EIS [23 CFR 771.123(b)(1)]. The NOI provides additional data to support FHWA’s decision that an EIS is the appropriate level of documentation to address the proposed study and potential effects from the project. In the case of the State College Area Connector, the decision to prepare the EIS is based on the PEL study results. This provides a starting point for the EIS investigations. Once the NOI is published, all analysis of alternatives, effect investigations, mitigation development, and public and agency coordination are documented in the EIS and supporting technical reports. There is no need or regulatory requirement to reissue the NOI to address changes to the alternatives that occur as part of the NEPA process.</p> <p>7. PEL Build Alternative Alternatives and NEPA Build Alternatives – At the August 2024 public open house meeting, three boards were utilized to document how the</p>

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		<p>The “driver expectation” argument as mentioned in the NOI is irrelevant in this regard, since it is part and parcel of TDM and associated incremental safety improvements such as signaling and signage to educate drivers and manage expectations.</p> <p>Summary Conclusions How could NVEC’s concerns be corrected procedurally and legally without the de novo introduction post-PEL we warned against before?</p> <p>Answer: By further refining the Cental Alternative, and/or the now deprecated South (formerly 322-5) Alternative to stay even closer to the existing 322, while also refining away some of Central’s excessive limited access Interstate features all or in part.</p> <p>This Combined Alternative refinement can meet the project need through the synergistic implementation of TDM, multimodal, incremental safety related features, and features derived from the Minimum Build Alternative which was set aside and evaluated apart from TDM and multimodal enhancements.</p> <p>NVEC has been adamant that a Combined Alternative (ie essentially a TDM/ multi-modal/minimum build hybrid) should have been included as one of the explicit alternatives to be advanced into the NEPA study on an equal basis with the build alternatives. As we commented in our NOI filing, we still think that this is a legal flaw which PADOT and FHWA should address by any legal means necessary sooner rather than later.</p> <p>Even if FHWA do not conclude that it is legally required to do that, there is another solution which is more fully under the jurisdiction of PADOT as it exercises its PA Constitutional Section 27 environmental trusteeship obligations and authority. That is, PADOT can continue to refine and mitigate the North and Central Alternatives themselves using TDM/multi-modal/minimum build principles as it continues to work on these maximalist build alternatives during the NEPA phase.</p> <p>There are “many roads to Rome” if one employs the principle that proactive refinement is desirable, and in fact required when new environmental or legal issues are brought to the attention of, or otherwise discovered by, FHWA or PADOT.</p> <p>This post-PEL introduction of what we have called the “Combined Alternative” into the range of Build Alternative NEPA candidates can, and should, be achieved by refining the Central Alternative all or in part. This is the same process by which the new North, Central, and South have been, and will be, further refined. At the end of the day, the name given to any Alternative refinement is not that important.</p> <p>While NVEC argues that this should be done during a NOI revision that also updates in its accompanying document the new North, Central, and South names and alignments; there is, as we have said, no reason that it couldn’t also be done early in the NEPA process. One way to do this is to leave South in the NOI update but then immediately refine it once again into a Combined Alternative under whatever name is appropriate.</p> <p>“Where there is a will there is a way.”</p> <p>NVEC argues that, Federal environmental, administrative due process, and the relevant funding legislation provisions, especially when viewed in light of the trustee obligations of PADOT under PA Section 27 of the Pennsylvania Constitution require that PADOT use the available legal means to make this work. So since the</p>	<p>PEL Build Alternatives transformed into the NEPA Build Alternatives. The following presents a summary of those boards and provides clarification regarding the evolution of the alternatives.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PEL Corridor Alternative US 322-1OEX (name derived based on location in the eastern portion of US 322) developed into the North Alternative (named based on its location relative to US 322 in the central portion of the project area). Changes between the PEL and NEPA alternative included: a shift in the east to minimize effects to resources on the south side of US 322; extending further north in the central part of the project area to minimize effects to farmlands and other environmental features; and the removal of the midpoint interchange and PA 45 connector. This board can be found on the project website for more information. https://www.penndot.pa.gov/RegionalOffices/district-2/ConstructionsProjectsAndRoadwork/SCAC/Documents/Aug-2024%20Public%20Meeting/24%20-%20SCAC%20PEL%201OEX%20and%20North%20Alternative%20Comparison.pdf • PEL Corridor Alternative US 322-1S (name derived based on location in the eastern portion of US 322) developed into the Central Alternative (named based on its location relative to US 322 in the central portion of the project area). Changes between the PEL and NEPA alternatives included: a shift closer to US 322 in the east to minimize farm operations and other environmental effects south of US 322; remains south of US 322 for a longer distance before crossing north over US 322 northward to minimize effects to farmlands and other environmental features and addresses local official input; and the removal of the midpoint interchange and PA 45 connector. This board can be found on the project website for more information. https://www.penndot.pa.gov/RegionalOffices/district-2/ConstructionsProjectsAndRoadwork/SCAC/Documents/Aug-2024%20Public%20Meeting/25%20-%20SCAC%20PEL%201S%20and%20Central%20Alternative%20Comparison.pdf • PEL Corridor Alternative US 322-5 (name derived based on location in the eastern portion of US 322) developed into the South Alternative (named based on its location relative to US 322 in the central portion of the project area). Changes between the PEL and NEPA alternatives included: a shift closer to US 322 in the east to minimize farm operation and other environmental effects south of US 322 and the removal of the midpoint interchange. This board can be found on the project website for more information. https://www.penndot.pa.gov/RegionalOffices/district-2/ConstructionsProjectsAndRoadwork/SCAC/Documents/Aug-2024%20Public%20Meeting/26%20-%20SCAC%20PEL%205%20and%20South%20Alternative%20Comparison.pdf <p>While we appreciate NVEC’s opinion that the alternatives are refinements of one another, PennDOT will refine and evaluate the North, Central, and South Alternatives</p>

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		<p>Central Alignment can be refined using these TDM/minimum build techniques so as to move even closer to the existing alignment; a change made possible by forgoing full limited access and incorporating minimum build techniques, the reduced build alternative becomes much closer to the No build and to other high volume yet non-interstate configurations such as items 2 and 3 listed in Table 2-1 above.</p> <p>But as we argued in our 2023 PEL Study comments and reiterated more recently in our NOI comments:</p> <p>“Thus there is insufficient legal basis for the categorical exclusion of a Combined Alternative from NEPA review. A combination TSM/DSM/Multimodal/ Minimum Build Alternative must be carried forward into the NEPA EIS process on an equal footing with 322-1OEX and 322-s1 and 322-5.” [As quoted from NVEC’s Pell comments as cited above]</p> <p>The inclusion of the Combined Alternative in the revised NOI and associated documents to replace or refine the now deprecated 322-5 or its South Alternative refinement would ensure that the NEPA Alternative Analysis process is more fully compliant with Federal, Pennsylvania and municipal law, including the environmental trusteeship obligations of PADOT and other State agencies under Section 27 of the Pennsylvania Constitution.</p> <p>In any event, the No Build Alternative as described in the NOI does not fulfill the regulatory and Constitutional requirements that this proposed Combined Alternative would address, since the current NOI wording excludes incremental minimal build safety improvements; or other elements of the PEL’s Upgrade Existing Alternative which were only rejected because they were viewed in isolation, and not in combination with multimodal, TDM and other minimum build techniques.</p> <p>However, we also propose that just as the North, South, and especially the Central Alternative can be refined to form a de facto Combined Alternatives, the “No Build Alternative” required as a baseline for comparison during the Alternatives Analysis, could also be duplicated and refined into a freestanding Combined Alternative as the NEPA process proceeds into its Preliminary and then Final forms.</p> <p>Conclusion NVEC categorically rejects the PEL Study’s 322-5 (now called South) Alternative for the reasons we set forth in our original 2023 PEL comments (which we incorporate by reference), and in the text to which these NVEC Comments on PADOT’s Aug 15,2024 meeting and meeting materials is attached.</p> <p>We also assert that what we called in the PEL comments the “Combined Alternative” could and should replace the now deprecated 322-5 or South alignment which has, in effect, been rendered superfluous and redundant after it was refined into the Central Alignment.</p> <p>While we appreciate and applaud PADOT’s new refinements, NVEC cannot support any of the 4 lane maximalist build alternatives at this time. We are optimistic though that further refinements and mitigations can be developed.</p> <p>For example, please consider (and include in the PADOT, NEPA and NOI record), the following “Rethinking 322” document developed at Penn State:</p> <p>https://issuu.com/stuckemanschool/docs/rethinking-322_booklet_final_version_4</p> <p>NVEC contends that farmland impact numbers as reflected in any NEPA associated Decision Matrix must be examined critically and not necessarily be taken at face value.</p>	<p>as part of the EIS process. The proposed project and associated investigations, including the alternative evaluation will be conducted in accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) of 1969, as amended (42 U.S.C. 4321, et seq.), 23 U.S.C. 139, FHWA regulations implementing NEPA (23 CFR 771.101-771.139) and all applicable Federal, State, and local governmental laws and regulations.</p> <p>8. Alternative Refinement – In several locations, NVEC noted areas where refinement to alternatives would work to avoid or minimize effects to area resources. Following the public open house meeting and resource agency coordination, the design team is developing refinements to the North, Central, and South Alternatives to further minimize effects on the natural, cultural, community, farmland, and other area resources. Additionally, the team will include local roadway and private property access along with stormwater management facilities. These refinements will be further coordinated with the resource agencies and presented at the next public meeting.</p> <p>9. Dismissing or Combining the South Alternative with the Central Alternative - PennDOT recognizes that each of the alternatives presented have differing effects to the various resources in the area and in some areas are in close proximity or on the same alignment as other alternatives. However, the South Alternative specifically provides the best opportunity to minimize effects on conservation easements and productive agricultural lands (farmland) but notably has higher effects on natural resources and displacements. Based on the level of investigation and engineering design presented at the public open house meeting, it is premature to dismiss any of the presented alternatives. As part of the EIS Process, PennDOT will continue to refine and evaluate the North, Central, and South Alternatives in the same manner prior to dismissing alternatives and determining a recommended preferred alternative. Resource effects and potential mitigation measures will provide the foundation to identify a recommended preferred alternative.</p> <p>10. “De novo” Alternative – NVEC note that it would be “...problematic if a new build alignment would just be inserted into the menu of NEPA choices “de novo” after the PEL Study and later with the NEPA review itself.” NEPA does not limit when an alternative can be inserted into the process for evaluation. Additionally, NEPA does not dictate the number of alternatives that must be evaluated. As outlined in 23 CFR 771.123(c), the draft EIS must evaluate all reasonable alternatives to the action and document the reasons why other alternatives, which may have been considered, were eliminated from detailed study.</p> <p>11. Right-of-Way Compensation – Right-of-way acquisition and relocations will be conducted in accordance with the Uniform Relocation Assistance and Real Property Acquisition Policies Act of 1970 (URA) (42 U.S.C. 4201-4655), its implementing regulations at 49 CFR part 24, and the Pa Eminent Domain Code (23 Pa. C. S. §§101-907). Part of the process includes an appraisal to determine market</p>

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		<p>The acquisition and generous compensation for farmland needed for right-of-way at the edges of bona-fide farming operations, even if that land is enrolled in a farmland preservation program, is actually farmland protective, if , when all is said and done, that farmland will be densely developed anyway once the new road is built. Potentially commercial land should be valued accordingly when its price is set. Expenses in this regard are far preferable to environmental damage or the loss of community assets, including farms otherwise not likely to be developed. Generous compensation is especially warranted for land along the current route 322 which could be acquired during a Combined Alternative Minimum Build.</p> <p>In the interests of facilitating the most environmentally benign and user safe Build Alternative we support generous compensation to landowners whose property is needed. We don't believe that avoidance of such generous compensation is a legitimate factor which can ever justify route alignments with greater environmental impacts and risks- especially in light of excavation and mitigation costs.</p> <p>On a less conciliatory note, there are some caveats we must mention in closing. So we resubmit as NOI comments here these quotes from our 2023 PEL comments:</p> <p>"The behind-the-scenes lobbying of real estate speculators, potential road construction contractors, or so-called political actors attempting to skew the alignment and interchanges to favor special interests is illegitimate. Consideration of such factors is not allowed under NEPA, other environmental regulations, the charters of at least two local municipalities, and the Pennsylvania Constitution."</p> <p>"It is because NVEC is a strong advocate of local farmland preservation, that we adamantly oppose the misuse of farmland protection programs to enable real estate speculators to quietly manipulate the planning process so as to promote taxpayer built infrastructure which would eventually enable an equitable investor, through litigation or politics, to have farmland rezoned high density commercial."</p> <p>Thank you.</p> <p>Dorothy Blair President Nittany Valley Environmental Coalition</p> <p>David Stone Executive Committee nvec2018@gmail.com</p> <p>Submitted by email on Aug 30, 2024 on behalf of the NVEC 501c4</p> <p>NVEC Comments on PADOT's Aug 15,2024 meeting and meeting materials</p> <p>Docket No. FHWA-2024-0056]</p> <p>PADOT_NVEC_Comments_PADOTAUG15meeting_FHWA20240056</p>	<p>value, which provides the foundation for the property offer. In addition, there are other fees, payments, and services that can be included as part of the acquisition process.</p> <p>12. No Build vs. NVEC Combined Alternative – To meet the requirements of NEPA, a “No Build” alternative is always included as a benchmark against which the effects of other alternatives can be compared. The No Build alternative includes those projects that are already planned and programmed for implementation and can include short-term minor reconstruction, such as safety upgrading and maintenance (FHWA Technical Advisory 6640.8A). The NVEC Combined Alternative as proposed would not qualify to replace the No Build Alternative.</p> <p>13. NVEC PEL Report Comments – PennDOT appreciates NVEC’s input on the State College Area Connector. However, NVEC’s PEL Report comments that were appended to this submission were previously addressed as part of the PEL process. The responses to those comments can be found in the State College Area Connector Draft Planning and Environmental Linkages (PEL) Study Public Comment Summary Report. This report can be found on the project website:https://www.penndot.pa.gov/RegionalOffices/district-2/ConstructionsProjectsAndRoadwork/SCAC/Documents/SCAC%20Draft%20PEL%20Public%20Comment%20Summary%20Report.pdf.</p>
Pezalski, Tyler	16827	Please note several homes are being constructed at the end of Roundal Road in Boalsburg that will definitely be in the cut line of all three design alternatives.	Comment noted.

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Regel, Cindy	16827	At the meeting, an engineer mentioned that there will be no access road on the north side of any of the new alignments. There would be no access to Nittany Meadows Farm, which is adjacent to my property. One of the proposed solutions is to buy Scott Yocum's property in the Huntridge Manor development and build an access road to the farm. This recommendation is not acceptable to me as a homeowner in Huntridge Manor development. This is a residential development with no sidewalks. Lots of neighbors walk their dogs and jog through the neighborhood. In addition, we have kids riding bikes and scooters. Nittany Meadow Farm is an agritainment farm. They have goat yoga classes up to 4 times a week plus are opening a farm store. It is not safe to have this additional traffic as well as feed trucks and animal trailers going through a residential neighborhood. Entrance to the Nittany Meadow Farm should be from an access road along the existing 322 corridor.	At the time of the public meeting in August 2024, there has not been any changes to official access to individual properties. During the public meeting, property owners were invited to discuss private access and recommendations. Information collected from the public at that station will be used during the evaluation process. As preliminary engineering plans advance, access to individual properties will be evaluated, developed, and presented at the next public meeting.
Regel, Kevin	16827	Where is the access road for the Nittany Farm going to be located?	At the time of the public meeting in August 2024, there has not been any changes to official access to individual properties. During the public meeting, property owners were invited to discuss private access and recommendations. Information collected from the public at that station will be used during the evaluation process. As preliminary engineering plans advance, access to individual properties will be evaluated, developed, and presented at the next public meeting.
Rejuso, Jeremiah	60053	Wouldn't it be more efficient to create public transit capable of having higher throughputs of moving people than expanding the road network? Not to mention the environmental concerns and obvious benefits of building transit instead.	While transit provides a great opportunity to transport large volumes of people in an efficient manner, it does not solve rural roadway capacity or safety issues. In addition, transit would not address the trucking or freight related travel concerns within the US 322 corridor. Thus, it would not address the purpose and needs for the US 322 corridor.
Scherr, Adam	16803	<p>As a student of Penn State and automobile owner, I think this road is an incredible waste of taxpayer resources and will do more harm than good. In place of the family-owned farmland, homes, and natural areas, this road will offer only a handful more lanes to a road that is already fully capable of supporting vehicle traffic.</p> <p>Having driven on 322 many many times, I know that this road is plenty accessible for car transit. On game day weekends, of which there are UNDER 10 PER YEAR, the road definitely gets congested. But will adding more lanes really solve that? Scientific study after study has shown that increasing the number of available lanes DOES NOT reduce traffic, since drivers will start using these newly created lanes when normally they would have found other routes to get to their destination. The idea that destroying people's homes and livelihoods for faster roadways is a sham. This connector would only lead to similar congestion levels (for the sparse days of the year that the congestion happens) and decrease safety for all drivers involved.</p> <p>One of the other supposed merits of building this connector is to improve the safety of 322. However, a roadways like this would most likely allow for cars to travel at higher speeds than they can in certain parts of the current 322. Increasing the speed at which cars can travel is directly in opposition to the goal of increased safety. The number one factor correlated to decreased road safety is increased speed. This is because people have less reaction time. In our current 322, in the most congested areas, cars are traveling roughly 40 miles per hour. A needlessly open 322 connector would have higher speeds than that, and be more dangerous to other drivers.</p> <p>I have yet to meet a single person in support of the construction of the new 322 connector. Who wants this? The townships? The university? All I can say with certainty is that the people who are against it truly care about the repercussions of such a roadway. The people who live on the land and operate the farms that are going to be bulldozed and replaced with pavement.</p> <p>Please do not continue with the construction of this project. Thank you, and I hope that you understand where I am coming from.</p>	<p>The proposed project is being advanced to address the transportation needs identified along the US 322 corridor. Specifically, there is a need to address congestion, safety, and driver expectation. All of the proposed Build Alternatives will improve safety by providing a high-speed facility to remove regional travelers from local 322 thus removing potential conflicts between slower moving local traffic and higher speed regional through traffic including large trucks. In addition, it will provide a modern roadway that meets all the current design standards for the speeds at which the traffic is moving.</p> <p>As part of the project, PennDOT will develop alternatives that best balance the transportation needs with the potential effects to the natural, cultural, and socioeconomic environment. If a resource cannot be avoided, impacts to that resource will be mitigated. Additionally, PennDOT will evaluate right-of-way needs, and work with area landowners to develop compensation packages for any land that is needed for the project.</p> <p>Regarding your concerns on the traffic in the area, the planning level traffic analyses/studies are based on traffic for an average day throughout the year, not on special event traffic conditions. Traffic data collected for the project was obtained while schools (local primary schools as well as secondary schools) are open. Traffic data obtained and analyzed were based on daily and peak hour traffic volumes and conditions for an average day of the week (e.g., Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday) during a non-holiday/non-special event. If PennDOT were to design for special events, the transportation projects would be excessively large to accommodate the additional traffic. Any proposed transportation project would improve event traffic but would not fully address all of the event traffic needs.</p>

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			<p>Alternatives were developed to best balance the transportation needs with the potential effects to the natural, cultural, and socioeconomic environment including agricultural properties and residential properties.</p>
Schmiedel, Matt	16827	When will there be more information about the access roads next to 322 for neighborhoods and streets that will need to use them?	<p>At the time of the public meeting in August 2024, there has not been any changes to official access to individual properties. During the public meeting, property owners were invited to discuss private access and recommendations. Information collected from the public at that station will be used during the evaluation process. As preliminary engineering plans advance, access to individual properties will be evaluated, developed, and presented at the next public meeting.</p>
Schneider, Kevin	16801	Why is there no interchange to connect the commercial area near Tussey Sink/Taylor Hill Rd. area? In the developed area near Bear Meadows Rd. having a vertical embankment rather than a slope could allow the new access road to be placed closer to the main route and have less impact in the residential developments. Why wasn't this part of the design?	<p>PennDOT announced in January 2024 that the interior interchange and local road connection would be removed from this State College Area Connector project. This was based on traffic analysis which determined that the connector road and interior interchange would only provide limited localized improvements to PA 45. In addition, it was determined that its inclusion was not necessary to address the overall State College Area Connector project's purpose and needs, nor did it address corridor wide issues along PA 45. Therefore, it was removed from this State College Area Connector project and will be considered in the independent PA 45 Corridor Improvements project, a separate study, as appropriate.</p> <p>Proposed local 322 in the Bear Meadow Road area is being evaluated to address concerns raised at the public meeting.</p>

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Schultz, Gary	16827	I oppose any access to the Immel Farm through Huntridge Manor via Scott Yocum's property. I strongly feel that directing access to this farm through a residential neighborhood potentially dangerous, devalues property, and would not be a safe or effective entrance to the farm due to the extreme elevation difference.	As preliminary engineering plans advance, access to individual properties will be evaluated, developed, and presented at the next public meeting. At the time of this meeting, no official access to individual properties had been developed. During the public meeting, a station was available for properties owners to discuss private access and recommendations.
Seaman, Susan	16828	Will you be informing the impacted residents and those nearby personally?	Our next public meeting will have a similar format with early access for property owners within the study area to review project information prior to the general public open house. Property owners will be invited to that meeting via an invitation from PennDOT. In general, no personal contact regarding impacts to individual properties will be initiated until right-of-way acquisition begins.
Shuman, Jessica	16828	My home, which is one of many in Tusseyville, will be deeply affected in a negative way by the North alignment. We also have an ephemeral waterway and sinkhole on the property that are affected. We have owls, foxes, kestrels, eagles and a lot of other wildlife in our protected woods. I will email Eric Murnyak with the list.	Thank you for your comment. Field investigations and coordination on environmental resources is ongoing and will be considered as the project progresses. Additionally, PennDOT is aware of the underlying geology throughout the project area. Detailed geological testing will be conducted to determine what measures and precautions are necessary to stabilize the proposed design.
Shuman, Miles	16828	Why does minimizing impact to Kerr Farm rank as a higher priority than sparing the 5-10 homes (or more) that this alignment would destroy? Is there a modified routing in the Tusseyville/Kerr area that would be better for both? How do the OEX and North plans compare quantitatively?	Throughout the area, there are numerous competing resources with varying degrees of regulatory protection. PennDOT is evaluating alternative refinements in this area to address concerns raised at the public meeting. The PEL Corridor Alternative US 322-1OEX developed into the North Alternative. Changes between the PEL and NEPA alternative included: a shift in the east to minimize effects to resources on the south side of US 322; extending further north in the central part of the project area to minimize effects to farmlands and other environmental features; and the removal of the midpoint interchange and PA 45 connector.
Simon, Jim		Would a bike route be considered on 45 from Indian Hill or Rocky Lane into Boal Ave. in town?	Currently, the State College Area Connector does not offer any specific bicycle and pedestrian facilities along PA 45 between the PA 45/US 322 interchange and Boal Avenue. Coordination with Harris Township identified a shared use path for inclusion in this project along Boal Avenue from Discovery Drive to Bear Meadows Road. However, the State College Area Connector design would not preclude the ability to implement future improvements along PA 45.
Simon, Julie		Please consider painting bridges in a neutral color so they blend in. Thanks for making the community safer.	Thank you for your comment. Bridge aesthetic treatment will be considered as design progresses.
Simpkins, John	16827	Why can't there be an access road to the Nittany Meadows Farm directly from whatever the 322 plan is? It makes no sense to route a farm and business through a neighborhood when a 322 access road is possible.	As preliminary engineering plans advance, access to individual properties will be evaluated, developed, and presented at the next public meeting. At the time of this meeting, no official access to individual properties had been developed. During the public meeting, a station was available for properties owners to discuss private access and recommendations.

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Smith, Scott	16828	This project has been drawn out so long I just want to know where the road is going. I don't want to move, but have to we will. My children graduate in two years from high school. The road isn't safe now and needs something done with it now.	PennDOT is working to advance the schedule while meeting all the rules, regulations, and guidance required as part of the National Environmental Policy Act. PennDOT will make every effort to inform the public of changes on the project as soon as possible.
Smith, Sue		Will you hold another meeting after September when people are back in town? And after Grange Fair?	The next public meeting is anticipated to be held in 2025.
Stachowski, Jeff		<p>Excerpt from comment form Question 2: I am ready to sell my property. Will be retiring. Just need a definitive decision ASAP so I can either sell (if the central route) is chosen or plan to sell to you. I am in limbo at this moment and I need to have some direction.</p> <p>Please let me know what my options are at this point for liquidating this property.</p>	<p>PennDOT is working to advance the schedule while meeting all the rules, regulations, and guidance required as part of the National Environmental Policy Act. (NEPA). PennDOT will make every effort to inform the public of changes on the project as soon as possible.</p> <p>Unfortunately, traditional property acquisition by PennDOT cannot occur until after the Record of Decision (ROD) is provided by the Federal Highway Administration. During the project development process, a property owner may privately sell his/her property at any time.</p> <p>Federal law (23 USC § 108) allows property acquisition by states prior to the completion of the review National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) approval when certain terms and conditions are met. Detailed coordination would be necessary to confirm applicability. All acquisitions, regardless of the timing of the acquisition, will comply with the Uniform Relocation Assistance and Real Property Acquisition Act of 1970, as amended, 23 CFR 710 and 23 CFR 771.</p>
Stryker, Harry Ford	16803	I volunteer with the Spring Creek Chapter of Trout Unlimited and would be happy to participate in the project design.	Thank you for your comment.
Swanson, Paul		Will there be acoustic walls to block truck noise coming through dense population areas, ie. Bear Meadows, golf course, Liberty Hill, others.	<p>Noise analyses are currently being conducted. This process includes the following steps:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Identify land uses within the project area that are sensitive to noise, such as homes and parks (e.g., Liberty Hill community). This step has been completed. 2. Monitor existing noise levels and develop acoustic models to predict future conditions. This step has been completed. 3. Evaluate predicted future noise levels after the highway project is constructed and identify locations where noise levels exceed identified FHWA standards. This step is currently underway. 4. Consider noise abatement (e.g., barriers/walls) where noise impacts are anticipated. This step will be conducted after step 3 is completed. 5. Identify areas where preliminary noise abatement is potentially warranted, feasible, and reasonable. This step will be conducted after step 4 is completed. <p>If noise abatement is determined to be warranted and feasible, during final design noise specific community meetings will be conducted with the impacted receivers to discuss the type of abatement to be implemented (e.g., walls).</p> <p>The Noise Assessment will be reevaluated in the Final Design process before final determinations regarding potential noise abatement designs are made for the project.</p>

state college area CONNECTOR

NAME (LAST, FIRST)	ZIP CODE	QUESTIONS/COMMENTS	RESPONSES
Swim, Janet	16827	<p>We, the residents of Laurel Hills in Boalsburg, would like information about the decisions that have and will be made about a) the service road-currently proposed to be in our neighborhood, south of 322, on all three proposed alignments, and b) the location and elevation of the expanded highway and overpasses. These decisions impact the livability in our neighborhood, especially for those living close to 322.</p> <p>1) Does the state compensate people who live next to the highway and service road for the devaluing of their property? 2) Does the environmental impact include increased light pollution? More generally, does it consider sensory pollution (noise, light, chemicals) on animals (e.g. especially likely to change for the blue route)? 3) A staff member at the public meeting indicated that a bike path along the service road would likely be included. This is great. It was not clear how far the bike path would go. I request that it goes all the way up to Tussey. That is, be sure it doesn't end at the proposed overpass on Bear Meadow Road - the two T intersections and it continues at least up to the ski lodge, but possibly up to the parking area for the forest. Too often, I see bike paths ending before likely destinations are reached. 4) The T-intersections at the overpass look problematic. I was told about 1000 cars were expected to travel on the side of the road. That is a lot of traffic, even if only 2/3 or 1/2 get to the intersections. How will the engineering handle these intersections? Circles could help with the traffic flow, but it seems two circles would be needed, and this will still be quite awkward. 5) Please integrate a bike and walking path at the intersection of Service Road and Bear Meadow Road. Many people walk, run, and bike up Bear Meadow Road.</p> <p>We, the residents of Laurel Hills in Boalsburg, would like information about the decisions that have and will be made about a) the service road - currently proposed to be in our neighborhood, south of 322, on all three proposed alignments, and b) the location and elevation of the expanded highways and overpasses. These decisions impact the livability of our neighborhood, especially those living close to 322.</p> <p>1) Service road location: We would like the section of the service road currently proposed to be between Bear Meadows Road and Somerset Road on the south side of 322 to be north of 322. What led PennDOT to place the service road on the south side on all the maps? A. The south side service road appears to prioritize the golf course over the livability of our neighborhood. There is room for the service road on the north side of the road. One long fairway on the north side has a gap between it and the highway. The gap or highway could be adjusted if needed. Moreover, the viability of this location is suggested by the north-side service road on the more western part of the golf course which is already proposed on all the 322 alternatives. B. The service road will increase sensory (noise, light, and chemical) pollution over and above that of the highway. Pollution from the service road would impact those near the service road. However, it appears that the livability and perhaps the existence of one house (on an agricultural safety zone, not a conservation easement, and not listed as a historical house) on the north side is prioritized over the livability of an entire neighborhood on the south side, with at least three families needing to sell their homes. C. The service road on the south side is not needed. A connector between the Bear Meadows Road and Elks Road is on all three 322 alternatives. This connector would still serve those traveling to the service road from either Bear Meadows or Elks Road. A connector that extends from Somerset Road to a north-side service road could be built. (This connector is already on the South 322 alternative.) This connector would allow people, including the three families living on Somerset Road, to travel east and west along the service road on the north side. D. There are wetlands on the golf course, but there is also a wetland west of Somerset Road. Looking at the already existing proposed north side service road, it appears the extension of the north side service road would similarly avoid the wetland. In contrast, a service road on the south side covers part of a wetland west of Somerset Road.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Property compensation is only available for properties that are directly impacted, are left inaccessible, or needed temporarily for construction purposes by the project. 2. The Environmental Impact Statement will consider visual and wildlife effects resulting from the project. 3. PennDOT has coordinated bicycle and pedestrian accommodations with the local townships. As a result of this coordination, a shared use path has been included in each of the proposed alternatives from Discovery Boulevard to Bear Meadow Road. 4. The project design including location of local road, access and storm water management facilities are being refined to address concerns rated at the public meeting. This includes the mainline elevation and local road and intersection proposals in the Bear Meadow Road area. These will be shown at the next public meeting. 5. See 3 above. <p>PennDOT is working to refine the preliminary engineering design based on comments received at the public meeting and from resource agencies. This includes the elevation of the roadway, proposed access roads, and individual property access.</p> <p>Any proposed alternative will be developed in accordance with PennDOT design criteria, standards, and specifications as outlined in various manuals approved by FHWA for a transportation facility. Overall, these alternatives and any associated shifts are being developed to provide the best balance to natural, cultural, and socioeconomic impacts while still meeting the project's purpose and needs. All alternatives and any associated changes post public meeting will be evaluated relative to the proposed impacts. If a resource cannot be avoided, impacts to that resource will be mitigated. The refined alternatives, proposed impacts, and potential mitigation measures will be presented in the Draft Environmental Impact Statement, which will be available for public review and comment.</p>

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		<p>2) Location and elevation of the expansion of 322. We would like the two current lanes on 322 to be the two eastbound lanes on the expanded 322 highway and the westbound lanes and associated road work to be on the north side of 322. We would also like 322 lowered before our neighborhood and extended past Somerset. The Bear Meadows and Somerset Road connectors could go over rather than under 322.</p> <p>A. This location and elevation would provide a natural barrier to the sensory pollution from 322. A natural barrier is critical because the feasibility of a constructed sound and light barrier next to 322 has not be established.</p> <p>B. Without further development of plans, the impact of the location and elevation on the residents of either side of 322 and the golf course is unknown. We would like prioritization of criteria for the location and elevation (as well as the service road location) to be transparent.</p> <p>Please note we are concerned that even with these adjustments, especially if only one of them is made, we will still be seriously impacted by the sizeable expansion of and elevation of 322. Residents need to have the option to sell their homes to the Commonwealth should these outcomes threaten the value of our homes and our ability to live in them. Clarification on the criteria used to select houses to receive offers by the Commonwealth would be appreciated.</p>	
Tait, John	16828	The Audubon important bird area must be put back on the map. It was very disappointing that it had been left off the map.	Thank you for your comment. The information is contained on our web map and is still part of the consideration in the environmental process.
Tenney, Austin	16827	<p>I went to the meeting today and didn't have a chance to put my comment card in. I have serious concerns about the drainage. We get tons of water draining down Tussey Mountain and the majority comes between the house and the bottom of the neighborhood where we live. There needs to be a well planned way to allow water drainage during construction and obviously when the highway is done being built. Bear Meadows residents should be some of the first people to know when the plans are solidified in that region. I understand there are some approval processes and steps, but the lines are being drawn and they aren't into the golf course which they absolutely should be. Residential property should take precedence. Also AI, studying the noise, talked about there will be a "cost effectiveness" evaluated for a sound wall. I think we have enough people in our neighborhood that will be heavily affected by the sound that there should be no expense spared to provide what we need especially since PennDOT is implementing eminent domain and taking some of the best parts of our properties including views and the beauty around us away for this road. Please use courtesy, respect, and empathy as you proceed with this plan.</p>	<p>The project design will include stormwater management facilities along all of the alternatives being proposed to accommodate drainage in the area. Additionally, proposed local 322 in the Bear Meadow Road area is being evaluated to address concerns raised at the public meeting. These will be shown at the next public meeting.</p> <p>Noise analyses are currently being conducted. This process includes the following steps:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Identify land uses within the project area that are sensitive to noise, such as homes and parks (e.g., Liberty Hill community). This step has been completed. 2. Monitor existing noise levels and develop acoustic models to predict future conditions. This step has been completed. 3. Evaluate predicted future noise levels after the highway project is constructed and identify locations where noise levels exceed identified FHWA standards. This step is currently underway. 4. Consider noise abatement (e.g., barriers/walls) where noise impacts are anticipated. This step will be conducted after step 3 is completed. 5. Identify areas where preliminary noise abatement is potentially warranted, feasible, and reasonable. This step will be conducted after step 4 is completed. <p>If noise abatement is determined to be warranted and feasible, during final design noise specific community meetings will be conducted with the impacted receivers to discuss the type of abatement to be implemented (e.g., walls).</p> <p>The Noise Assessment will be reevaluated in the Final Design process before final determinations regarding potential noise abatement designs are made for the project.</p>

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Wagner, Kevin	16827	What specific noise mitigation measures are being considered along any of the 322 corridor options?	<p>Noise analyses are currently being conducted. This process includes the following steps:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Identify land uses within the project area that are sensitive to noise, such as homes and parks (e.g., Liberty Hill community). This step has been completed. 2. Monitor existing noise levels and develop acoustic models to predict future conditions. This step has been completed. 3. Evaluate predicted future noise levels after the highway project is constructed and identify locations where noise levels exceed identified FHWA standards. This step is currently underway. 4. Consider noise abatement (e.g., barriers/walls) where noise impacts are anticipated. This step will be conducted after step 3 is completed. 5. Identify areas where preliminary noise abatement is potentially warranted, feasible, and reasonable. This step will be conducted after step 4 is completed. <p>If noise abatement is determined to be warranted and feasible, during final design noise specific community meetings will be conducted with the impacted receivers to discuss the type of abatement to be implemented (e.g., walls).</p> <p>The Noise Assessment will be reevaluated in the Final Design process before final determinations regarding potential noise abatement designs are made for the project.</p>
Warner, Andrew		No matter which alternative is selected, investments need to be made to enable safe movement and migration of wildlife, eg. Wildlife under/over passes. These should be unique from under/over passes for existing 322.	The project design will include wildlife crossings along various points along all of the alternatives being proposed. These will be shown at the next public meeting.
Weitzeil, Zoe	85020	Why do you guys insist on continuing to "invest" in this system that we all despise, which causes pollution and keeps people poor?	The proposed project is being advanced to address the transportation needs identified along the US 322 corridor. Specifically, there is a need to address congestion, safety, and driver expectation.
Wenzel, Miwa		If you build something like this, do you think we could also get initiative into better non-car infrastructure? E.g. some of the PennDOT bike routes are horrendously scary. What would it take to bring attention to this and alternative transportation. Thank you for your time.	<p>PennDOT has coordinated bicycle and pedestrian accommodations with the local townships. As a result of this coordination, a shared use path has been included in each of the proposed alternatives from Discovery Boulevard to Bear Meadow Road.</p> <p>Additionally, the project will evaluate the changes in Bicycle Level of Service on the existing roadway network with the removal of traffic with implementation of one of the Build Alternatives.</p> <p>It should be noted that Centre Area Transportation Authority (CATA) is the party responsible for determining where, when, and how transit service is provided throughout the region. As the project advances and specific improvements are identified such as fringe parking area, PennDOT will ensure that CATA is aware of new infrastructure opportunities.</p>
White, Mel	16803	Will eminent domain be used to seize the land on which the route will be built?	Eminent domain can be used for property acquisition in Pennsylvania if an amicable agreement cannot be reached between PennDOT and the property owner.
Wild, Robert		Please re-evaluate the 322/ Bear Meadows interchange: stopping traffic makes no sense. Possibly a roundabout could be a solution.	Proposed local 322 in the Bear Meadow Road area is being evaluated to address concerns raised at the public meeting.

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State College Area Connector
August 2024 Public Meeting Comment Response Table

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Yahner, Tom	16828	<p>There are areas within the study area, that contribute (more than others) to the character of the Rural Historic District. There areas are larger than individual properties and constitute areas of landscape fabric typical of the character of the Rural Historic District. I would be interested in seeing those areas mapped to see how the three alternative routes impact those routes. I understand that this would be a more subjective assessment than the criteria applied to historic register eligibility for individual properties, but nevertheless important.</p>	<p>The Penns Valley/Brush Valley Rural Historic District (RHD) has been determined eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places. Effects to the RHD as a whole, including impacts to individual contributing properties as well as the overall landscape, will be assessed as part of the Section 106 process. This information will be presented in the Draft Environmental Impact Statement, which will be available for public review and comment.</p>
Yearick, Earl	16828	<p>My name is Earl (Gov) Yearick I am the owner of #1 Cycle Center and Iron Horse Ranch – 322 Self Storage – Iron Horse Digital Billboard.</p> <p>With this email, I would like to address the impact of the bypass on the Centre county community; Residential property owners, Commercial business owners, (myself included), traffic flow and “wet lands”.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Commercial property owners, including #1 Cycle Center and 322 Self Storage would be much better serviced by an exit thru my property. Please see the attached original proposed exit US 322-15. The exit would be basically "farmland" and the "traffic flow" would not interfere with the commercial properties on Rt. 322 where the buildings are much closer together with customers entering and exiting the businesses. • Proposed US 322-5 is going thru wetland and many residential properties and would also require two bridges being built. <p>Considering my financial position, my health, age 77 years old and ready for retirement. Also, all of the above, I feel the original proposed route thru my property would have the Least impact on ALL of the surrounding community and land.</p>	<p>PennDOT announced in January 2024 that the interior interchange and local road connection would be removed from this State College Area Connector project. This was based on traffic analysis which determined that the connector road and interior interchange would only provide limited localized improvements to PA 45. In addition, it was determined that its inclusion was not necessary to address the overall State College Area Connector project’s purpose and needs, nor did it address corridor wide issues along PA 45. Therefore, it was removed from this State College Area Connector project and will be considered in the independent PA 45 Corridor Improvements project, a separate study, as appropriate.</p> <p>Throughout the area, there are numerous competing resources with varying degrees of regulatory protection. PennDOT is evaluating alternative refinements in this area to address concerns raised at the public meeting.</p>
Zurek, Sasha		<p>Pursuing highway expansion in this day and age is short sighted and wrong. We need to be getting people out of cars, not inducing demand. If you want to reduce congestion on 322, build transit instead. It's cheaper in the long run.</p>	<p>While transit provides a great opportunity to transport large volumes of people in an efficient manner, it does not solve rural roadway capacity or safety issues. In addition, transit would not address the trucking or freight related travel concerns within the US 322 corridor. Thus, it would not address the purpose and needs for the US 322 corridor.</p>