



Note: Text changes from the October 2024 Draft Environmental Impact Statement are in *blue italics* in the Final Environmental Impact Statement.

Combined Final Environmental Impact Statement/Record of Decision

Volume 1 - Final Environmental Impact Statement

May 2025

U.S. 6219, Section 050
Transportation Improvement Project
Meyersdale, PA to Old Salisbury Road, MD



FHWA-PA-EIS-24-01-D

U.S. 6219, Section 050 Transportation Improvement Project from Meyersdale, PA to Old Salisbury Road, MD
FINAL ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT

Submitted pursuant to 42 U.S. Code § 4332 (2)(c), and where applicable, 49 U.S. Code § 303, by the U.S. Department of Transportation, Federal Highway Administration and Pennsylvania Department of Transportation, Engineering District 9-0



For Federal Highway Administration
Pennsylvania Division

5/29/2025

Date of Approval



For Pennsylvania Department of Transportation

5/27/2025

Date of Approval

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The following agencies are Cooperating Agencies: Maryland State Highway Administration, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers - Pittsburgh District, and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

FHWA in coordination with the Pennsylvania Department of Transportation (PennDOT) and the Maryland State Highway Administration (SHA) have prepared this Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS) to study potential improvements to U.S. 6219, Section 050 from Meyersdale, PA to Old Salisbury Road, MD. The project includes the proposed construction of an eight (8) mile (six (6) miles in PA and two (2) miles in MD) four-lane limited access facility on new alignment from the end of the Meyersdale Bypass in Somerset County, PA to the newly constructed portion of U.S. 219 in Garrett County, MD. This FEIS contains the information required by the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) for major Federal actions that significantly affect the quality of the human environment.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Pennsylvania Department of Transportation (PennDOT) in cooperation with the Maryland Department of Transportation State Highway Administration (SHA) with federal oversight from the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) have initiated improvement studies for Section 050 of U.S. 6219 from Meyersdale, PA to Old Salisbury Road, MD. Throughout this document, this project will be referred to as the U.S. 219 project. The U.S. 219 project extends approximately eight (8) miles from the southern end of the Meyersdale Bypass in Somerset County, Pennsylvania (PA) to the newly constructed 1.4-mile section of U.S. 219 in Garrett County, Maryland (MD) between Interstate 68 (I-68) and Old Salisbury Road. Of the eight (8) miles, six (6) are in Pennsylvania and two (2) are in Maryland.

In 1999, PennDOT completed the *Needs Analysis U.S. Route 219 I-68 (MD) to Somerset, Pennsylvania* (PennDOT 1999) for an approximately 28-mile portion of U.S. 219 between I-68 in Maryland and the southern terminus of the four-lane U.S. 219 in Somerset, PA, excluding the Meyersdale Bypass, a 5-mile section of U.S. 219 around Meyersdale, PA. This study revealed numerous deficiencies along the entire 28-mile corridor.

Two sections of U.S. 219 in Somerset County, Section 020 to the north of Meyersdale and Section

019 (currently Section 050) to the south were identified as having deficiencies and recommended for further study. U.S. 219, Section 020, between Meyersdale and the four-lane U.S. 219 in Somerset, PA was advanced through the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) process as an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS), then selection, design and construction. This eleven-mile section of U.S. 219 is also a four-lane, limited access facility and opened to traffic in 2018. The last unimproved section of U.S. 219 is the eight-mile section from the southern end of the Meyersdale Bypass to I-68. The project started the NEPA process in 2001 and was subsequently placed on hold in 2007 due to funding constraints. A Planning and Environmental Linkages (PEL) study identifying potential corridors/alignments of a U.S. 219 connection between I-68 and Meyersdale was completed in 2016. Then in 2017, the SHA completed a Categorical Exclusion (CE) for a new alignment of the 1.4-mile segment of U.S. 219 between I-68 and Old Salisbury Road in Maryland, which was approved by FHWA on July 18, 2017. Construction of this section of U.S. 219 was completed in 2021.

The intent of this project is to build upon the 2016 PEL document that examined several alternatives within the established study area, from the southern end of the Meyersdale Bypass to the new 1.4-mile segment in Maryland. The Draft Environmental

Impact Statement (DEIS) detailed the evaluation and comparison of four build alternatives and the No Build Alternative, and identified a Preferred Alternative. A Selected Alternative is identified in the Record of Decision (ROD).

ES-1 What is an EIS?

An EIS is a document required by NEPA (*Public Law 91-190, Section 102, Subsection (C)*), under *42 US Code (USC) 4332 Subsection (C)*, that takes into consideration the effects of a federal agency's proposed action on the environment. NEPA requires Federal agencies to prepare an EIS for proposed actions that significantly affect the environment. PennDOT's Integrated Transportation Development Process guided the development of this project. SHA's guidelines and regulations were consulted throughout the process to ensure consistency. The project development utilized PennDOT's ten-step process, which integrates NEPA and Section 404 of the federal Clean Water Act. To comply with NEPA, this EIS is being prepared in accordance with the *Fiscal Responsibility Act of 2023 (Pub. L. No. 118-5, 137 Stat. 10)*, FHWA's implementing regulations for NEPA (23 CFR § 771), and PennDOT Publication No. 10B (MD-1B). Additionally, this FEIS is being completed in compliance with *23 USC 139*, which established a new Environmental Review Process for transportation projects developed as EISs.

An EIS identifies the purpose and need for the action; considers alternatives to meet the project purpose and need; describes the affected environment; analyzes the environmental consequences of the alternatives, and documents agency coordination and public involvement. The EIS process concludes with the selection of an alternative to be carried forward in Preliminary and Final Design.

A scoping meeting was held with the resource agencies on November 16, 2021. *These agencies included the PA State Historic Preservation Office, PA Department of Environmental Protection (DEP), US Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), US Army Corps of Engineers (USACE), PA Fish and Boat Commission (PFBC), MD Department of Planning, US Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS), PA Department of Conservation and Natural Resources, Maryland Department of the Environment (MDE), and PA Game Commission (PGC).* An introductory meeting was held with the public on June 23, 2022. Following these meetings, a Notice of Intent (NOI) to Prepare an EIS was prepared and published in the Federal Register on June 2, 2023. A letter from the U.S. EPA was received on June 29, 2023, indicating the U.S. EPA will provide comments on general NEPA compliance of the EIS and specific comments pursuant to our responsibilities under Section 309 of the Clean Air Act (CAA) (*42 USC 7609*) and Sections 402(d) and

404(b), (c), and (q) of the CWA Clean Water Act (CWA). U.S. EPA had no comments to offer at the time they issued the letter.

Following the NOI, the DEIS was prepared and circulated, providing an opportunity for the public, interest groups, and other agencies to review and again, provide comments. The DEIS concludes with a Preferred Alternative. This combined Final EIS (FEIS)/ROD was then prepared, which includes refinements of the data presented in the DEIS. In addition, this FEIS/ROD provides responses to all substantive comments received during the DEIS Public Comment Period.

ES-2 Who is leading the Project?

FHWA is responsible for the authorization of federal-aid funds to implement the project improvements and is therefore identified as the Lead Federal Agency under NEPA for the U.S. 219 project. PennDOT is the Lead State Agency and is responsible for the administration of federal funds for highway transportation improvements in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. SHA is partnering with PennDOT in the completion of this project.

ES-3 What other agencies are involved in the Project?

In coordination with FHWA, PennDOT has conducted extensive outreach and engagement efforts with federal, state, tribal nations, regional,

and local agencies, as well as interested stakeholders and the general public. A U.S. 6219, Section 050 Coordination Plan for Agency Involvement (PennDOT, FHWA, and SHA Oct. 2022), included within the NOI in **Appendix A**, was prepared at the onset of the project in accordance with 23 U.S.C. §139(g). The plan establishes the role for each involved agency, the proposed project schedule, and expectations for agency input and involvement. The agencies involved include Cooperating and Participating Agencies. Cooperating Agencies are those government and regulatory agencies with jurisdiction by law (e.g., with permitting or land transfer authority) or special expertise with respect to any environmental impact or resource involved in an environmental review. The list of Cooperating Agencies is provided in the Plan (**Appendix A**).

At request of the Lead Federal Agency, Cooperating Agencies assume responsibility for developing information and preparing environmental analyses, including portions of the EIS for which the Cooperating Agency has special expertise. The **USACE, USFWS and U.S. EPA** are considered **Cooperating Agencies** that provide input on specific milestones throughout the environmental review.

Participating Agencies include any federal, state, local agencies or tribal nations that could have an interest in the proposed project. Participating

Agencies for this project are included in **Table ES-1** below.

ES-4 What is the history of the Project?

This project has an extensive history starting in the 1990s when PennDOT evaluated U.S. 219 between the Pennsylvania Turnpike in Somerset, Pennsylvania to Interstate 68 (I-68) in Maryland.

In 1999, PennDOT completed the *Needs Analysis U.S. Route 219 I-68 (MD) to Somerset, Pennsylvania* (PennDOT 1999) for an approximately 28-mile portion of U.S. 219 between I-68 in Maryland and the southern terminus of the four-lane U.S. 219 in Somerset, PA, excluding the Meyersdale Bypass, a 5-mile section of U.S. 219 around Meyersdale, PA. Two project corridors were identified from this Needs Analysis. These projects were:

- SR 6219, Section 020 (Somerset to Meyersdale, Pennsylvania); and

- SR 6219, Section 019 (currently Section 050) (Meyersdale, Pennsylvania to I-68 in Maryland).

Preliminary engineering and a DEIS for U.S. 219, Section 019 originally began in 2001 by PennDOT and SHA but was put on hold in 2007 due to funding constraints. As a result, the document went unpublished. Since that time, PennDOT completed construction of U.S. 219, Section 020, from the Meyersdale Bypass north to the existing four-lane section of U.S. 219 near Somerset that connects to I-76 (the Pennsylvania Turnpike). By 2018, Section 019 (currently Section 050) of U.S. 219 was the only remaining two-lane, non-limited access section in over 70 miles of a four-lane expressway.

If the state transportation agencies had continued with the former NEPA efforts for SR 6219, Section 019 (currently Section 050) and had selected a build alternative, FHWA would not have been able to render a location approval because the project would not have met the planning requirements

outlined in 23 CFR 450 as a financial plan did not exist which committed funding for design and construction. FHWA, SHA, and PennDOT collaborated to find a solution that would allow improvements to this section of U.S. 219 to move forward while meeting all applicable state and federal requirements. The solution identified was a PEL study, which allowed the transportation agencies, resource agencies, and the public to work together to identify goals and objectives, identify deficiencies and needs, develop possible solutions/alternatives, develop a basic description of environmental setting, conduct a preliminary screening of solutions, eliminate unreasonable solutions and complete a preliminary identification of environmental impacts and environmental mitigation. The PEL study addressed fiscal constraints by breaking larger potential projects into smaller stand-alone projects that could be completed as funding became available. The PEL study helped determine which reasonable alignment(s) should move forward into the NEPA process and identified stand-alone projects with independent utility and logical termini for future NEPA evaluation.

On July 21, 2016, the PEL study concluded that two alignments (Alternatives E and E-Shift) were considered reasonable and should be advanced for consideration in future project analysis. While the most economic benefit would be realized by

Table ES-1: Participating Agencies

Pennsylvania	Maryland	Tribal Nations
PA Department of Conservation & Natural Resources	MD Historical Trust	Delaware Nation, Oklahoma
PA Fish and Boat Commission	MD Department of Planning	
PA Department of Environmental Protection	MD Department of Environment	
	MD Department of Natural Resources	

constructing an alignment in its entirety, the different funding levels between states would not allow for the construction of the entire project from I-68 in Maryland to Meyersdale, Pennsylvania. Therefore, as part of the 2016 PEL study, an analysis was completed to identify stand-alone projects within the overall limits. This review, including localized economic benefits, identified a potential stand-alone project between I-68 and a priority funding area (PFA) in Maryland. This 1.4-mile stand-alone project consisted of a new alignment for U.S. 219 along an area of common alignment for Alignment E and Alignment E-Shift in Maryland. This concept extended from I-68 to the north of Old Salisbury Road intersection within existing U.S. 219. The stand-alone project was advanced by SHA into preliminary engineering and was issued environmental clearance on July 18, 2017. The project advanced into final design and construction, and the project was opened to traffic on May 6, 2021.

The DEIS initially considered seven alternatives (DA, DA-Shift, DU, DU-Shift, E, E-Shift, and the No-Build), two of which (Alternatives E and E-Shift) were recommended to advance into NEPA from the 2016 PEL study. However, DA and DA-Shift were dismissed early in the NEPA process prior to detailed alternatives development due to impacts. The DEIS evaluated alternatives DU, DU-Shift, E, E-Shift and the No-Build.

ES-5 What is the purpose of the Project and why is it needed?

The purpose and need establishes the reason why an agency is proposing a project and serves as the primary criteria in the alternatives screening process. The project purpose is the set of objectives that would be met to address the transportation needs. The project need includes the data substantiating that a transportation problem currently exists or is likely to occur.

The purpose of the U.S. 219 project is to complete Corridor N of the Appalachian Development Highway System, to improve the system linkage in the region, provide safe and efficient access for motorists traveling on U.S. 219, and provide transportation infrastructure to support economic opportunities in existing and planned communities and employment/business centers and natural resource-based industries within the Appalachian Region.

The project needs include lack of efficient mobility for trucks and numerous roadway and geometric deficiencies along existing U.S. 219 that do not meet current design criteria and contribute to slower travel speeds through the corridor. Additionally, existing U.S. 219 *lacks* the infrastructure needed to access surrounding municipalities, labor, and business markets, *which limits* economic opportunities in the Appalachian Region. These needs are further

documented in the *Purpose and Need Report: SR 6219 Section 050 U.S. 219 from Meyersdale to Old Salisbury Road Project* (PennDOT 2022), included in **Appendix B**.

ES-6 What are the alternatives for the Project and how were they evaluated?

In accordance with NEPA, comparison of a full range of engineering, operational, cost, and environmental factors was considered in the identification of a Preferred Alternative at the conclusion of the DEIS. The No Build Alternative and six alternatives were initially evaluated using secondary source information. These alternatives were evaluated to determine potential impacts on socioeconomic, natural, and historic resources. The analysis of alternatives considered how well each alternative would meet the purpose and need of the project. Based on that initial evaluation, Alternatives DA and DA-Shift were dismissed from further evaluation due to significant environmental impacts in comparison to the other four alternatives.

As a result, Alternatives DU, DU-Shift, E, and E-Shift were evaluated in detail and are discussed in this document. See **Table ES-2** below for an evolution of the alternatives from the results of the PEL through to the four build alternatives studied in the DEIS.

A. No Build Alternative

The No Build Alternative is included in the environmental impact analysis as the baseline condition for comparison. The No Build Alternative is not identified as the Preferred Alternative because it would not meet the purpose and need of the

project. It would not improve regional system linkage and would not improve safe and efficient access for trucks and other motorists on U.S. 219. Moreover, the No Build Alternative would not provide transportation infrastructure to support economic opportunities in existing and planned communities

and employment/business centers and industries within the Appalachian Region.

B. Build Alternatives

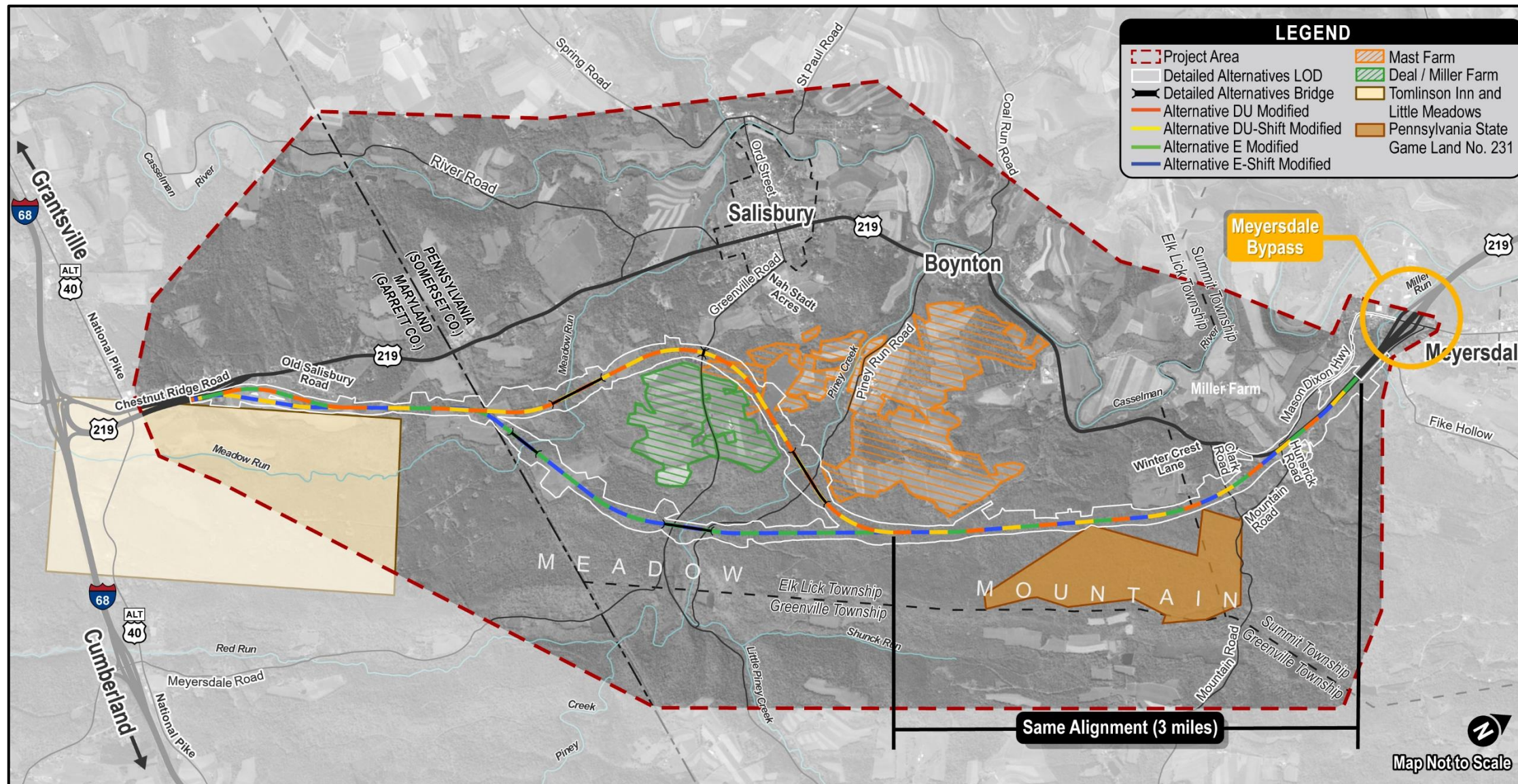
Each of the four build alternatives meets the purpose and need of the project by providing a roadway with a safer geometric design and improved capacity and efficiency for trucks and cars. Each build alternative also provides a consistent link in the regional system, primarily between I-68 and I-76, thereby completing the development of Corridor N of the ADHS and supporting increased economic opportunities.

Each of the build alternatives incorporate a PennDOT maintenance facility. The sites are located just north of the Maryland/Pennsylvania state line. The impact associated with the maintenance facility site is part of the project impact numbers since these sites have been incorporated into the overall limit of disturbance for each alternative.

On January 24, 2024, refinements to original Alternatives DU, DU-Shift, E, and E-Shift were proposed to the Pennsylvania and Maryland resource agencies at an interagency coordination meeting. The purpose for the refinements were to avoid and/or minimize impacts to resources within the impact area. The agencies agreed to the refinements and the refined alternatives replaced the original four alternatives and were subsequently

Table ES-2: Evolution of Alternatives in the DEIS

Date	Description of Alternatives
July 2016	PEL document recommended Alternatives E and E-Shift be advanced into NEPA for further evaluation.
October 2021	Alternatives AE and D from the PEL were initially examined to include with Alternatives E and E-Shift to offer a broader range of alternatives. With the new logical termini established Alternative AE was dropped from consideration because it shared the same alignment as Alternatives E and E-Shift. Alternative D was considered viable and advanced.
November 2021	Presented Alternatives E and E-Shift and D from the PEL to the agencies at a Scoping Meeting. Alternative D was added to allow for further evaluation and minimization and expanded range of alternatives. This Alternative ended up being called Alternative DA and also included DA-Shift.
April 2022	Two additional Alternatives, DU and DU-Shift were added to allow for an expanded range of alternatives.
November 16, 2022	Agency Scoping meeting held and included the following alternatives: E, E-Shift, DA, DA-Shift, DU and DU-Shift.
June 1, 2023	Notice of Intent (NOI) published and included the following alternatives: E, E-Shift, DA, DA-Shift, DU and DU-Shift.
June 23 (In-person) and June 27, 2023 (Virtual)	Scoping Meeting held and included all alternatives in the NOI
July 2023	Based on results from the June 2023 public meeting, discussions with the resource agencies and comparison of impacts using secondary source data, Alternatives DA and DA-Shift were dismissed from further evaluation.
December 2023	After collecting and mapping all the field data and based on results of the technical studies, engineering refinements to Alternative E, E-Shift, DU and DU-Shift were made to minimize impacts to resources including wetlands, streams, farmlands and Section 4(f) resources. As a result of these refinements, the word “Modified” was added to each of the four alternatives and these four alternatives replaced the original four alternatives.
January 2024	Team prepared DEIS for the No-Build and the four build alternatives: Alternative E Modified, E-Shift Modified, DU Modified and DU-Shift Modified. <i>These alternatives were in the DEIS, as issued on November 15, 2024, and available for public and agency comment during the comment period.</i>



labeled: Alternative DU Modified, DU-Shift Modified, E Modified, and E-Shift Modified. See **Figure ES-1** for a map displaying the four detailed build alternatives.

Alternative DU Modified begins at the southern end of the Meyersdale Bypass, which is similar to all four build alternatives for a distance of 3 miles. The alternative follows existing U.S. 219 until it passes Hunsrick Road and continues in a southwesterly direction staying west of Mountain Road. Alternative DU Modified would bisect Clark Road and follow the base of Meadow Mountain, staying to the east of Winter Crest Lane, avoiding Pennsylvania State Game Lands (SGL) 231 located east of the alternative. The alternative continues to follow the base of Meadow Mountain, staying east of the Mast Farm. Just north of Piney Run Road, the alignment turns west and crosses over Piney Run Road and Piney Creek on a large structure. The alternative passes between the Mast Farm and the Deal Farm, through a portion of both farms. The alternative also crosses over Greenville Road, just to the east of Nah Stadt Acres Drive. Once the alternative crosses over Greenville Road, it turns south towards the state line and is situated about 0.5 miles east of existing U.S. 219. After the alignment crosses the state line, it trends westward towards the tie in point just south of Old Salisbury Road. The alignment is situated between existing U.S. 219 and the Tomlinson Inn and Little Meadows historic site. The alternative ties

back into existing U.S. 219 about 2,000 feet north of U.S. 40 (National Pike).

Alternative DU-Shift Modified follows Alternative DU Modified except when the alternative crosses over the PA/MD state line. Alternative DU-Shift Modified is further away from residences along Old Salisbury Road than Alternative DU Modified, by 350 feet at the farthest point. The alternative ties back into existing U.S. 219 about 2,000 feet north of U.S. 40 (National Pike). This shift was suggested by residents along Old Salisbury Road during former 2001 NEPA efforts as a way to move the alignment further away from their homes than Alternative DU.

Alternative E Modified follows the same alignment as the other build alternatives to the point just north of Piney Run Road. Alternative E Modified continues along the edge of Meadow Mountain, avoiding both the Mast and Deal Farms. Once past Greenville Road, the alternative heads west towards existing U.S. 219. Alternative E Modified joins up with Alternative DU Modified at the PA/MD state line and follows the same alignment as Alternative DU Modified. The alternative is situated between existing U.S. 219 and the Tomlinson Inn and Little Meadows historic site. The alternative ties back into existing U.S. 219 about 2,000 feet north of U.S. 40 (National Pike).

Alternative E-Shift Modified follows the same alignment as Alternative E Modified until the PA/MD

state line. At that point, the alternative follows Alternative DU-Shift Modified and is situated further away from residences along Old Salisbury Road, by 350 feet at the farthest point. The alternative ties back into existing U.S. 219 about 2,000 feet north of U.S. 40 (National Pike).

ES-7 What is the environmental impact limit of disturbance?

The environmental impact limit of disturbance, or LOD, is a tool used to determine the maximum extent of impacts that could result from the construction of the build alternatives: DU Modified, DU-Shift Modified, E Modified and E-Shift Modified. *The LOD is smaller and more precise than the PEL study area; the project area, which includes the general area between the project's logical termini; and the Area of Potential Effects, which is a term used during historic resource analysis to describe an area where the project may directly or inadvertently cause alterations in the character or use of historic properties.*

The LODs are based on planning- level engineering, which includes potential short-term and permanent impacts and construction access and would be refined during final design, which is more detailed engineering. A roadway typical section featuring a 60-foot median width between the two sets of roadway lanes, two 12-foot roadway lanes in each direction, and a 10-foot shoulder on the outside

edge of the lanes helps determine the LOD for each of the four build alternatives. The LOD included a 50-to-100-foot buffer beyond the areas of anticipated excavation and fill placement. The project team also included preliminary stormwater control measures and temporary erosion and sediment pollution control features needed during construction. Potential maintenance facility locations are included in the LOD near the state line within Pennsylvania, east of Alternatives E Modified and E-Shift Modified and west of DU Modified and DU-Shift Modified. **Chapter 3** calculates preliminary impacts of the build alternatives using the LOD.

A reduction of the alternative median width and cut and fill lines were made as part of the January 2024 refinements of the alternatives. The median width in some cases, was reduced from 60 feet to either 44 feet or 36 feet and the limit of disturbance was reduced from 50 feet to 20 feet. Additional refinements would continue during final design, after the ROD has been issued for the selected alternative, and any new impacts will be evaluated prior to construction.

ES-8 What are the anticipated impacts of the alternatives?

The environmental impact LOD was used to determine impacts of the No Build and four build alternatives. Detailed field data was collected and impacts to socioeconomic, natural, and historic

resources have been identified and are summarized in **Table ES-3**. These potential impacts represent the maximum extent of impacts based on the largest potential footprint that may be required to construct the build alternatives. More detailed information is provided in **Chapter 3** and resource technical reports listed in the Appendices. Refer to the Table of Contents for specific reports.

Refinements to the Preferred Alternative were made after the public comment period on the DEIS and are documented in the FEIS. The ROD identifies a Selected Alternative. Future refinements to the Selected Alternative would occur during final design. These refinements are anticipated to result in a reduction in impacts.

Should future refinements measurably increase the potential impacts, beyond the environmental impact LOD identified for the Selected Alternative, additional analysis or a re-evaluation of the environmental analysis may be needed.

ES-9 What is the estimated cost of each alternative?

Preliminary cost estimates show that Alternatives DU Modified and DU-Shift Modified are generally \$170 million greater than Alternatives E Modified and E-Shift Modified. The DU Modified Alternatives have significantly greater physical impact to both surface and deep mining areas than the E Modified Alternatives. The preliminary cost estimate for

Alternatives DU Modified and DU-Shift Modified is approximately \$483 million. The preliminary cost estimate for Alternatives E Modified and E-Shift Modified is approximately \$307 million. No improvements would be included with the No Build Alternative, and it would therefore have no cost.

ES-10 What is the Preferred Alternative?

Based on comparison of the potential environmental impacts and current public and agency feedback of the alternatives described in the DEIS, **Alternative E-Shift Modified** is identified in this FEIS as the **Preferred Alternative**. Alternative E-Shift Modified offers several advantages over Alternatives DU Modified, DU-Shift Modified, and E Modified that make it the best option for addressing project needs. Public involvement efforts between 2001 and 2007 for the unpublished DEIS prompted the development of Alternative E-Shift Modified. The alignment is farther away than other alternatives from homes along Old Salisbury Road and is also carefully designed to avoid the Tomlinson Inn and Little Meadows historic boundary. The anticipated impacts of Alternative E-Shift Modified (Preferred Alternative) and corresponding mitigation are included in **Table ES-5**.

ES-11 When would the Preferred Alternative be constructed?

The Preferred Alternative has been identified in this FEIS *and the Selected Alternative is identified in the ROD*. Now, this alternative can be carried into Preliminary Engineering and Final Design. The project is currently fully funded for Final Design and Right-of-Way Acquisition in the 2025-2028 timeframe. Contingent on construction funding, which is not yet allocated, construction of the Preferred Alternative could be completed between 2029 and 2031.

ES-12 Could the construction be phased?

The PennDOT 2023 Twelve Year Plan identifies one project, specifying the limits as U.S. 219 from the Maryland line to the Meyersdale Bypass. Additionally, the Southern Alleghenies Planning and Development Commission, the Regional Planning Organization for the area, also recognizes the project in its entirety. The project is also included in Maryland Department of Transportation's Consolidated Transportation Program (CTP) Fiscal Year 2024-2029. *Additionally, the Pennsylvania and Maryland portions of the project cannot function independently. Therefore, the projects must be constructed concurrently and cannot be phased.*

Table ES-3: Summary of Environmental Impacts

Resource	No Build	DU Mod.	DU-Shift Mod.	E Mod.	E-Shift Mod.
Socioeconomic Resource Impacts					
Parcels Intersected by LOD (#)	0	124	121	113	110
Residential Displacements (#)	0	11	11	10	10
Commercial Displacements (#)	0	2	2	2	2
Impacted Noise Receptors (#)	4	13	9	13	9
Cultural Resource Impacts					
Above Ground Historic Resources (# / Effect)	0 / No Effect	3 / Adverse Effect	3 / Adverse Effect	1 / No Adverse Effect	1 / No Adverse Effect
Areas of High Probability for (acres) Pre- <i>contact</i> Archaeology	0	50.2	50.2	48.8	48.8
Historic Archaeology	0	17.1	17.1	14.4	14.4
Section 4(f) Resources (# / Type of Use)	0	3 / > De Minimis	3 / > De Minimis	1 / De Minimis	1 / De Minimis
Natural Resource Impacts					
Forestland	0	431.4	430.0	389.8	388.8
Active Farmland (acres)	0	76.1	76.3	37.4	37.6
Productive Farms (#)	0	9	9	6	6
Prime Farmland Soils (acres)	0	34.2	34.2	21.2	21.2
Soils of Statewide Importance (acres)	0	104.3	104.3	83.4	83.3
Preferential Tax Assessment (acres)	0	74.6	74.9	35.8	36.1
FEMA 1% Annual Chance Floodplains (acres)	0	12.3	12.3	4.7	4.7
Potential Bat Hibernacula (#)	0	3	3	0	0
Wetland (acres)	0	11.38	11.25	10.15	10.02
Streams (linear feet)	0	24,997	25,012	23,148	23,141
Mining & Potential Hazardous Residual Waste					
Surface Mining Boundaries (acres)	0	321.0	320.9	214.0	214.0
Deep Mine Boundaries (acres)	0	24.1	24.1	24.2	24.2
Area of Concern Sites (#)	0	3	3	3	3
Engineering					
Length of Alternative (miles)	0	8.3	8.3	7.9	7.9
LOD (acres)	0	633.8	631.3	566.0	563.8
Preliminary Cost Estimate (Year 2030 Dollars)	\$0	\$483.0 M	\$486.3 M	\$307.0 M	\$310.4 M

Note: 1) Green shading represents the lowest impact per category by alternative (excluding the No Build, which does not carry any direct impacts other than noise receptors). 2) Four impacted noise receptors are associated with the No Build Alternative because of design year traffic projections. 3) Preliminary construction cost estimates are exclusive of Right of Way Acquisition, Utility Relocation, Mineral Rights, Wildlife Crossings, Intelligent Transportation Systems and Maintenance Facility Final Amenities.

ES-13 How has the public been involved in the Project?

A very robust outreach program began in the early phases of the U.S. 219 project, specifically during the development of the purpose and need starting in 1998; however, this response focuses on outreach completed beginning with the 2021 scoping meetings through to the present. A scoping meeting was held with the resource agencies on November 16, 2021. An introductory meeting was held in-person with the public on June 23, 2022, and virtually on June 27, 2022. Following these meetings, a NOI was prepared and published in the Federal Register on June 2, 2023. The NOI provided information for interested parties to comment. No members of the public provided comments.

A Community Advisory Committee (CAC) was formed in 2003 to provide an additional method of communication between PennDOT, SHA, FHWA, and the local communities, and to provide input into project development. The CAC met on November 3, 2021, as part of the scoping phase. Since then, the CAC has met three other times: June 2, 2022, November 2, 2023, and April 11, 2024. These meetings were held both in-person and virtually.

One additional public meeting was held on November 16, 2023, and virtually on November 21, 2024. The public survey results have always shown that Alternative E-Shift Modified is the most favored

alternative, followed closely by Alternative E Modified.

Notifications for all public meetings were provided through websites, newspaper advertisements, direct mail invitations, electronic mail invitations, social media, and targeted media relations. Project newsletters have been distributed to an all-

encompassing database of interested stakeholders. Public outreach held since 2020 is detailed in **Table ES-4**.

A project-specific web page is on the PennDOT District 9-0 website and also on the SHA Project Portal. The website has been updated periodically with new information.

Table ES-4: Summary of Public Outreach Meetings Since 2020

Date / Type	Location	Purpose
June 23, 2022 / Public Officials Meeting No. 1	Salisbury Volunteer Fire Department: 385 Ord Street, Salisbury, PA.	Scoping Meeting, Process to move from PEL to NEPA, Purpose and Need and Logical Termini, PEL Alternatives studied and dismissed, Alternatives to be studied in detail, potential areas for access and project schedule
June 23, 2022 / Public Plans Display No. 1	Salisbury Volunteer Fire Department: 385 Ord Street, Salisbury, PA.	
June 27, 2022 / Virtual Public Meeting No. 1	Zoom Platform (Online)	
November 16, 2023 / Public Officials Meeting No. 2	Salisbury Volunteer Fire Department: 385 Ord Street, Salisbury, PA.	Refinement to the alternatives presented at the June 2022 meetings, findings from detailed environmental information for key resources, maps of Alternatives DU, DU-Shift, E and E-Shift, environmental impact table, status of potential direct connection in Maryland and project schedule.
November 16, 2023 / Public Plans Display No. 2	Salisbury Volunteer Fire Department: 385 Ord Street, Salisbury, PA.	
November 21, 2023 / Virtual Public Meeting No. 2	Zoom Platform (Online)	
December 11, 2024 / Public Officials Meeting No. 3	Salisbury Volunteer Fire Department: 385 Ord Street, Salisbury, PA.	Formally present the DEIS and FHWA Preferred Alternative and provide an opportunity for public comment on the DEIS, Section 404 permit, and MDE waterway permit application and water quality certification
December 11, 2024 / PA Public Hearing	Salisbury Volunteer Fire Department: 385 Ord Street, Salisbury, PA	
December 12, 2024 / MD Public Hearing	Grantsville Volunteer Fire Department 178 Springs Road, Grantsville, MD	
Note: This table lists all the public outreach meetings held since the Pennsylvania Transportation Secretary announced the commitment of funds for the EIS on November 9, 2020.		

ES-14 Will there be additional public outreach opportunities?

PennDOT will continue to share information about the Project's progress via monthly e-newsletters, website updates, and other public outreach methods until the conclusion of the NEPA phase.

Upon issuance of the Notice of Availability (NOA) for the DEIS in the Federal Register, there was a *59-day comment period, between November 15, 2024, and January 13, 2025*, in accordance with the regulations of 40 CFR § 1506.10 and 23 CFR § 771.123(k). During this time, the DEIS was made available for review and the information was presented at two local public hearings conducted by PennDOT, SHA, FHWA, USACE and MDE. The local public hearings took place within the comment period to solicit feedback and receive comments from the public, stakeholders, and agencies. The public was notified of the hearing dates via mailings, social media, newspaper, and project website notifications. Comments were also provided via email, an electronic comment form submitted through the project website, by phone, or by mail. PennDOT, SHA, and FHWA reviewed and documented all the comments received. The FEIS/ROD was developed to document any refinements to the Preferred Alternative and to respond to substantive comments received on the DEIS. All comments received during the comment

period were considered by PennDOT, SHA, and FHWA before finalizing the FEIS and ROD.

ES-15 How was the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers involved at the Public Hearing?

The USACE participated in the Public Hearing, as comments were also accepted on the Joint Federal/State Permit Application (JPA) for Alteration of Any Floodplain, Waterway, Tidal or Nontidal Wetland in Pennsylvania and in Maryland. The USACE is responsible for reviewing the JPA per the Clean Water Act (Section 404(b)(1)). The PA DEP is responsible for reviewing the application for Pennsylvania resources and the MDE is responsible for reviewing the application for Maryland resources.

The USACE followed its own requirements for the advertisement and public hearings. Notice was given at least 30 days in advance of the public hearing to all Federal agencies affected by the proposed action, state and local agencies, and other parties having an interest in the subject of the hearing. PennDOT adhered to the requirement for publishing a public hearing notice as part of the notice of availability of the NEPA document.

Table ES-5: Impact and Mitigation Summary

Resource	Anticipated Impact of Preferred Alternative (E-Shift Modified)	Commitment/Mitigation for Preferred Alternative (E-Shift Modified)
Land Use & Zoning, Planning, and Development (See Chapter 3.1)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Permanent conversion to transportation right-of-way would occur to 388.8 acres of forestland and 37.6 acres of productive agricultural land. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No specific mitigation is proposed. In Pennsylvania, the Municipalities Planning Code, Sound Land Use policies, and Keystone Principles establish guidelines for investment in public infrastructure. In Maryland, the Economic Growth, Resource Protection, and Planning Act of 1992 <i>established the State Planning Policy which organizes and directs land use and growth comprehensive planning, regulation, and funding by state, county, and municipal governments. The MD Department of Planning and SHA have determined that the Alternative E-Shift Modified is consistent with the Maryland State Planning Policy.</i>
Population & Demographics (See Chapter 3.2)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The new expressway would improve north and south project area access. <i>The project area encompasses an eight-mile corridor, including six miles in Pennsylvania and two miles in Maryland.</i> Property impacts and acquisitions would be scattered along forested, agricultural, or rural residential areas with low population densities. The objective of the preferred alternative is to stimulate project area economic growth by facilitating improved mobility for freight and labor. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No specific mitigation is proposed. <i>No significant adverse effect to the populations or demographics of the project area is anticipated as a result of the project.</i>
Communities & Community Facilities (See Chapter 3.5)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The alternative is anticipated to improve community access to schools, police, fire protection, medical treatment, emergency medical services, and recreational resources. No impacts to pedestrian facilities are anticipated. No Plain Sect population travel issues are anticipated since the project would maintain the existing local roadway network. U.S. 219 would no longer be directly accessible from Clark Road or Mountain Road, however, the proposed <i>Mountain Road Extension</i>, would allow Plain Sect travelling along these roads to use <i>Mountain Road</i> to reach Mason Dixon Highway and maintain similar east-west travel routes. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Coordination with community service providers (i.e. school districts and emergency service providers) will continue through preliminary engineering, final design, and construction to ensure access benefits of the project are maximized for all communities.
Parks & Recreational Facilities (See Chapter 3.6)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No adverse or direct impacts to parks or recreational facilities are anticipated. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A 300-foot long retaining wall will be constructed to avoid impacts to State Game Lands (SGL) 231. Alignment shifts, profile shifts and bifurcation could be considered <i>in final design but will continue to</i> avoid PA SGL 231. Coordination with PA Game Commission (PGC) will continue through final design and construction.

Resource	Anticipated Impact of Preferred Alternative (E-Shift Modified)	Commitment/Mitigation for Preferred Alternative (E-Shift Modified)
Displacements (See Chapter 3.7)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The alternative includes property impacts to <i>110</i> parcels. This includes <i>ten</i> residential displacements and two commercial displacements. Additionally, the alternative requires acquisition of an existing outdoor advertising device along U.S. 219 and is likely to require acquisition of an antenna tower along existing U.S. 219 in Maryland due to access issues. The alternative also requires displacement and acquisition of a sludge drying bed associated with the Weimer Strip and Auger post mining remediation activities. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Preliminary and final design will continue to minimize impacts to the residential and commercial properties and restore property access where feasible. Mitigation measures for displacements include relocating residences into available and comparable housing. If, under normal relocation procedures, available and comparable replacement housing cannot be identified, PennDOT and MD SHA shall provide "Housing of Last Resort" options to ensure that all displaced individuals are properly relocated. In accordance with the Federal Uniform Relocation Assistance and Real Property Acquisition Policies Act of 1970 (49 CFR 24) and PennDOT and SHA's Relocation Assistance Programs, all displaced residential and commercial establishments shall be eligible to receive replacement payments. This includes fair market value of real and personal property and moving expenses. Under no circumstances will the project require any business to vacate before the 90-day Notice to Vacate expiration date. <i>PennDOT will incur the cost to design, relocate, and build a new sludge drying bed associated with the Weimer Strip and Auger post mining remediation site. It is anticipated that the sludge drying bed will be relocated to a similar environment on the same property and its function and access will be restored. The relocated sludge drying bed will not be sited within a floodplain or wetland.</i> <i>If the antenna tower along existing U.S. 219 in Maryland, near the south end of the project area is deemed inaccessible and would need to be displaced, SHA will incur the cost to design and relocate the new antenna.</i> <i>Highway fencing will be placed at the edge of PennDOT and SHA's right-of-way to minimize the likelihood of persons using the adjacent properties interacting with those using the roadway. The design is still in the very early stages and the specific details about the fencing has not been determined at this time. Future public meetings, to be held prior to construction will have details about the location and style of fencing.</i>
Historic Architectural Resources (See Chapter 3.8)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The alternative was determined to have no adverse effect to historic architectural resources. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No specific mitigation is proposed <i>because this alternative was determined to have No Adverse Effect to historic architectural resources. Minimization efforts undertaken in the early phases of project development have avoided any adverse effects.</i>

Resource	Anticipated Impact of Preferred Alternative (E-Shift Modified)	Commitment/Mitigation for Preferred Alternative (E-Shift Modified)
Archaeological Resources (See Chapter 3.9)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Through ground disturbance, the alternative has the potential to impact archaeological resources. This includes impacts to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 48.8 acres of high pre-contact probability 32.8 acres of moderate pre-contact probability 191.9 acres of low pre-contact probability 14.4 acres of high historic probability 11.9 acres of moderate historic probability 147.0 acres of low historic probability 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A Programmatic Agreement for the project <i>was executed</i> to ensure compliance with Section 106 Process for archaeological resources (<i>See Appendix M</i>). Detailed field investigations to identify intact archaeological properties will be conducted within the archaeological Area of Potential Effects (APE) for the Preferred Alternative. If National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) eligible archaeological properties are identified, and it is determined the project would have an Adverse Effect to the properties, then PennDOT will identify mitigation measures in consultation with both Pennsylvania and Maryland State Historic Preservation Offices (SHPOs), Federally Recognized Tribal Nations, and other consulting parties. The Programmatic Agreement will ensure that if the project needs any archaeological mitigation measures, they will be appropriately completed.
Section 4(f) Resources (See Chapter 3.10)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The alternative requires use of 0.78 acres along the eastern boundary of the Miller Farm / Earnest and Carrie V. Miller Residence, a historic Section 4(f) resource. The historic boundary of the Miller Farm / Earnest and Carrie V. Miller Residence abuts the former Mason Dixon Highway (Old U.S. 219) right-of-way line. Old U.S. 219 in this area needs to be re-established. The PA SHPO concurred with a no adverse effect determination and Section 4(f) <i>de minimis</i> use finding for the impact. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Temporary construction fencing will be installed along the required right-of-way across the Miller Farm to avoid any additional, unforeseen encroachments onto the property. The fencing shall be removed after the completion of construction.</i>
Air Quality (See Chapter 3.11)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No significant adverse impact on air quality is anticipated within the project area as a result of the proposed build alternatives. The anticipated annual average daily traffic of the project would have no significant adverse impact on air quality as a result of transportation related CO or mobile-source air toxics emissions. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No specific mitigation is proposed. <i>No significant adverse effect to the air quality of the project area is anticipated as a result of the project.</i>
Noise (See Chapter 3.12)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Nine noise impacts were identified for the alternative, with eight in Pennsylvania (NSAs 12, 13, 14 and 18) and one in Maryland (NSA 1). These impacts are associated with predicted noise levels equaling or exceeding the NAC (66 dB(A) for residential land uses) or substantially exceeding existing noise levels by 10 dB(A) or more. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Preliminary noise barriers were evaluated for the <i>five</i> NSAs warranting noise abatement consideration. <i>The evaluation determined that noise barriers were not feasible for NSAs 1 and 18 due to driveway and roadway access. For NSAs 12, 13 and 14 noise barriers were found feasible but not reasonable per PennDOT's and SHA's traffic noise policy due to failing the cost per benefitted receptor criteria. Additional noise analyses, including of undeveloped lands, using more detailed engineering data will be conducted during the final design stage of the project and documented in the Final Design Noise Report.</i>

Resource	Anticipated Impact of Preferred Alternative (E-Shift Modified)	Commitment/Mitigation for Preferred Alternative (E-Shift Modified)
Farmlands (See Chapter 3.13)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The alternative would result in the following impacts to agricultural resources: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 3.66 acres of Primary Agricultural Land 3.67 acres of Productive Agricultural Land 21.2 acres of Prime Farmland Soils 83.3 acres of Farmland Soils of Statewide Importance 37.6 acres of active farmland 6 farmland operations 36.1 acres of preferential tax assessment parcels 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No specific mitigation is proposed <i>at this time</i>. <i>Avoidance and minimization measures for the Preferred Alternative will be evaluated during Final Design. This will include coordination with farm owners and operators to reduce farmland impacts, provide access to remnant parcels where possible, develop detours, and/or provide access during construction, etc.</i>
Hazardous Materials (See Chapter 3.14)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Numerous surface and underground mining permits, and historical mining are within and adjacent to the alternative. The possibility of residual waste from mining activities could impact the alternative. Two locations of significant mounds of spoils, assumedly associated with abandoned mines, were located adjacent to the alternative, just south of the Pennsylvania/Maryland state line. Stained surface soils were identified in a sludge drying bed within the alternative. The sludge drying bed is reportedly part of a nearby active water treatment operation and is located within the former Weimer Strip and Auger mine. The alternative also impacts two properties that have stained surface soil, historical releases of petroleum products, and/or dumping, as well as a buried gas pipeline. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A waste management plan and/or Phase II/III Environmental Site Assessments (ESAs) (i.e., geophysical survey, soil, and groundwater sampling) will address impacts and the handling and disposal of waste encountered during construction within the Preferred Alternative. The Areas of Concern (AOC) listed below will be impacted by the Preferred Alternative, and the following studies will be conducted: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> AOC-2 (Gas Pipeline/ Abandoned Mine) - Geophysical Survey with Contingent Phase II/III ESAs AOC-4 (Weimer Strip & Auger Post Mining Remediation) - Waste Management Plan and/or Phase II/III ESAs AOC-5 (Mountain Road, AML & Underground Mining Permits) - Waste Management Plan, Geophysical Survey, and/or Phase II/III ESAs Undocumented hazardous waste sites or contaminants encountered during construction will be managed and remediated in accordance with applicable federal, state, and local requirements.
Geology, Hydrology, & Groundwater (See Chapter 3.15)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All build alternatives are anticipated to encounter similar geologic conditions, and therefore, no constructability or design advantage was identified for any of the build alternatives with respect to local geology. However, geologic features would impact potential construction methods. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Boring programs for preliminary engineering and final design will follow the guidelines set forth in <i>PennDOT Publication No. 293, Geotechnical Engineering Manual</i>. Roadway borings in preliminary engineering will be located every 500± to 1,000± feet while roadway borings for final design will be located every 300± feet. Additional borings will be drilled at locations of deep cuts and high fills during both phases. Individual boring programs will be completed during final design for the two proposed structures over Piney Creek and Meadow Run and will consist of a minimum of two borings per substructure unit. Additional borings for smaller structures such as culverts and retaining walls will likely be included, but locations of these structures have not been finalized. Roadway borings at embankments will extend a depth of two-times the embankment height, unless competent material with sufficient thickness is encountered. Roadway borings in the cuts will extend ten feet below the proposed subgrade elevation. Finally, roadway borings at grade will extend to a depth of five feet below subgrade.

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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> It is assumed that the Piney Creek and Meadow Run structure foundations will consist of spread footings on bedrock or piles bearing on/in bedrock. In this instance, the borings will extend to a depth of ten feet below bottom of footing or pile tip elevation unless claystone is encountered, in which case the boring will be extended an additional ten feet into bedrock. Future boring programs will likely include supplemental borings for acid bearing rock. The number of borings will be based on the minimum boring requirements shown on Table 10.5.1-1 of the <i>PennDOT Publication No. 293, Geotechnical Engineering Manual</i>. Detailed soil and rock slope stability analyses using site specific information will be conducted to determine a slope ratio that ensures an acceptable factor of safety is achieved. Benching on the cut slopes may reduce the potential for rock falls encroaching on the constructed roadway. If benching or flattening of the rock cuts cannot be achieved, other appropriate measures such as rock fall collection zones at the toe of the cut, rock removal (scaling, trimming), or rock reinforcement with mesh may be designed. Acid Base Accounting (ABA) tests will be performed on rock samples obtained from test borings to determine the extent of acid bearing rock along the Selected Alternative and the appropriate treatments. Piezometers will be set in several test borings along the Selected Alternative to measure and continuously monitor the ground water level and to collect samples for testing to identify potential impacts and to assist in design of positive mitigation measures. Intercepting springs during construction is highly likely and will require the construction of drainage swales, rock blankets, and finger drains to convey water away from the cut slopes. Properly sized stormwater management basins will also be required. Special provisions shall be included in the contract stating that the contractor will coordinate with the Borough of Salisbury to ensure that there are no interruptions in water flow or degradation of water quality caused by construction activities. Temporary rerouting of the water supply from Findley Spring may be required if construction along the Selected Alternative interferes with the water supply line located within the Piney Creek valley. <i>Prior to construction, the project team will meet with the Salisbury Borough Water Commission to discuss the location of water lines within the project LOD. The project team will also work with the Salisbury Borough Water Commission to verify the location of the water lines. Water quality from Findley Spring also will be monitored during construction to identify possible construction impacts.</i> Special provisions shall also be included to perform water quality tests and sounding to static water level on residential wells before, during, and after construction to verify that the well water quality and volume has not been negatively impacted by facets of

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		<p>construction, such as acid mine drainage and dewatering the water bearing zone. If private wells are determined to be impacted resulting in the loss of water or degradation of water quality, the wells will be replaced or remediated, as appropriate.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> As part of the construction phase, a monitoring program of perennial watercourses is anticipated. This program is planned to consist of pre-construction, ongoing construction, and post construction sampling at locations upstream, within, and downstream of the constructed alignment.
Mining (See Chapter 3.16)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Impacts from mining could occur at the northern end of the project area where the alternative includes a large swath of land that has been both deep mined and strip mined. Geotechnical concerns include the potential for mine related subsidence, settlement, and slope stability of thick (greater than 100± feet) unconsolidated surface mine spoils and the potential for acid mine drainage. Surface mine spoils and soil contaminated by acid mine drainage can be corrosive and damaging to the environment. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Where the overburden above deep mined areas is relatively thin, concern for future mine subsidence <i>will</i> be mitigated by means of deep mine grouting. Methods such as deep dynamic compaction, stone columns, or pre-loading <i>will</i> mitigate settlement of thick unconsolidated strip mine spoils beneath roadways and embankments. Properly sized rock toes or bonding benches <i>will</i> be incorporated in sidehill fills while flatter slope ratios <i>will</i> be used for cutting slopes to make sure an acceptable factor of safety can be achieved. Acid mine drainage will be collected and treated following all environmental regulations. Corrosive soils will be mitigated by the same means as acid bearing rock, if necessary. Additional test borings will be drilled along the Selected Alternative and at all major cut slopes and fill embankments to better evaluate any soft soil or slope stability related issues, respectively.
Soils & Erosion (See Chapter 3.17)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The alternative is underlain by coarse soils, such as those derived from the sandstone bedrock of the Pottsville group rocks. Coarser soils are more stable and have a higher factor of safety. Similarly, fill embankments comprised of coarser soils may be constructed on steeper slopes with a sufficient factor of safety. Settlement of embankments due to consolidation of residual soils under the weight of fill or post-construction consolidation of fill under self-mass would be smaller and faster in coarse soils compared to fine-grained soils. Additionally, colluvial soils, human-made fill, and strip mine spoils also occur throughout the alternative. Thick colluvial zones comprised of large sandstone float from the sandstone outcrops along Allegheny Mountain. These soils present potential settlement problems and may be subject to extensive surface erosion and potential slope stability problems in cut and fill areas. Soils exposed and stockpiled during construction could result in soil erosion and sedimentation. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Special subgrade treatment for low strength clays exposed immediately below roadway grades may involve undercutting and backfilling with more suitable material, base reinforcement with geogrids, or surficial treatment with moisture resistant solutions. When incorporated in fill embankments, their mixing with better materials or selective placement may be suggested. Soft alluvial soils encountered in narrow gullies at the base of fill embankments may have to be removed and replaced with coarser material either as rock toe or rock base. The same means that mitigate strip mine spoils can mitigate settlement of embankments due to consolidation of thick colluvial and man-made fill deposits. Cuts and sidehill fills through these same soils will require similar mitigation as the strip mine spoils. Implementing standard erosion and sediment pollution control (E&SPC) best management practices (BMPs) in accordance with the PA DEP Erosion and Sediment Pollution Control Program Manual, 25 PA Code Chapter 102 Erosion and Sediment Control, Code of Maryland Regulations (COMAR) 26.17.01 Erosion and Sediment Control, and the Maryland Standards and Specifications for Soil Erosion and Sediment Control will mitigate erosion and sediment pollution during construction. E&SPC BMPs implemented may include, but are not limited to, compost filter sock, silt fence, pumped

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		water filter bags, drainage inlet protection, rolled erosion control products, sediment traps and basins, rock armoring, flocculants, natural vegetation for both temporary and permanent stabilization, and construction sequencing to limit exposed earth. National Pollution Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permits will authorize earth disturbance required for construction in both Pennsylvania and Maryland. E&SPC BMPs will be designed in coordination with the Post Construction Stormwater Management (PCSM) plan to ensure that temporary BMPs such as sediment traps and basins can be converted to permanent stormwater management BMPs with minimal disturbance to the features constructed. Furthermore, areas subject to PCSM infiltration BMPs shall have compaction minimized during construction to promote infiltration of stormwater.
Stormwater Management (See Chapter 3.18)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The alternative would result in impacts to stormwater runoff within and adjacent to the project area due to affecting existing drainage patterns, adding impervious area, compacting soils, and introducing additional pollutants such as deicing materials, vehicular oils, and thermal pollution. These alterations produce an increase in peak rate of stormwater runoff, volume of stormwater runoff and water quality degradation. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Stormwater generated from the Preferred Alternative will be managed utilizing a multitude of structural and non-structural SCMs/BMPs that implement peak rate control, volume control and water quality improvements. These SCMs/BMPs may include detention basins; infiltration basins and/or trenches; bioretention and/or microbioretention; constructed wetlands and/or submerged gravel wetlands; amended soil to improve absorption and water quality; Managed Release Concept basins for areas with poor infiltration; level spreaders; bioswales/vegetated swales; vegetated filter strips; disconnection from storm sewers; revegetation/reforestation; and minimization of disturbed areas. <i>These stormwater control features are intended to maximize infiltration to improve water quality, reduce rate of runoff to pre-project conditions and reduce volume of runoff from impervious surfaces. The SCMs/BMPs would also aid in reducing thermal pollution by providing shade, detention time, and infiltration of runoff, in conjunction with vegetated channels where practical.</i> <i>The state NPDES Construction Activity permit programs in both PA and MD will regulate stormwater management design, construction, and post-construction inspection/maintenance. The design and NPDES permitting process will determine the frequency of post-construction inspection and monitoring. No post-construction water quality monitoring is anticipated since NPDES Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System (MS4) permit coverage is not required in the project area.</i>
Waterways, Watersheds, Surface Water Quality, & Aquatic Biota (See Chapter 3.19)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The alternative includes impacts to the following waterways in Pennsylvania: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 16,451 linear feet of perennial streams 1,829 linear feet of <i>seasonal</i> streams 6,708 linear feet of wild trout streams 3,150 linear feet of trout stocked streams The alternative includes impacts to the following waterways in Maryland: 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Impacts to waterways required that PennDOT and SHA receive provisional notification for a Section 404 Permit from the Pittsburgh District of USACE (in coordination with the Baltimore District), PA DEP, and MDE, contingent on receiving a Section 401 Water Quality Certification from the PA DEP and MDE. The Section 404 Permit and Section 401 Water Quality Certification will address avoidance and minimization to Waters of the US, along with the plan to mitigate unavoidable impacts. Additionally, Pennsylvania and Maryland have state regulations governing waterway encroachments and alterations, including Pa. Code Title 25, Chapter 105 in Pennsylvania and Title 5 in Maryland, that

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1,433 linear feet of perennial streams • 3,428 linear feet of <i>seasonal</i> streams 	<p>require project review by state environmental agencies. In Pennsylvania, PennDOT will request a Section 401 Water Quality Certification in conjunction with the Section 404 Permit and will apply for a Chapter 105 Permit during final design.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Construction timing restrictions will apply to Wild Trout Waters and Stocked Trout Waters and their tributaries in Pennsylvania. These streams include Piney Creek and its tributaries and Meadow Run. The PFBC restricts in-stream work between the dates of February 15 and June 1, inclusive, for Stocked Trout Waters and restricts in-stream work between the dates of October 1 and December 31, inclusive, for Wild Trout Waters. • In Maryland, all <i>regulated</i> streams are Use <i>III</i>. In-stream work will not occur within Use <i>III</i> waters during the period of <i>October 1</i> to <i>April 30</i>, inclusive, during any year (COMAR 26.08.02.11). • Compensatory mitigation is required for unavoidable permanent impacts to streams. PennDOT will mitigate stream impacts occurring within Pennsylvania and SHA will mitigate for stream impacts occurring in Maryland. Federal and state permitting processes will coordinate and approve specific compensatory stream mitigation. • PennDOT and SHA will avoid and minimize impacts to streams. Efforts to minimize stream impacts could include crossing streams at right angles and using retaining walls in areas of cut or fill. In-kind stream relocations will be constructed where practicable to reduce the total compensatory stream mitigation required. • In Pennsylvania, <i>once impacts are finalized</i>, PennDOT will purchase credits from an approved private mitigation bank. Maryland does not have a private mitigation bank that can service the impacts related to the project. SHA will develop a permittee responsible mitigation (PRM) plan.
Wetlands (See Chapter 3.20)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The alternative includes impacts to the following wetland types in Pennsylvania: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>1.50</i> acres of palustrine emergent (PEM) wetlands • <i>4.16</i> acres of palustrine forested (PFO) wetlands • <i>0.50</i> acre of PEM/PFO wetlands • <i>1.28</i> acres of palustrine scrub/shrub (PSS) wetlands • <i>1.97</i> acres of PFO/PSS wetlands • 0.01 acre of palustrine open water (POW) wetlands • The alternative includes impacts to the following wetland types in Maryland: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 0.45 acre of PEM wetlands • 0.15 acre PFO wetlands 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PennDOT and SHA will avoid and minimize wetland impacts to the maximum extent practicable. Compensatory mitigation is required for unavoidable permanent impacts to wetlands. PennDOT will mitigate wetland impacts occurring in Pennsylvania and SHA will mitigate wetland impacts occurring in Maryland. Specific compensatory wetland mitigation will be coordinated and approved through the federal and state permitting processes. • In Pennsylvania, <i>once impacts are finalized</i>, PennDOT will purchase credits from an approved private wetland mitigation bank. Maryland does not have a private wetland mitigation bank that can service the impacts related to the project; SHA will develop a PRM plan.

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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Five years of monitoring for specific wetlands that are partially impacted by construction of the project will be conducted. The purpose of this monitoring is to ensure there are no unanticipated secondary impacts to those resources. Additional compensatory mitigation will be required for temporary fills that remain in place for longer than 12 months to address the associated temporal loss to the resources.
Floodplains (See Chapter 3.21)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> None of the build alternatives would result in a significant floodplain encroachment per <i>Executive Order 11988 (Floodplain Management)</i>. The alternative includes minor impacts to the Miller Run (0.6 acres) and Piney Creek (4.1 acres) Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) 1% annual chance floodplains as a result of roadway crossings. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> PennDOT and SHA will minimize and avoid impacts to FEMA 1% annual chance floodplains throughout the final design process. During final design and prior to construction, permitting procedures will be instituted in accordance with PA DEP, MDE, and USACE. All action taken with respect to construction will conform to Executive Order 11988 (Floodplain Management).
Vegetation, Terrestrial Habitat, & Terrestrial Wildlife (See Chapter 3.22)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The alternative includes impacts to the following terrestrial and aquatic habitats: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 388.8 acres of forestland 4.7 acres of floodplains 10.02 acres of wetlands 23,141 linear feet of streams 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Coordination of mitigation is ongoing between PennDOT, SHA, USFWS, PGC, PFBC, PA DEP, MDE, and MD Department of Natural Resources (DNR), <i>and mitigation will be finalized during final design</i>. These mitigation efforts include, but are not limited to, following approved E&SPC plans which include native seed mixes and plantings. The project team will utilize best management practices from the <i>PennDOT Publication No. 756, Invasive Species Best Management Practices</i>. <i>The project team has committed to incorporating at least one wildlife crossing into the project</i>. Wildlife crossings will be considered at locations to be determined along the Preferred Alternative to facilitate safe wildlife crossing and to prevent collisions. PennDOT will continue to evaluate the use and locations of wildlife crossings in the design phase and will coordinate with USFWS, PGC, and PFBC to ensure that habitat connectivity is maintained as much as possible. The details of these mitigation efforts will be finalized in final design and will follow guidance from <i>PennDOT Publication No. 13M, Design Manual Part 2 Highway Design– March 2015 Edition</i>. In accordance with the Maryland Reforestation Law, before in-kind forest replacement is considered, every reasonable effort will be made to minimize the cutting or clearing of trees in Maryland. Additionally, replacement of forestland in Maryland will occur on a one-to-one basis. SHA will locate state or publicly owned land of equivalent size to be reforested. If no state or publicly owned land is available, SHA will pay into the MD DNR Reforestation Fund. Acre-for-acre reforestation either within the immediate project right-of-way, within other SHA-owned land, or payment into the MD DNR Reforestation Fund will mitigate unavoidable impacts to forest resources. Reforestation plans will be coordinated by SHA's Landscape Operations Division, and a MD DNR Reforestation Site Review form will be prepared during final design.

Resource	Anticipated Impact of Preferred Alternative (E-Shift Modified)	Commitment/Mitigation for Preferred Alternative (E-Shift Modified)
<p>Rare, Threatened, & Endangered Species (See Chapter 3.23)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The 2024 Biological Assessment for the alternative has determined that the proposed action “may affect, likely to adversely affect” the Indiana bat, northern long-eared bat, and/or tricolored bat. <i>A Biological Opinion was issued by USFWS on March 26, 2025, and concurred with this determination.</i> The alternative would not directly affect any known hibernacula. • The alternative would bridge known habitat associated with the longnose sucker, specifically Meadow Run and Piney Creek. • The alternative would impact the Meadow Mountain area in Maryland, which is known to provide habitat for the linear-leaved willowherb, alder flycatcher, and North American porcupine. 	<p><i>The 2024 Biological Assessment proposed numerous mitigation measures to compensate for the impacts to protected bat species. These measures were finalized based on consultation with the USFWS through the Biological Opinion issued by USFWS on March 26, 2025. Avoidance, minimization, and conservation measures will include:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Direct impacts to hibernacula outside of the LOD identified within the Biological Opinion must be avoided.</i> • <i>To avoid harming or disturbing hibernating Indiana bats, northern long-eared bats and tricolored bats, all earth disturbance activities within 0.5 miles of any known hibernaculum will only occur from April 1 to November 15.</i> • <i>All trees shall be cut from November 15 to March 31.</i> • <i>Demolition of buildings or structures shall occur from November 15 to March 31. Alternatively, an emergence survey may be conducted.</i> • <i>All disturbance of rocky bat habitat (i.e., construction activities and associated noise) shall occur from November 15 to March 31. Where feasible, identified rocky habitats may be avoided.</i> • <i>No materials, waste, or fill will be deposited in areas that would result in additional forest clearing or sedimentation to any streams in areas providing habitat to Indiana bats, northern long-eared bats, or tricolored bats.</i> • <i>All temporary lighting concurrent with construction activities shall be directed downward to face the work area.</i> • <i>A Pollution Prevention and Contingency Plan will be developed and maintained.</i> • <i>A dust control strategy will be developed and be reviewed by USFWS.</i> • <i>A blasting plan will be prepared by the contractor to meet DEP and PGC guidelines and be submitted to the USFWS, PGC, and PennDOT for review and approval prior to commencement. All blasting will be monitored with sound and seismographic equipment and monitoring points will be coordinated with the USFWS and PGC. Blasting shall be conducted between November 1 to March 31. Blasting will not be permitted within one mile to the north and south of the Piney Creek bridge during the winter hibernation period from October 31 to March 31. No blasting shall occur within 0.2 miles of any known hibernacula. A record of each blast shall be maintained for a period of five years.</i> • <i>FHWA, through PennDOT and MD SHA, will develop a system to track the implementation of each mitigation measure, the completion date, and results of the</i>

Resource	Anticipated Impact of Preferred Alternative (E-Shift Modified)	Commitment/Mitigation for Preferred Alternative (E-Shift Modified)
		<p>mitigation action. The tracking system summary will be provided to the Service quarterly, and available upon request. Additionally, FHWA, PennDOT, and MD SHA will provide an Environmental Monitor.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A planting plan will be developed, in coordination with the USFWS/PGC and DNR guidance. • FHWA, PennDOT, and MD SHA will offset the total loss of 400 acres of forest habitat by purchasing the large mine-cave rights or a perpetual easement on this property for perpetual protection of bats and their habitat to offset impacts to hibernacula and suitable forest habitat. Following construction of the project, the property or easement will be transferred to a land manager. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ If purchase of the large mine-cave is unsuccessful, FHWA, PennDOT, and MD SHA will offset impacts to hibernacula and suitable forest habitat in the form of purchasing conservation credits from a USFWS-approved conservation banking entity to compensate for the loss of 400 acres of forested habitat. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Additionally, PennDOT will purchase and install four artificial roost structures, designed to the PGC/USFWS requirements, at locations designated by the USFWS and the PGC, or similar effort to offset direct impacts to known hibernaculum. • FHWA, PennDOT, and MD SHA will provide pre-construction, two years of construction, and one-year post-construction monitoring of the large mine-cave opening. Monitoring results will be shared with PennDOT, SHA, FHWA, PGC, and the USFWS. • Any dead Indiana bats, northern long-eared bats, or tricolored bats found in the action area will be reported to USFWS within 48 hours of discovery. • Construction equipment will be fitted with properly functioning mufflers to minimize noise impact. To minimize impacts to air quality, the contractor will comply with Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection Rules and Regulations, Title 25. • To offset unavoidable impacts to rocky outcroppings, FHWA/PennDOT/SHA, with input from bat experts, proposes to design, create and/or rebuild rock outcroppings that are conducive to bat roosting and potential hibernation. Although anticipated to be minor in occurrence, these impacts and coordination can occur during final design activities.

Resource	Anticipated Impact of Preferred Alternative (E-Shift Modified)	Commitment/Mitigation for Preferred Alternative (E-Shift Modified)
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Excavation will occur during daytime hours to avoid impacts during nighttime foraging. An approved erosion, sedimentation, and pollution control plan will be implemented to avoid degradation of receiving waters. Lengths of stream crossing culvert structures will be minimized to the extent possible to reduce alteration to existing aquatic habitats that serve as potential habitats and flyways. Pertaining to the longnose sucker, the design of avoidance measures will be evaluated and forwarded to PFBC upon finalization of the ongoing field investigations. E&SPC BMPs will be implemented to avoid sedimentation and minimize habitat impacts. Additionally, stormwater management will be designed to ensure that discharge into streams will minimize elevated stream temperatures, as requested by PFBC. <i>The cutting of trees along stream corridors will also be kept to a minimum. Furthermore, in-stream construction restrictions will be implemented from March 15 to July 1 for streams known to support longnose suckers and their tributaries, including the Casselman River and its tributaries.</i> In accordance with MD DNR requirements, sediment and erosion controls with supplemental measures shall be implemented to maximize stormwater infiltration to and avoid degrading wetland areas supporting rare species along Meadow Run. Caution will also be used to avoid significant instream pH changes on-site and downstream of the project area. Project design shall maintain or enhance fish passage through the project area, particularly during low flow periods. Additionally, Forest Interior Dwelling Bird Species habitat shall be conserved where possible.
Reasonably Foreseeable Effects (See Chapter 3.24)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The project would complete ADHS Corridor N & improve travel times for potential new employers and employees within the U.S. 219 Corridor. As such, it has the potential to induce and facilitate regional economic growth by improving system linkage and providing infrastructure that supports economic development within designated growth areas. Potential new development in these locations could impact environmental resources within the growth areas. The four Build Alternatives, DU Modified, DU-Shift Modified, E Modified, and E-Shift Modified will have various levels of direct and reasonably foreseeable impacts on land use, socioeconomic, environmental and cultural resources within the RFE Study Area. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> State and local regulatory agencies would enforce any mitigation requirements caused by such development.
Construction (See Chapter 3.26)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Construction activities could result in disruptions to local residents and the traveling public. Construction of the Preferred Alternative would require 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Maintenance and protection of traffic plans will be developed during final design to mitigate construction access impacts and to minimize travel delays throughout the

Resource	Anticipated Impact of Preferred Alternative (E-Shift Modified)	Commitment/Mitigation for Preferred Alternative (E-Shift Modified)
	<p>temporary road closures and reduced speed work zones, which would cause minor inconveniences to residents and the traveling public. These delays could result in decreased access and potential increased response time for emergency service providers. These disruptions would be temporary and localized occurring during the construction period.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clearing and grubbing of existing vegetation and earthwork would be required. Exposed soils would result in the potential increase for soil erosion and sedimentation to nearby streams and/or wetlands. • Construction could temporarily impact existing air quality due to particulate matter in the air in the form of windblown dust resulting from earthmoving activities. Temporary noise impacts would occur as well from construction equipment and blasting activities. 	<p>project area. These plans will include appropriate signs and pavement markings. Access to all businesses and residences will be maintained through construction. Advanced coordination with emergency service providers, municipalities, school districts, Plain Sect populations, and the general public will occur to give notice of traffic and detour information.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The use of approved dust palliatives such as calcium chloride or water will be required to control windblown dust. Methods for reducing impacts to existing air quality may also include covering of stockpiles during storage or transport, and restoration of vegetation as quickly as possible to prevent windblown dust. • Measures to reduce construction noise levels may include requiring the contractor to utilize proper mufflers on construction vehicles and equipment, and the restriction of certain activities to specified hours. • Pennsylvania Act 38 and Maryland's Miss Utility Dig Law requires notification of excavators, designers, or any person preparing to disturb the earth's surface to coordinate and locate all utilities within the limits of work. Therefore, coordination will be undertaken for any relocation or grade adjustments (manholes, inlets, etc.) that may be required. • <i>The state NPDES Construction Activity permit programs in both PA and MD will require and regulate the Erosion and Sediment Control design for the project. Typically, regulatory inspections occur throughout the project.</i> • <i>Additional geotechnical testing and analysis, testing of potentially contaminated areas based on historical land use and investigation of historically mined areas will be required as the design progresses. The extent of these efforts and types of soil erosion and sedimentation mitigation practices are unknown until further investigation/testing is conducted. Specialized mitigation measures will be implemented as needed based on results of further investigation into historical land use and potential areas of hazardous materials. These measures will be coordinated with the Somerset County Conservation District, PA DEP, and MDE through the permitting process.</i> • <i>If soil contamination is present in Maryland, a permit for soil remediation is required from MDE's Air and Radiation Management Administration. Any above ground or underground petroleum storage tanks that may be within the construction area must have contents and tanks along with any contamination removed. The MDE Oil Control Program or PA DEP Division of Storage Tanks should be contacted for additional guidance.</i>

Resource	Anticipated Impact of Preferred Alternative (E-Shift Modified)	Commitment/Mitigation for Preferred Alternative (E-Shift Modified)
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There will be meeting(s) held during final design to present details on items such as fencing, landscaping and lighting. • If contractors suspect that asbestos is present in any portion of a structure that will be renovated/demolished, then the contractor shall contact the MDE Community Environmental Services Program, Air and Radiation Management Administration, or the PA DEP Bureau of Air Quality to learn about the State's requirements for asbestos handling and complete any required asbestos notifications. • Construction, renovation and/or demolition of buildings and roadways must be performed in conformance with State regulations. This includes regulations relating to "Particulate Matter from Materials Handling and Construction" (COMAR 26.11.06.03D) in Maryland and "Prohibition of Certain Fugitive Emissions" (PA Code Title 25, Chapter 123) in Pennsylvania. These regulations require that during any construction and/or demolition work, reasonable precautions be taken to prevent particulate matter, such as fugitive dust, from becoming airborne. • Any solid waste including construction, demolition and land clearing debris, generated from the project, must be properly disposed of at a permitted solid waste acceptance facility, or recycled if possible. The MDE Solid Waste Program or PA DEP Residual Waste Program should be contacted for additional information regarding solid waste activities. The MDE Resource Management Program or a PA DEP Recycling Coordinator should be contacted for additional information regarding recycling activities. • The MDE Solid Waste Program or PA DEP Hazardous Waste Program should be contacted directly if construction is anticipated to generate or require handling of hazardous wastes to ensure these activities are being conducted in compliance with applicable State and Federal laws and regulations. These Programs should also be contacted prior to construction activities to ensure that the treatment, storage or disposal of hazardous wastes and low-level radioactive wastes will be conducted in compliance with applicable State and federal laws and regulations. • Borrow areas used to provide clean earth back fill material may require a surface mine permit. Disposal of excess cut material at a surface mine may require site approval. The MDE Mining Program or PA DEP District Mining Office should be contacted for further guidance. • A wetland and waterway delineation must be conducted for any proposed borrow or placement site prior to use. Borrow or placement sites must be located in uplands; no waters or wetlands will be used for excess material disposal unless permitted. All borrow or placement sites must receive the appropriate Endangered Species Act and Cultural Resource clearance prior to use. PennDOT and SHA may also choose to have field views with the resource agencies prior to use of proposed waste areas.

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		CAA	Clean Air Act	GTS	Garret County Transit Service	
		CAC	Community Advisory Committee	HHS	Health and Human Services	
		CO ₂	Carbon Dioxide	IIJA	Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act	
		CO	Carbon Monoxide	IRM	Interagency Review Meeting	
				LEDPA	Least Environmentally Damaging Practicable Alternative	

LOD	Limit of Disturbance	PAL	Productive Agricultural Land	U.S. EPA	United States Environmental Protection Agency
LOS	Level of Service	PA-SHARE	Pennsylvania's State Historic and Archaeological Resource Exchange	USFWS	United States Fish and Wildlife Service
L RTP	Southern Alleghenies Long Range Transportation Plan	PCN	Pennsylvania Priority Commercial Network	USGS	United States Geological Survey
MD DNR	Maryland Department of Natural Resources	PEL	Planning and Environment Linkage	VMT	Vehicle Miles Travelled
MDE	Maryland Department of the Environment	PennDOT	Pennsylvania Department of Transportation	WDA	Work Development Area
MDP	Maryland Department of Planning	PFA	Priority Funding Area	WRR	Watershed Resources Registry
MEPA	Maryland Environmental Policy Act	PFBC	Pennsylvania Fish and Boat Commission	WWF	Warm Water Fishes
MERLIN	Maryland Environmental Resources and Land Information Network	PGC	Pennsylvania Game Commission		
MHT	Maryland Historical Trust	PHFS	Primary Highway Freight System Network		
MOVES	Motor Vehicle Emission Simulator	PM	Particulate Matter		
MPC	Municipal Planning Code	PNDI	Pennsylvania Natural Diversity Inventory		
MSAT	Mobile Source Air Toxics	PRM	Permittee Responsible Mitigation		
NAAQS	National Ambient Air Quality Standards	RFE	<i>Reasonably Foreseeable Effects</i>		
NAC	Noise Abatement Criteria	ROD	Record of Decision		
NEPA	National Environmental Policy Act	RT&E	Rare Threatened and Endangered Species		
NHFP	National Highway Freight Program	SAP&DC	Southern Alleghenies Planning and Development Commission		
NHPA	National Historic Preservation Act	SCTS	Somerset County Transportation System		
NHS	National Highway System	SGL	State Game Lands		
NLCD	National Land Cover Database	SHA	Maryland State Highway Administration		
NOI	Notice of Intent	SHPO	State Historic Preservation Office(r)		
NPDES	National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System	SSA	Sole Source Aquifer		
NRCS	Natural Resource Conservation Service	SSPRAs	Sensitive Species and Project Review Areas		
NRHP	National Register of Historic Places	TEA	Targeted Ecological Areas		
NSA	Noise Study Area	THPO	Tribal Historic Preservation Officers		
NWI	National Wetlands Inventory	TIP	Transportation Improvement Program		
O-D	Origin and Destination	TMDL	Total Maximum Daily Load		
OHWM	Ordinary High-Water Mark	TNM	Traffic Noise Model		
PA DEP	Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection	TSM	Transportation System Management		
PACE	Pennsylvania Conservation Explorer	USACE	United States Army Corp of Engineers		
		USDA	United States Department of Agriculture		

1 INTRODUCTION, PURPOSE, & NEED

The Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), the lead Federal agency, has prepared this Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS), in coordination with the Pennsylvania Department of Transportation (PennDOT) and Maryland State Highway Administration (SHA). The FEIS has been prepared in conformance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) for the U.S. 6219, Section 050 Transportation Improvement Project from Meyersdale, PA to Old Salisbury Road, MD. For purposes of the FEIS, the project is referred to as the U.S. 219 project. In earlier stages of the project, this project was referred to as U.S. 6219, Section 019.

In addition to introducing the project, this chapter presents the project's purpose and need, which was developed by FHWA, PennDOT, and SHA, in coordination with Cooperating and Participating Agencies and the public during the NEPA scoping process. The full Purpose and Need document is included as **Appendix B**.

The proposed project is included in Southern Alleghenies Transportation Improvement Plan (TIP), Southern Alleghenies Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP), and Maryland Department of Transportation's Consolidated Transportation

Program (CTP) Fiscal Year 2024-2029. U.S. 219 is a principal arterial on the National Highway System (NHS) and is on the Pennsylvania Priority Commercial Network (PCN). U.S. 219 is one of only a few direct north-south routes in western Pennsylvania and Maryland, and it links I-68 in Maryland to I-76 (Pennsylvania Turnpike) and I-80 to the north.

PennDOT's *Transportation Program Development and Project Delivery Process* guided the development of this project. SHA's guidelines and regulations were consulted throughout the process to ensure consistency. However, the project development utilized PennDOT's *six-step process* (see *PennDOT Publication No. 10, Transportation Program Development and Project Delivery Process*), which integrates NEPA and Section 404 of the Clean Water Act. To comply with NEPA, this Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) is being prepared in accordance with the Fiscal Responsibility Act of 2023 (Pub. L. No. 118-5, 137 Stat. 10), FHWA's implementing regulations for NEPA (23 CFR §771), and PennDOT Publication No. 10B (MD-1B)¹. Additionally, this FEIS is being completed in compliance with *23 USC 139*, which established a new Environmental Review Process for transportation projects developed as EISs.

In accordance with 23 CFR §771.111(a), FHWA published a Notice of Intent (NOI) to prepare an EIS for this project on June 2, 2023.



Photograph 1-1: View of U.S. 219 from Hunsrick Summit bridge looking south.

1.1 Project Description

The intent of this project is to complete Corridor N of the Appalachian Development Highway System (ADHS) through improvements to the section of U.S. 219 between the terminus of the four-lane highway section south of Meyersdale, Pennsylvania and the north end of the 1.4-mile segment of U.S. 219 constructed in Garrett County, Maryland. The project would supplement the interstate system by connecting I-68 and I-76, the Pennsylvania Turnpike, connecting the project area portion of Appalachia to the interstate system, and improving mobility for motorists and freight along U.S. 219. The project would enhance access between existing populations to destinations and markets in the region, potentially generating economic opportunity in previously isolated areas.

1.2 Project Background

In 1965, the United States Congress passed the Appalachian Regional Development Act; the legislation was enacted to address “persistent poverty” in the 13 states that comprise the underserved Appalachia region. Two key components of the legislation were to establish the Appalachian Regional Commission (ARC) and to develop the ADHS.

The ARC is a partnership between the federal government and the 13 Appalachian states

represented by each of their respective governors; the primary mission is to ensure economic opportunities are pursued and a capable, ready workforce is available to fill job opportunities. The ADHS is a network of 32 highways spanning 3,090 miles and 13 states. Since its authorization, the legislation has been proven to be effective as 2,814 miles or 91.1% (as of September 2020) of the “eligible mileage” were either completely built or open to traffic. The highway system connects communities to commerce and helps to reduce the number of high poverty counties in the region by nearly 70%. **Figure 1-1** depicts the ADHS network.

In continuing the vision of ADHS, PennDOT, SHA, and FHWA are pursuing an improvement project along U.S. 219 between Meyersdale, Pennsylvania and Old Salisbury Road in Maryland. The U.S. 219, project is a part of ADHS Corridor N and represents the final remaining uncompleted eight-mile segment along U.S. 219. This project is a critical component to completing the ADHS, helping to provide an improved connection between I-68 and U.S. Route 22, including the towns of Meyersdale, Somerset, Johnstown, and Ebensburg, as well as creating a linkage between I-68 and I-76 (the Pennsylvania Turnpike).

This project would serve as a foundation for the long-term goal of promoting economic development in the Appalachian Region.

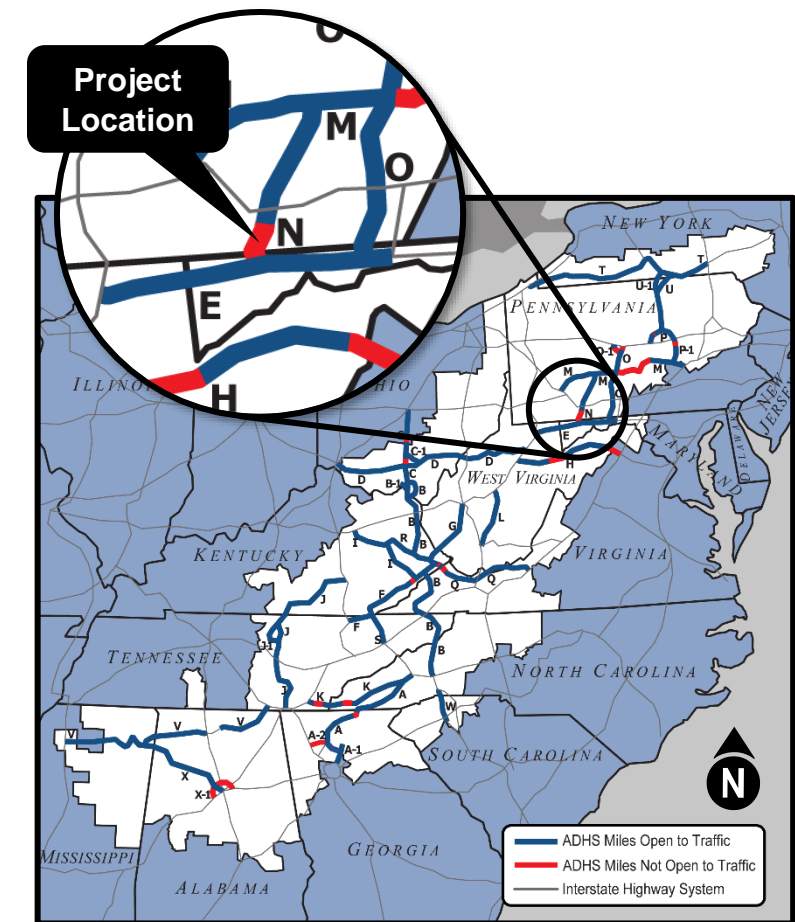


Figure 1-1: ADHS Highway System Map (ADHS Highway System Status Report FY2020)

1.3 Project History

The U.S. 219 project between Somerset, PA and I-68 in MD, has an extensive history and the timeline for the project is presented in **Figure 1-2**. In 1999, PennDOT completed the *U.S. Route 219 Project Needs Analysis* (PennDOT 1999), included as **Appendix C**, that evaluated transportation needs of the two-lane U.S. 219 between the I-76/Pennsylvania Turnpike in Somerset, PA and I-68 in MD. The study revealed numerous deficiencies along the entire corridor.

The 1999 needs study identified two projects with independent utility and logical termini on U.S. 219.

These projects were:

- U.S. 219, Section 019 (currently U.S. 219, Section 050) (From I-68 in Maryland to the southern terminus of the Meyersdale Bypass in Pennsylvania); and
- U.S. 219, Section 020 (From the northern terminus of the Meyersdale Bypass to Somerset, Pennsylvania)

Preliminary engineering and work towards a Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) for this section, originally began in 2001 by PennDOT and SHA but was put on hold in 2007 due to funding constraints. As a result, a DEIS for this section was

not issued. Since that time, PennDOT has completed the construction of U.S. 219, Section 020, Meyersdale to Somerset. That project consisted of the construction of a new 11-mile, four-lane, limited access roadway extending from the northern end of the Meyersdale Bypass of U.S. 219 (a four-lane limited access roadway) to the southern end of the existing four-lane limited access U.S. 219, south of Somerset.

On July 23, 2014, a revised NOI was published in the Federal Register to restart the NEPA process for this section. The revised NOI for this second NEPA evaluation effort was rescinded on February 16,

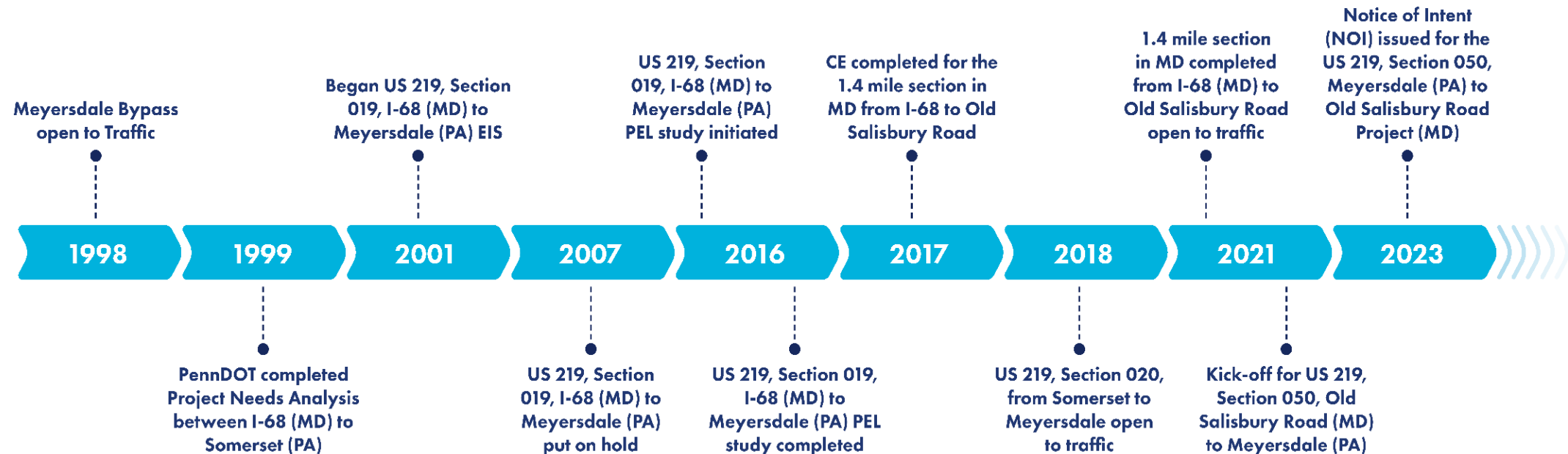


Figure 1-2: Project History

2016, due to varying funding constraints between Maryland and Pennsylvania. Through collaboration between FHWA, SHA, and PennDOT, a solution was found which allowed the evaluation of this section of U.S. 219 to be continued for future project phases. The solution was a Planning and Environment Linkages (PEL) study, which allowed the transportation agencies, resource agencies and the public to work together to identify goals and objectives, deficiencies and needs, possible solutions/alternatives, and to conduct a preliminary screening of potential solutions.

The *U.S. 219: I-68 (MD) to Meyersdale (PA) PEL Study* (PennDOT 2016) was completed in July 2016 and recommended two alignments that could move forward into the NEPA process: Alignments E and E-Shift. The PEL study also identified an independent, stand-alone breakout project within these two alignments in Maryland: from I-68 to Old Salisbury Road. This 1.4-mile project was then advanced, and construction was completed in 2021. The PEL study is included as **Appendix D**.

Due to a lack in funding to complete Section 019, PennDOT performed a subsequent safety study in 2020 along the remaining 2-lane section of U.S. 219, entitled *U.S. 219 Existing Corridor Safety Study, SR 219, Seg 0010 to Seg 0114* (PennDOT 2020), included as **Appendix E**. The purpose of the study was to evaluate existing U.S. 219 and determine safety needs/problem areas for which future

projects could be developed to address the current needs and deficiencies.

Evaluation of the remaining uncompleted portion of this section of U.S. 219 was re-initiated by PennDOT in 2021. This project is now being referred to as U.S. 219, Section 050, and is the only remaining two-lane, non-limited access section of U.S. 219 in more than 70 miles of the four-lane expressway between I-68 to the south and U.S. Route 22 to the north. Refer to **Figures 1-3** and **Figures 1-4**.

On June 2, 2023, a NOI to prepare an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) was published in the Federal Register for the U.S. 219, Section 050 project. The NOI included four (4) build alternatives. Two of the alternatives (E and E-Shift) were recommended from the PEL to be advanced into NEPA. The majority of the E and E-Shift alternatives share a common alignment, except for a small section in Maryland, where they split. Because these two alternatives are so similar, the FHWA requested that additional alternatives be considered. As a result, the team developed and carried Alternatives DU and DU-Shift into the detailed study phase. This FEIS document discusses the impacts to various resources from these four alternatives and any proposed mitigation.

1.4 Project Area

Since the southernmost 1.4 miles of U.S. 219 has been completed and the existing interchange

between I-68 and U.S. 219 has been upgraded, it would no longer be logical to consider alternatives which would create a new interchange on I-68. Nor would a new interchange along U.S. 219 meet current design criteria for interchange spacing. Therefore, the project area for U.S. 219 Section 050 has been condensed and logical termini have been established as follows:

- Northern terminus: south end of the existing four-lane limited access facilities constructed as part of the project: U.S. 219, Meyersdale Bypass, in Pennsylvania.
- Southern terminus: north end of the existing four-lane limited access facility constructed as part of the project: U.S. 219, I-68 to Old Salisbury Road, in Maryland.

This project proposes the construction of an eight mile (six miles in Pennsylvania and two miles in Maryland) four-lane limited access facility on new alignment from the end of the Meyersdale Bypass in Somerset County, Pennsylvania to the newly constructed portion of U.S. 219 in Garrett County, Maryland.

The project area encompasses the Borough of Salisbury and portions of Elk Lick and Summit Townships in Somerset County, Pennsylvania, and northeastern Garrett County, Maryland, as shown in **Figure 1-5**. The project area is mostly rural, with scattered residential and commercial properties, and significant forested and agricultural areas.

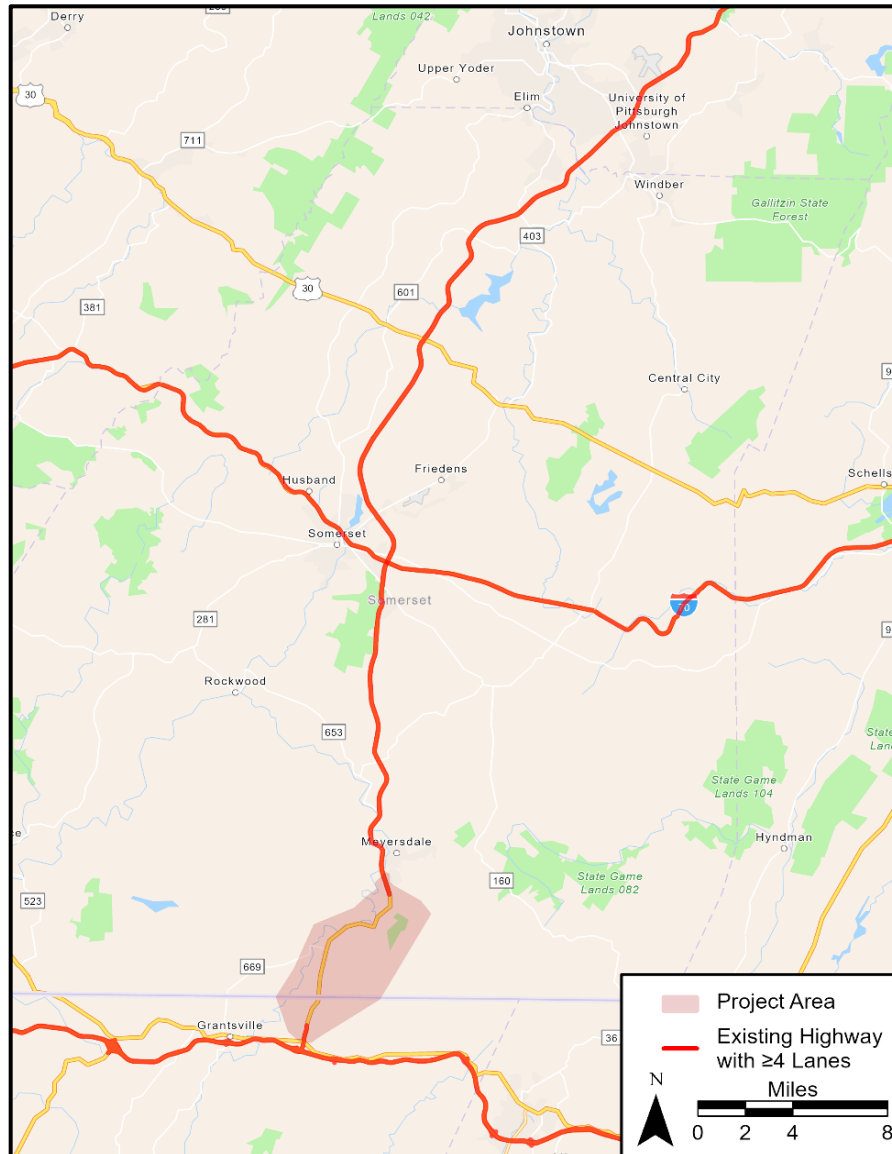


Figure 1-3: U.S. 219 Corridor Map

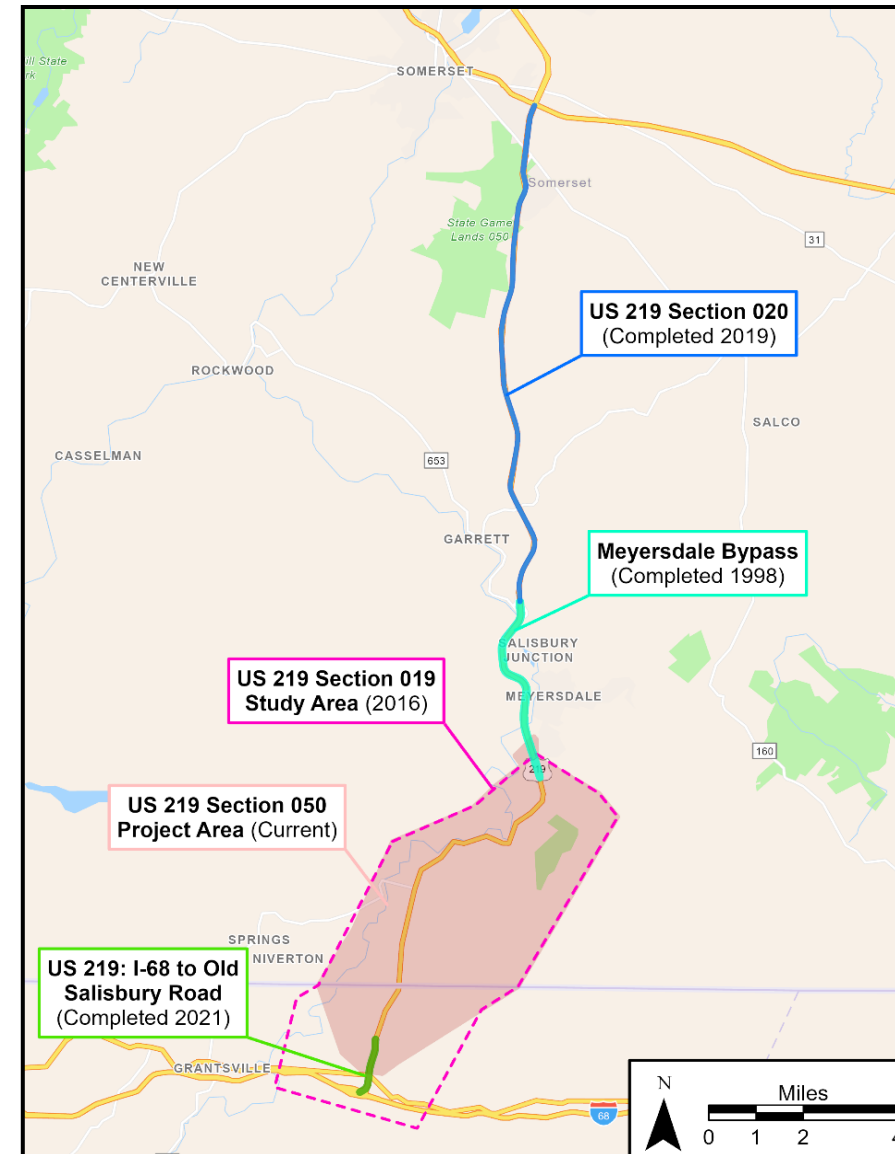


Figure 1-4: U.S. 219 History Map

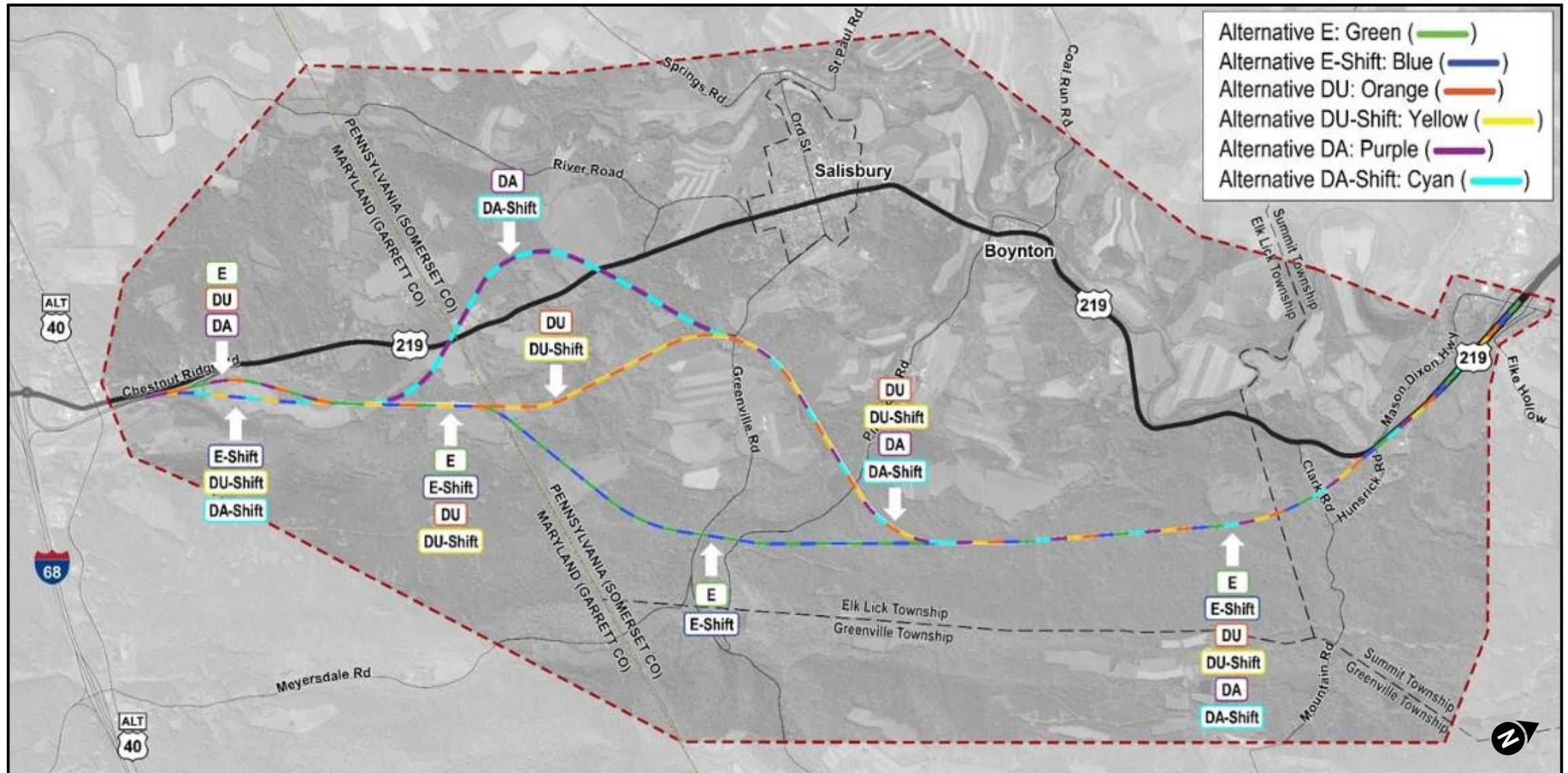


Figure 1-5: Project Area and Alternatives

1.5 Existing Traffic Volumes

In December 2022, 24-hour intersection turning movement counts were collected as an updated basis for all future analyses. Count locations were selected to include all major intersections along the existing U.S. 219 corridor as well as several intersections in the vicinity of both project termini. **Figure 1-7** depicts the Average Daily Traffic (ADT) results of the data collection efforts.

A 1.5% linear regional growth rate was provided by MD SHA and their Maryland Statewide Transportation Model (MSTM). Following coordination with agency partners, it was determined that this growth rate would be used as the basis for future growth beyond the count year of 2022 to the forecasted opening year (2030) and design year (2050). **Figure 1-8** and **Figure 1-9** depict a more generalized summary of ADTs on critical roadway segments in the count year (2022) and design year (2050).

1.5.1 No Build Projected Level of Service

The Transportation Research Board’s (TRB) *Highway Capacity Manual, 7th edition* (TRB 2022), is used as the basis for determining the anticipated level of service (LOS) for highway segments. LOS as an indication of how well a particular segment can accommodate the projected traffic volumes in a given peak hour. PennDOT design guidance from Publication 13, Design Manual Part 2, Contextual

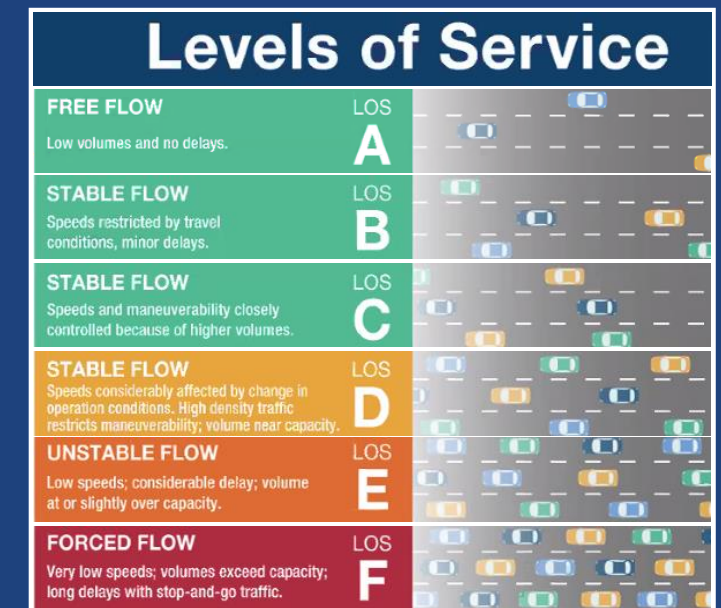
Roadway Design, Section 2.4.3.d states “PennDOT uses LOS C for rural areas and LOS D for urban areas as its measure for acceptable roadway operations”. Therefore, based on the project’s rural setting and classification of roadway, a LOS during peak hours of A through C would be considered acceptable, with D through F considered unacceptable. Throughout the corridor, the PM peak hour had higher traffic volumes than the AM peak hour, so the LOS summaries to follow are based on the PM peak hour as the worst performing analysis period.

Table 1-1 also summarizes the results, including the opening year (2030). LOS C is described by the TRB as “most vehicles travel in platoons and speeds are noticeably curtailed” partially due to the lack of passing areas and turning of vehicles. LOS D is described by the TRB as having “high passing demand”. See **Figure 1-6** for a description of each LOS A-F.

Table 1-1: No Build Alternative LOS

Analysis Year	Existing U.S. 219 South of Salisbury	Existing U.S. 219 North of Salisbury	Mason Dixon Highway
2022	C	C	A
2030	D	C	A
2050	D	D	A

LOS is a rating system that measures congestion for motorized vehicles as quality of service on an A to F scale. “A” represents the best (free-flow) condition while “F” is the worst-possible (congested) condition.



Source: Transportation for America

Figure 1-6: Level of Service Rating System

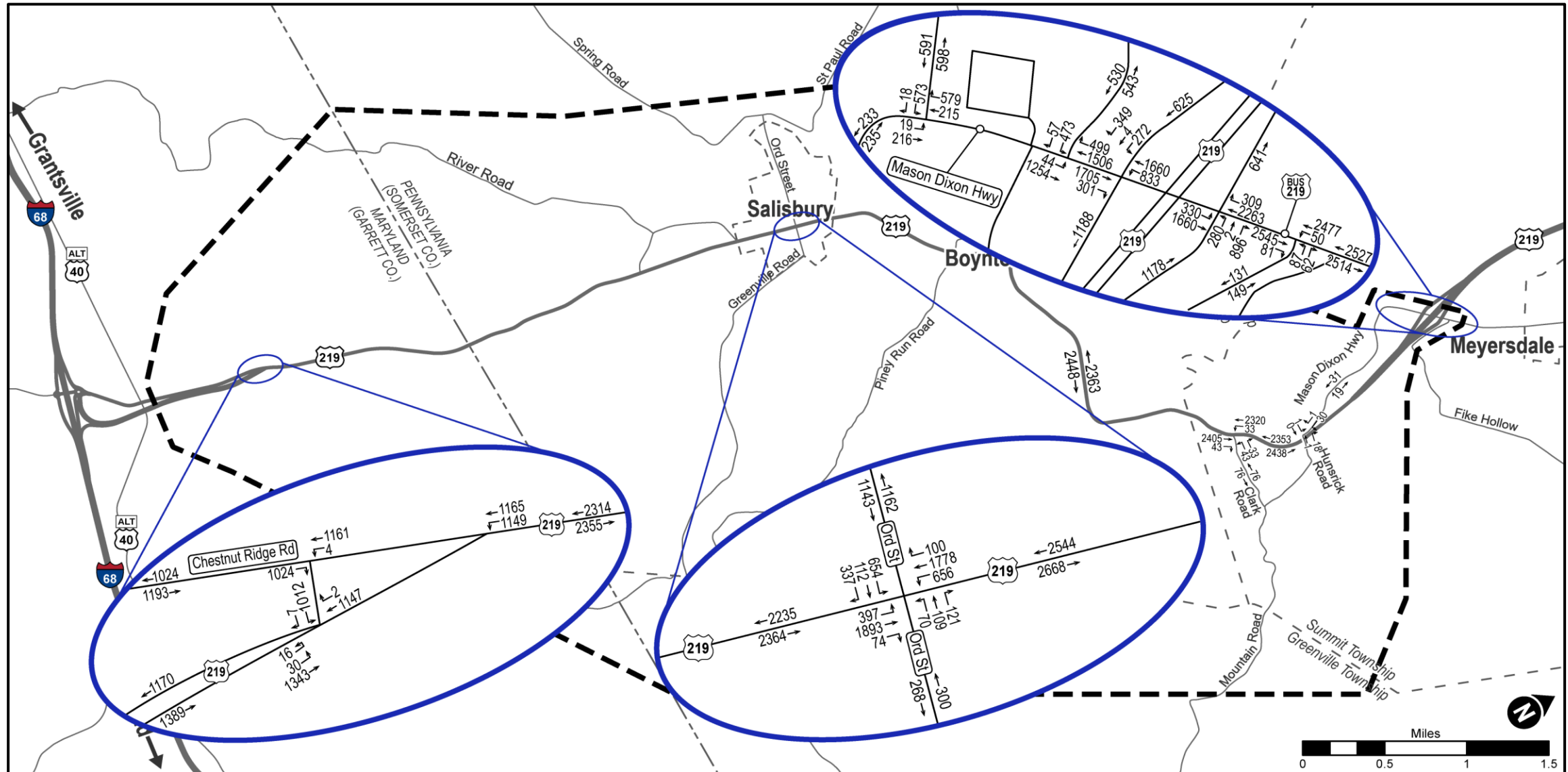


Figure 1-7: 2022 ADT Results

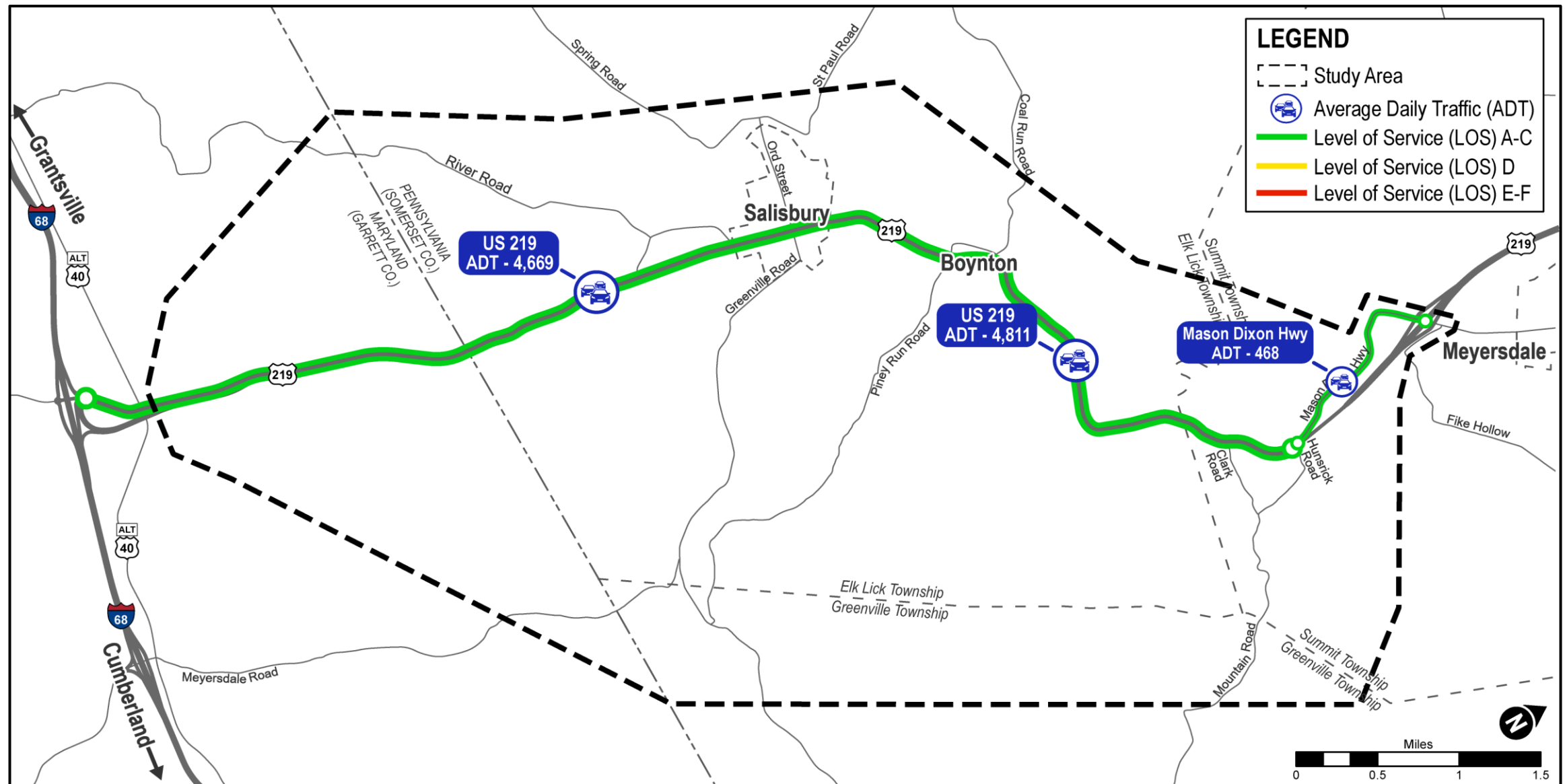


Figure 1-8: 2022 Existing ADT & LOS

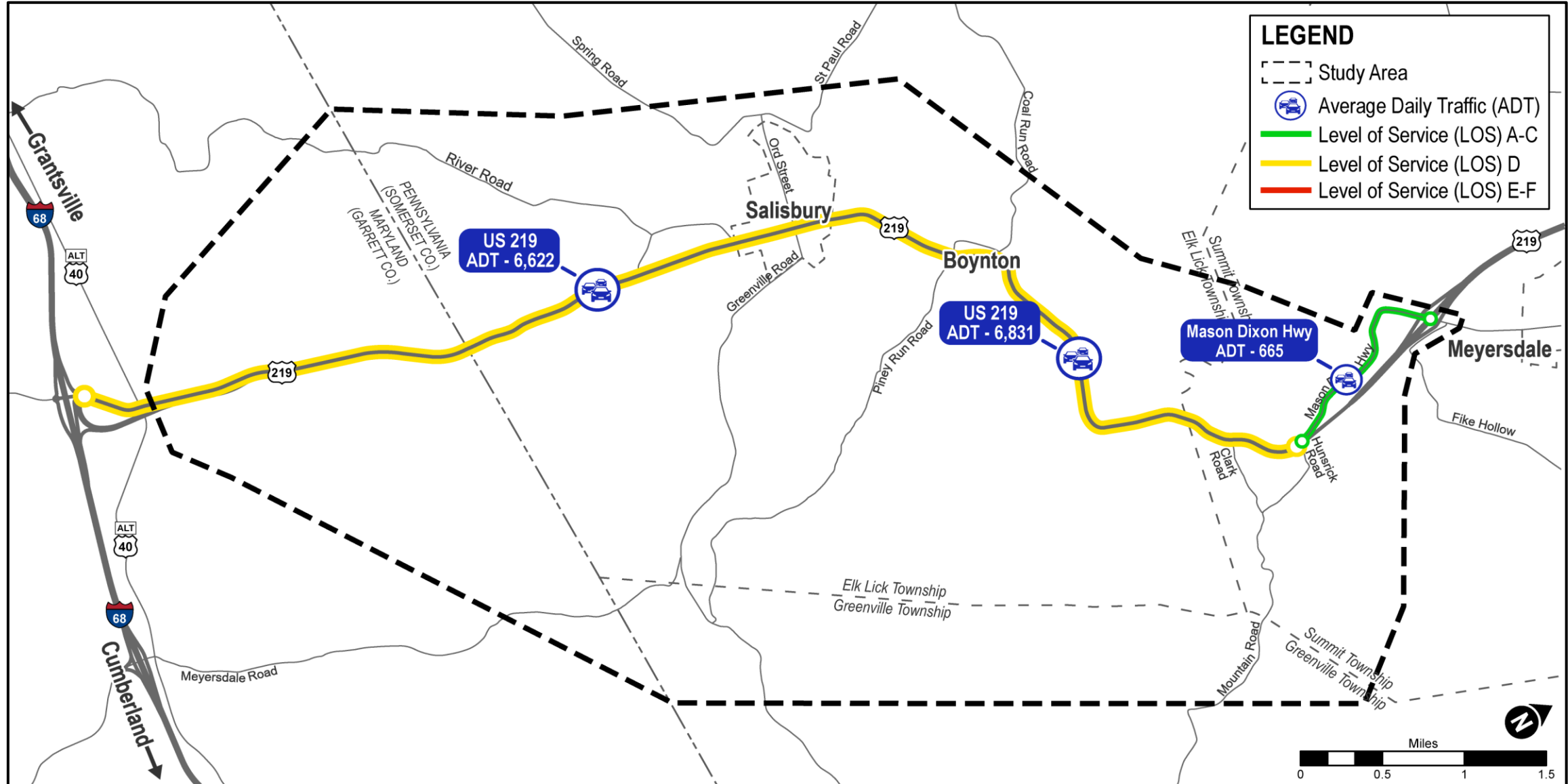


Figure 1-9: 2050 No Build Condition Projected ADT & LOS

1.6 Project Purpose

The purpose of the U.S. 219 project is to complete Corridor N of the Appalachian Development Highway System, to improve the system linkage in the region, provide safe and efficient access for motorists traveling on U.S. 219, and provide transportation infrastructure to support economic opportunities in existing and planned communities and employment/business centers and natural resource-based industries within the Appalachian Region.

1.7 Project Need

The proposed project is needed for three identifiable reasons:

- Existing U.S. 219 does not provide efficient mobility for trucks and freight.
- There are numerous roadway and geometric deficiencies present along the existing U.S. 219 alignment.
- The existing roadway infrastructure is a limiting factor in economic development opportunities in the Appalachian Region.

These are described in further detail.

1.7.1 Lack of Efficient Mobility for Trucks

Existing U.S. 219 does not provide efficient mobility for trucks. Current truck percentages on existing U.S. 219 are between 19% and 25%. Trucks

interacting with different modes of local traffic (including automobiles, bicycles, pedestrians, and Amish buggies) contribute to the mobility issues and cause increased travel times throughout the corridor. Additionally, the steep topography of the study area results in a steep and winding alignment on existing U.S. 219. From the end of the Meyersdale Bypass south, near Hunsrick Summit, Pennsylvania, the existing alignment southbound is on a steep downhill grade (steeper than 5%). In addition, the existing two-lane alignment from under the existing Hunsrick Summit bridge heading south is on a horizontal curve that exceeds the maximum desirable curvature ($4^{\circ}45'$) for this type of facility. Several other steep grades (steeper than 5%) also exist between Boynton and Salisbury, Pennsylvania and between Salisbury, Pennsylvania and the state line. Despite the acceptable operational characteristics shown by capacity analyses, the mixing of through trucks with local traffic characteristics and geometric issues (school bus stops, residential and business land use access, steep grades and sharp curves) results in trucks traveling below posted speed limits creating traffic queues behind these vehicles. This presents challenges for the efficient movement of through trucks within the project area.

Truck volumes will continue to increase from future growth and there is a potential for additional truck volumes *as a result of development that may occur*



**Photograph 1-2: Sharp curve on U.S. 219 about 1.25 miles south of Salisbury, PA.
Source: U.S. 219 PEL Study**



Photograph 1-3: Heavy trucks traveling south on U.S. 219 through Salisbury, PA.

in Maryland's Priority Funding Area (PFA) as shown in **Figure 2-4**. The Maryland Smart Growth Act directs state infrastructure investment to within locally designated PFAs, and PFAs encourage private development. The PFA can be accessed from U.S. 219 near the southern terminus. Lack of mobility through the corridor is projected to result in a potential loss of more than 19 million hours of travel time to the public over a 25-year period.

U.S. 219 is a vital route in the region for the trucking industry. In August of 2020, FHWA designated the entire segment of U.S. 219 in Somerset County as a Critical Rural Freight Corridor (CRFC). **Figure 1-10** details the limits of the CRFC designation. A CRFC is a roadway that provides access and connection to the Primary Highway Freight System Network (PHFS) in 23 U.S.C. 167, and the interstate system with other important ports, public transportation facilities, or other intermodal freight facilities. This designation recognizes a specific route as an important freight route for a variety of reasons: percentage truck traffic, freight access points (like farming, mining, distribution), access to other multimodal transportation assets (like ports and rail). U.S. 219 provides access to natural gas exploration, wind energy production, active coal mining and other mining operations, agricultural facilities producing livestock and crops, a class I rail line in Somerset and in Meyersdale, and several industrial parks in Somerset and in Meyersdale.

The CRFC designation is a component under the National Highway Freight Program (NHFP). The goals of the NHFP are to:

- invest in infrastructure and operational improvements on the highways of the United States;
- improve the safety, security, efficiency, and resiliency of freight transportation in rural and urban areas;
- improve the state of good repair of the National Highway Freight Network;
- improve the safety, efficiency, and reliability of the National Highway Freight Network;
- improve the efficiency and productivity of the National Highway Freight Network;
- improve the flexibility of states to support multi-state corridor planning and the creation of multi-state organizations to increase the ability of states to address highway freight connectivity;
- and to reduce the environmental impacts of freight movement on the National Highway Freight Network.

Compounding the mobility issues is the fact that the existing roadway network in the region is limited by a lack of major north-south roadway corridors. **Figure 1-11** shows the primary roadway network in the region. The three primary north-south routes through the area are U.S. 219, SR 160, and SR 669. SR 160 and SR 669, which are common alternatives

to U.S. 219, suffer from safety issues which have led to truck and weight restrictions (for example, SR 669 shown in **Figure 1-11**) that limit these routes as an

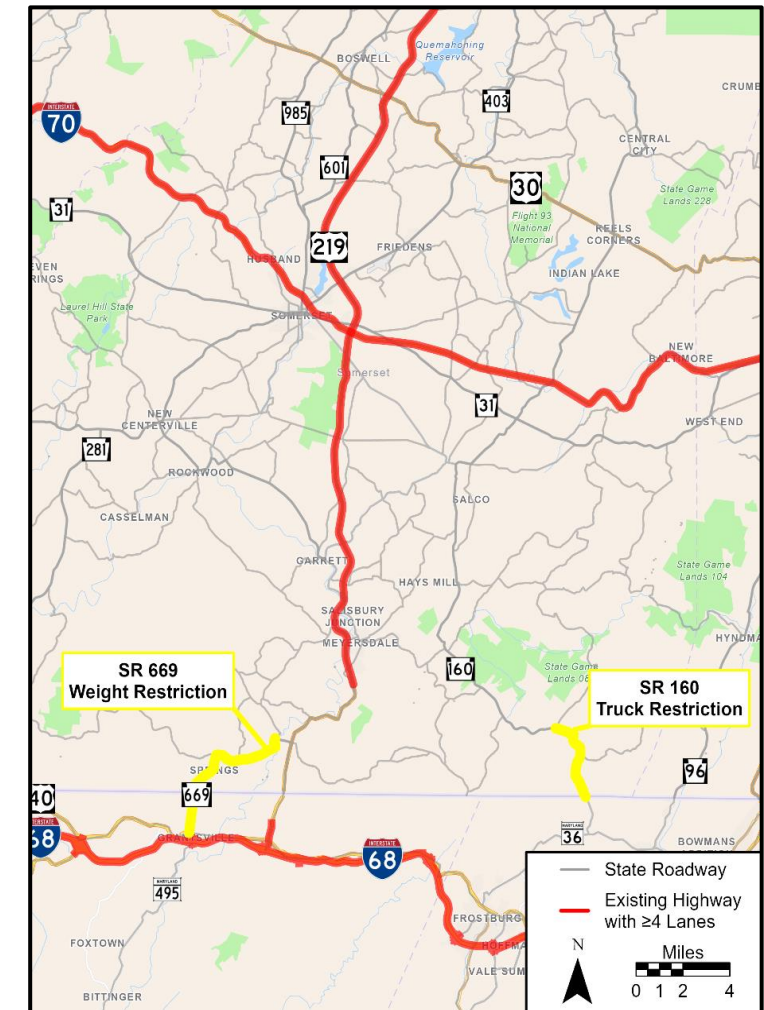


Figure 1-10: Somerset County Critical Rural Freight Corridor

alternative, which drives truck traffic onto U.S. 219 through Salisbury. The lack of route options only exacerbates the traffic levels, safety impacts, and delays for businesses operating north-south in the region, particularly on U.S. 219.

Additionally, in accordance with the *Southern Alleghenies Planning & Development Commission's Pennsylvania-Maryland Corridor N Completion Analysis & Impact Study* (SAP&DC 2020), included as **Appendix F**, the lack of north-south roadways also leads to a lack of network resilience and the ability to choose alternate routes in the event of an incident in the region. The study shows that *unexpected or non-typical congestion* incidents in the region reduce speeds along the north-south routes from ranges of 45 to 65 miles per hour (mph) to speeds between 8 and 16 mph. Most notably the study showed that U.S. 219 had the largest reduction with free flow speeds being reduced from 64.4 mph to 8.3 mph.

1.7.2 Roadway & Geometric Deficiencies

Existing deficiencies are primarily located within the Pennsylvania portion of the project area. In 2020 PennDOT performed a safety study along the existing corridor of U.S. 219 in Somerset County, Pennsylvania. The purpose of the study was to evaluate the existing roadway corridor geometrics against PennDOT Publication No. 13M, *Design Manual Part 2 Highway Design* and American Association of State Highway and Transportation

Officials (AASHTO) Design Criteria to determine the safety needs/problem areas. The study identified the following roadway deficiencies:

- Fourteen (14) of the thirty-five (35) horizontal curves do not meet AASHTO design criteria for the posted speed limit. Seven (7) of these curves have a corresponding design speed that is more than five (5) mph below the posted speed, with four (4) being 10 mph below the posted speed, and one (1) being 20 mph below the posted speed.
- Four (4) of the thirty-five (35) horizontal curves have superelevation rates that are more than 3% below design criteria for the posted speed limit. This lack of superelevation reduces safe travel speeds even more than noted above.
- Nine (9) vertical curves may not meet design criteria of stopping sight distance for the posted speed limit, with two (2) that are significantly deficient (> 200').
- Six (6) intersections have deficient sight distance.
- Existing shoulders vary between two (2) and six (6) feet in width through the entire corridor and do not meet the width of eight (8) to ten (10) feet required for a Rural Regional Arterial.

Omitted from the list above are several other deficiencies in PA which are being addressed by

projects that are currently in either design or construction which include:

- Salisbury Cut (Segment 0020/0030)

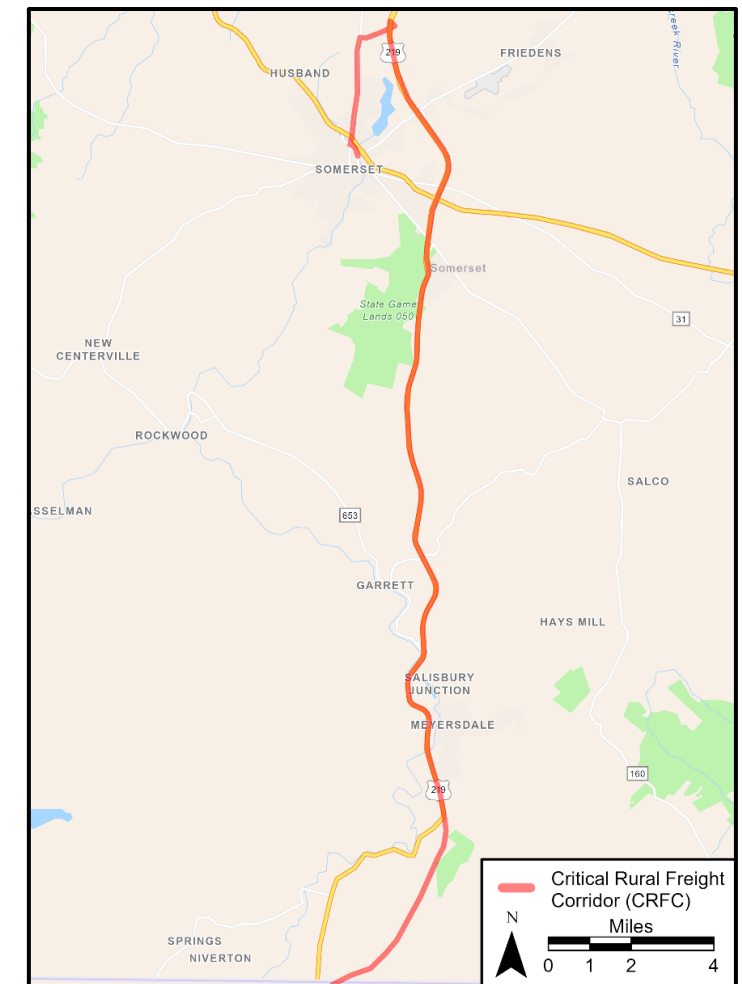


Figure 1-11: Regional Roadway Network

- Boynton Curve Slope Layback (Segment 0070)
- T-325 (Engles Mills Road) Slope Layback (Segment 0080)
- U.S. 219 Boynton Slide (Segment 0080)

The results in the 2020 safety study were similar to the roadway deficiencies noted in the 2016 PEL Study which identified eleven (11) horizontal and eleven (11) vertical deficiencies in Pennsylvania. The PEL study also evaluated roadway geometrics within the Maryland portion of the project area and identified one additional deficient vertical curve located just north of Old Salisbury Road (See **Figure 1-12** for locations).

The deficiencies noted above combined with the narrowness of the roadway negatively impact safe travel speeds at multiple locations throughout the project corridor, and in turn contribute to lack of efficient mobility through the project area, especially for trucks.

1.7.3 Lack of Infrastructure Limiting Economic Development

Links between the Appalachian Region and the remainder of North America are not consistent with other completed ADHS highways (four-lane, limited access type facilities) which contributes to the lack of economic growth within this portion of the Appalachian region.

The purpose of the ARC is to assist the Appalachian Region in providing the infrastructure necessary for economic development, develop the region's industry, generate a diversified regional economy, and make the region's industrial and commercial resources more competitive. Its secondary purpose is to provide a framework for coordinating federal, state, and local initiatives to respond to the economic competitiveness challenges in the Appalachian Region, adapting new technologies, improving access to technical and financial resources, and to address the needs of severely and persistently distressed areas of the Appalachian Region.

ARC consistently gathers data for the Appalachian Region to evaluate which counties are in greater need for ARC funding. ARC classifies counties according to four criteria: distressed, transitional, competitive, and attainment in their Distressed Designation and County Economic Status Classification System. Both Garrett (Maryland) and Somerset (Pennsylvania) Counties are currently

rated as transitional counties by ARC in fiscal year 2022. Transitional counties are classified as those below the national average for one or more of the three economic indicators (three-year average unemployment, per capita market income, and poverty), but do not satisfy the criteria of the distressed category. Distressed counties are the most economically depressed counties and rank in the worst 10 percent of the nation's counties for these economic indicators.

As shown in **Table 1-2**, in Garrett County, Maryland and Somerset County, Pennsylvania, the unemployment rate and poverty rates are both better than the U.S. average. However, per capita income rates for both counties remain lower than the U.S. average, and more significant is the fact that the county per capita incomes are approximately 20% less than the respective statewide values. Both counties are designated as transitional by ARC due to their low per capital income rates as compared to the national average.

Table 1-2: Unemployment Rate and Poverty Rates

Geography	Unemployment Rate	Per Capita Income	Poverty Rate	Poverty Rate of Children Under 18
United States	5.3%	\$41,261	12.5%	16.7%
Maryland	5.1%	\$49,865	9.3%	11.8%
Garrett County, MD	4.6%	\$41,130	11.1%	14.7%
Pennsylvania	5.4%	\$41,234	11.8%	16.2%
Somerset County, PA	5.2%	\$31,627	10.8%	15.4%

Source: 2022 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

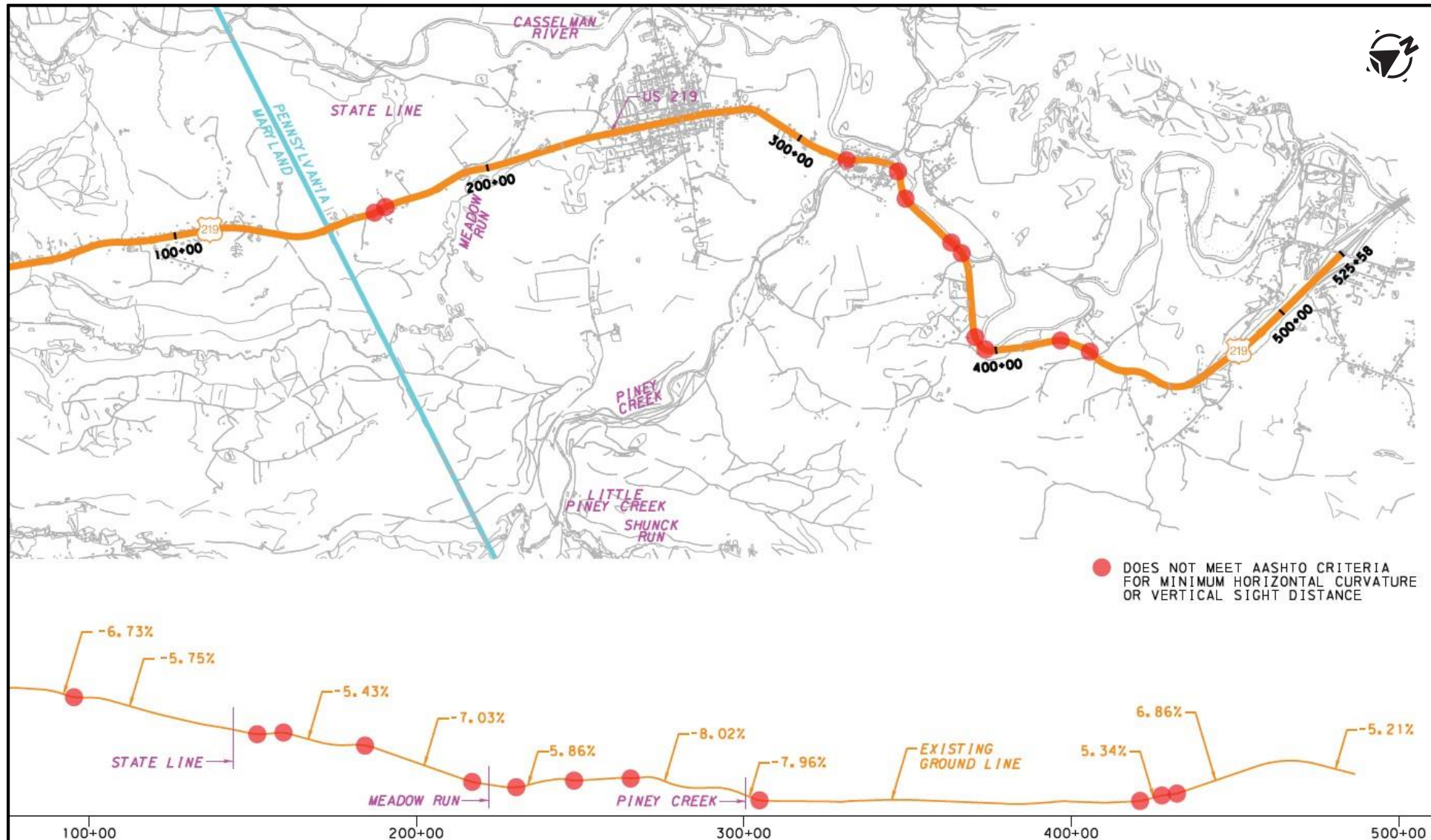


Figure 1-12: Existing Horizontal and Vertical Deficiencies

SAP&DC's *Comprehensive Plan for the Southern Alleghenies Region* (SAP&DC 2018) identified the need to create jobs and attract workers and their families to the region. Improvements for the region identified in the *Economic Analysis of Completing the Appalachian Development Highway System: Technical Report* (ARC 2017), provided as **Appendix G**, include faster and more reliable travel times, reduced vehicle operating and logistical costs, and access to labor and business delivery markets.

The current roadway infrastructure limits access to labor markets and labor mobility. Reduced travel speeds and longer travel times limit the range of markets that existing businesses can serve within the region and limit the range of local labor markets that businesses can attract. This inhibits efficient access to jobs and economic centers in the region.

Within the State of Maryland, areas of economic opportunity need to be focused within PFAs. PFAs include existing communities and places designated for future growth by local governments. Areas eligible for PFA designation include existing communities and areas where industrial or other economic development is desired. Counties may also designate PFAs in areas planned for new residential communities which will be served by water and sewer systems and meet density standards. This project would support economic vitality and job growth opportunities within the town

of Grantsville and Chestnut Ridge Development Center PFAs. Garrett County and Grantsville in Maryland identified this section of U.S. 219 as their priority transportation need in the Garrett County 2022 Transportation Priorities Letter. Garrett County also stated that the project is consistent with their comprehensive plan.

An evaluation of the project area was completed as part of the *Southern Alleghenies Planning & Development Commission's Pennsylvania-Maryland Corridor N Completion Analysis & Impact Study* (SAP&DC 2020), using ESRI Business Analysis software, a Geographical Information System (GIS) based tool, which is used to identify under-performing markets, pinpoint the right growth sites, and find where target customers live. **Figure 1-13** shows the anticipated catchment area or travel shed for employees based on a drive time analysis. The lighter colors in the figure show the existing catchment area that is limited by the lower travel speeds and lack of mobility along the existing roadway network. The darker shades of blue, orange, and green show the expected catchment area for the same time frames at free flow travel speeds. This study shows that the current roadway infrastructure is limiting the number of skilled employees that businesses can attract, and it is also limiting the market areas that a business can serve within a 15, 30, and 45-minute travel radius.

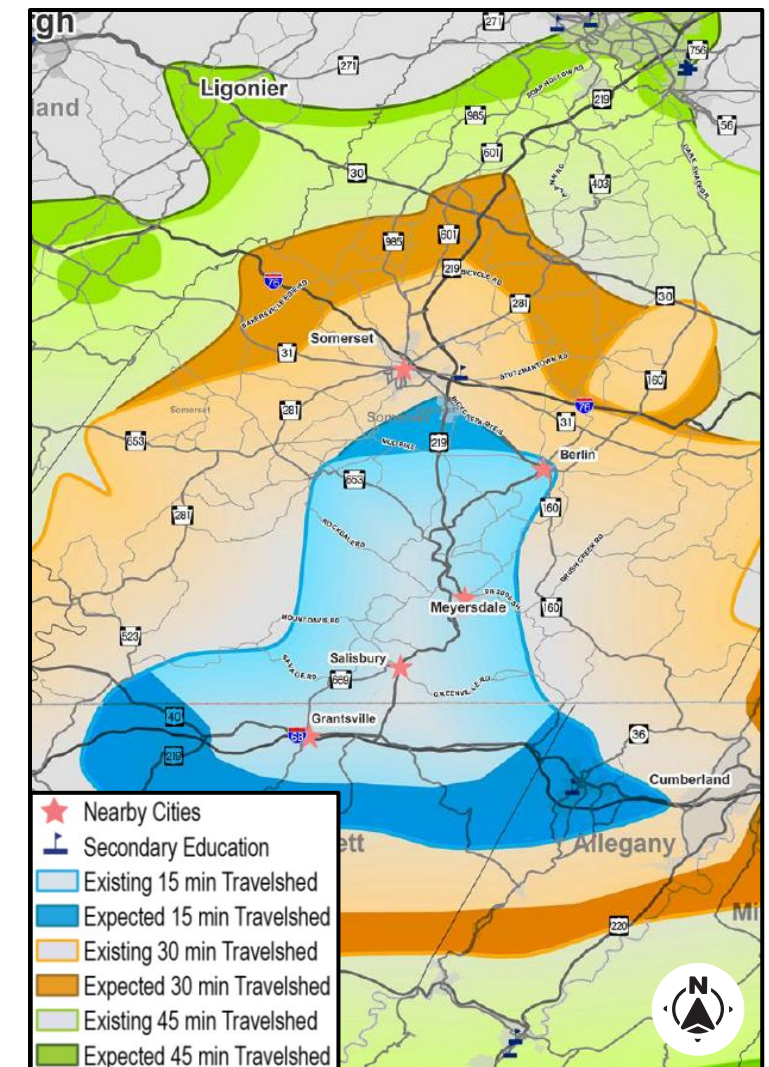


Figure 1-13: Workforce Access Drivetime

2 ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED

2.1 Alternative History – Review of those Eliminated from Detailed Study since 2007

2.1.1 2007 Draft Environmental Impact Statement Alternatives

Fifteen (15) alternatives* were developed, excluding the No Build, for U.S. 219 Section 050 during the former National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) conducted between 2001 and 2007. The location of these alignments is shown in **Figure 2-1** and include:

- No Build (not shown on **Figure 2-1**)
- Transportation Systems Management (TSM) low-cost solutions without major construction such as high occupancy vehicle lanes, improved public transportation, ride sharing, and park-and-ride lots (not shown on **Figure 2-1**)
- Upgrade of existing U.S. 219
- Alignments A through E, E-Shift and AE
- United State Army Corp of Engineers (USACE) Alignments 1 and 2

- United States Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) Alignment
- Agency Alignment
- Ridge Alignment (2 alignments)

Upon completion of the preliminary alternatives analysis phase, six (6) alternatives were advanced for detailed study in the 2007 DEIS. These were:

- No Build Alternative
- Alignments A, D, E, E-Shift, and AE.

Preparation of the DEIS was in process; however, the project was put on hold prior to the public hearing in 2007 due to funding constraints.

2.1.2 Planning and Environmental Linkages (PEL) Study

Maryland State Highway Administration (SHA) with Pennsylvania Department of Transportation (PennDOT) as a partner, initiated a PEL study in 2014 and completed the study in July 2016. The PEL study re-visited and evaluated the 15 alignments including the no build and all previous alignments developed during the earlier 2007 NEPA study. The PEL study additionally considered a Westerly Alignment. This alignment was developed in response to public comment. The PEL study alignments are depicted in **Figure 2-1**.

All 16 alignments, including the No Build, were evaluated to determine whether they met the PEL vision and goals while minimizing environmental

impacts using the following 3-step screening and evaluation process:

A. Step 1 Screening

Step 1 screened each alignment for their ability to address the PEL vision and goals per specific performance measures. The PEL vision was to assist the Appalachian Regional Commission (ARC) in working toward the completion of Corridor N of the Appalachian Development Highway System (ADHS) through improvements to the project area.

Goals of the PEL included:

- Provide safe and efficient access for the southern Somerset County and northern Garrett County regions to improve their economic development potential.
- Improve the level of safety for motorists traveling on U.S. 219.
- Improve mobility in the U.S. 219 corridor.

*The terms **alignment** and **alternatives** have been used interchangeably throughout this chapter. **Alignments** originated in the PEL document. Once the project was re-initiated in 2021 and started the NEPA process, the term **alternatives** is used exclusively.

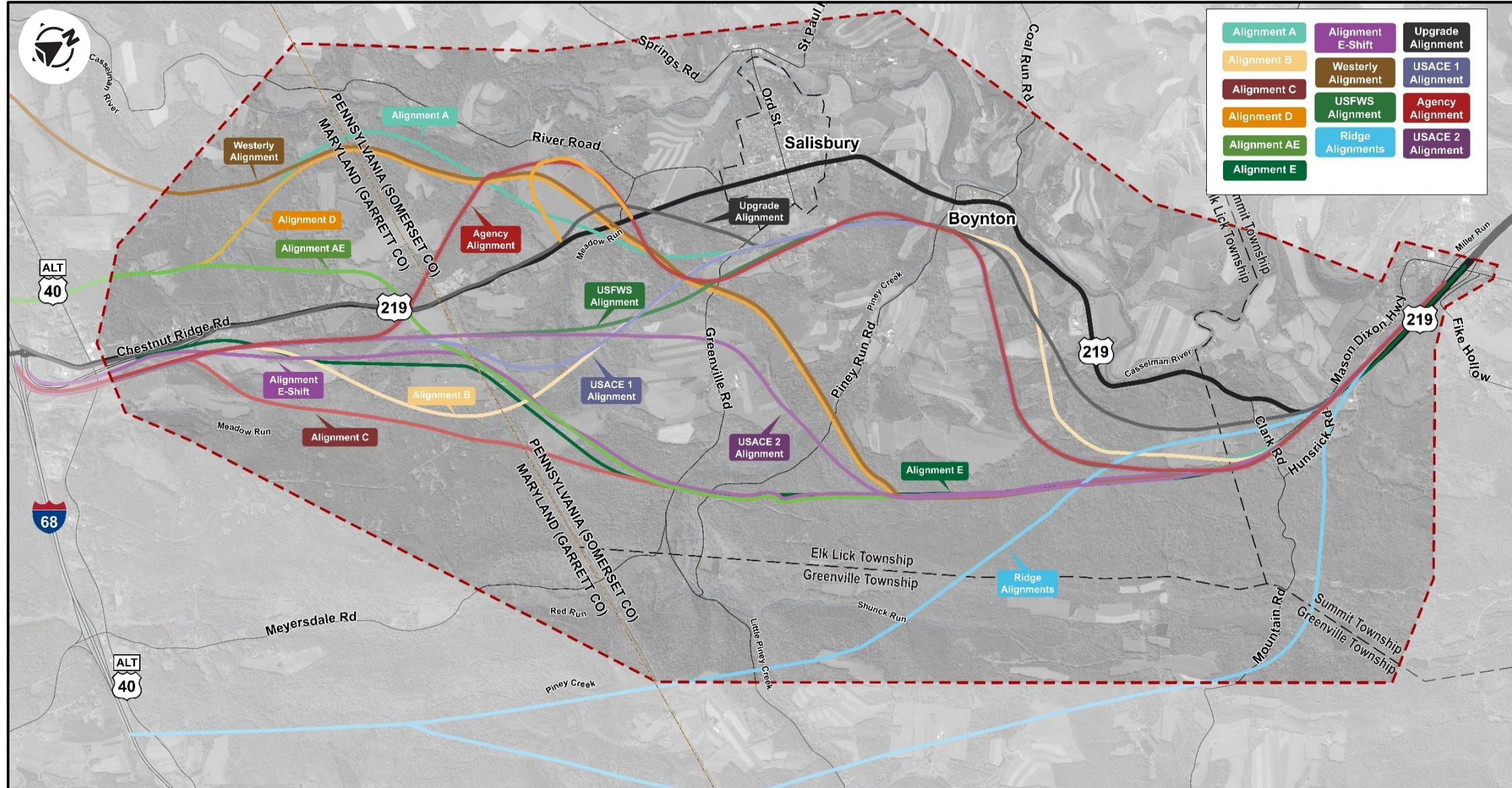


Figure 2-1: Alignments Considered during 2007 DEIS or 2016 PEL Study

The project team evaluated alignments to determine whether they met the PEL goals. Those dismissed for not meeting the PEL vision and goals:

- No Build**
- TSM Alternative
- Upgrade of existing U.S. 219
- Ridge Alignments (2 alignments - Citizen's Impact Group)
- Westerly Alignment

B. Step 2 Screening

The project team completed an initial environmental and cultural resources screening of the alignments advanced from Step 1 to Step 2. Alignments were assessed using readily available data within a *PEL* Limit of Disturbance (LOD), which included a 50-foot-wide buffer outside of the preliminary roadway cut/fill limits for the entire project area. Following the initial environmental and cultural resource analysis, these alignments were considered unreasonable due to their potential impacts in comparison to other alignments and were dismissed from further evaluation:

****The No Build Alternative does not meet the project purpose and need, but it was retained to provide a baseline for comparison to the build alternatives.**

- Alignments A, B, C
- USACE Alignments 1 and 2
- Agency Alignment
- USFWS Alignment

C. Step 3 Screening

The third screening step collected and used targeted data to further refine which of the four alignments would advance to a NEPA study. Also, potential stormwater management facilities were considered and an expanded LOD was developed.

During this step in the process, it was determined that Alignments D and AE result in greater environmental, cultural, and socioeconomic impacts than E and E-Shift. Alignments E and E-Shift were found to meet the vision and goals of the PEL study, *acceptable to* advance into a future NEPA study, and *have the potential* to balance socioeconomic, environmental, and transportation impacts for the proposed project. **Figure 2-2** depicts the process and screening results, and **Figure 2-3** identifies the alignments and reasons for dismissal.

D. Logical Termini and U.S. 219 improvement between I-68 and the Proposed Chestnut Ridge Development

The PEL study concluded Alignments E and E-Shift were considered reasonable and recommended to be evaluated in future NEPA Studies. However, at the time of the PEL study, adequate funding was not

available to advance the project in its entirety. As a result, an evaluation was conducted to determine whether any stand-alone projects existed along the recommended E/E-Shift alignment that exhibited logical termini and would not preclude the study of future alignments which would complete Corridor N of the ADHS.

E. U.S. 219 improvement in Maryland between I-68 and the Proposed Chestnut Ridge Development NEPA Study

The PEL identified the recently constructed 1.4 mile four-lane segment of U.S. 219 in Maryland as a stand-alone project to move forward into NEPA based on its ability to:

- 1) address the PEL's local and regional economic goals,
- 2) provide a high-speed and safe truck connection to the proposed Casselman Farm Development, and
- 3) provide rational end points for both the transportation improvement and for the assessment of environmental impacts, consistent with the Federal Highway Administration's (FHWA's) logical termini definition.



Figure 2-2: Alignment Screening Process



Figure 2-3: Step 2 Reasons for PEL Alternatives to be Carried or Dismissed

<p>Dismissed in Step 2 - USACE 2 Alignment</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Displaces 11 residences and has higher stream and forest impacts than USACE 1 Alignment Likely to have a direct impact on three potential bat hibernacula along Piney Creek 	<p>Dismissed in Step 3 - Alignment AE</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Impacts nearly twice the delineated wetlands as other alignments and would be difficult to obtain a permit Bisects Garrett County Employment Center in Maryland Does not tie into current logical termini
<p>Dismissed in Step 2 - Agency Alignment</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Has the highest impacts to productive agriculture, second highest impact to forestland Anticipated adverse effect on two historic properties and has greater potential for archaeology impacts Requires seven residential displacements 	<p>Carried into NEPA in Step 3 - Alignment E</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Allows Garrett County Employment Center in Maryland to stay intact compared to Alignments D and AE Least potential for environmental impacts (Along with E-Shift) No residents displaced Most publicly favored alignment
<p>Dismissed in Step 2 - USFWS Alignment</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Has one of the highest impacts to productive agriculture and a higher potential for forestland and NHD streams impacts Impacts the second highest amount of NWI wetlands (tie with USACE 1 Alignment) Effects two historic sites and requires approximately 15 residential displacements 	<p>Carried into NEPA in Step 3 - Alignment E-Shift</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Allows Garrett County Employment Center in Maryland to stay intact compared to Alignments D and AE Least potential for environmental impacts (Along with E) No residents displaced Second-most publicly favored alignment
<p>Dismissed in Step 3 - Alignment D</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Directly impacts a known bat hibernacula (federally threatened northern long-eared bat) Impacts PAL in Pennsylvania, thus requiring approval by ALCAB to condemn farmlands Bisects Garrett County Employment Center in Maryland Does not tie into current logical termini 	

Figure 2-3: Step 2 Reasons for PEL Alternatives to be Carried or Dismissed (Continued)

The PEL identified that the 1.4-mile section in Maryland improves the existing I-68/U.S. 219 interchange and best addresses the PEL's vision and goals by directly serving near future planned development (Casselman Farm Development Site) located in Garrett County, MD's Priority Funding Area (PFA)), which is illustrated in **Figure 2-4**. This section is "of sufficient length to address environmental matters on a broad scope and does not restrict consideration of alternatives for other reasonably foreseeable transportation improvements" including the current study to complete the remaining four-lane U.S. 219 section between the Meyersdale Interchange in Pennsylvania and the recently completed 1.4-mile section in Maryland.

A NEPA study was initiated for the 1.4-mile section in Maryland, following the PEL. The NEPA study evaluated multiple alternatives presented at a public workshop on September 8, 2016, and an open house on September 9, 2016. A Joint Location/Design Public Hearing followed on February 6, 2017, to obtain public input on the alternatives under consideration. FHWA approved a Categorical Exclusion (CE) for the Preferred Alternative on July 18, 2017, with the new highway opening to traffic in May 2021.

2.1.3 Current NEPA EIS Project

The project was re-initiated by PennDOT in 2021. The first step was to examine the 2016 PEL study's

vision and goals to establish a Purpose and Need Statement for a proposed project. The PEL study area was also reviewed to confirm that no major changes to land use, resource presence, desire of the public and municipal officials, economy, community facilities and services, and population occurred within the study area since 2016 that would influence the project's purpose and need. After consulting with both Somerset County and Garrett County, conducting field views, and reviewing aerial mapping, PennDOT determined that no discernible changes occurred in the project area that would affect the project's vision and goals.

On a regional level, the ADHS's goals remain to generate economic development in previously isolated areas by supplementing the interstate system. Connecting the missing link between I-68 to the south and Meyersdale to the north has been identified as a critical step in realizing ADHS's goals and vision. Though the 1.4-mile roadway project did not fully complete ADHS Corridor N in Maryland, it provides an incremental improvement with the short-term benefit of supporting proposed development initiatives in the Chestnut Ridge Development Corridor (CRDC), which is an area that roughly aligns with the PFA shown in **Figure 2-4**, as well as the long-term benefit of completing another portion of Corridor N.

A. Revisiting Logical termini

The PEL evaluated two potential southern logical

termini for this segment of the corridor, with the easternmost terminus having served as the logical terminus for the recently completed 1.4-mile U.S. 219 section in MD. It serves as this study's southern terminus. This southern terminus is consistent with the study's purpose of completing ADHS Corridor N to improve regional system linkage, to provide safe and efficient access for motorists traveling on U.S. 219, and to provide transportation infrastructure to support economic development within the Appalachian Region. **Figure 2-5** highlights the southern logical terminus for the project.

Consideration of a new or different logical termini would create additional new impacts beyond those associated with the new 1.4-mile construction in Maryland because the alignment would need to connect to I-68. This connection to I-68 would require the alignment to impact land not currently in transportation use. FHWA guidance is to space interchanges no closer than 3 miles from one another on rural interstates. **Figure 2-6** depicts Exit 22, U.S. 219 north/Meyersdale exit, labelled as "2". To the east is the Exit 24 interchange, Lower New Germany Road, labelled as "3" in **Figure 2-6**. This exit is only 1.76 miles from the U.S. 219 north/Meyersdale exit. To the west is the Exit 19 interchange, Grantsville/Swanton, located 3.06 miles from the U.S. 219 north/Meyersdale exit and labelled a "1" in **Figure 2-6**. Any new interchange would require abandoning the existing U.S. 219

north/Meyersdale interchange. This would not be fiscally responsible due to the recent investment of over \$90 million.

B. Preliminary Alternatives

The 2016 PEL had recommended that E and E-Shift alternatives advance to NEPA. When studies were reinitiated in 2021, FHWA determined that a broader range of alternatives beyond the PEL recommended alternatives (E and E-Shift) would need to be studied in greater detail. While AE and D were dismissed in Step 3 of the PEL Evaluation due to higher environmental impacts, it was determined that the level of detail during NEPA could allow for further minimization of impacts and that both alternatives should be included in the DEIS.

Alternatives AE and D were initially examined, as they were the two alternatives that made it to Step 3 of the PEL Evaluation. Since both alternatives from the PEL ended west of the current I-68 interchange and bisected the Casselman Farm Development, both alternatives needed to be modified to tie into the current southern terminus. Once re-engineered to tie into the new southern logical termini, Alternative AE essentially became the same alternative as Alternative E and E-Shift (**Figure 2-7**). As a result, Alternative AE was eliminated from further consideration to be studied in the EIS. Alternative D, however, due to its more northerly east-to-west crossing of the project area provided multiple opportunities to combine with the southern

portion of previously dismissed PEL alternatives to tie into the new southern terminus (**Figure 2-8**).

Two different combinations of a D Alternative were developed (Alternatives DA and DU). The first of these combinations was with the previously studied Agency Alignment (Red Alignment in **Figure 2-1**) which was named Alternative D/Agency (Alternative DA). This alternative uses the original Alternative D alignment, to a point just west of where it crosses existing U.S. 219, and then it follows the Agency Alignment back to the new southern terminus. The second combination was with the previously studied USFWS (Green Alignment in **Figure 2-1**) and USACE2 (Purple Alignment in **Figure 2-1**) alternatives from the PEL, which was referred to as Alignment D/USFWS/USACE (Alternative DU). This alternative again uses the northern portion of Alternative D alignment but veers southeast of U.S. 219, in the same proximity as the original USFWS USACE2 Alignment, tying into the new southern terminus (**Figure 2-1**). Since a shift for Alternative E was evaluated in the vicinity of Old Salisbury Road near the southern terminus, it is appropriate to study the same shift for Alternatives DA and DU.

As mentioned above, the team updated all secondary source data and conducted field views within the project area and determined that no significant changes have occurred in the project area that would invalidate the findings from the 2016 PEL. With the completion of the improvements to

U.S. 219 from I-68 to Old Salisbury Road in 2021, the project area was revised from what was used in the PEL Study to what is shown in **Figure 2-5**, which reflects the new logical southern terminus. None of the project area's natural, cultural, and socioeconomic features have substantially changed since 2016 and would not result in different impact quantities from the previously studied alternatives. Therefore, the team decided to carry seven alternatives, including Alternatives DA, DA-Shift, DU, DU-Shift, E, E-Shift, and the No Build Alternative, into the formal NEPA process. The locations of these alternatives are depicted in **Figure 2-9**.

2.2 FEIS Alternatives Description – Preliminary Alternatives

Alternative DA, DA-Shift, DU, DU-Shift, E, E-Shift, and the No Build Alternative were presented to the Pennsylvania resource agencies at a May 25, 2022, Agency Coordination Meeting and to the Maryland resource agencies at a June 15, 2022, Interagency Review Meeting (IRM). This presentation was also provided to the Community Advisory Committee (CAC) on June 2, 2022, and public officials and general public at a June 23, 2022, open house meeting and a June 27, 2022, virtual meeting.

It was determined that these alternatives, except for the No Build Alternative, meet the project's purpose and need and would be considered in the DEIS.

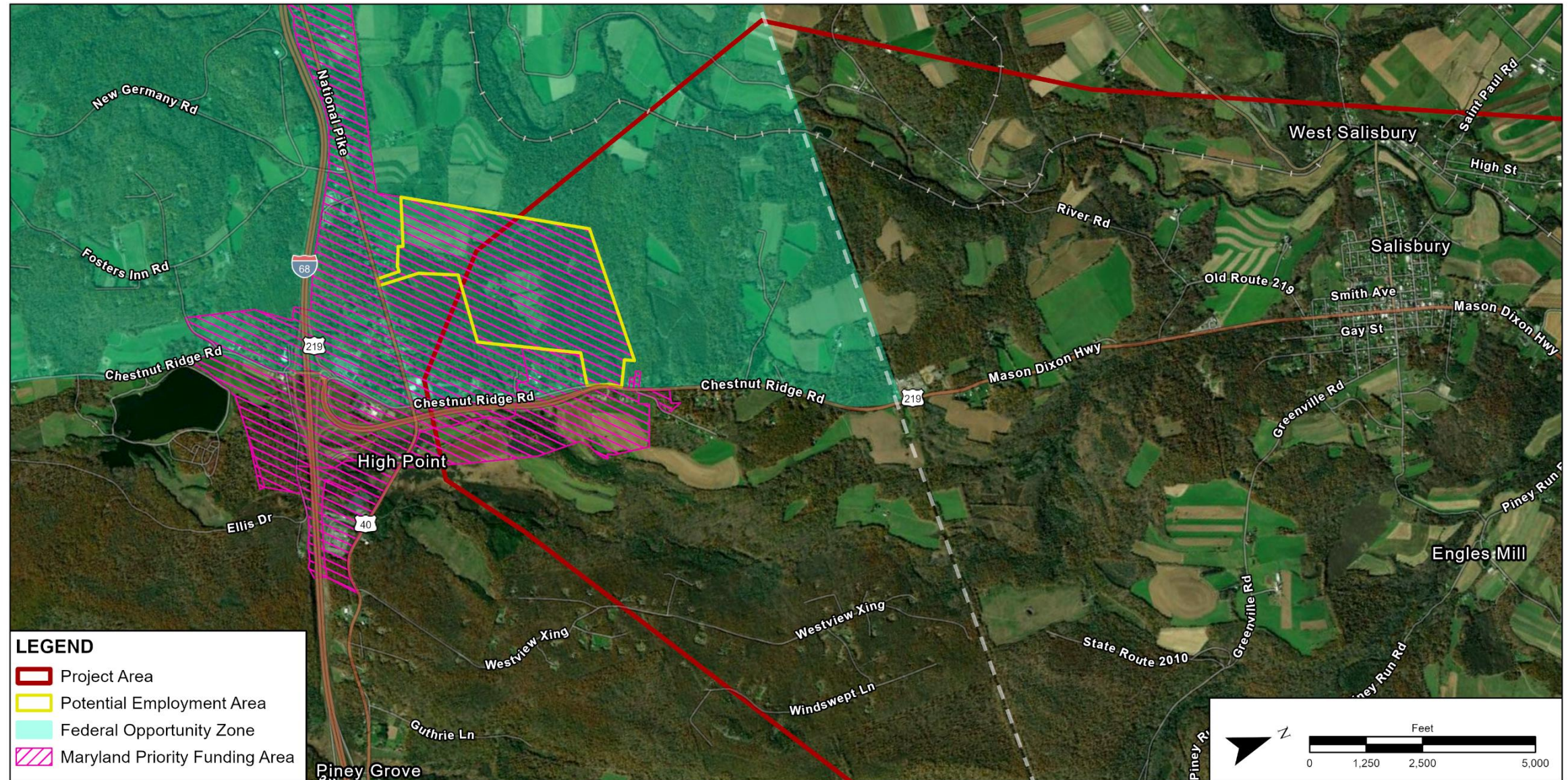


Figure 2-4: Economic Development Areas



Figure 2-5: Southern Logical Termini

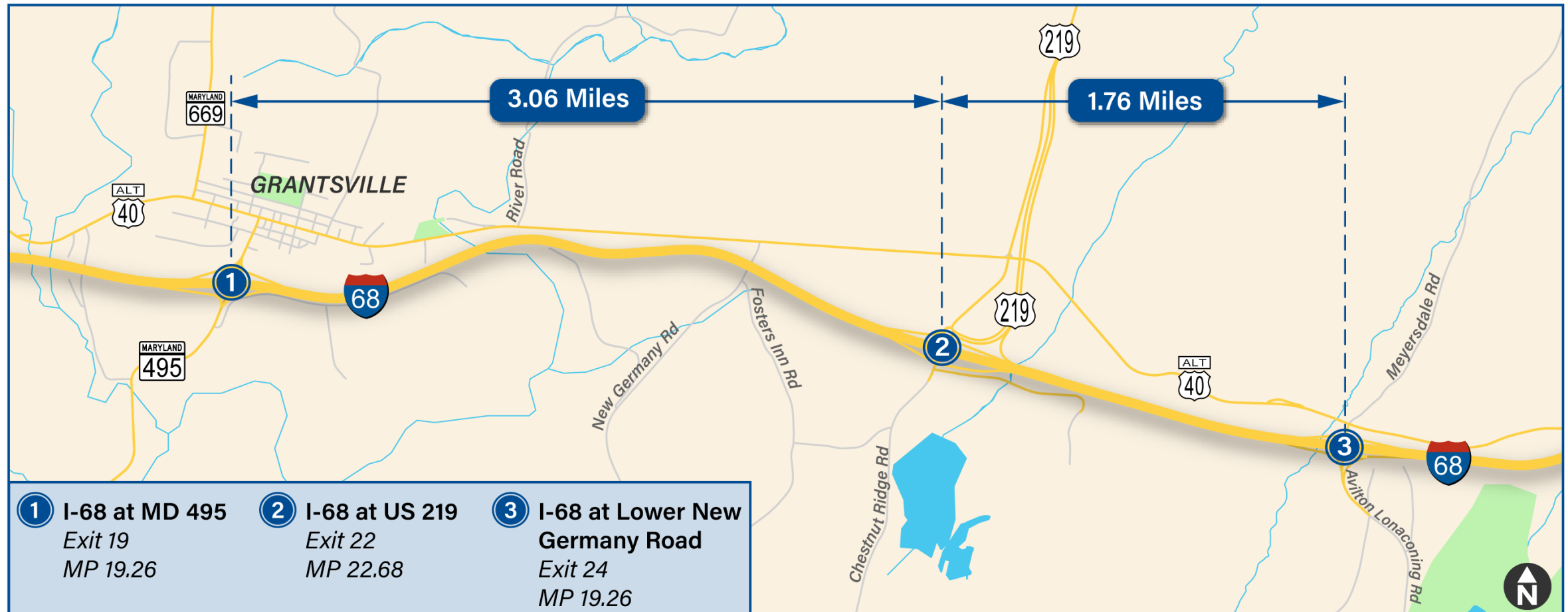


Figure 2-6: Interstate 68 (I-68) Interchange Spacing

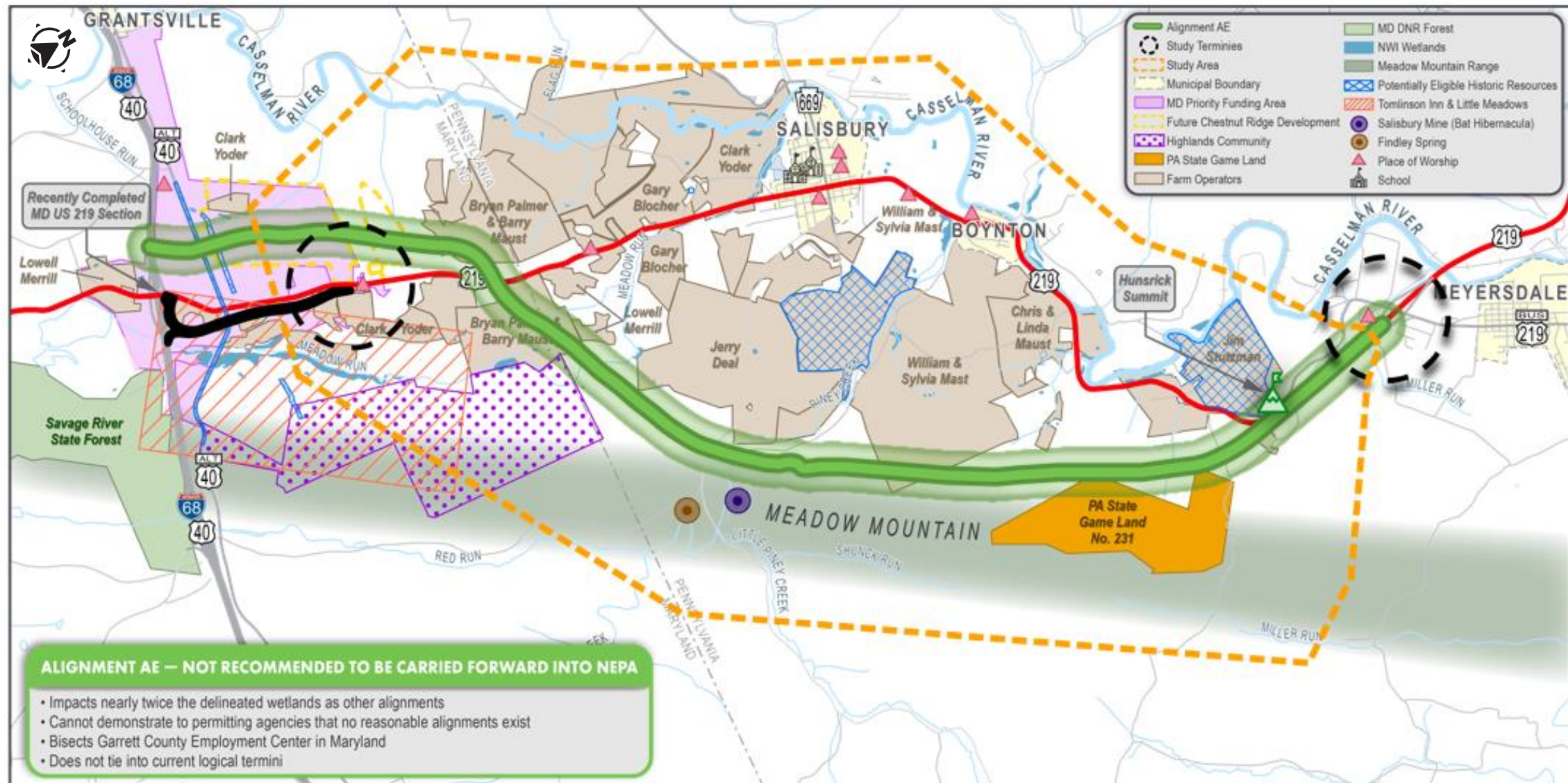


Figure 2-7: Alignment AE from the PEL

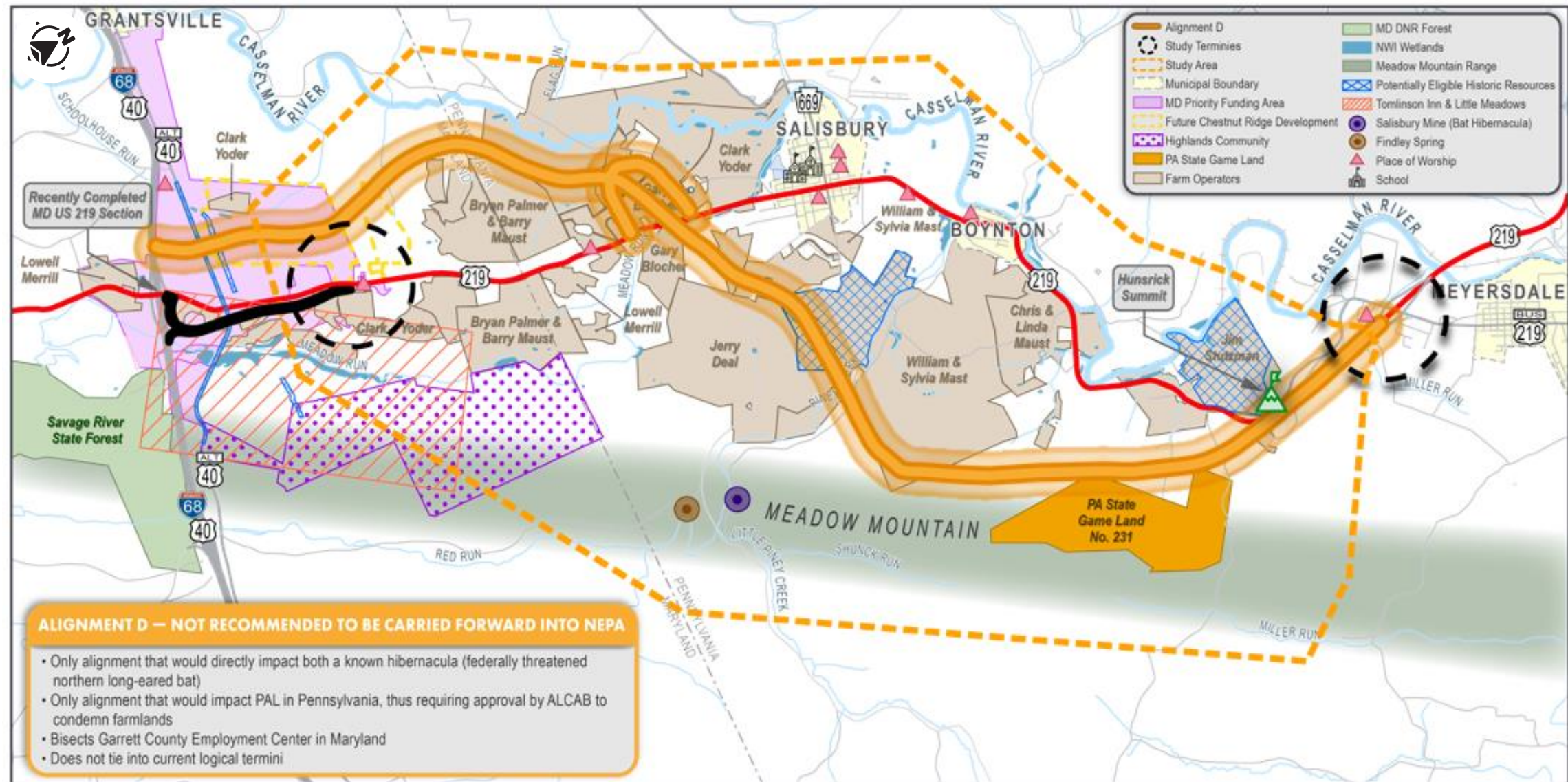


Figure 2-8: Alignment D from the PEL

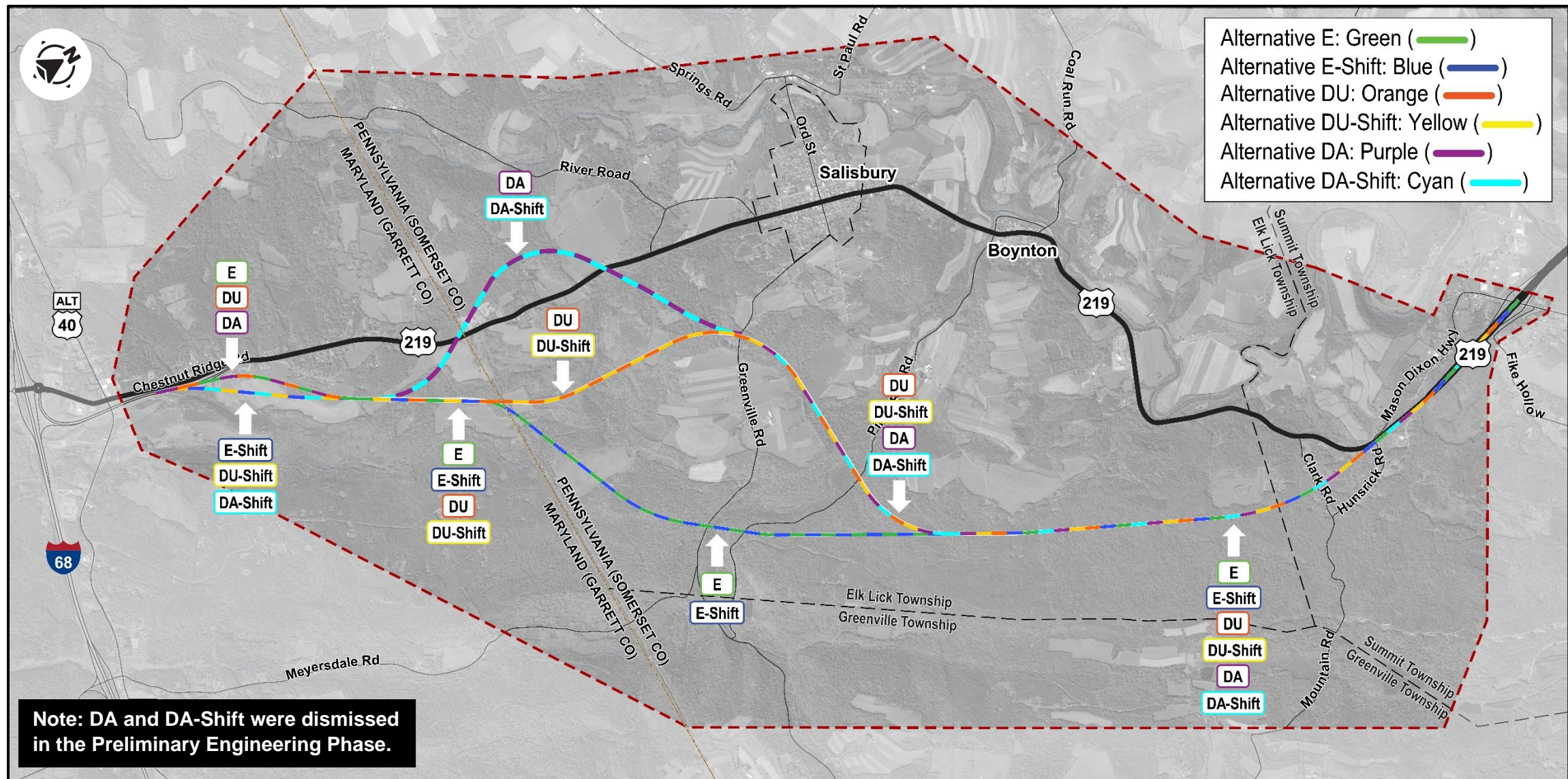


Figure 2-9: Alternatives Carried into the NEPA Process

The No Build Alternative was retained as a basis for comparison. The alternatives are described below in **Chapter 2.3.1 to 2.3.9**. These alternatives are presented on **Figure 2-9** and their associated environmental impacts are presented in **Table 2-1**.

2.2.1 No Build Alternative

The No Build Alternative involves taking no action, except routine maintenance along U.S. 219. The existing two-lane roadway between Meyersdale, Pennsylvania and Garrett County, Maryland would remain. No new alternatives or additional roadway would be constructed.

2.2.2 Overview of Build Alternatives

Each of the proposed build alternatives Alternative DA, DA-Shift, DU, DU-Shift, E, and E-Shift, were evaluated with a consistent roadway layout, also known as a typical section. The typical section for each build alternative provides a four-lane divided limited access highway with 12-foot wide travel lanes, 8-foot wide inside shoulders and 10-foot wide outside shoulders. The width of the median between the inside edges of northbound and southbound travel lanes is between 36 to 60 feet. Most of the median within Pennsylvania would be 60 feet wide and would transition down to 36 feet wide in Maryland to match the current roadway typical section. Typical sections of the build alternatives are depicted in **Figure 2-10**.

In cut sections, where excavation would be required for construction, a proposed swale is located 15 feet outside the edge of the roadway shoulder. The backslope of the swale extends for 5 feet at a 4:1 slope, then continues at a 2:1 slope, until intersecting the existing ground. In fill sections, where fill must be placed for construction, a 10:1 slope extends from the outside roadway shoulder for 6 feet, then continues at a 2:1 slope until intersecting existing ground.

2.2.3 Common Segment Improvements – All Build Alternatives

The northern three miles in Pennsylvania all follow the same alignment, starting from the existing Meyersdale interchange. In addition to the three miles being on the same alignment, other improvements described below are being proposed. These improvements include upgrades to portions of Mason-Dixon Highway, an extension of *Mountain Road* from *its northern terminus* to Fike Hollow Road on the east side of U.S. 219, *in addition* a cul-de-sac of *Hunsrick Road*, and cul-de-sacs *on the bisected* Clark Road *are proposed*. These improvements are intended to ensure that local traffic has continued access. These improvements are included with all alternatives being considered, other than the No Build Alternative. The scope of these proposed improvements is outlined below and depicted in **Figure 2-11**. The numbers below correspond to the number on the figure, illustrating

the location of the improvement. Stormwater management facilities, which would result in the need for additional right-of-way and environmental impacts have also been incorporated into the design, as shown on **Figure 2-11**.

1. Hunsrick Road

Improvements made to tie a new U.S. 219 alternative into existing U.S. 219 require the removal of the existing Hunsrick Road Bridge (SR 2102). Due to geometric and intersection sight distance constraints at the intersection of Hunsrick Road (T - 355) and Mason-Dixon Highway (T-355), it was determined that the Hunsrick Road Bridge would not be replaced and Hunsrick Road would terminate on the east side of U.S. 219.

Hunsrick Road currently extends northwest from the intersection with Mountain Road to the Hunsrick Road Bridge. With the removal of the Hunsrick Road Bridge and proposed improvements associated with the Mountain Road Extension, a cul-de-sac would be placed at the northern end of Hunsrick Road. The intersection of Mountain Road with Hunsrick Road would be realigned and maintained. Access to property along Chipmonk Lane would be maintained from Mason-Dixon Highway.

2. Clark Road

Clark Road (T-353) extends west from Mountain Road (T-824) to existing U.S. 219. Due to topographical and geometric constraints, providing

a grade separated crossing of a new U.S. 219 alternative proposed under this study was not practical. It was determined Clark Road should be bisected where it crosses a new alternative of U.S. 219 proposed under this study. A cul-de-sac would be placed at each end of the roadway where it intersects the U.S. 219 right-of-way. The eastern side of Clark Road would maintain access to U.S. Business 219 near the Meyersdale interchange via Mountain Road, the *Mountain Road Extension*, and Fike Hollow Road.

3. Mountain Road *Extension*

As a result of the Hunsrick Road Bridge removal, a new roadway would be constructed: the Mountain Road Extension. This new roadway would connect existing Mountain Road (T-824) with Fike Hollow Road (T-363) and would parallel the new U.S. 219 alternative along the eastern side. This new connector roadway would provide access from Mountain Road to U.S. Business Route 219 (SR 2047) near the Meyersdale Interchange. The proposed typical section for the Mountain Road Extension includes two 9-foot travel lanes and 2-foot outside shoulders. The design speed is anticipated to be 25 miles per hour.

4. Mason-Dixon Highway

The Mason-Dixon Highway (T-355) would be improved between Hunsrick Road and the U.S. 219 Meyersdale Interchange in accordance with PennDOT's Resurfacing, Restoration, and

Rehabilitation (3R) design criteria, using a design speed transition from 55 mph to 35 mph. The upgrades are roughly 1.3-miles in length, starting near Hunsrick Road and ending at the U.S. 219 Meyersdale Interchange.

Prior to the opening of the Meyersdale Bypass, Mason-Dixon Highway carried U.S. 219. After the Meyersdale Bypass opened, PennDOT transferred ownership and maintenance of Mason-Dixon Highway to Summit Township. Following completion of a new U.S. 219 alternative proposed under this study, ownership of Mason-Dixon Highway is to be transferred back to PennDOT as part of re-routed traffic patterns in the area.

5. Existing U.S. 219 Connection to be Removed

Existing U.S. 219 would be severed, and a local connection would be re-established immediately south of the existing Hunsrick Road bridge along the previously abandoned roadway alignment. This new roadway would become Business U.S. 219.

2.2.4 Alternative DA

The alignment for Alternative DA was determined using input from some of the farm owners in the project area and Cooperating and Participating Agencies during the former 2001 NEPA efforts to avoid natural resource impacts by staying closer to U.S. 219 while avoiding the mountain slope/ridge. Alternative DA starts at the southern end of the Meyersdale Bypass, proceeding in a southerly

direction to just south of the Mast Farm, where it heads westward toward existing U.S. 219. The alternative crosses between the Deal and Mast Farms, then turns in a southwesterly direction, crossing existing U.S. 219 just south of Salisbury, Pennsylvania. Alternative DA then travels in a southerly direction, crossing existing U.S. 219 again, just south of the Mason-Dixon Line and staying close to existing U.S. 219, and ties into the newly constructed section of U.S. 219 in Maryland.

2.2.5 Alternative DA-Shift

The Alternative DA-Shift alignment resulted from combining Alternative DA with Alternative E-Shift. Alternative E-Shift was suggested by residents during former 2001 NEPA efforts to move the alternative further away from residences along Old Salisbury Road. Alternative DA-Shift follows the same alternative as Alternative DA from Meyersdale until about one mile south of the Mason-Dixon Line, where the alternative is shifted eastward, away from Old Salisbury Road.

2.2.6 Alternative DU

The Alternative DU alignment was developed by combining suggestions from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) with an alternative identified during former 2001 NEPA efforts. USFWS suggested an alternative to avoid the mountain slope/ridge in Pennsylvania and reduce potential impacts to terrestrial wildlife. Alternative DU follows

Alternative DA until Greenville Road, where instead of continuing southwest towards existing U.S. 219, the alternative travels south towards the Mason-Dixon Line. Alternative DU and Alternative DA coincide again south of the Mason-Dixon Line.

2.2.7 Alternative DU-Shift

Like Alternative DA Shift, Alternative DU-Shift resulted from combining Alternative DU with Alternative E-Shift to move the alternative further away from residences along Old Salisbury Road. Alternative DU-Shift mimics the alternative of Alternative DU from Meyersdale until south of the Mason-Dixon Line, where the alternative is shifted eastward and away from Old Salisbury Road.

2.2.8 Alternative E

The Alternative E alignment was suggested during former 2001 NEPA efforts to avoid farmland in Pennsylvania and avoid residential areas along existing U.S. 219. Alternative E starts at the southern end of the Meyersdale Bypass and proceeds in a southerly direction along the face of Meadow Mountain. At the Pennsylvania/Maryland border, Alternative E would extend in a southwesterly direction, east of the existing U.S. 219.

2.2.9 Alternative E-Shift

The alignment for Alternative E-Shift was suggested by residents along Old Salisbury Road during former

2001 NEPA efforts and involves shifting Alternative E further away from the residences on Old Salisbury Road. Alternative E-Shift follows Alternative E, with the exception of a small shift in Maryland, slightly eastward, away from the homes along Old Salisbury Road. Alternative E does not directly impact the homes along Old Salisbury Road; however, residents requested an evaluation of a slightly eastward shift to move the alternative further from their homes. The trade-off is that Alternative E-Shift bisects a farm field that is only slightly impacted by Alternative E. This shifted section is the same as the shifted section of Alternative DA-Shift and Alternative DU-Shift.





2.3 Alternatives Dismissed from Preliminary Alternatives Phase

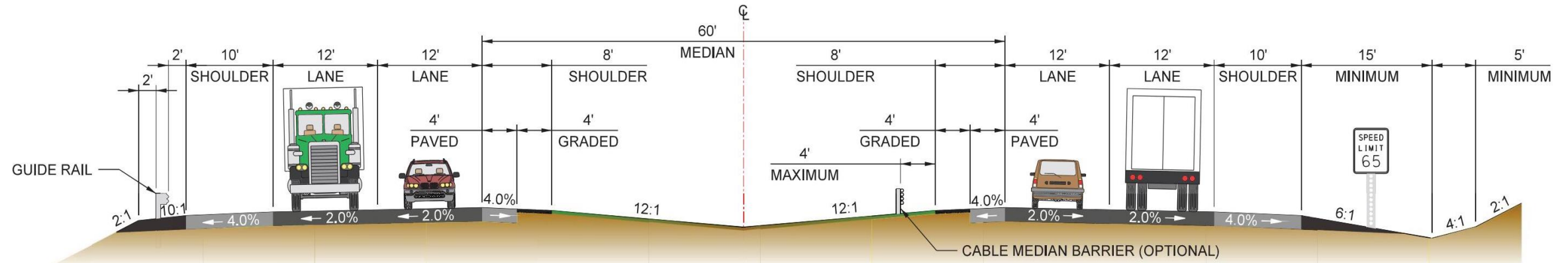
The first step in the NEPA alternative evaluation phase was to quantify environmental impacts for each of the alternatives using readily available desktop information such as on-line GIS data. **Table 2-1** presents the results of that evaluation. At the stage of the project when impacts in **Table 2-1** were calculated, the LODs for the alternatives were based only on the roadway layout. LODs at this stage of the project did not include stormwater management basins, the proposed maintenance facility (described in **Chapter 2.5**), Mason Dixon Highway improvements, or the *Mountain* Road Extension. It was determined that the impacts for Alternative DA

and DA-Shift were higher for most resources and a decision was made to dismiss those alternatives from further study and not collect detailed field data on those two alternatives. This analysis and decision was presented to the Pennsylvania and Maryland resource agencies at an August 24, 2022 interagency meeting. None of the resource agency representatives expressed concern about dismissing Alternative DA and DA-Shift at that time. Therefore, Alternative DU, DU-Shift, E, and E-Shift advanced into the detailed study phase.

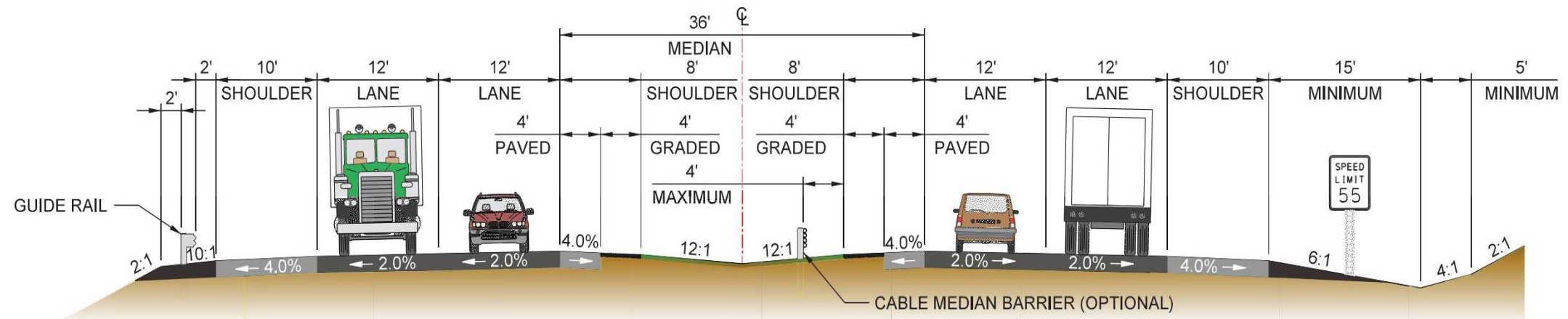
Additionally, information related to dismissing Alternative DA and DA-Shift was presented to the public during meetings held in November 2023. There was no concern or opposition expressed at those meetings regarding dismissing Alternatives DA and DA-Shift from further consideration and not carrying them into the detailed alternatives phase.

Table 2-1: Impacts Analysis Using Secondary Source Data

 Socioeconomic <small>* includes only buildings within alignment * * includes buildings outside of alignment</small>	DA	DA-Shift	DU	DU-Shift	E	E-Shift
Residential Displacements (#) *	12	12	9	9	6	6
Parcels containing impacted buildings* **	33	28	31	26	27	22
Outbuilding Displacements (#)	18	17	15	14	13	12
Commercial Displacements (#)	2	2	2	2	2	2
Other Displacements (e.g. billboards) (#)	3	3	1	1	2	2
Parcels Impacted	96	88	85	77	73	65
Columbia Gas Line (feet)	482	482	480	480	947	947
Salisbury Water Line (feet)	1301	1301	1301	1301	1378	1378
 Historic Resources	DA	DA-Shift	DU	DU-Shift	E	E-Shift
Mason Dixon Marker (#)	0	0	0	0	1	1
Tomlinson Inn/Little Meadows (acres)	9.7	14.1	10.9	15.3	10.7	15.1
Lowry Farm (acres)	16.9	16.9	16.8	16.8	0.0	0.0
Miller Farm (acres)	1.2	1.2	1.2	1.2	1.2	1.2
 Engineering	DA	DA-Shift	DU	DU-Shift	E	E-Shift
Length of Alignment (miles)	8.6	8.6	8.2	8.2	7.8	7.8
Segment Acres	547.8	549.3	515.6	517.1	462.9	464.3
 Natural Resources	DA	DA-Shift	DU	DU-Shift	E	E-Shift
National Land Cover Database Forestland	411	409	406	404	359	357
Number of Potential Bat Hibernacula Impacted	3	3	3	3	0	0
PA Productive Agriculture (acres) - 2016 data	33.1	33.1	26.9	26.9	16.6	16.6
MD Productive Agriculture (acres) - 2016 data	46.6	39.8	49.1	42.4	47.7	41.0
National Wetlands Inventory - Wetlands (acres)	2.8	2.8	3.6	3.6	1.7	1.7
National Hydrography Dataset - Streams (linear feet)	5120	5120	3151	3151	3120	3120
State Gamelands (acres)	1.1	1.1	1.1	1.1	1.1	1.1



U.S. 219 TYPICAL SECTION WITH 60' MEDIAN



U.S. 219 TYPICAL SECTION WITH 36' MEDIAN

Figure 2-10: Proposed Typical Sections

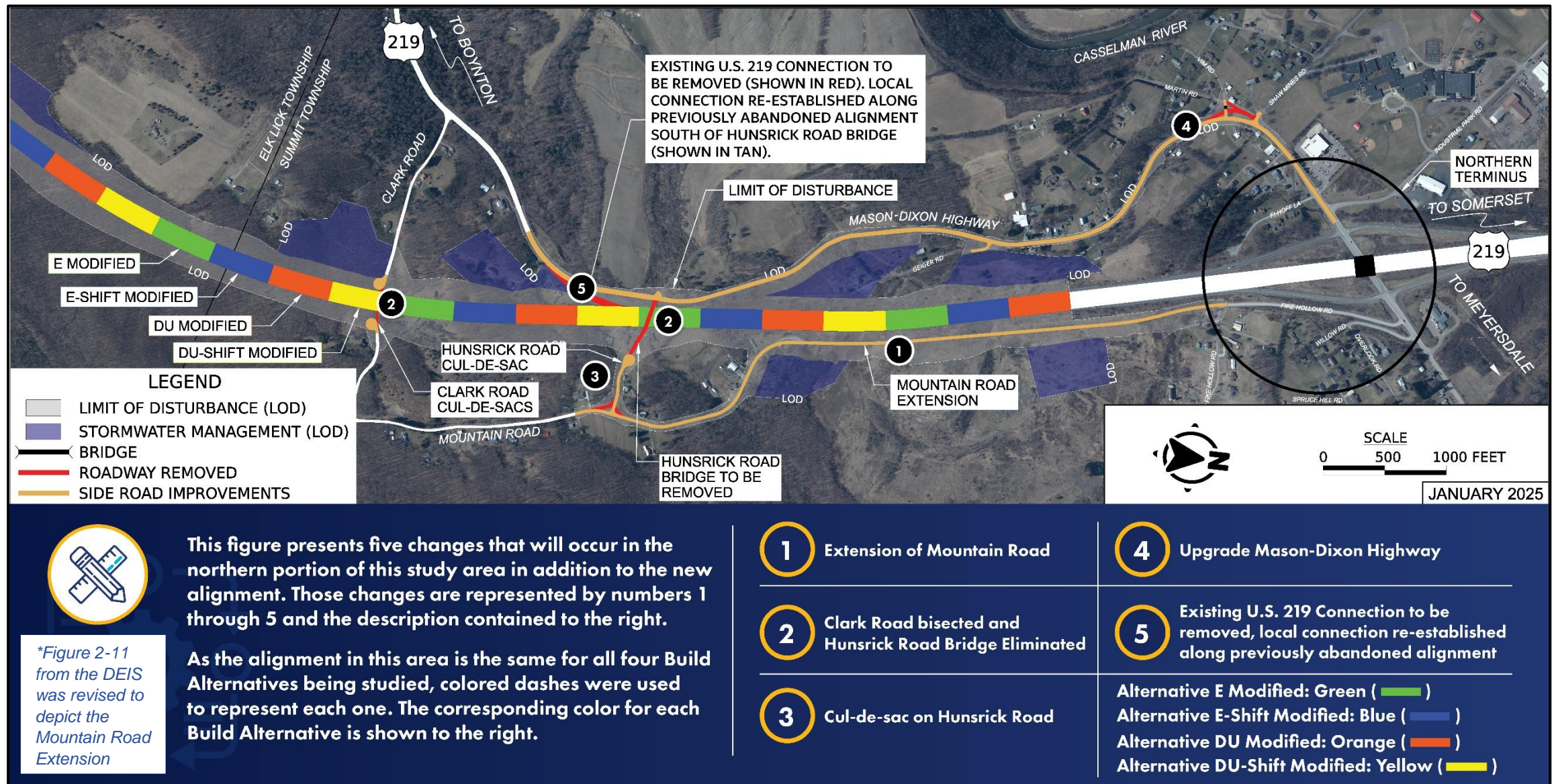


Figure 2-11: Additional Improvements in Northern Portion of Project Area*

2.4 Traffic & Transportation

2.4.1 Projected Traffic Volumes

The projected traffic volumes for the No Build opening year (2030) and Design Year (2050) were adjusted to account for the currently proposed alternatives. Since each alternative utilizes varying alignments with the same connections from a traffic standpoint, a single build set of traffic volumes was generated and is available in project technical files.

All alternatives remove a bridge on Hunsrick Road over existing U.S. 219 and sever Clark Road, requiring a new connection to Fike Hollow Road or along the proposed Business U.S. 219. An Origin-Destination study was conducted utilizing StreetLight Data's Origin and Destination (O-D) metrics to identify vehicle trips. The data metrics tracked trips originating at the southern terminus of U.S. 219 and ending north of the U.S. 219 Meyersdale interchange as well as to the east in the town of Meyersdale and conversely for north to south traveling vehicles. These vehicles were redistributed with the assumption they would use the new U.S. 219 bypass with remaining vehicles using Business U.S. 219 for local trips. **Figure 2-12** depicts the build ADT for the design year (2050).

An existing roadway connection between Chestnut Ridge Road Road/Business U.S. 219 and the 1.4-mile section of U.S. 219 built previously in Maryland would not be advanced as part of the currently

proposed alternatives. Previously, a proposed interchange and adjacent development were considered as part of the proposed alternatives in a similar location to this existing roadway connection. Removing this tie would require further analysis to determine how local traffic destined for area businesses would re-route through the adjacent intersections to the south through Alternate U.S. 40 and the roundabout with the I-68 westbound ramps. Although analysis is ongoing, the impact to LOS to both mainline segments of U.S. 219 and the adjacent intersections is anticipated to be negligible.

2.4.2 Level of Service Analysis

The *TRB's Highway Capacity Manual, 7th edition A Guide for Multimodal Analysis* (2022) is used as the basis for determining the anticipated LOS for highway segments. LOS is an indication of how well a particular segment can accommodate the projected traffic volumes in a given peak hour. For the project's rural setting and classification of roadway, a LOS during peak hours of A through C is generally acceptable, with D through F being

unacceptable. See **Figure 1-6** for a description of each LOS A-F. For the new section of U.S. 219 and the section of Business U.S. 219 south of Salisbury, PA, the PM peak hour had higher traffic volumes than the AM. For the sections of Business U.S. 219 north of Salisbury, PA, the AM peak hour had higher traffic volumes than the PM. The LOS for 2030 and 2050 build conditions use the worst-case analysis period. If additional traffic generators are introduced into the area in the future, impacts to local roadway traffic operations are typically evaluated and mitigated through the municipal site plan approval process. The proposed roadway would be capable of accommodating the additional traffic volumes generated by any foreseeable developments due to the relatively low ADT anticipated.

Figure 2-12 depicts the build LOS for the design year (2050) and **Table 2-2** depicts the build LOS for the opening year (2030) and design year (2050). In all build scenarios, all highway sections operate acceptably at LOS C or better.

Table 2-2: LOS for Opening & Design Year No Build and Build Conditions

Analysis Year	Existing U.S. 219 South of Salisbury	Existing U.S. 219 North of Salisbury	Mason Dixon Highway	Proposed U.S. Route 219
2030 No Build	D	C	A	N/A
2030 Build	C	B	B	A
2050 No Build	D	D	A	N/A
2050 Build	C	C	C	A

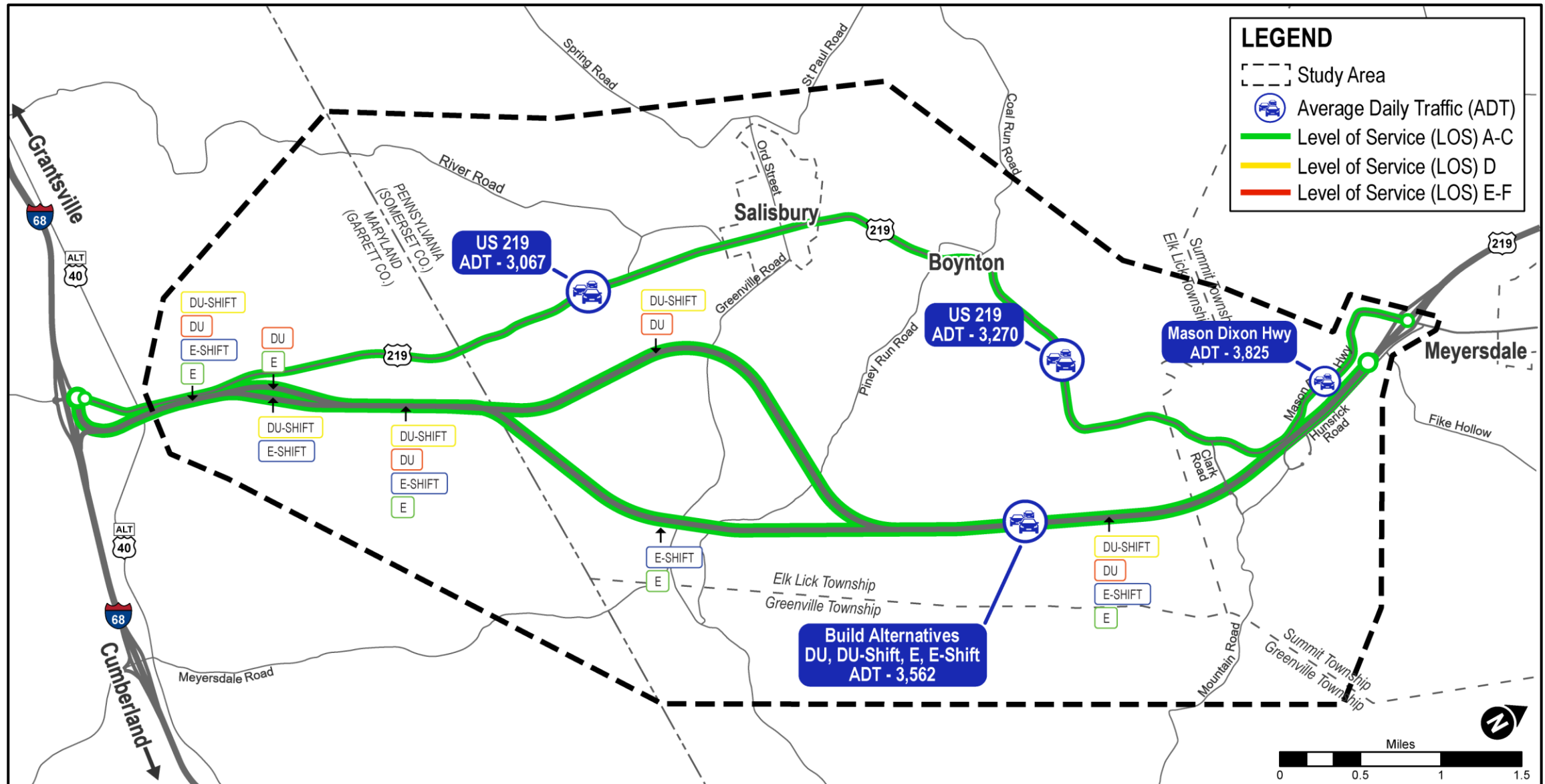


Figure 2-12: 2050 Build Condition Projected ADT & LOS

2.5 Detailed Alternatives Phase

Prior to beginning collection and mapping for the detailed alternatives, PennDOT requested that a maintenance facility be incorporated into the design.

The engineers met with PennDOT maintenance staff to discuss needs for a facility and based on those meetings, facilities were developed for each of the four alternatives.

For Alternatives E Modified and E-Shift Modified a 5.7-acre maintenance facility site is located on the eastern side of the alignment (along northbound lanes), just north of the Maryland/Pennsylvania state border, with a 9.3-acre limit of disturbance.

For Alternatives DU Modified and DU-Shift Modified, the 5.7-acre maintenance facility site is located on the western side of the alignment (along southbound lanes), just north of the Maryland/Pennsylvania state border, with a 10.5-acre limit of disturbance. The impact associated with the maintenance facility site is part of the project impact numbers since these sites have been incorporated into the overall limit of disturbance for each alternative.

After collecting and mapping all of the field data and based on results of the technical studies, PennDOT and SHA continued to evaluate modifications to the alternatives to avoid and/or minimize potential impacts to environmental and cultural resources, including wetlands, watercourses, farmlands,

historic properties, Section 4(f)/Section 2002 resources (PA state equivalent of a Section 4(f) resource), and Pennsylvania State Game Lands. While it is the intent of the project to result in the least amount of impact on the social and natural environment as possible, several resources are afforded more protection under certain laws than others. The goal of these laws is to try and avoid the resource altogether. If avoidance is not possible, then the impact to the resource should be minimized to the extent possible. If the resource is impacted, then the impact must also be mitigated. On January 24, 2024, refinements to Alternative DU, DU-Shift, E, and E-Shift were proposed to the Pennsylvania and Maryland resource agencies at an interagency meeting, and these refinements were termed Alternative DU Modified, DU-Shift Modified, E Modified, and E-Shift Modified. **Figure 2-13** illustrates the resources to be avoided.

The Miller Farm identified as Number 1 on **Figure 2-13** is considered a historic resource protected under Section 4(f)/Section 2002. This resource is located on the west side of U.S. 219, approximately 0.5 miles from the northern limit of the project. The boundary of the Miller Farm abuts the Mason Dixon Highway and an abandoned portion of the previous U.S. 219 right-of-way line. The exact location of the right-of-way in this area is being established to better understand what impacts, if any, may result in this location. The abandoned portion of U.S. 219 in

this area needs to be re-established (and be designated Business U.S. 219) since the new alternatives would eliminate the connection between the Meyersdale Bypass and existing U.S. 219. The Business U.S. 219 alignment would be reestablished in its original location before construction of new U.S. 219. Approximately 0.4 miles of roadway would need to be constructed that would connect the Mason Dixon Highway to existing U.S. 219. The proposed roadway must be reestablished in its original location, as moving the alignment to the west would have a greater impact to the Miller Farm and moving the alignment to the east would be in conflict with all of the proposed alternatives.

The Pennsylvania State Game Lands 231 (SGL 231) indicated as Number 2 on **Figure 2-13** is considered a Section 4(f)/Section 2002 resource and is located along the east side of all of the alternatives on the ridge of Meadow Mountain. SGL 231 starts to parallel the alternatives at about 1.25 miles south of the northern limit of the project area and extends for about 1.44 miles. At approximately 1.96 miles from the northern limit, all of the alternatives would slightly impact SGL 231 (1.0 acre of impact). In an effort to avoid this resource, a 300-foot long retaining wall, approximately 3.5 feet in height, was proposed along the east side of U.S. 219 at the location where the 1.0-acre impact would have occurred. This retaining wall would allow cut

slope impacts to SGL 231 to be completely avoided. Additionally, in this area, the LOD was reduced from 100 feet beyond the top of the cut to approximately 45 feet beyond the top of the cut. This modification was applied to all alternatives.

The Deal Farm, identified as Number 3 on **Figure 2-13**, is considered a historic resource protected under Section 4(f)/Section 2002. The resource is located between Piney Run Road and Greenville Road. While the historic name of this farm is called the Deal Farm, it is also an active farm operated by the Deal and Miller families. The farm has been in the same families for over one hundred years and includes approximately 524 acres of land (355 are owned by Myron Deal and Jennifer Miller and 169 acres are leased). The owners estimate that of the 524 acres of land, 262 are in agricultural production. The farm produces corn, soybeans, hay, small grains, beef cattle, and hogs. The boundary of the farm property is larger and different than the historic Deal Farm property; however, a reduction in the limit of disturbance with Alternatives E and E-Shift, on the west side of proposed Piney Creek Bridge resulted in avoidance of the historic portion of the Deal Farm. There was never an impact with Alternatives E and E-Shift to the Deal/Miller farming operation. An avoidance of the Deal Farm with Alternatives DU and DU-Shift was not achievable since the Deal Farm abuts another historic property, the Lowry Farm. The current DU and DU-Shift alternatives

impact the corners of both portions of the historic Lowry and Deal Farms. If alternatives DU and DU-Shift were moved north, the alternatives would bisect the historic Lowry Farm property. The Lowry Farm is identified as Number 4 on **Figure 2-13**.

Another modification of the alternatives was made to avoid Mason Dixon Marker No. 191, located just south of the Pennsylvania/Maryland border. Mason Dixon Marker No. 191 is indicated as Number 5 on **Figure 2-13** and is considered a historic resource protected under Section 4(f). The modified alternatives generally shifted 10 to 60 feet westward, away from the Mason Dixon Marker, the median width was reduced in this area from 60 feet to 44 feet and the limit of disturbance was reduced from 100 feet to 50 feet in this area. These modifications resulted in a total avoidance of Mason Dixon Marker No. 191.

The last modification focused on the historic Tomlinson Inn and Little Meadows, located in Maryland, labeled as Number 6 on **Figure 2-13**. The Tomlinson Inn and Little Meadows is considered a historic resource protected under Section 4(f). The Tomlinson Inn and Little Meadows historic district is bounded to the north and to the west by Chestnut Ridge, to the south by the National Pike, to the east by Meadow Mountain and is over 500 acres. For all of the modified alternatives, the existing U.S. 219 tie-in location in Maryland was adjusted north by approximately 650 feet to avoid impacts to this

resource. Additionally, the horizontal alignment was also shifted 60 feet to the west, the median width was reduced from 60 feet to between 36 and 44 feet and the limit of disturbance was reduced to approximately 50 feet beyond the cut and fill lines. These modifications resulted in a total avoidance of the Tomlinson Inn and Little Meadows historic site.

The reduction in the median width and limit of disturbance in the areas discussed above also resulted in a reduction of all social and natural resource impacts. **Table 2-3** contains the impact numbers before and after the modifications were made. At the stage of the project when impacts in **Table 2-3** were calculated, the LODs for the alternatives were expanded to include stormwater management basins, the proposed maintenance facility (described in **Chapter 2.6**), Mason Dixon Highway improvements, and the *Mountain Road Extension*. The alternatives would continue to be refined as the design progresses and these impacts are thought to be worst-case impacts at this time.

The Pennsylvania and Maryland resource agencies supported the design refinements, and PennDOT and SHA elected to move forward with the modified alternatives and to dismiss the unmodified alternatives, Alternatives DU, DU-Shift, E, and E-Shift, from further consideration.

2.6 Alternatives Advanced for Further Evaluation

The following alternatives are being advanced in the NEPA process and were examined in further detail in the DEIS: Alternative DU Modified, Alternative DU-Shift Modified, Alternative E Modified and Alternative E-Shift Modified. A comparison of socioeconomic, environmental, and cultural resource impacts, as well as mitigation for unavoidable impacts, is presented in **Chapter 3**.

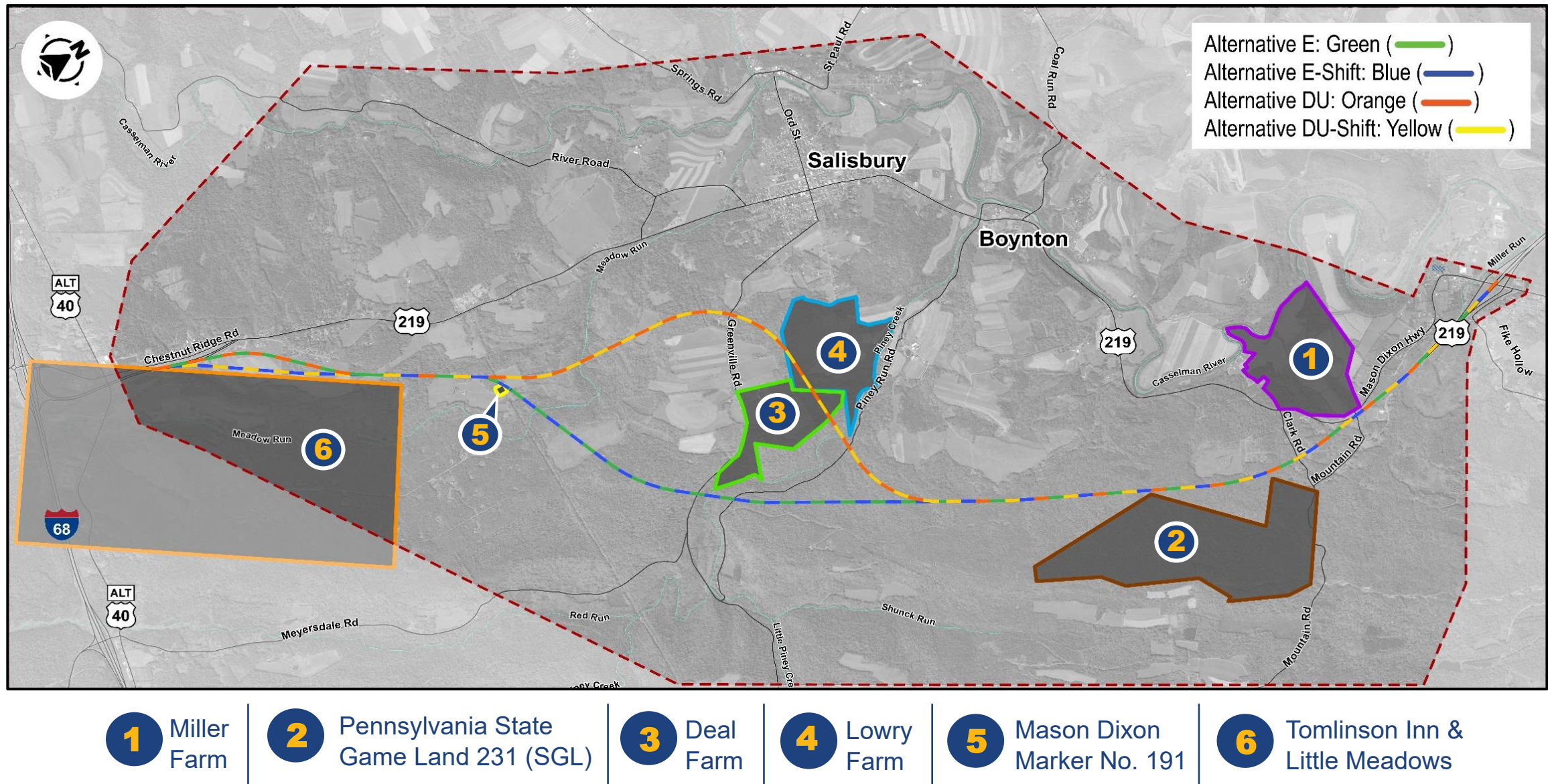


Figure 2-13: Detailed Study Alternatives and Refinement Locations

Table 2-3: Alternative Impacts Comparison Overview





 Socioeconomic	DU	Modified	DU-Shift	Modified	E	Modified	E-Shift	Modified
Parcels intersected by the Limit of Disturbance (#)	135	124	129	121	125	113	119	110
Residential Displacements (#)	12	11	12	11	9	10	9	10
Outbuilding Displacements (#)	28	27	27	26	26	24	25	24
Commercial Displacements (#)	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2
Other Displacements (e.g. billboards) (#)	2	2	3	2	3	3	4	3
State Game Land (acres)	1	0	1	0	1	0	1	0
 Aboveground Historic Resources	DU	Modified	DU-Shift	Modified	E	Modified	E-Shift	Modified
Mason Dixon Marker (#)	0	0	0	0	1	0	1	0
Tomlinson Inn/Little Meadows (acres)	10.1	0	30.3	0	9.9	0	30.1	0
Lowry Farm (acres)	23.7	23.4	23.7	23.4	0	0	0	0
Miller Farm (acres)	0.7	0.6	0.7	0.6	0.7	0.6	0.7	0.6
Deal Farm (acres)	16.4	16.2	16.4	16.2	1.7	0	1.7	0
S.J. Miller School (acres)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
 Archaeology	DU	Modified	DU-Shift	Modified	E	Modified	E-Shift	Modified
Pre- contact Probability - High (acres)	133.6	50.2	133.6	50.2	132.2	48.8	132.2	48.8
Pre- contact Probability - Moderate (acres)	76.8	47.4	76.8	47.4	63.7	30.5	63.2	32.8
Pre- contact Probability - Low (acres)	361.3	266.1	376.4	266.0	302.8	191.9	317.1	191.9
Historic Probability - High (acres)	42.8	17.1	42.8	17.1	27.4	14.4	27.4	14.4
Historic Probability - Moderate (PA only) (acres)	22.0	13.4	22.0	13.4	16.7	11.9	16.7	11.9
Historic Probability - Low (PA only) (acres)	282.8	227.3	282.8	227.3	198.3	147.0	198.3	147.0
 Mining & Potential Hazardous Waste	DU	Modified	DU-Shift	Modified	E	Modified	E-Shift	Modified
Surface Mining Boundaries (acres)	341.5	321.0	343.0	320.9	239.9	214.0	241.4	214.0
Deep Mine Boundaries (acres)	25.0	24.1	25.0	24.1	25.0	24.2	25.0	24.2
Area Of Concern Sites (#)	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3

Table 2-3: Alternative Impacts Comparison Overview (Continued)









 Engineering	DU	Modified	DU-Shift	Modified	E	Modified	E-Shift	Modified
Natural Gas Pipeline (linear feet)	487.1	397.7	487.1	397.7	951.6	873.8	951.6	873.8
Length of Alignment (miles)	8.7	8.3	8.7	8.3	8.4	7.9	8.3	7.9
Limit of Disturbance Acreage	725.8	633.8	739.2	631.3	675.8	566.0	689.3	563.8
 Natural Resources	DU	Modified	DU-Shift	Modified	E	Modified	E-Shift	Modified
 Forestland	459.6	431.4	459.6	430.0	438.2	389.8	437.6	388.8
Deciduous Forestland (acres)	200.7	185.6	200.7	184.2	272.6	245.8	270.9	244.8
Evergreen Forestland (acres)	1.9	0	1.9	0	8.4	3.8	9.2	3.8
Mixed Forestland (acres)	257.0	245.8	257.0	245.8	157.2	140.2	157.5	140.2
Forest Interior Dwelling Species Habitat (MD Only)	-	6.7	-	6.7	-	6.5	-	6.5
 Farmland								
Productive Cropland/Pasture (acres)	71.4	76.1	91.5	76.3	53.8	37.4	73.8	37.6
Maple Sugar Production Forest (acres)	23.7	23.1	23.7	23.1	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1
Productive Farms (#)	11	9	11	9	8	6	8	6
Prime Farmland Soils (acres)	39.0	34.2	39.0	34.2	26.3	21.2	26.3	21.2
Soils of Statewide Importance (acres)	141.6	104.3	149.0	104.3	120.8	83.4	127.6	83.3
Preferential Tax Assessment (acres)	146.7	74.92	170.3	75.18	106.2	36.14	129.7	36.36
 Other								
FEMA 100-Year Flood Zone (acres)	12.3	12.3	12.3	12.3	7.1	4.7	7.1	4.7
Potential Bat Hibernacula (#)	3	3	3	3	0	0	0	0

Table 2-3: Alternative Impacts Comparison Overview (Continued)

 Natural Resources	DU	Modified	DU-Shift	Modified	E	Modified	E-Shift	Modified
 Wetland (acres)	14.35	11.38	14.45	11.25	12.80	10.15	12.68	10.02
Palustrine Emergent PEM	4.29	2.84	4.39	2.70	3.27	2.09	3.16	1.95
Palustrine Emergent/Palustrine Forested PEM/PFO	0.52	0.50	0.52	0.50	0.49	0.50	0.49	0.50
Palustrine Forested PFO	4.99	4.65	4.99	4.66	4.61	4.30	4.61	4.31
Palustrine Forested/Palustrine Scrub Shrub PFO/PSS	2.57	1.97	2.57	1.97	2.57	1.97	2.57	1.97
Palustrine Scrub Shrub PSS	1.65	1.42	1.65	1.42	1.51	1.28	1.51	1.28
Palustrine Scrub Shrub/Palustrine Emergent PSS/PEM	0.34	0	0.34	0	0.34	0	0.34	0
Palustrine Open Water POW	0	0	0	0	0.01	0.01	0.01	0.01
 Streams	29,173	24,997	29,549	25,012	29,295	23,148	29,675	23,141
Perennial Streams (linear feet)	17,556	17,343	17,882	17,343	19,936	17,890	20,262	17,884
Intermittent Stream (linear feet)	8,721	7,654	8,771	7,669	6,710	5,258	6,764	5,257

3 ENVIRONMENTAL RESOURCES, IMPACTS AND MITIGATION

This chapter describes the potential project impacts from the proposed alternatives on the socioeconomic, cultural, and natural environment.

Desktop analysis and field investigation have verified that the following environmental features do not exist within the project area and are not discussed within this chapter:

- Wild & Scenic Rivers
- Coastal Zones
- National Natural Landmarks
- Section 6(f) Resources
- National Historic Landmarks

Different areas may be discussed within Chapter 3, including a larger project area (shown as the black hatched area on **Figure 3-1**), which was used to define most of the existing conditions within the project area, or a smaller limit of disturbance (LOD)

Limit of Disturbance (LOD) – The impact boundary used to calculate impacts for all resources. Each alternative studied has its own LOD.

(shown as the black lines outlining the detailed alternatives on **Figure 3-1**), which is the area used to calculate impacts for build alternatives: Alternatives DU Modified, DU-Shift Modified, E Modified and E-Shift Modified as of January 24, 2024.

These build alternatives were previously described in **Chapter 2.5**. In addition to including the roadway typical section, the LOD also includes the median, shoulders, and cut and fill lines. The project team also included preliminary stormwater control measures and temporary erosion and sediment pollution control features needed during construction. Additionally, near the state line within Pennsylvania potential maintenance facility locations were included. For Alternatives DU Modified and DU-Shift Modified, the facility is located along the southbound lanes, west of the alternatives and for Alternatives E Modified and E-Shift Modified, the facility is located along the northbound lanes, east of the alternatives.

Chapter 3 includes sections for all socioeconomic, cultural, and natural environmental resources present in the project area. Each section details the methodology used to identify the resource, notes the existing conditions of the resource present in the project area, and describes the impact to the resource within the alternatives' LOD and any required mitigation.

3.1 Land Use, Zoning, Planning, & Development

3.1.1 Methodology

County and municipal comprehensive plans and zoning codes often identify land use and development goals. Somerset and Garrett Counties, however, do not have countywide zoning, and none of the project area municipalities have zoning within the project area. County comprehensive plans were evaluated for land use conflicts with the proposed project alternatives. Federal data sources, including the National Land Cover Database (NLCD) and the Census of Agriculture, also supplemented local land use planning documentation to determine potential land use impacts associated with the project.

3.1.2 Existing Conditions

Within the project area, vast areas of forested and agricultural land characterize Somerset County and Garrett County. According to land cover data from the 2021 NLCD, forestland is the predominant regional land use, covering 67.7% of the project area. This is followed by agricultural land, consisting of pasture and cropland, which comprises 21.5% of the project area. Developed land encompasses 7.7% of the project area. **Figure 3-1** and **Table 3-1** include the project area land cover data from the NLCD.

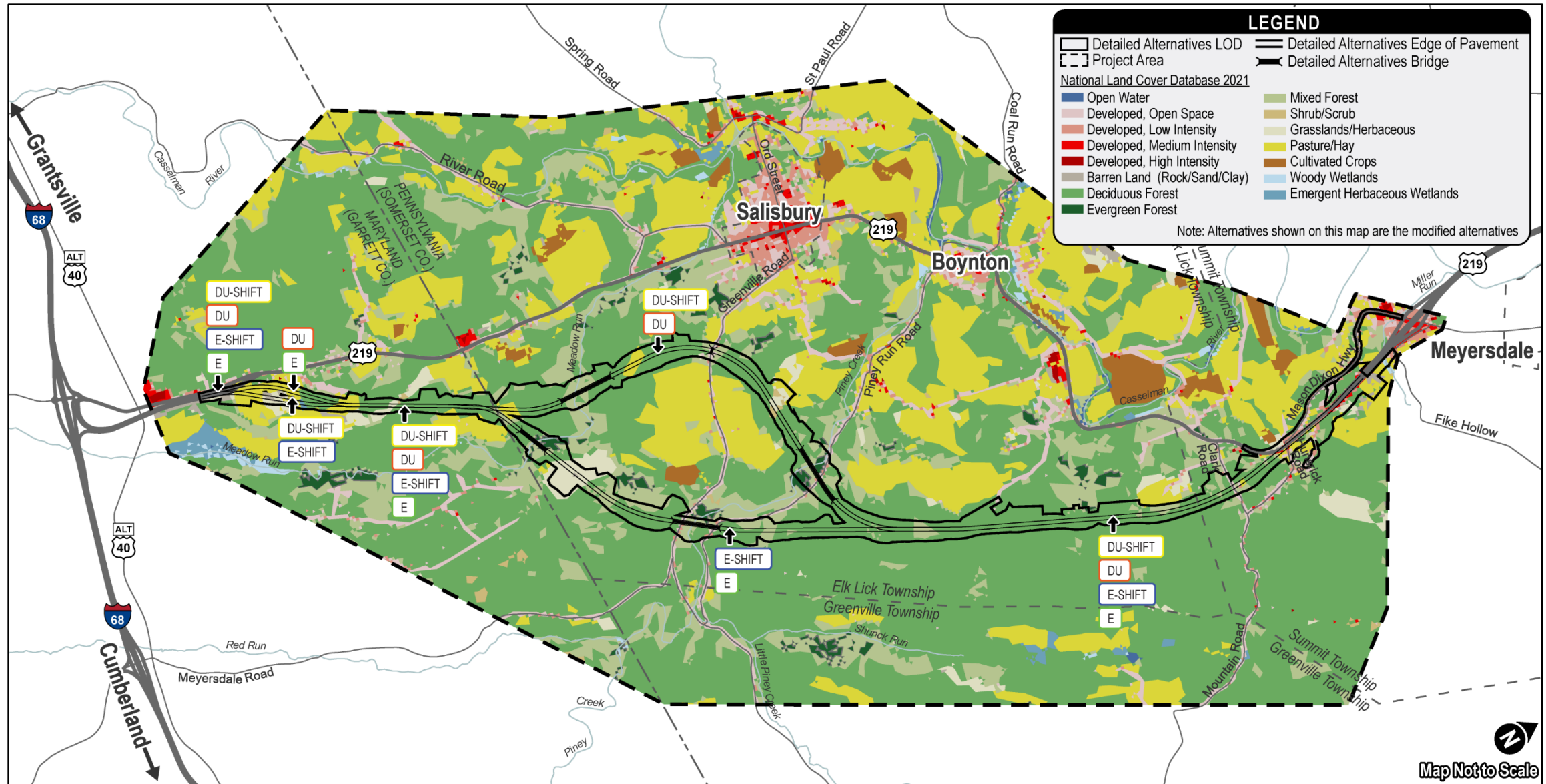


Figure 3-1: National Land Cover Database within Project Area

Concentrated development areas within the Somerset County portion of the project area include the area outside Meyersdale Borough, which includes medium density residential neighborhoods and multiple commercial properties. Salisbury Borough lies fully within the project area and includes medium density neighborhoods and a population of approximately 605 residents. In Garrett County, the area surrounding the proposed U.S. 219 alternatives includes low to medium density residential development. The development density increases (including commercial development) to the south towards I-68.

As evidenced by the NLCD data in **Table 3-1**, agricultural land is prevalent throughout the project area and is fundamental to the character and economy of both counties. The U.S. Department of Agriculture’s (USDA) 2022 Census of Agriculture quantifies this importance to the region’s economy. Somerset County contains approximately 998 farms totaling close to 200,000 acres. These farms account for over 25% of the land within Somerset County. The average farm size is roughly 198 acres. In Garrett County, there are about 680 farms totaling approximately 95,500 acres. This represents about 23% of the county’s land. The average farm size in Garrett County is about 141 acres. The most significant products sold by farmers in both counties in 2022 were milk, grains, and cattle.

One of the purposes of this project involves encouraging economic development in the Appalachian Region, which includes Somerset and Garrett Counties. Local, state, and federal initiatives are in place to encourage this economic growth, especially in Maryland. Garrett County designated the southwest end of the project as a Potential Employment Area, known as the Chestnut Ridge Development Corridor, due to its potential for commercial development. Federal agencies also designated Census Tract 2 in Garrett County as a Federal Opportunity Zone. This includes the western half of the project area within Maryland. The State of Maryland designated the southern end of the project, around existing U.S. 219, and the proposed build alternatives as a Priority Funding Area (PFA). **Figure 2-4** in **Chapter 2.1** shows these areas.

Table 3-1: Project Area Land Cover

Land Cover Type	Percentage of Project Area ¹
Forested	67.7%
Agricultural	21.5%
Developed	7.7%
Shrubland and Grassland	1.8%
Waterways and Wetlands	1.0%
Barren	0.3%
¹ Source: 2021 NLCD	

The 2022 Garrett County Comprehensive Plan encourages growth in designated locations while maintaining forested and agricultural land in more sensitive locations. The PFA location and the comprehensive plan highlight this area as a county designated growth area. The plan also states that



the extension of U.S. 219 to Pennsylvania is a top transportation priority for the county, necessary to improve access, reduce travel time, and promote economic development in the area. Furthermore, the plan proposes project area future land uses, including agricultural, residential, and general commercial uses.

Somerset County does not have a countywide comprehensive plan. However, Somerset County adopted the Comprehensive Plan for the Southern Alleghenies Region in 2018. The plan identified municipalities within the project area as having weak or at-risk levels of economic demand and investment, including Salisbury Borough (weak), Elk Lick Township (at-risk), and Summit Township (at-risk). The plan outlined the importance of completing U.S. 219 between Meyersdale and Maryland, with the goal of encouraging new development along the future alignment and developing local infrastructure that businesses require.

Additional information about existing conditions is provided in **Appendix H**, which contains the *Socioeconomic Existing Conditions Report*.

3.1.3 Impacts

The No Build Alternative would not result in any land use impacts or require any property acquisition. The No Build Alternative, however, is not consistent with Somerset County and Garrett County comprehensive planning objectives, as the No Build

Alternative would not complete Corridor N of the Appalachian Development Highway System (ADHS), improve U.S. 219, or promote new development.

Table 2-3 in **Chapter 2.5** shows land use impacts associated with the four build alternatives. Permanent conversion to transportation right-of-way would most commonly occur to forestland, followed by agricultural land. Approximate forestland impacts would be 388.8 acres for Alternative E-Shift Modified, 389.8 acres for Alternative E Modified, 431.4 acres for Alternative DU Modified, and 430.0 acres for Alternative DU-Shift Modified. Productive agricultural land impacts would be 37.6 acres for Alternative E-Shift Modified, 37.4 acres for Alternative E Modified, 76.1 acres for Alternative DU Modified, and 76.3 acres for Alternative DU-Shift Modified. **Table 2-3** shows these impacts.

The potentially impacted forestland is privately owned and is generally used for recreation, including hunting and off-roading; production, including lumber or maple syrup; or as part of a residential property. **Chapter 3.13** further discusses the potentially impacted agricultural land.

In summary, all the build alternatives would permanently change existing land uses to transportation uses. The proposed acquired lands for the new highway consist primarily of forest and agricultural lands. These land uses would continue

to be the dominant regional land uses following construction of a build alternative.

Additionally, construction of proposed alternatives *could* result in further *commercial, industrial, or*



residential development along new or existing transportation corridors in the vicinity of the project. *However*, this type of *new* development *resulting from transportation corridors typically* occurs at new access *points or* interchanges, *and* there are *no* new access points or interchanges being proposed as part of this project. *The Reasonably Foreseeable Effects* section (**Chapter 3.24**) of this chapter further addresses development potential. The county would control the extent and pace of the development beyond the proposed build alternatives' LOD.

3.1.4 Mitigation

Although the proposed build alternatives follow varying alignments, county and local land use planning and associated development regulations can ensure compatibility with local goals. In Pennsylvania, the Municipalities Planning Code (MPC), effective 1969, enables local communities to develop local ordinances and regulates development to achieve their vision. Additionally, the Commonwealth's Sound Land Use policies and Keystone Principles have established guidelines for public infrastructure and investment.

Maryland enacted the Economic Growth, Resource Protection, and Planning Act of 1992 (the Planning Act). *The Planning Act established the State Planning Policy, which has evolved through subsequent legislation and is currently known as the 12 Visions found in Subtitle 5-7A of the State Finance and Procurement Article. The 12 Visions*

call for growing smarter and more sustainably and making efficient use of State resources through a more collaborative and informed public process. Among them, the transportation vision promotes multimodal transportation that facilitates "the safe, convenient, affordable, and efficient movement of people, goods, and services within and between population and business centers." The Planning Act requires state-funded major transportation or other capital improvement projects to be consistent with the 12 Visions. The Planning Act also requires local jurisdictions to address the 12 visions in their comprehensive plans. The comprehensive plans establish land use, economic growth, and resource protection priorities within *a local jurisdiction* area. The Planning Act also established an Economic Growth, Resource Protection, and Planning Commission to oversee, study, and report on progress towards vision implementation. *Please note that the Economic Growth, Resource Protection, and Planning Commission no longer exists.*

It is not anticipated that any build alternative would create substantial additional development pressure on low growth areas, nor encourage land uses that are not consistent with area plans. It is also anticipated that as the project progresses into final design, land impacts would be refined and minimized to the extent feasible. Refinements could include a reduced limit of disturbance and fewer land

impacts as more detailed engineering data is collected.

Within Maryland, the four build alternatives' southern termini would connect to existing U.S. 219 within the PFA. No new access points are proposed as part of this tie in.

The Maryland Department of Planning (MDP) and SHA collaboratively evaluated the project's consistency with the State Planning Policy as mandated by state law. MDP and SHA determined that the Alternative E-Shift Modified, i.e., the FHWA Preferred Alternative, is consistent with the State Planning Policy as the alternative would (a) help direct development into the designated growth areas in Maryland, (b) act to connect the Maryland PFA to an existing growth area in Meyersdale, Pennsylvania, (c) support economic growth and investment potential in the Appalachian Region, (d) sufficiently mitigate the project's direct environmental resource impacts, and (e) not be likely to have a reasonably foreseeable effect on adverse land use and growth impacts in environmentally sensitive and rural areas.

3.2 Population & Demographics

3.2.1 Methodology

The 1990-2020 U.S. Decennial Censuses and the 2018-2022 5-Year American Community Survey (ACS) data served as a tool to analyze the current

project area's economic conditions. Data from the Appalachian Regional Commission (ARC) also served as a tool to compare Somerset and Garrett Counties to other Appalachian Region counties. ARC classifies counties according to four criteria: distressed, transitional, competitive, and attainment. For the fiscal years 2023 and 2024, the ARC rated Somerset County and Garrett County as transitional counties. Transitional counties are *classified as those below the national average for one or more of the three economic indicators (three-year average unemployment, per capita market income, and poverty), but do not satisfy the criteria of the distressed category. Distressed counties are the most economically depressed counties and rank in the worst 10 percent of the nation's counties for these economic indicators.*

3.2.2 Existing Conditions

Somerset and Garrett Counties have demographic and economic concerns related to a decreasing and aging populations. According to the U.S. Census data, the total population within Somerset and Garrett Counties has declined approximately 5% and 4%, respectively, between 2010 and 2020. Conversely, Pennsylvania and Maryland population has increased by approximately 2% and 7%, respectively.

Furthermore, ACS data indicates that Somerset County's median age is 5.9 years older than Pennsylvania's median age and Garrett County's

median age is 8.5 years older than Maryland's median age. Each county's median age has outpaced each state's median age since 2000. Pennsylvania's median age has increased by 2.8 years and Maryland by 3.1 years since 2000. Comparatively, Somerset County's median age has increased by 6.5 years and Garrett County by 9.3 years since 2000. This trend also emerges in the population over the age of 65 in each county, which is significantly greater than the statewide population. Twenty-three percent (23.1%) of Somerset County's population is 65 or older as compared to 18.7% in Pennsylvania. Twenty-three percent (23.0%) of Garrett County's population is 65 or older as compared to 16.0% in Maryland.

Both county unemployment rates are slightly lower than their respective states, as shown in **Table 3-2**. This may be partially attributed to the lower labor force participation rates in each county as compared to statewide levels. The poverty rate in Somerset County is lower than Pennsylvania's poverty rate as well. Garrett County's poverty rate is higher than Maryland's overall poverty rate. **Chapter 3.3** examines the poverty and low-income populations within the project area in greater detail. Additionally, median household income, home price, and rent are all significantly lower in Somerset and Garrett Counties as compared to statewide medians.

The population holding a bachelor's degree within Somerset County is 17.2%, and 24.6% in Garrett

Table 3-2: Demographic Census Data

Demographic Data	Garrett County	Somerset County	MD	PA
2000 Total Population ¹	29,846	80,023	5,296,486	12,281,054
2010 Total Population ¹	30,097	77,742	5,773,552	12,702,379
2020 Total Population ¹	28,806	74,129	6,177,224	13,002,700
Race ²	White Alone	95.13%	93.14%	47.17%
	Black/African American	0.83%	2.51%	29.06%
	American Indian & Alaska Native	0.11%	0.07%	0.20%
	Asian	0.28%	0.26%	6.77%
	Native Hawaiian & Other Pacific Islander	0.01%	0.01%	0.04%
	Hispanic or Latino	1.11%	1.40%	11.81%
	Some Other Race	0.19%	0.17%	0.57%
	Two or More Races	2.34%	2.44%	4.38%
Poverty Rate ³	11.1%	10.8%	9.3%	11.8%
Unemployment Rate ³	4.6%	5.2%	5.1%	5.4%
Not in Labor Force ³	41.2%	44.3%	32.8%	37.1%
Median Age ³	47.6	46.7	39.1	40.8
Median Age, 2000 ¹	38.3	40.2	36.0	38.0
Over 65 Years of Age ³	23.0%	23.1%	16.0%	18.7%
High School Graduate or Higher ³	90.5%	90.0%	91.0%	91.7%
Bachelor's degree or Higher ³	24.6%	17.2%	42.2%	33.8%
Total Households ³	12,448	28,956	2,318,124	5,193,727
Median Household Income ³	\$64,447	\$57,357	\$98,461	\$73,170
Avg. Household Size ³	2.27	2.40	2.60	2.42
Median Home Price ³	\$220,100	\$124,500	\$380,500	\$226,00
Median Rent ³	\$681	\$704	\$1,598	\$1,110
Home Ownership Rate ³	80.1%	80.7%	67.5%	69.2%

¹Data is from the U.S. Census Bureau Decennial Census of the specified year.

²Data is from the 2020 Decennial Census.

³Data is from the 2018-2022 5-Year American Community Survey (ACS)

Note: Hispanic is an ethnicity and may be included in any of the races. Total percentages are rounded.

County. This is approximately half the respective statewide percentages in Pennsylvania (33.8%) and in Maryland (42.2%). The largest industry in both counties is educational services, health care, and social assistance. The next largest industry is manufacturing in Somerset County and construction in Garrett County, followed by retail in both counties. Employment in agriculture, forestry, fishing, hunting, and mining is also significant to the region.

Additional information about existing conditions is provided in **Appendix H**, which contains the *Socioeconomic Existing Conditions Report*.

3.2.3 Impacts

The No Build Alternative would have no direct effect on existing project area populations.

The four build alternatives would involve construction of a new, limited-access expressway. This new expressway would improve north and south project area access. Existing U.S. 219 will be maintained as a local road with each build alternative. Expressway construction would reduce traffic and truck volumes along existing U.S. 219, improving community safety. This holds true for the Borough of Salisbury, where existing U.S. 219 runs through the center of the borough. The four build alternatives would alleviate traffic issues, improve pedestrian and vehicular safety, and reduce traffic noise for residents and businesses within the borough.

The four build alternatives all include *ten* residential displacements at the north end of the project area. Alternatives DU Modified and DU-Shift Modified also include an additional residential displacement near the center of the project area.

All four build alternatives include two commercial displacements near the north end of the project area. **Chapter 3.7** further discusses these impacts.

Property impacts and acquisitions would be scattered along forested, agricultural, or rural residential areas with low population densities. The objective of the four build alternatives is to stimulate project area economic *growth* by facilitating improved mobility for freight and labor. The proposed U.S. 219 highway would not be tolled providing all populations free and equal access.

3.2.4 Mitigation

Preliminary and final design engineering of the selected alternative would continue to reduce residential and commercial property impacts and restore property access where feasible. Landlocked parcels, *where property access is no longer feasible*, are anticipated as well as access adjustments. Mitigation measures for displacements *will* include relocating residences into available and comparable housing and businesses into available and comparable commercial facilities, *in accordance with the Federal Uniform Relocation Assistance and Real Property Acquisition Policies*

Act of 1970 (49 CFR 24) and PennDOT and SHA's Relocation Assistance Programs. Chapter 3.7 provides additional impact information and mitigation associated with displacements. *Highway fencing will be placed at the edge of PennDOT and SHA's right-of-way to minimize the likelihood of person using the adjacent properties interacting with those using the roadway. The design is still in the very early stages and the specific details about the fencing has not been determined at this time. Future public meetings, to be held prior to construction, will have details about the location and style of fencing.*

3.3

Since the issuance of the DEIS on November 15, 2024, and in compliance with new Executive Orders (EOs) and policies, this section is no longer required for federal actions.

3.4

Since the issuance of the DEIS on November 15, 2024, and in compliance with new EOs and policies, this section is no longer required for federal actions.

3.5 Communities & Community Facilities

3.5.1 Methodology

The project team used state and local records, aerial mapping analysis, detailed field studies, and public

involvement activities to identify the communities and community facilities present within the project area. Public involvement activities included public meetings, CAC meetings, and coordination with municipalities.

The project team identified Plain Sect communities within the project area. Plain sect communities are groups characterized by a separation from the world and a varying use of modern technologies. This can include Amish and conservative Mennonites. Plain Sect communities typically have unique transportation needs as well. During previous project studies in this area, a meeting was held with Bishop Bennie A. Yoder of the Amish Community in West Salisbury on September 10, 2002. More recently, a telephone conversation occurred with Bishop Paul S. Yoder on October 25, 2023, and a meeting on July 5, 2024, reconfirmed that the information from 2002 is still accurate. A summary of the July 5, 2024, meeting is included as an attachment in **Appendix H**. Aerial mapping analysis, Pennsylvania Department of Education records, local news media, site reconnaissance, and public involvement efforts provided information on Plain Sect communities as well.

3.5.2 Existing Conditions

A. Communities

Communities identified within the project area include Summit Township, Elk Lick Township, the unincorporated community of Boynton, and

Salisbury Borough. There is no named community that represents the project area within Garrett County, Maryland.

Diffuse populations over a large area characterize rural townships in Pennsylvania, like Summit and Elk Lick. Summit Township has a population (as of 2020) of 2,141 residents within 45.3 square miles, with a population density of 48.2 residents per square mile. Elk Lick Township encompasses 57.7 square miles and a population (as of 2020) of 2,264, averaging 37.6 residents per square mile. Summit Township surrounds Meyersdale Borough at the north end of the project area, and Elk Lick Township surrounds Salisbury Borough near the center of the project area. Residential and commercial areas sprawl outside of these boroughs into each township. The build alternatives are proposed within the southeast side of Summit Township and east side of Elk Lick Township.

The community of Boynton is a small conglomeration of residences and commercial facilities within 0.1 square miles. It includes approximately 144 residents (as of 2020) and is one of the most densely populated areas of Elk Lick

Township. The community is located along existing U.S. 219.

Salisbury Borough is the most densely populated area within the project area with a population (as of 2020) of approximately 706 residents within 0.4

square miles. This establishes a population density of 1,843.3 residents per square mile. Existing U.S. 219 runs through the center of the Borough. These communities and their population size are depicted on **Figure 3-5**.

B. Community Facilities

These communities rely on various facilities or agencies to provide utilities, education, administration, religious and emergency services. There are several public water supply and wastewater facilities in or near the project area including:



Photograph 3-3: Existing U.S. 219 through Salisbury Borough

- The Salisbury Borough public water supply, under the authority of the Salisbury Borough Water Works Commission. The Salisbury Borough Water Works Commission currently services properties within the borough only.
- Meyersdale Area Municipal Authority whose service area is adjacent to the north end of the project area.
- Garrett County operates the Chestnut Ridge Collection System for wastewater at the south end of the project area. No water service is currently available in the Chestnut Ridge area (Garrett County, 2014).
- Various private groundwater wells and septic systems are located within the project area, serving rural residents and businesses.

Other major public utilities and facilities currently in the project area include Columbia Gas just north of and parallel to the Pennsylvania/Maryland State Line and a wind farm located at the northeast end of the project area. Six of the turbines are located within the northeast corner of the study area.

Emergency and medical service providers serve many residents located outside of their local area due to the project area's rural nature. Only Salisbury Volunteer Fire Company is located within the project area. All of the other emergency and medical service providers are located outside of the project area. They include:

- Meyersdale Area Ambulance Association

- Northern Garrett County Rescue Squad
- Eastern Garrett County Volunteer Fire Company
- Grantsville Volunteer Fire Department
- Meyersdale Borough Police Department
- Pennsylvania State Police Troop A - Somerset Station
- Maryland State Police Barrack W - Mc Henry

Three public school districts serve the project area including the Salisbury-Elk Lick School District, Meyersdale Area School District and Garrett County Public Schools.

Several government offices are located within the project area including municipal buildings, and post offices.

Ten places of worship are located within the project area. There are also six cemeteries and memorials within the project area.

See **Figure 3-2**, for a general overview of resources within the project area. **Chapter 3.6** discusses Parks and Recreational Facilities. Somerset and Garrett Counties offer on-demand public transit services (space-available basis) to all residents. The Community Action Partnership for Somerset County Tableland Services, Inc. operates Somerset County Transportation System (SCTS). SCTS also offers regular trips between Salisbury and Meyersdale. Garrett Transit Service (GTS) is a department of

Garrett County Community Action Committee. GTS provides transportation throughout Garrett County and other parts of Maryland and neighboring West Virginia.

C. Plain Sect Communities

A review of project information identified two Amish communities, one in the West Salisbury community within Elk Lick Township and one in Pocahontas within Greenville Township, just outside the project area. According to the interviewed Amish Bishops,



Photograph 3-4: Wind Farm in Somerset County

the Amish occasionally travel between these two communities. From West Salisbury, the Amish tend to travel east through Salisbury, crossing U.S. 219 within the Borough. The likely route beyond Salisbury is Greenville Road, which would take Amish travelers directly to Pocahontas. The length of the trip is approximately nine miles. Amish communities in the area speak and read the English language.

Current aerial analysis and site reconnaissance identified three Plain Sect or Amish churches (or places of worship) in Summit, Elk Lick and Greenville Townships.

Pennsylvania Department of Education records also identified fourteen Amish schools in these townships.

The *Daily American* newspaper profiled various Amish businesses, and the project team identified other businesses in the area using aerial mapping. **Figure 3-3** shows these businesses, Amish places of worship, and Amish schools within the vicinity of the project area.

Project team and resident observations have noted Amish travel along Piney Run Road. The project team discussed the presence of Plain Sect populations in the project vicinity with officials from Elk Lick Township on September 12, 2022. The Township identified an Amish population living along Mountain Road and Clark Road.

Additional information about existing conditions is provided in **Appendix H**, which contains the *Socioeconomic Existing Conditions Report*.

3.5.3 Impacts

The No Build Alternative would have no direct effect on existing communities or community facilities within the project area. The four build alternatives would involve construction of a new, limited-access expressway. This new expressway would improve north and south project area access. Existing U.S. 219 would be maintained as a local road with each of the build alternatives. Expressway construction would reduce traffic and truck volumes along existing U.S. 219, improving community safety. The build alternatives are anticipated to improve community access to schools, police, fire protection, medical treatment, emergency medical services, and recreational resources. Members of the CAC represented some of these essential community services during project development.

Chapter 3.7 discusses impacts to individual residences. The four build alternatives would not bisect any existing communities, nor would the build alternatives adversely impact community facilities. While all four build alternatives would bisect Clark Road, *the impacted area along Clark Road is mountainous and there are no pedestrian facilities along Clark Road*. Vehicular travel to each side of Clark Road would be provided along the proposed

Mountain Road Extension, Mountain Road, and existing U.S. 219.

None of the four build alternatives would directly impact pedestrian facilities. However, there are sidewalks in Salisbury and U.S. 219 currently runs through the center of town. With the expected reduction in traffic from existing U.S. 219, the local network could result in safer walking and bicycling within Salisbury.



Photograph 3-5: Horse and Buggy along Existing U.S. 219 at Salisbury Builders Supply

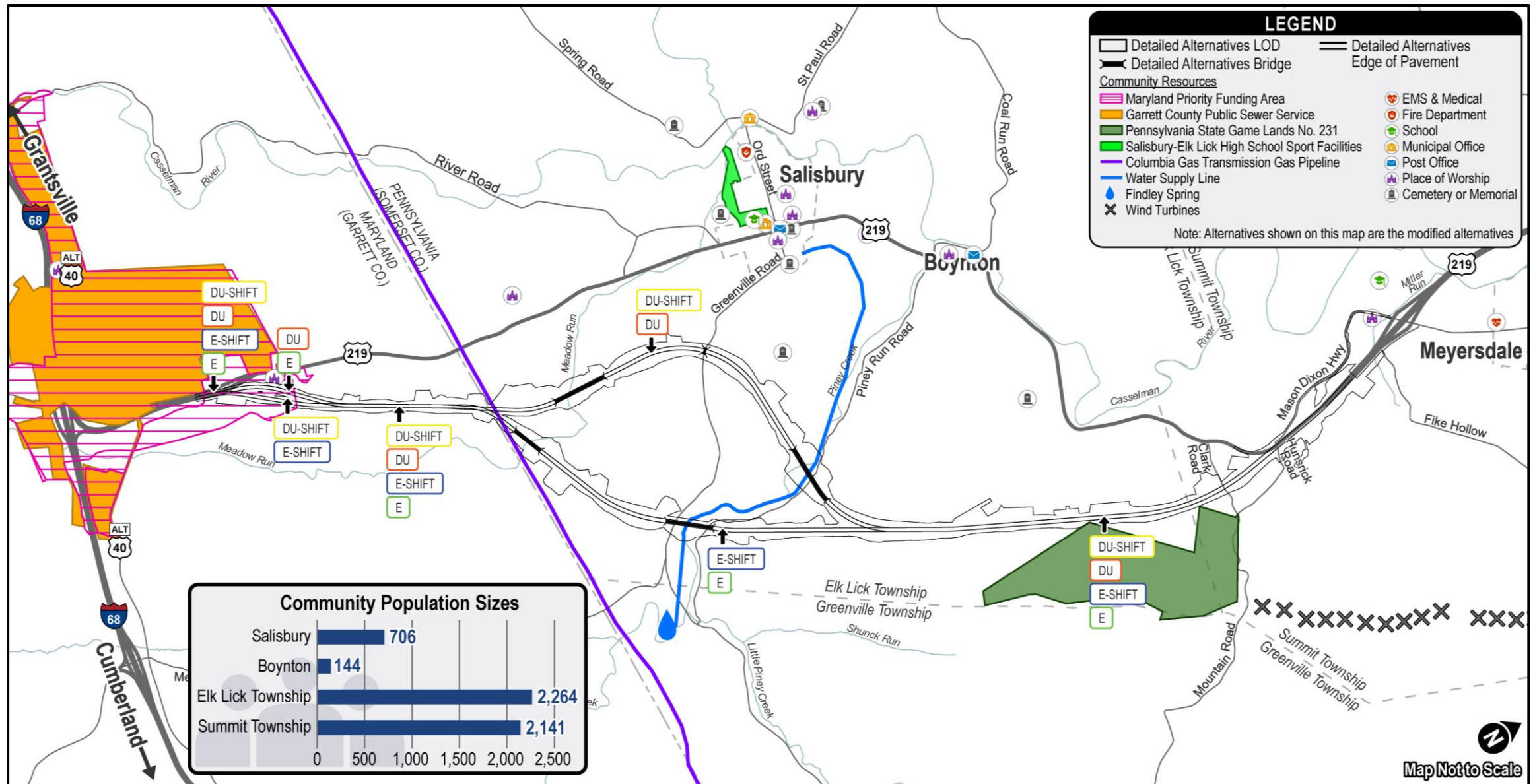


Figure 3-2: Community Resources and Public Facilities

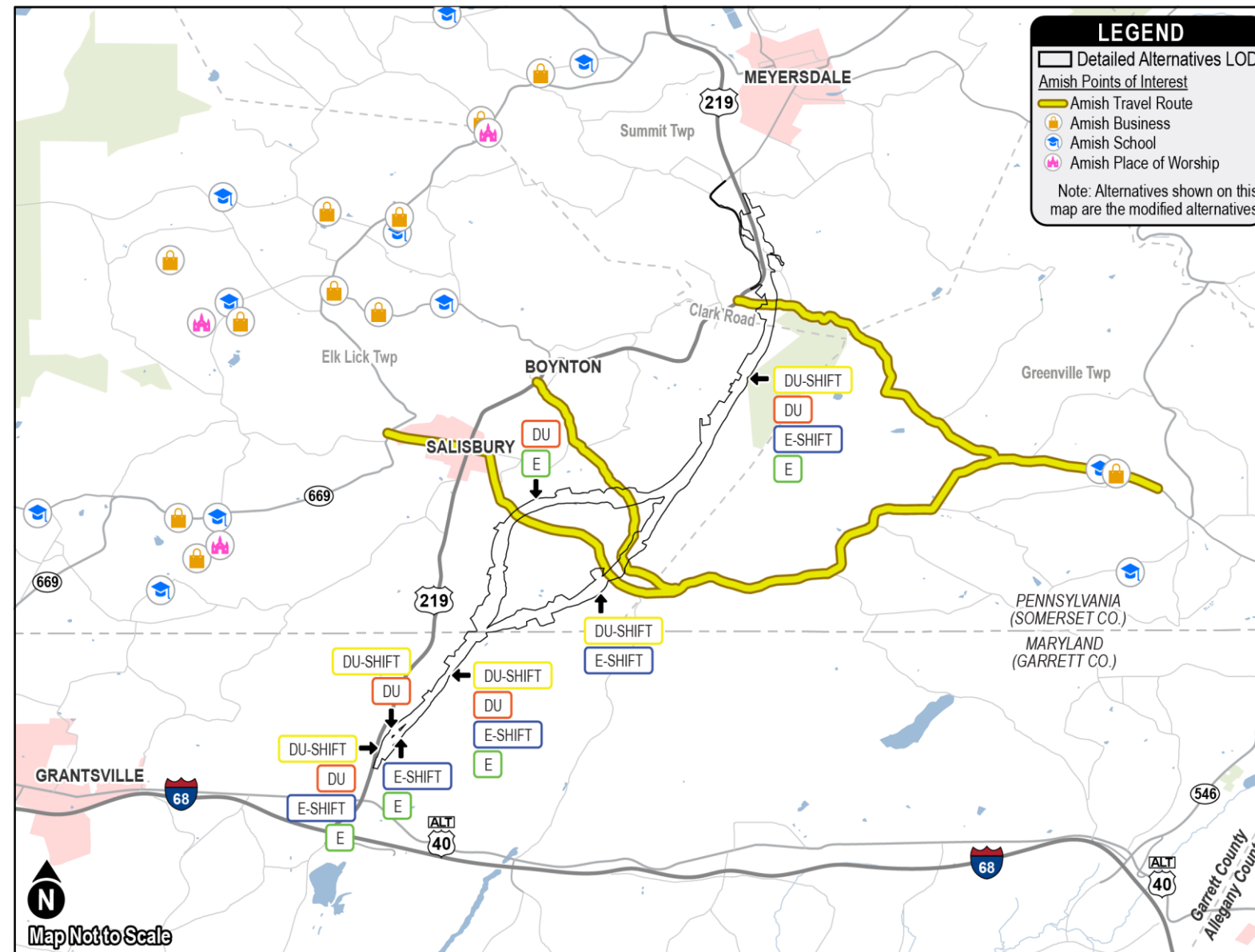


Figure 3-3: Plain Sect Community Resources

Elk Lick Township indicated that they anticipate no Plain Sect population travel issues since the project would maintain the existing local roadway network. As shown in **Figure 2-11**, U.S. 219 would no longer be directly accessible from Clark Road or Mountain Road because of the build alternatives. The proposed *Mountain* Road Extension, however, would allow Amish travelling along these roads to use *Mountain* Road to reach Mason Dixon Highway and maintain similar east-west travel routes.

This change to the local network was discussed with Bishop Paul S. Yoder and he indicated there were not concerns relative to the proposed changes.

3.5.4 Mitigation

Plain Sect communities are not anticipated to have travel issues associated with the proposed build alternatives due to the proposed *Mountain* Road Extension, which would allow similar east-west travel routes to be maintained.

Coordination with community service providers (i.e. school districts and emergency service providers) *will* continue through preliminary engineering, final design and construction to ensure access benefits of the project are maximized for all communities.

3.6 Parks & Recreational Facilities

3.6.1 Methodology

The project team used state and local records, aerial mapping analysis, field investigations, public involvement, and agency coordination to identify parks and recreational facilities in the project area.

Section 4(f) of the USDOT Act of 1966 provides consideration of publicly owned parks and recreation areas. In Pennsylvania, Section 2002 of the Administrative Code of 1929 also applies to activities conducted by PennDOT and includes requirements that serve as a state counterpart to Section 4(f). **Chapter 3.10** provides additional information about Section 4(f) resources within the project area, and **Appendix I** of this document includes a Section 4(f) *De Minimis* Form that also reviews the potential for impacts to Section 4(f)/Section 2002 resources.

Additionally, Section 6(f) of the Land and Water Conservation Act requires that the project team coordinates with the National Park Service on the conversion of lands or facilities acquired with Land and Water Conservation Act funds under the State Assistance program.

3.6.2 Existing Conditions

Existing project area parks and recreational facilities include the Salisbury-Elk Lick High School sports

facilities and the Pennsylvania State Game Lands No. 231 (SGL 231), as shown on **Figure 3-2**.

Salisbury-Elk Lick High School sports facilities are located on the west side of Smith Avenue in the Borough of Salisbury. Activities and services include baseball and softball fields, restrooms, a concession stand, a basketball court, a large wooden play area, swings, climbing apparatus, and tennis courts.

SGL 231 is in the northeastern side of the project area, south of Mountain Road and within Summit, Elk Lick, and Greenville Townships. SGL 231 totals 429 acres and provides wildlife habitat and recreational opportunities for hunters, hikers, wildlife photographers, and birdwatchers.

No other parks or recreational facilities are present within the project area. No lands or facilities acquired with Land and Water Conservation Act funds (Section 6(f) properties) are located within the project area.

3.6.3 Impacts

No adverse or direct impacts to parks or recreational facilities are anticipated from the No Build Alternative or the four build alternatives.

Constructing a 300-foot long retaining wall, approximately 3.5 feet in height along the east side of northbound U.S. 219, would aid in avoiding impacts from the build alternatives to SGL 231. This wall avoids a potential 1.0-acre cut slope impact to

SGL 231. Further refinements to the retaining wall and limits of disturbance are possible during final design.

3.6.4 Mitigation

No direct or temporary impacts to parks or recreational facilities are anticipated, and no mitigation measures are proposed. *A 300-foot long retaining wall will be constructed to avoid impacts to SGL 231. Alignment shifts, profile shifts, and bifurcation could be considered in final design but will continue to avoid PA SGL 231.* Coordination with the PA Game Commission *will* continue through final design and construction *and will include evaluating the possible locations of wildlife crossings.*

3.7 Displacements

3.7.1 Methodology

Literature searches and coordination with local officials helped the project team gather property data. County property assessment databases and tax maps were used to verify property ownership within the project area and to establish a project property ownership database. This database includes property owner names and addresses, tax map numbers, total acreages, and types of property (residential, commercial, agricultural, mining, etc.). On-site field investigations verified the location of

buildings and the type of land use on existing properties.

A property impact analysis was conducted using aerial photography, preliminary engineering designs for the build alternatives, field verification of land use, and geographic information system (GIS) analysis. In addition to cut and fill slope limits, the preliminary impact analysis for acquisitions and displacements considered changes to property use and access. Multiple online real estate search websites helped identify available housing units.

Acquisitions are generally proposed for properties within the proposed alignments of the build alternatives, and for some adjacent properties. Properties proposed for acquisition either contain land necessary for construction of the proposed alignment and its supporting infrastructure or the alignment would impact access to the property and cannot be restored. Depending on the Build Alternative, these properties include residences,

commercial properties, forestland, farmland, an antenna tower, or a billboard.

3.7.2 Impacts

Table 3-3 summarizes potential acquisitions and displacements associated with the proposed build alternatives. Final determination on property acquisition would occur during final design after the selected alternative has been refined and access issues have been examined further.

The No Build Alternative would not require any property acquisition or displacements. Alternative DU-Shift Modified impacts the most parcels of the build alternatives with **124**. Alternative E-Shift Modified impacts the least number of parcels with **110**. Alternative DU Modified requires the most outbuilding displacements with **27**, and Alternatives DU Modified and DU-Shift Modified require the most residential displacements with **11**. Alternatives E Modified and E-Shift Modified require **10** residential displacements and **24** outbuilding displacements.

Table 3-3: Potential Property Acquisitions and Displacements

Type of Acquisition/ Displacement	No Build	DU Mod.	DU-Shift Mod	E Mod.	E-Shift Mod.
Parcels Intersected by LOD	0	124	121	113	110
Residential Displacements	0	11	11	10	10
Outbuilding Displacements	0	27	26	24	24
Commercial Displacements	0	2	2	2	2
Other Displacements (billboard, antenna tower, and sludge drying bed)	0	2	2	3	3

The *ten* residential displacements required by all build alternatives are located at the north end of the project area. Alternatives DU Modified and DU-Shift Modified also include an additional residential displacement near the center of the project area.

All four build alternatives include two commercial displacements near the north end of the project area.

All four build alternatives require acquisition of an existing billboard along U.S. 219, near the north end of the project area. All build alternatives would impact access to and likely require acquisition of an antenna tower along existing U.S. 219 in Maryland, near the south end of the project area. *Additionally, a sludge drying bed is located within the footprint of Alternatives E Modified and E-Shift Modified. According to information obtained from PA DEP, the sludge drying bed is part of a nearby active water treatment operation and is in the footprint of the historic Weimer Strip and Auger mine. Multiple treatment lagoons and two caustic soda aboveground storage tanks associated with the water treatment operation are located adjacent to and to the north of Alternatives E Modified and E-Shift Modified. The sludge drying bed associated with the nearby active water treatment operation would be displaced by Alternatives E Modified and E-Shift Modified and likely require acquisition.*

Most of the residential and commercial property displacements are in Summit Township, Somerset County. One residential displacement is proposed under Alternatives DU Modified and DU-Shift Modified within Elk Lick Township, Somerset County. Property displacements associated with Alternatives DU Modified and DU-Shift Modified would have minor impacts to the tax base within the respective township and school district, and to Somerset County. For example, a property in Summit Township had a total millage of 41.25 in 2023, with a mill rate of 13.36 for Somerset County, 2.63 for Summit Township, and 25.26 for Meyersdale Area School District. *Mill rate is the rate at which tax revenue is produced from property assessments, conveyed in terms of 1/1000th of assessed value.* This is equivalent to \$4,125 lost in yearly real estate taxes for a property *in Summit Township* with an assessed value of \$100,000 per displacement. Additionally, Summit Township and Meyersdale Area School District each have a 0.5% Earned Income Tax rate for residents.

3.7.3 Mitigation

Preliminary and final design engineering *will* continue to minimize impacts to the residential and commercial properties in the project area. Mitigation measures for displacements include relocating residences into available and comparable housing. If, under normal relocation procedures, available and comparable replacement housing cannot be

identified, PennDOT and SHA *will* provide "Housing of Last Resort" options to ensure that all displaced individuals are properly relocated.

In accordance with the Federal Uniform Relocation Assistance and Real Property Acquisition Policies Act of 1970 (49 CFR 24) and PennDOT and SHA's Relocation Assistance Programs, all displaced residential and commercial establishments *will* be eligible to receive replacement payments. This includes fair market value of real and personal property and moving expenses. Under no circumstances will the project require any business to vacate before the 90-day Notice to Vacate expiration date.

An *April 2025* review of available real estate data identified a wide range of properties for sale in the project area. **Table 3-4** shows for any selected build alternative that there is adequate replacement housing available to cover the potentially displaced properties (maximum displacement is *eleven* residences).

Additionally, there are available vacant land parcels for relocating displaced businesses. While it is likely that the properties listed would not be available at the time project property acquisition would commence, this represents an approximation of what is typically available in the area. At present, there are no known factors that would influence the future availability of replacement housing. No

person *will* be displaced until clean, safe, and comparable replacement housing have been made available.

If the antenna tower along existing U.S. 219 in Maryland, near the south end of the project area is deemed inaccessible and would need to be displaced, SHA would incur the cost to design and relocate the new antenna.

Additionally, if the sludge drying bed associated with the Weimer Strip and Auger post mining remediation site would be displaced, PennDOT will incur the cost to design, relocate, and build a new sludge drying bed associated with the Weimer Strip and Auger post mining remediation site. The sludge drying bed will be relocated to a similar environment on the same property and its function and access will be restored. The relocated sludge drying bed will not be sited within a floodplain or wetland.

Table 3-4: Number of Properties Available

List Price	Residential	Multi-Family ¹	Farm	Vacant Lot
<\$100K	3	-	-	5
\$100K-\$250K	4	1	-	
\$251K-\$500K	1	1	-	1
\$501K-\$1.5M	4	1	1	-
>\$1.5M	1	-	-	2

Note: Based on an *April 2025* search in the 15558 (Salisbury, PA), 15552 (Meyersdale, PA), and 21536 (Grantsville, MD) zip codes using Zillow, Redfin, Trulia, and Realtor.com.

¹No Multi-Family Structures are displaced by this project.

3.8 Historic Architectural Resources

3.8.1 Methodology

Historic architectural resources studies for this project include the development of an above ground historic properties area of potential effects (APE) representing areas of potential direct effects; identification of resources that are eligible for or listed in the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP); and a determination of the potential effects of the No Build Alternative and four build alternatives on NRHP-eligible and listed historic properties.

Studies were conducted to comply with federal and state cultural resources laws and regulations, including Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA) and its implementing regulation 36 CFR §800, Section 4(f) of the USDOT Act of 1966 (as amended in 1968), Executive Order 11593 (36 FR 8921, 3 CFR 1971 Comp. P. 154), Archaeological and Historic Preservation Act of 1974, Commonwealth of Pennsylvania State Act No. 1978-273, Maryland Historical Trust (MHT) Act of 1985 as amended, and State Finance and Procurement Article §§ 5A-325 and 5A-326 of the Annotated Code of Maryland.

Additionally, the following handbooks were consulted throughout the process: PennDOT Publication No. 689, *The Transportation Project Development Process: Cultural Resources*

Handbook (PennDOT, September 2023) and *Standards and Guidelines for Architectural and Historical Investigations in Maryland* (MHT, 2023).

Section 106 of the NHPA requires coordination with the State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) with jurisdiction over a historic or potentially historic property. Properties 50 years or older are evaluated to determine whether the properties meet at least one of the four following eligibility criteria and maintain historic integrity:

- Criterion A: Association with significant historic events and broad patterns of history
- Criterion B: Association with significant persons
- Criterion C: Architectural, design, or artistic significance
- Criterion D: Archaeological significance.

PennDOT and SHA have evaluated the project area for the presence of above ground historic properties. Professionals who meet or exceed the qualifications of the Secretary of the Interior’s Standards and Guidelines for Archeology and Historic Preservation as specified for their position in 36 CFR §61 performed all technical work for these investigations. investigations.

A. Above Ground Historic Properties APE

In November 2022, a preliminary above ground historic properties APE was developed for the

project to represent the “geographic area or areas within which an undertaking may directly or *inadvertently* cause alterations in the character or use of historic properties, if any such properties exist” (36 CFR 800.16(d)). In response to changes in the preliminary design of the alternatives, a revised above ground historic properties APE was developed in June 2023. Land with existing roadway infrastructure and new alignments for the improved highway through less developed and heavily forested areas characterizes the APE.

Based on direction from PA SHPO, the above ground historic properties APE, which is large enough to consider both direct and *reasonably foreseeable* effects, was represented by two separate boundaries (direct and *reasonably foreseeable*) during the identification studies.

The direct effects to above ground historic properties APE includes 1,147.86 acres and is equivalent to the project's revised preliminary archaeological APE (see Section 3.9 Archaeological Resources). It represents project areas where direct impacts may occur, including the roadway construction, temporary construction easements, and/or stormwater areas. Since the direct effects APE was developed and used as part of the project's eligibility studies, the project's limits of disturbance have been reduced as part of the January 2024 modifications of the alternatives. The effects to above ground historic properties APE

encompasses 2,304 acres and accounts for potential visual, audible, and/or atmospheric effects that may extend beyond the direct effects APE.

B. Identification of Above Ground Historic Properties in Pennsylvania

The project team conducted studies for the identification, documentation, and evaluation of historic architectural resources in Pennsylvania in accordance with federal and state regulations. Background research, files from the PA SHPO Pennsylvania's State Historic and Archaeological Resource Exchange (PA-SHARE) database, and field survey informed the resulting *Above Ground Historic Properties Pennsylvania Determination of Eligibility Report* (PennDOT, August 2023), provided in **Appendix J**.

C. Identification of Above Ground Historic Properties in Maryland

The project team conducted identification of above ground historic architectural resources in Maryland in accordance with federal and state regulations. Refer to the *Above Ground Historic Properties Maryland Determination of Eligibility Report* (PennDOT, January 2023), provided in **Appendix K**, for detailed information pertaining to pertinent regulations, investigation methodology, and existing conditions of above ground historic properties in the Maryland portion of the APE.

D. Consulting Party Coordination

The Section 106 process requires lead Federal agencies (e.g., FHWA) to identify and engage a variety of consulting parties, principally including SHPOs and Tribal Historic Preservation Officers (THPOs). The Consulting Parties on the U.S. 219 project include both the Pennsylvania and Maryland SHPOs, tribal governments, and other interested parties, all of whom were kept abreast of the investigations and provided input into the process.



Photograph 3-6: Maryland state historical marker for Little Meadows in Garrett County

The project's Consulting Parties get updates via postings on PennDOT's PATH online cultural resources portal, email notifications, and (as needed) mailings.

The first Consulting Party meeting was a hybrid virtual and in-person meeting held on October 30, 2023, in Salisbury, PA. The meeting presented information and updates about the project and fostered discussion about both above ground historic properties and archaeological (below ground) resources in the project area. A second Consulting Party meeting was held on April 11, 2024, which discussed the potential effects of the project alternatives on historic architectural resources.

E. Determination of Effects

A combined Determination of Effects report treating resources in both Pennsylvania and Maryland circulated in March 2024. The report evaluated the potential effects of a No Build Alternative and four build alternatives on a total of seven NRHP-eligible resources and one NRHP-listed resource. Refer to the *Above Ground Historic Properties in PA and MD Determination of Effects Report* (PennDOT, March 2024) provided in **Appendix L**.

Both the PA and MD SHPOs have confirmed that the project's Preferred Alternative, E-Shift Modified, will have No Adverse Effect on the project's identified NRHP-eligible and listed historic

resources. Section 106 consultation will continue as project design is refined through the Selected Alternative. The project's cultural resources Programmatic Agreement, included as **Appendix M**, stipulates the process to follow if the project is later determined to have an adverse effect whether through the alteration of the Selected Alternative or the selection of a different alternative. In that case, additional consultation will be necessary to mitigate and resolve the adverse effect.

3.8.2 Existing Conditions

In Pennsylvania, background research and a review of the Pennsylvania SHPO's PA-SHARE database identified 10 previously surveyed resources, including one property that no longer exists. Nine of the properties were evaluated with addendum Historic Resource Survey Forms (HRSFs) to update their physical descriptions and, where applicable, to provide additional information for evaluating significance and NRHP-eligibility. The eligibility survey also identified 25 new historic architectural resources that were at least 45 years old. Seven of the newly identified resources were evaluated with HRSFs. Information from the HRSFs is summarized in **Appendix J**.

The survey resulted in the identification of five NRHP-eligible properties in Pennsylvania. These properties are listed below and shown on **Figure 3-4**:

- S.J. Miller School (2023RE07648)
- Miller Farm/Earnest and Carrie V. Miller Residence (1994RE00436)
- Lowry Farm (2004RE00605)
- Deal Farm/Ambrose Deal Farm (2004RE00606)
- Jacob Glotfelty Barn (1995RE41407)

S.J. Miller School

The S.J. Miller School (2023RE07648) is a Colonial Revival style schoolhouse from 1924 with a partially exposed basement level. The institutional building, which is located at 1464 Shaw Mines Road, features a central pedimented entry, asphalt shingle hipped roof, brick walls, and a rock-faced concrete block basement with few exterior alterations. The school district currently uses the building for storage. The S.J. Miller School was determined to be eligible for listing in the National Register in 2023 under Criterion C for its architectural merit. Its NRHP boundary corresponds to the property tax parcel.

Miller Farm / Earnest and Carrie V. Miller Residence

The Miller Farm, which is also known as the Earnest and Carrie V. Miller Residence (1994RE00436), is a 294-acre farm property with a ca. 1912 American Foursquare farmhouse, a ca. 1883 bank barn that was rebuilt ca. 1920, and assorted historic and non-

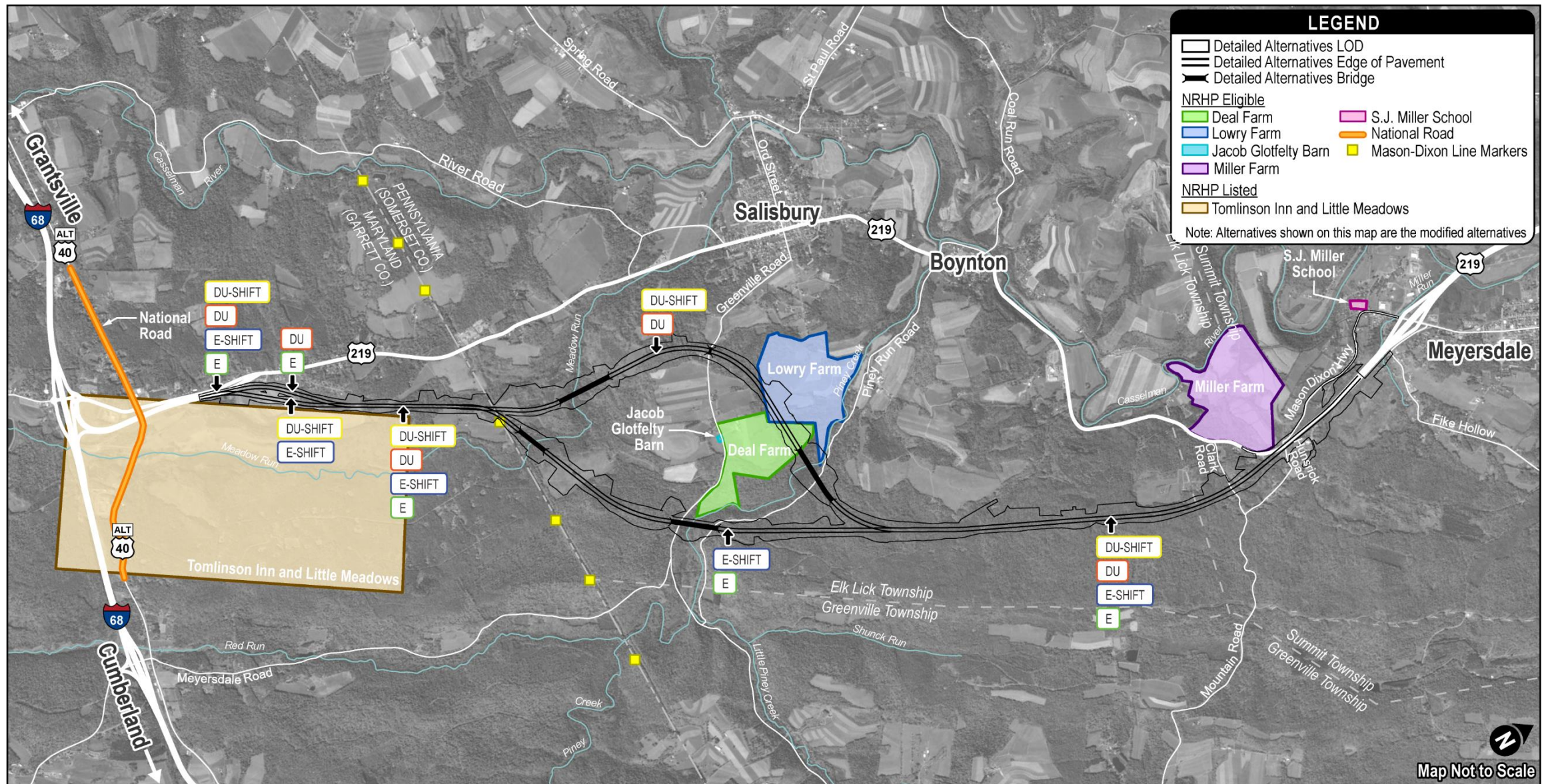


Figure 3-4: Historic Architectural Resources within Project Area

historic outbuildings. The farm is located at 671 Ernest Miller Road. It was determined to be NRHP-eligible in 1993 (reconfirmed in 2004) under Criterion A for Agriculture and Criterion C for Architecture. The Miller Farm's NRHP boundary represents historic landholdings associated with the farm. The eastern boundary of the property terminates at the edge of former U.S. 219, the Mason Dixon Highway, which was abandoned ca. 1998 with the construction of the U.S. 219

Meyersdale Bypass. As part of this project, the Mason Dixon Highway would be reestablished along its original alignment at the eastern edge of the property.

Lowry Farm

The 166-acre Lowry Farm (2004RE00605) at 761 Engles Mill Road features a ca. 1852 brick farmhouse, a ca. 1869 bank barn, and outbuildings from ca. 1900 through 1960. The Lowry Farm was determined to be NRHP eligible in 2005 under Criterion A for Agriculture and Criterion C for Architecture. Its NRHP boundary was revised to include associated farmland in the current tax parcel. The boundary includes the farmstead, cultivated fields, pastures, and woodlots.

Deal Farm / Ambrose Deal Farm

The Deal Farm, which is also known as the Ambrose Deal Farm (2004RE00606), is a 125-acre farm at 630 Greenville Road that has been agriculturally

active from the late nineteenth century to the present. The farm centers on an expanded bank barn from the 1880s and an American Foursquare farmhouse with stone facing from ca. 1935. The Deal Farm was determined to be eligible for the NRHP in 2023 due to its significance under the Allegheny Mountain Part-Time and General Farming historic agricultural region context. Its NRHP boundary corresponds to the current tax parcel and includes the farmstead, cultivated fields, pastures, and woodlots.

Jacob Glotfelty Barn

The Jacob Glotfelty Barn (1995RE41407) at 629 Greenville Road is a log and frame bank barn from 1827 that is prominently sited in an agricultural clearing. It was determined to be eligible for NRHP listing in 2023 under Criterion C in the area of Architecture as a well-preserved example of a double-pen, log Sweitzer barn with three-bay threshing floor arrangement; it is a sizeable example of the form, which is rare in the region. The NRHP boundary of the barn corresponds to the footprint of the building with a modest buffer.

Pennsylvania and Maryland share one NRHP-eligible resource because of its location on the state line. This historic resource is listed below and shown on **Figure 3-4**. Both states include its documentation in their SHPO files:

- Mason-Dixon Line Marker No. 191 (2006RE00149 and G-I-A-189)

Mason-Dixon Line Milestone Marker 191

Mason-Dixon Line Milestone Marker 191 is a boundary marker that surveyors placed during a 1901-1903 resurvey of the Mason-Dixon Line. The marker is an approximately two-foot-tall square stone post with a pyramidal top. There is an "M" carved into its south face, and a "P" on its north face, denoting the Maryland and Pennsylvania sides of the border. The dates 1767 and 1902, for the original survey and resurvey of the Mason-Dixon Line, are carved on its east and west faces. The marker is one of over 240 Mason-Dixon line markers, which



Photograph 3-7: Jacob Glotfelty Barn

include original stones dating from the 1760s, stones dating from the 1901-1903 resurvey, and several twentieth and twenty-first-century replacements. The markers are significant for their association with Mason and Dixon's groundbreaking surveying techniques and with the line's subsequent use as the boundary between slave-owning and non-slave-owning states before and during the Civil War. Mason-Dixon Marker No. 191 is located on the Mason-Dixon line approximately 2,500 feet east of Chestnut Ridge Road. The State of Maryland and the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania own the marker itself, but it sits on property owned by Sidney S. and Carolyn S. Markowitz, trustees. Pennsylvania determined the marker eligible for the NRHP in 2006 within a resource group of five similar markers (PA-SHARE No. 2006RE00149). However, Maryland's MEDUSA database shows no eligibility determination as of December 2023. The resource does not have a formal boundary in either PA-SHARE or MEDUSA, but an undated and unattributed addendum in the MEDUSA file includes a recommendation for a boundary of a fifty-foot diameter circle around the monument, encompassing the 1902 marker, the 1760s cairn mound (which could not be identified in 2023), and the immediate setting. The Pennsylvania and Maryland SHPOs both concurred with the fifty-foot diameter boundary in December 2023.

Two historic resources in the Maryland portion of the APE were previously determined eligible or listed in the NRHP. These two historic resources are listed below and shown on **Figure 3-4**:

- Tomlinson Inn and Little Meadows property (G-I-A-012) - NRHP-listed
- The National Road (G-I-A-227) - NRHP-eligible (Alt. U.S. 40 from Steelers Drive to just south of New Germany Road)

Tomlinson Inn and Little Meadows/The National Road

The Tomlinson Inn and Little Meadows (G-I-A-012) property includes a ca. 1818 stone inn, two barns, several smaller outbuildings, and possibly a

cemetery. Prior to the construction of the still existing buildings, the unusual natural meadow made a convenient stopping place for soldiers and westward-bound settlers. The construction of the National Road and the Tomlinson Inn reinforced the property's significance as a stopping point on the route known as the "Gateway to the West." The Tomlinson Inn and Little Meadows property was listed on the NRHP in 1973 for significance in the areas of architecture, military history, and transportation. Specifically, the property is significant for its association with the construction of the first federally funded highway (the National Road), westward migration, and as the site of a military camp during the French and Indian War. In



Photograph 3-8: Mason-Dixon Milestone Marker



Photograph 3-9: Barn on the Historic Tomlinson Inn and Little Meadows Property

addition to the property’s historic buildings, several individually significant archaeological sites have been identified within its boundaries, including Braddock’s Road (18GA314), Braddock’s Little Meadows Encampment (18GA317), and The Tomlinson Inn Site (18GA322). These resources were included in a Little Meadows Archeological district that was identified and determined eligible under Criteria A, B, and D in 2016. The NRHP boundary of the Tomlinson Inn and Little Meadows property includes approximately 1,476 acres and was drawn to encompass the above-ground resources, the archaeological resources, and their unique natural setting.

Desktop research and field survey identified 14 resources in the Maryland portion of the APE that had not been previously surveyed. None of the newly identified resources were recommended eligible for listing in the NRHP. Refer to the *Above Ground Historic Properties Pennsylvania Determination of Eligibility Report* (PennDOT, August 2023) found in **Appendix J**, or the *Above Ground Historic Properties Maryland Determination of Eligibility Report* (PennDOT, January 2023) found in **Appendix K** for detailed information pertaining to the eligibility evaluations of above ground historic properties in Pennsylvania and Maryland.

3.8.3 Impacts

The *Above Ground Historic Properties in Pennsylvania and Maryland Determination of*

Effects Report (PennDOT, March 2024), provided in **Appendix L**, evaluated the project’s potential to affect historic architectural resources. The report assessed the effects of the four alternatives to reduce potential effects on historic architectural resources among other considerations. **Table 3-5** shows the formally evaluated potential project effects of the No Build Alternative and the four build alternatives.

3.8.4 Mitigation

The four build alternatives have already been substantially refined to avoid and/or minimize effects

to NRHP-eligible and listed historic architectural properties, where possible. The *Above Ground Historic Properties in Pennsylvania and Maryland Determination of Effects Report* (PennDOT, March 2024), provided in **Appendix L**, evaluated the project’s potential to affect historic architectural resources. The report assessed the effects of the four build alternatives on historic architectural resources among other considerations.

If either Alternatives E Modified or Alternative E-Shift Modified is identified as the selected alternative, the project would have an above ground historic properties Section 106 finding of No

Table 3-5: Section 106 Effects per Modified Alternative

Historic Resource	NRHP Status	No Build	DU Mod.	DU-Shift Mod.	E Mod.	E-Shift Mod.
S.J. Miller School (2023RE07648)	Eligible	No Effect	No Effect	No Effect	No Effect	No Effect
Miller Farm / Earnest and Carrie V. Miller Residence (1994RE00436)	Eligible	No Effect	No Adverse Effect	No Adverse Effect	No Adverse Effect	No Adverse Effect
Lowry Farm (2004RE00605)	Eligible	No Effect	Adverse Effect	Adverse Effect	No Effect	No Effect
Deal Farm / Ambrose Deal Farm (2004RE00606)	Eligible	No Effect	Adverse Effect	Adverse Effect	No Effect	No Effect
Jacob Glotfelty Barn (1995RE41407)	Eligible	No Effect	No Effect	No Effect	No Effect	No Effect
Mason-Dixon Line Marker No. 191 (2006RE00149 and G-I-A-189)	Eligible	No Effect	No Effect	No Effect	No Adverse Effect	No Adverse Effect
Tomlinson Inn and Little Meadows Property (G-I-A-012)	Listed	No Effect	No Adverse Effect	No Adverse Effect	No Adverse Effect	No Adverse Effect
The National Road (G-I-A-227)	Eligible	No Effect	No Effect	No Effect	No Effect	No Effect
Summary of Effects to Above Ground Historic Properties		No Effect	Adverse Effect	Adverse Effect	No Adverse Effect	No Adverse Effect

Adverse Effect, and no additional mitigation would be necessary.

If either Alternative DU Modified or Alternative DU-Shift Modified is identified as the selected alternative, it is anticipated that the project would have an above ground historic properties Section 106 finding of Adverse Effect.

Alternative E-Shift modified has been identified as the preferred alternative, which resulted in a Section 106 finding of No Adverse Effect. *The executed Programmatic Agreement for the project ensures compliance with the Section 106 Process for archaeological resources, and it is included as Appendix M. The Programmatic Agreement includes stipulations for conducting archaeological surveys prior to construction, avoidance/impact minimization of any eligible archaeological resources, and resolving any potential adverse effect.*

3.9 Archaeological Resources

3.9.1 Methodology

Phase IA archaeological reconnaissance has been conducted within the project area (for archaeological resources referred to as the preliminary archaeological APE). The reconnaissance includes geomorphological field investigations, background and archival research, pedestrian archaeological assessment, and the review and/or creation of pre-

[contact](#) and historic period probability models. The models show areas of archaeological sensitivity (low/no, medium, and high) throughout the preliminary archaeological APE.

For both Pennsylvania and Maryland, the work was designed and conducted to facilitate project compliance with federal legislation regarding cultural resources, including the NHPA, as amended, and in accordance with the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation guidelines (36 CFR §800) that implement the regulation. Professionals who meet or exceed the qualifications of the Secretary of the Interior's Standard and Guidelines for Archeology and Historic Preservation as specified for their position in 36 CFR §61 performed all technical work for these investigations.

A. Pennsylvania

The Phase IA effort in Pennsylvania was conducted to comply with federal and state legislation and guidance regarding cultural resources, including Section 106 of the NHPA; Section 4(f) of the USDOT Act of 1966 as amended; Executive Order 11593 (36 FR 8921, 3 CFR 1971 Comp. P. 154); Pennsylvania State History Code, Title 37; Archaeological protocols and procedures established by PennDOT Publication No. 689, *Cultural Resources Handbook* (PennDOT, 2013); and PA SHPO *Guidelines for Archaeological Investigations in Pennsylvania* (PA SHPO, 2021)

Additionally, the following handbooks were

consulted throughout the process: PennDOT Publication No. 689, *The Transportation Project Development Process: Cultural Resources Handbook* (PennDOT, September 2023) and *Standards and Guidelines for Archaeological Investigations in Maryland* (Shaffer and Cole 1994).

Project area background research included the environmental setting, historic use, and historic maps and photographs. Existing data on known archaeological and historic resources in the project vicinity was reviewed. Files were reviewed on PA-SHARE, including archaeological and historic resource surveys, reports, and NRHP files. Historic maps, atlases, and historic aerial photographs of the preliminary archaeological APE were reviewed, as were public documents and county and township histories. Geomorphological investigations determined the location and depths of testable soils and/or disturbances.

A pedestrian survey entailed a verification of surface conditions within the preliminary archaeological APE, including landforms, disturbances, steep slopes, areas of standing water, visible historic features, rock shelters, and areas with the potential to contain intact archaeological resources. A handheld GPS and digital photographs captured surface conditions. *Additional information about this survey is included in the Archival Study and Archaeological Assessment (PennDOT, October 2023), included in Appendix N.*

Probability models illustrated the potential for pre-[contact](#) and historic period archaeological resources across the preliminary archaeological APE. The pre-contact period probability model used existing Statewide Pre-contact Probability Model data available on PA-SHARE, combined with pedestrian survey data about soils and landforms for which there is the potential of the presence of intact pre-contact period archaeological resources. The historic probability model included a review of known historic sites, historic maps and aerial images for historic buildings (both still existing or no longer existing), and current surface condition data recorded during the pedestrian reconnaissance.

For the Maryland portion of the preliminary archaeological APE, an archival study and archaeological assessment were completed in accordance with Section 106 of the NHPA; Section 4(f) of the USDOT Act of 1966 as amended; Executive Order 11593 (36 FR 8921, 3 CFR 1971 Comp. P. 154); Maryland Historical Trust Act of 1985 as amended; and State Finance and Procurement Article §§ 5A- 325, and 5A-326 of the Annotated Code of Maryland.

Field investigations and reporting were in accordance with the *Maryland Historical Trust's Standards and Guidelines for Archaeological Investigations in Maryland* (Shaffer and Cole 1994). Desktop research, pedestrian reconnaissance, and geomorphological field investigations evaluated

historic and [pre-contact](#) archaeological potential within the preliminary archaeological APE.

Both Pennsylvania and Maryland SHPOs, and Consulting Parties were kept abreast of the investigations and results and provided input into the process. Refer to the *Archival Study and Archaeological Assessment* (PennDOT, October 2023), included in **Appendix N**, for detailed information pertaining to pertinent regulations, investigation methodology, and existing conditions for the Maryland portion of the preliminary archaeological APE.

3.9.2 Existing Conditions

A. Pennsylvania

Geomorphological investigations were conducted at seven Pennsylvania sites to identify the locations and depths of testable soils, and/or disturbances. These investigations determined that the next stage of archaeological survey is shallow testing methods which involve shovel test pit excavations. Areas of deeply buried or stratified soils are not anticipated within the preliminary archaeological APE.

Background research found that there are seven previously recorded archaeological sites within or partially within the project area. The Turkeyfoot Path, an American Indian path and early historic road, crossed through the project area about 6 miles south of Meyersdale.



Photograph 3-10: Soil core from unplowed upland landforms within APE

The pedestrian survey identified several areas of historic archaeological potential. The survey also verified surface conditions and determined areas that are suitable for Phase IB survey once a selected alternative has been identified. Refer to the *Phase IA Archaeological Reconnaissance and Probability Modeling* (Markosky, July 2023) for detailed information pertaining to archaeological resources in Pennsylvania.

The project area in Pennsylvania includes 941.21 acres and the archaeology probability models determined the following:

Pre-contact Archeological Probability

- High: 71.68 acres (7.62%)
- Moderate: 77.72 acres (8.26%)
- Low: 495.46 acres (52.64%)
- None: 296.35 acres (31.49%)

Historic Archeological Probability

- High: 33.53 acres (3.56%)
- Moderate: 25.53 acres (2.71%)
- Low: 376.09 acres (39.96%)
- None: 506.06 acres (53.77%)

B. Maryland

The investigation of the Maryland portion of the preliminary archaeological APE identified areas of historic archaeological potential. These areas of historic potential have not been subject to archaeological survey, but a field survey is recommended for these areas. It is also possible

that small, unmapped extraction camps associated with Maryland’s historic coal mining, lumbering, ironmaking, or maple syrup industries may be present on undisturbed portions of the preliminary archaeological APE. Archeological field studies are recommended for these areas.

The Maryland archival study and archaeological assessment determined the following *pre-contact* archaeological potential.

Pre-contact Archeological Probability

- Moderate to High: 4.89 acres (5.8%)
- Low: 24.22 acres (29.2%)
- None: 53.94 acres (65%)

No alluvial deposits are present within the Maryland section of the preliminary archaeological APE, and there is no potential for deeply buried *pre-contact* archaeological resources. The archaeological assessment recommends testing those landforms within the APE identified as having low, moderate,

and high probability for *pre-contact* resources. Refer to the *Archival Study and Archaeological Assessment* (PennDOT, October 2023) in **Appendix N** for detailed information on Maryland archaeological resources.

3.9.3 Impacts

Impacts were assessed by overlaying the proposed LOD for each modified build alternative onto the existing Phase IA archaeological reconnaissance and probability assessment results. The opening paragraphs of **Chapter 3** further describes the LOD for the project and **Figure 3.1** illustrates the LOD. **Table 3-6** shows the impacts of each alternative.

The No Build Alternative would have no impact on archaeological resources. Both Alternatives E Modified and E-Shift Modified have significantly less probability to impact archaeological resources than Alternatives DU Modified and DU-Shift Modified. The probability of impacting *pre-contact*

Table 3-6: Impacts to Areas of Archaeological Probability per Alternative for the Project

Archaeological Probability (acres)		No Build	DU Mod.	DU-Shift Mod.	E Mod.	E-Shift Mod.
Pre-contact Probability	High	0	50.2	50.2	48.8	48.8
	Moderate	0	47.4	47.4	30.5	32.8
	Low	0	266.1	266.0	191.9	191.9
Historic Probability	High	0	17.1	17.1	14.4	14.4
	Moderate	0	13.4	13.4	11.9	11.9
	Low	0	227.3	227.3	147.0	147.0
TOTAL		0	621.5	621.4	444.5	446.8

archaeological resources is lowest with Alternative E Modified. The probability of impacting historic archaeological resources is the same for Alternatives E Modified or E-Shift Modified.

3.9.4 Mitigation

A Programmatic Agreement was *executed* to ensure compliance with the Section 106 Process for archaeological resources, and it is included as **Appendix M**.

Detailed field investigations to identify intact archaeological properties will be conducted within the archaeological APE once a selected alternative is identified. If NRHP-eligible archaeological properties are identified, and it is determined the project would have an Adverse Effect to the properties, then PennDOT will identify mitigation measures in consultation with both Pennsylvania and Maryland SHPOs, Federally Recognized Tribal Nations, and other consulting parties. The Programmatic Agreement ensures that if the project needs any archaeological mitigation measures, they will be appropriately completed.

3.10 Section 4(f) Resources

3.10.1 Methodology

Section 4(f) of the USDOT Act of 1966, as amended (49 USC 303) and Section 138 of the Federal Aid Highway Act of 1968, states that:

"The Secretary [of Transportation] shall not approve any program or project which requires the use of any publicly owned land from a park, recreation area, or wildlife and waterfowl refuge of national, state, or local significance as determined by the Federal, State, or local officials having jurisdiction thereof, or any land from a historic site of national, state, or local significance as so determined by such officials unless (1) there is no feasible and prudent alternative to the use of such land, and (2) such program includes all possible planning to minimize harm to such park, recreation area, wildlife and waterfowl refuge or historic site resulting from such use."

The Secretary may also approve such a use if FHWA determines that the use of the property will have a *de minimis* (negligible) impact.

Parks, recreational areas, or wildlife and wildfowl refuges are publicly owned lands when federal, state, or local officials officially designate it as such. Designation occurs when the federal, state, or local official(s) with jurisdiction over the land have made a written designation that the land either 1) represents a park, recreation area, or wildlife and waterfowl refuge, or 2) one of its major purposes or functions is for park, recreation, or refuge purposes. Designated public parks in a municipality's preliminary planning documents or comprehensive plans are considered to be Section 4(f) properties.

In order to qualify as a Section 4(f) property, the park, recreation area, or refuge property in question must serve a major recreational or refuge purpose. Incidental, secondary, occasional, or dispersed recreational activities do not constitute a major purpose. Just because a property is a designated park does not guarantee that it serves a major recreation purpose. If there are no visitors and noticeable recreational activities, it may not qualify as a Section 4(f) property.

In addition, for publicly owned land to qualify as a Section 4(f) property, the general public must be permitted visitation at any time when the publicly owned park or recreation area is open.

Section 4(f) does not apply when visitation permits are available to only a select group and not the general public at large. Select groups could include, but are not limited to, residents of a public housing project; military and their dependents; organized sports teams/leagues; and students, faculty, and alumni of a school, college, or university.

Section 4(f) applies to historic sites that are individually eligible or listed in the NRHP. Historic sites are evaluated and determined eligible for listing in accordance with the requirements and criteria in Section 106 of the NHPA. Unlike parks, recreation areas, and refuges, historic properties can be publicly or privately owned. Historic sites are also afforded Section 4(f) status if they are a

contributing element in a NRHP eligible or listed historic district.

Pursuant to 23 CFR § 774.11(e), official(s) with jurisdiction must identify the historic site. For historic sites, the official with jurisdiction is the SHPO, and/or the THPO.

The Section 4(f) boundary for a historic site is its historic boundary as determined during the Section 106 process. The historic boundary may or may not coincide with the property boundary/tax parcel.

The Determination of Eligibility phase of the Section 106 process identified historic and archaeological sites. Section 106 of the NHPA (16 U.S.C. §470f) involves consideration of the effects of Federal projects on historic and archaeological resources. This process is described further in **Chapter 3.8** and **Chapter 3.9**.

Section 4(f) does not apply to NRHP-eligible or listed archaeological sites that are determined to be important chiefly because of potential knowledge gained by data recovery and have minimal value for preservation in place.

The project team contacted the official(s) with jurisdiction over the Section 4(f) resources within the project area. The identification of resources included the review of official management plans and any mapping that shows the location of said resources.

3.10.2 Existing Conditions

The names and descriptions of Section 4(f) resources located within the project area are discussed below and **Figure 3-5** shows their locations. Additional information about historic resources is available in **Chapter 3.8**.

Five NRHP-eligible properties were identified within the LOD in Pennsylvania:

- S.J. Miller School
- Miller Farm/Earnest and Carrie V. Miller Residence
- Lowry Farm
- Deal Farm/Ambrose Deal Farm
- Jacob Glotfelty Barn

Pennsylvania and Maryland both recognized one NRHP-eligible resource within the LOD because of its location on the state line. Each state includes its documentation in their SHPO files:

- Mason-Dixon Line Marker No. 191 (2006RE00149 and G-I-A-189)

Two NRHP-listed or eligible resources were identified within the LOD in Maryland:

- Tomlinson Inn and Little Meadows property (G-I-A-012) NRHP-listed
- The National Road (G-I-A-227) NRHP-eligible (Alt. U.S. 40 from Steelers Drive to just south of New Germany Road)

Additionally, PA SGL 231 is considered a Section 4(f)/Section 2002 resource. State Game Lands in their entirety are treated as Section 4(f)/Section 2002 recreational resources, as per PennDOT Publication No. 349, *Section 4(f)/Section 2002 Handbook* (PennDOT 2018). PA SGL 231 is located in the townships of Summit, Elk Lick, and Greenville in Somerset County and currently has a deeded acreage of 429 acres. This resource is shown on **Figure 3-5**.

3.10.3 Impacts

Section 4(f) considers an impact as a "use." A project can "use" land from a Section 4(f) property in one of three ways: (1) when land is permanently incorporated into a transportation facility, (2) when there is a temporary occupancy of land that is adverse in terms of Section 4(f) purpose as determined by the criteria in 23 CFR 774.13(d), or (3) when there is a constructive use of a Section 4(f) property as determined by the criteria in 23 CFR 774.15.

Throughout the alternatives analysis phase, PennDOT and SHA continued to evaluate modifications to the alternatives to avoid and/or minimize use of Section 4(f) resources. The four build alternatives have been designed to avoid and/or minimize potential use of Section 4(f) resources to the extent possible (see **Chapter 2.5: Refinements of Alternatives**).

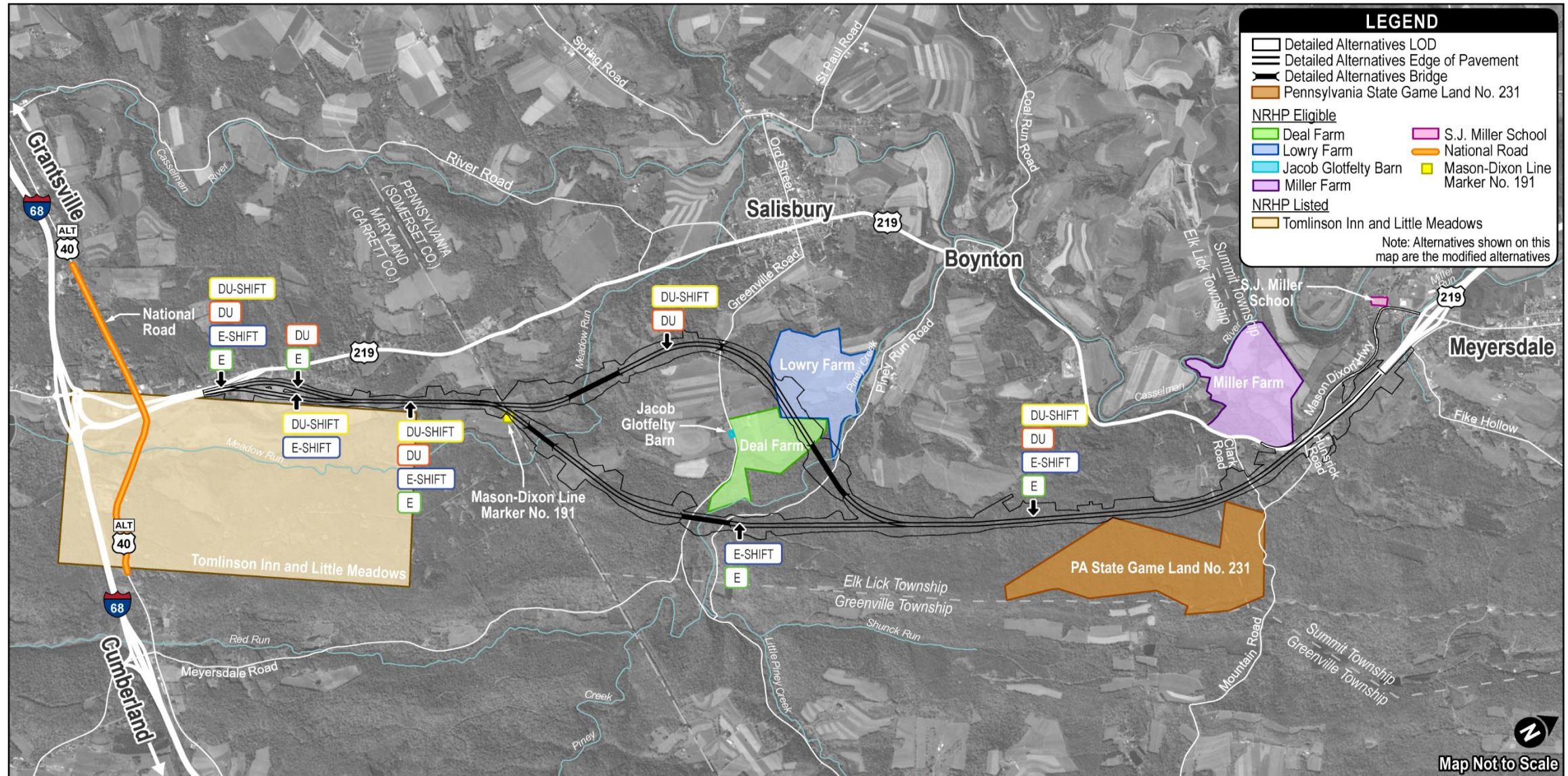


Figure 3-5: Section 4(f) Resources within Project Area

Table 3-7 presents a summary of the use of Section 4(f) resources. Only those resources that would result in a use by one or more of the alternatives is included in this table. The No Build Alternative avoids use of all identified Section 4(f) resources. None of the four build alternatives avoid all Section 4(f) resources. However, Alternatives DU Modified and DU-Shift Modified would require the use of two additional Section 4(f) resources. These uses would be considered a greater than *de minimis* Section 4(f) use. Additionally, Alternatives DU Modified and DU-Shift Modified would result in a Section 106 adverse effect to the Lowry Farm and the Deal Farm/Ambrose Farm. The Pennsylvania SHPO, in accordance with Section 106, agreed that Alternatives DU Modified and DU-Shift Modified would adversely affect the Lowry Farm and the Deal Farm / Ambrose Deal Farm.

All build alternatives result in the use of 0.78 acres along the eastern boundary of the Miller Farm /

Earnest and Carrie V. Miller Residence on the west side of U.S. 219, approximately 0.5 miles from the northern limit of the project. The historic boundary of the Miller Farm / Earnest and Carrie V. Miller Residence abuts the former Mason Dixon Highway (Old U.S. 219) right-of-way line. Old U.S. 219 in this area needs to be re-established (and be designated Business U.S. 219) since the new alternatives would eliminate the connection between the Meyersdale Bypass and U.S. 219. The Business U.S. 219 alignment would be reestablished in its original location before construction of the new U.S. 219. Approximately 0.4 miles of roadway would need to be constructed that would connect the Mason Dixon Highway to existing U.S. 219.

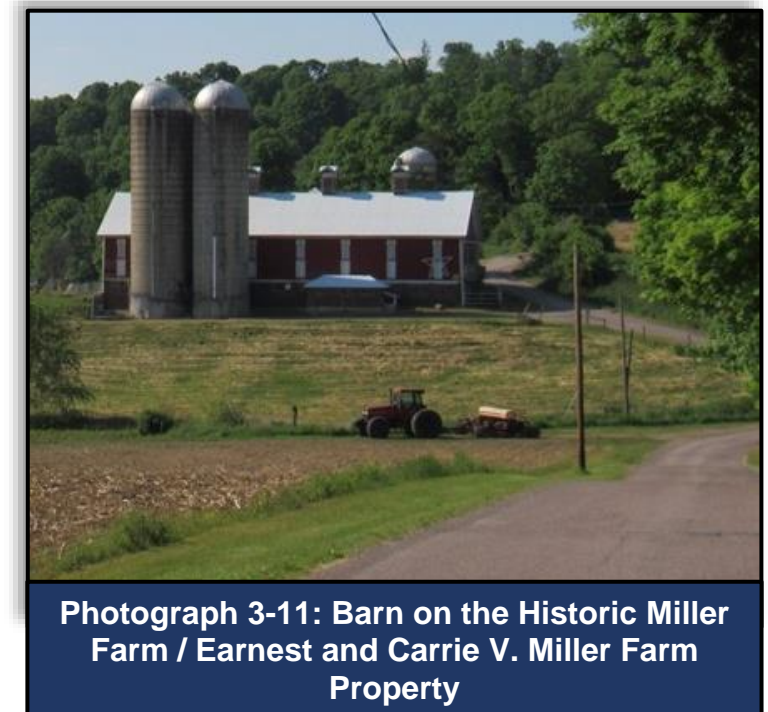
Shifting the northern portion of the four alternatives discussed here to the west would result in greater Section 4(f) use of the Miller Farm / Earnest and Carrie V. Miller Residence. Shifting the alignments

to the east would result in a Section 4(f) use of SGL 231.

The PA SHPO, in accordance with Section 106, agreed with a no adverse effect determination on the Miller Farm/Earnest and Carrie V. Miller Residence for all four build alternatives; therefore, determination of Section 4(f) *de minimis* use finding has been made in consultation with the FHWA. **Appendix I** contains the draft *Determination of Section 4(f) De Minimis Use/Section 2002 No Adverse Use of Historic Properties Form*.

Table 3-7: Summary of the Use of Section 4(f) Resources

Section 4(f) Resources	No Build	DU Mod.	DU-Shift Mod.	E Mod.	E-Shift Mod.
Miller Farm / Earnest and Carrie V. Miller Residence (1994RE00436)	No Use	<i>De Minimis</i> Use	<i>De Minimis</i> Use	<i>De Minimis</i> Use	<i>De Minimis</i> Use
Lowry Farm (2004RE00605)	No Use	Use requiring Individual 4(f) Evaluation	Use requiring Individual 4(f) Evaluation	No Use	No Use
Deal Farm / Ambrose Deal Farm (2004RE00606)	No Use	Use requiring Individual 4(f) Evaluation	Use requiring Individual 4(f) Evaluation	No Use	No Use



Photograph 3-11: Barn on the Historic Miller Farm / Earnest and Carrie V. Miller Farm Property

Alternatives DU Modified and DU-Shift Modified propose 16.2 acres of impacts to the Deal Farm and 23.4 acres of impacts to the Lowry Farm. These impacts are the result of proposed right-of-way acquisition, roadway construction, and stormwater management basins. Since these Section 4(f) properties would be adversely affected under Section 106, a greater than *de minimis* Section 4(f) use would be anticipated if one of these alternatives was the selected alternative. Alternative E Modified and E-Shift Modified would not incur any physical impact to the Deal Farm or Lowry Farm.

3.10.4 Mitigation

The re-establishment of the former U.S. 219 along its previous alignment at the eastern edge of the Miller Farm *will not* require mitigation. *Temporary construction fencing will be installed along the required right-of-way across the Miller Farm to avoid any additional, unforeseen encroachments onto the property. The fencing shall be removed after the completion of construction.* The design avoided and minimized impacts to all other resources.

3.11 Air Quality

3.11.1 Methodology

Following the passage of the Clean Air Act of 1963 (CAA), the Air Quality Act of 1967, and the Federal Clean Air Act Amendments of 1990, the U.S. EPA established National Ambient Air Quality Standards

(NAAQS) for six criteria pollutants. These pollutants include ozone, particulate matter (PM), sulfur dioxide, lead, carbon monoxide (CO), and nitrogen dioxide.

Air pollution levels in Somerset County, Pennsylvania and Garrett County, Maryland are in attainment, meaning that they consistently stay below the NAAQS for transportation-related pollutants. NEPA requires consideration of air quality impacts and a project-level analysis of CO pollutants and mobile source air toxics (MSAT). A qualitative analysis was conducted for potential CO and MSAT impacts. No qualitative analysis was necessary for PM, because the project area is within a U.S. EPA attainment area for PM standards. This analysis was guided by the PennDOT Publication No. 321, *Project-Level Air Quality Handbook* and MSAT analysis was guided by FHWA's *Updated Interim Guidance on Mobile Source Air Toxic Analysis in NEPA Documents* (FHWA, 2023).

3.11.2 Existing Conditions

A. Carbon Monoxide (CO)

CO is a component of motor vehicle exhaust and carbon fuel, and it is released when the fuel is not completely burned. FHWA and PennDOT have developed a project traffic threshold that determines the need for CO quantitative analysis of project impacts. The threshold is a design year AADT of 125,000 vehicles. Traffic analysis for the U.S. 219

Transportation Improvement Project was completed using 2022 traffic counts to determine existing conditions and an assumed linear growth rate of 1.5 percent between 2022 and the project's design year, 2050, to determine 2050 traffic volumes. These traffic volumes fall under the 125,000 AADT threshold specified in PennDOT Publication No. 321, *Project-Level Air Quality Handbook*. The analysis determined that the total AADT of the 2022 base condition is 4,811. The projected total AADT in 2050, the design year, for the build and no build condition is 6,832. This AADT for the build conditions includes traffic traveling along the proposed U.S. 219 alignment and along the existing U.S. 219 within the project area. **Chapter 3.11.3** discusses potential CO impacts.

B. Particulate Matter (PM)

PM is the term used for a mixture of solid particles and liquid droplets found in the air. These particles are a range of sizes, including particles that are less than 2.5 micrometers in diameter (PM_{2.5}) and less than 10 micrometers in diameter (PM₁₀). Sources of PM include vehicle emissions of dust, dirt, soot, smoke, and liquid droplets. The project is located in a U.S. EPA attainment area for PM_{2.5} and PM₁₀ standards. The project therefore does not require a project-level PM conformity determination. No further project-level air quality analysis for these pollutants is required according to the PM_{2.5} and PM₁₀ hot-spot analysis requirements established in

the March 10, 2006, *final transportation conformity rule (40 CFR 93)*.

C. Mobile Source Air Toxics (MSATs)

MSATs are hazardous air pollutants with significant contributions from mobile vehicles. These pollutants include benzene and other hydrocarbons such as 1,3-butadiene, formaldehyde, acetaldehyde, acrolein, and naphthalene. FHWA's *Updated Interim Guidance on Mobile Source Air Toxic Analysis in NEPA Documents* (FHWA, 2023) established a tiered approach with three categories for analyzing MSAT in NEPA documents. The three tiers are: no analysis for projects with no potential for meaningful MSAT effects, qualitative analysis for projects with low potential MSAT effects, and quantitative analysis to differentiate alternatives for projects with higher potential MSAT effects. This project would be considered a project with low potential MSAT effects because the projected design year traffic is less than 140,000 to 150,000 AADT. The roadway proposed by the project is projected to have an AADT of 6,832, significantly below 140,000 to 150,000 AADT, as previously discussed. Qualitative discussion of the project impacts is discussed in **Chapter 3.11.3.B**.

3.11.3 Impacts

A. Carbon Monoxide (CO)

There are currently no areas in Pennsylvania that are in "nonattainment" status for the CO NAAQS. Recent monitor readings across the state are well

below the standards and are expected to remain that way in the future. Since the 1990s, significant improvements in vehicle emissions technology, stricter vehicle emission standards, and improved fuel quality have greatly reduced transportation's impact on CO. PennDOT has determined that most transportation projects will not worsen CO emissions, especially those that support traffic volumes lower than 125,000 vehicles per day. The U.S. 219 project does not include or directly affect any roadways for which the 20-year forecasted daily volume would exceed the threshold level of 125,000 vehicles per day established in PennDOT Publication No. 321, *Project-Level Air Quality Handbook*. Projected AADT associated with the No Build *and Build Alternatives are* also below 125,000 vehicles per day. Therefore, the project would have no significant adverse impact on air quality as a result of CO emissions. This satisfies the qualitative analysis for CO that is required in PennDOT Publication No. 321, *Project-Level Air Quality Handbook*. While Maryland does not have an established traffic threshold for quantitative analysis of potential CO impacts, coordination with FHWA and SHA indicated the anticipated AADT of the project would have no significant adverse impact on air quality as a result of transportation related CO emissions.

B. Mobile Source Air Toxics (MSATs)

MSAT analysis was guided by FHWA's *Updated*



Photograph 3-12: Vehicles Traveling Along Existing U.S. 219

Interim Guidance on Mobile Source Air Toxic Analysis in NEPA Documents (FHWA, 2023). For the build condition associated with project implementation, the amount of MSATs emitted would be proportional to the vehicle miles traveled (VMT), assuming that other variables such as fleet mix are the same for each build alternative. *Reasonably foreseeable effects* of the project such as associated access traffic, emissions of evaporative MSAT (e.g., benzene) from parked cars, and emissions of diesel particulate matter from trucks could also cause localized differences in the MSAT.

It is expected that there would be no appreciable difference in projected AADT or overall MSAT emissions among the four build alternatives. As previously discussed, the design year AADT is projected to be the same for the proposed alternatives, with similar proposed roadway lengths for each alternative as well. For all alternatives, emissions are virtually certain to be lower than present levels in the design year of 2050 as a result of the U.S. EPA's national control programs. Local conditions may differ from these national projections in terms of fleet mix and turnover, VMT growth rates, and local control measures. The magnitude of the U.S. EPA-projected reductions however is so great (even after accounting for VMT growth) that MSAT emissions in the project area are likely to be lower in the future than they are today. According to U.S.

EPA's *Motor Vehicle Emission Simulator* (MOVES), FHWA estimates that even if VMT increases by 31% from 2020 to 2060, as forecasted nationally, a 76% combined reduction of the total annual MSATs emissions across the country is projected. Because the estimated VMT under each of the proposed build alternatives are nearly the same, varying by approximately five percent, it is expected there would be no appreciable difference in overall MSAT emissions among the various alternatives.

Information is incomplete or unavailable to credibly predict the project-specific health impacts due to changes in MSAT emissions associated with a proposed set of highway alternatives. The uncertainty introduced into the process through assumption and speculation rather than any genuine insight into the actual health impacts directly attributable to MSAT exposure associated with the proposed action would influence the outcome of such an assessment, adverse or not. Refer to the *Air Quality Memorandum*, included as **Appendix O**, prepared as part of this project or FHWA's *Updated Interim Guidance on Mobile Source Air Toxic Analysis in NEPA Documents*, *Appendix C* (FHWA, 2023) for additional information on incomplete or unavailable information for project specific MSAT health impacts.

C.

Since the issuance of the DEIS on November 15, 2024, and in compliance with new EOs and policies, this section is no longer required for federal actions.

D.

Since the issuance of the DEIS on November 15, 2024, and in compliance with new EOs and policies, this section is no longer required for federal actions.

E. Construction

Construction activities may generate temporary increases in MSAT emissions or other pollutants through construction vehicles and equipment exhaust. Construction could also temporarily impact air quality due to particulate matter in the air, in the form of dust, resulting from blasting, earthmoving activities, or movement of equipment over dirt roads. However, air quality impacts resulting from roadway construction activities are typically not a concern when contractors utilize appropriate control measures.

In Pennsylvania and Maryland, contractors must perform all construction activities in accordance with 25 PA Code Article III (Chapters 121-145, Air Resources) or 26 MD Code Subtitle 11 (Chapters 1-41, Air Quality) to ensure adequate control measures are in place. The use of approved dust palliatives such as calcium chloride or water will be required to control *fugitive dust*. Methods for

reducing impacts to existing air quality may also include covering of stockpiles during storage or transport, and restoration of vegetation as quickly as possible to prevent windblown dust. It's also important to provide advance notice and warning signs to communities that may be impacted by blasting activities.

Additional information about the air quality analysis is provided in **Appendix O**, which contains the *Air Quality Memorandum*.

3.12 Noise

3.12.1 Methodology

Roadway construction at a new location or even improvements to the existing transportation network may cause negative impacts to noise sensitive receptors located adjacent to the project area. For this reason, FHWA, PennDOT and SHA have established noise analysis methodologies and noise level criteria to assess potential noise impacts associated with the construction and use of transportation projects. A traffic noise impact occurs on a project when predicted build noise levels approach (within one A-weighted decibels [dB(A)]), meet or exceed the applicable Noise Abatement Criteria (NAC) listed in **Table 3-8**, or when the predicted noise levels are substantially higher (10 dB(A) or greater) than the existing noise level.

A *Preliminary Engineering Noise Report*, located in **Appendix P**, was completed using the methodology described in PennDOT Publication No. 24, *Project Level Highway Traffic Noise Handbook* (PennDOT, November 2019), *SHA Highway Noise Abatement Planning and Engineering Guidelines (April 2020)* and FHWA criteria as described in *Title 23 of the Code of Federal Regulations Part 772 (23 CFR 772)*. As defined in 23 CFR, Part 772, this project is classified as a Type I project for noise analysis as it

includes the construction of a highway on a new alignment. The objective of the *Preliminary Engineering Noise Report* is to provide an overview of the existing and future noise environment and predict the potential effects the project would have on the noise environment.

The noise analysis included noise monitoring and noise model validation of existing conditions at representative noise-sensitive land uses, noise modeling of existing and future (No-Build and Build)

Table 3-8: Noise Abatement Criteria (NAC) Hourly A Weighted Sound Level – Decibels [dB(A)]

Activity Category	Activity Criteria ¹ Leq(h) ²	PennDOT Approach Criteria	MD SHA Approach Criteria	Evaluation Location	Description of Activity Category
A	57	56	56	Exterior	Lands on which serenity and quiet are of extraordinary significance and serve an important public need and where the preservation of those qualities is essential if the area is to continue to serve its intended purpose.
B	67	66	66	Exterior	Residential
C³	67	66	66	Exterior	Active sport areas, amphitheaters, auditoriums, campgrounds, cemeteries, daycare centers, hospitals, libraries, medical facilities, parks, picnic areas, places of worship, playgrounds, public meeting rooms, public or nonprofit institutional structures, radio studios, recording studios, recreation areas, Section 4(f) sites, schools, television studios, trails, and trail crossings.
D³	52	51	51	Interior	Auditoriums, day care centers, hospitals, libraries, medical facilities, places of worship, public meeting rooms, public or nonprofit institutional structures, radio studios, recording studios, schools, and television studios.
E^{3/4}	72	71	71	Exterior	Hotels, motels, offices, restaurants/bars, and other developed lands, properties or activities not included in A-D or F.
F	--	--	--	--	Agriculture, airports, bus yards, emergency services, industrial, logging maintenance facilities, manufacturing, mining, rail yards, retail facilities, shipyards, utilities (water resources, water treatment, electrical), and warehousing.
G	--	--	--	--	Undeveloped lands that are not permitted

¹The Leq(h) Activity Criteria values are for impact determination only and are not design standards for noise abatement measures.
²The equivalent steady-state sound level which in a stated period of time contains the same acoustic energy as the time-varying sound level during the same time period, with Leq(h) being the hourly value of Leq.
³Includes undeveloped lands permitted for this activity category (PennDOT)
⁴Includes undeveloped lands permitted for this activity category (SHA)

conditions using FHWA's *Traffic Noise Model v2.5* (FHWA TNM®), hereafter referred to as simply "TNM", an assessment of future noise impacts, and where warranted, an evaluation of potential noise abatement measures. Refer to the *Preliminary Engineering Noise Report* located in **Appendix P** for details of the noise analysis as the following provides a summary of the report.

3.12.2 Existing Conditions

Existing noise level measurements are required to establish the basis of impact analysis, and to provide a snapshot of the typical project area existing noise levels. These measurements also validate the TNM model against field observed conditions. This ensures the accuracy and reliability of the modeled predicted future noise conditions for the proposed build alternatives.

A. Site Selection and Noise Monitoring

The identification of Noise Study Areas (NSAs) and the selection of noise monitored and modeled locations were conducted to represent all the project area existing noise source(s). Based on field reconnaissance and desktop mapping, the identified active land uses along the four build alternatives consist mostly of residential properties and two places of worship, defined as FHWA/PennDOT/SHA activity categories B and C land uses. The industrial, agricultural, and undeveloped fields along the project alternatives are considered

activity categories F and G land uses, which do not have an established NSA. **Table 3-8** from 23 CFR, Part 772 provides a description of each activity category.

There are 20 NSAs identified along the four build alternatives. These NSAs are grouped by common areas and land uses influenced by similar noise sources and levels, traffic mix and speed, and topographic features. These areas are used to evaluate traffic noise impacts and potential noise abatement measures and to assess the feasibility and reasonableness of possible noise abatement measures. A receptor is a point within the NSA that represents an area where frequent human outdoor activity occurs. The majority of receptors in the project area represent residential (Activity Category B) land uses.

The 20 NSAs identified along the four build alternatives are presented on **Figure 3-6** for Pennsylvania and **Figure 3-7** for Maryland. In Pennsylvania, 15 NSAs, 6a thru 19 were identified. In Maryland, five NSAs, 1 thru 5 were identified.

Refer to the *Preliminary Engineering Noise Report* located in **Appendix P** for detailed descriptions of the NSAs, specifically Section 4.1 and more detailed maps, specifically in Appendix A of that report.

Within the 20 NSAs, existing noise levels were monitored or predicted at 99 noise-sensitive receptor locations (34 monitored and modeled sites

and 65 modeled only sites) to identify existing acoustical conditions (see **Figure 3-6** and **Figure 3-7**). Of the 99 noise-sensitive receptor locations, 69 are located in Pennsylvania and 30 in Maryland. Refer to the *Preliminary Engineering Noise Report* located in **Appendix P** for more detailed maps of the noise-sensitive receptor locations, specifically Appendix A. Noise receptor locations are also depicted in **Appendix Q**.

Of the 34 noise-sensitive receptors selected for monitoring, five are long-term monitoring sites (24-hours). Long-term noise monitoring was conducted for one receptor site in Pennsylvania to establish a baseline for receptors where traffic is not the dominant contributing acoustical characteristics. Long-term noise monitoring was conducted at four receptor sites in Maryland to establish the loudest-hour Leq(h) for the existing condition which is used to normalize the Leq of corresponding short-term measurements where existing noise levels are not dominated by road noise and where TNM cannot predict the existing noise levels.

The remaining 29 noise-sensitive receptors selected for monitoring are short-term monitoring sites. Short-term monitoring was conducted for 20-minute periods. Individual 1-minute intervals were recorded to filter out events not representative of the existing noise environment or non-traffic-related events (e.g., barking dogs, aircrafts, and lawn equipment) during the monitoring session.

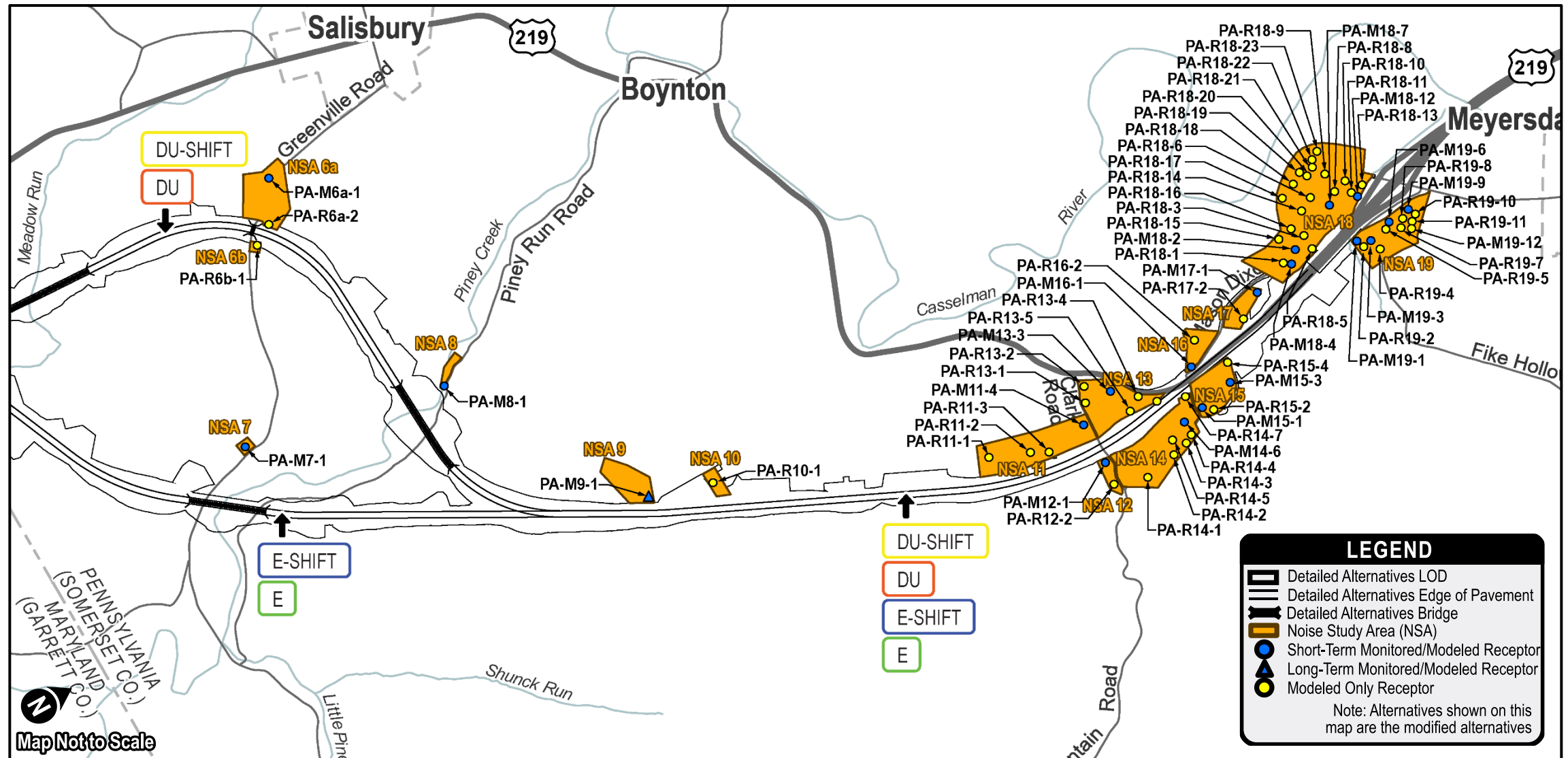


Figure 3-6: Noise-Sensitive Receptor and NSA Locations in Pennsylvania

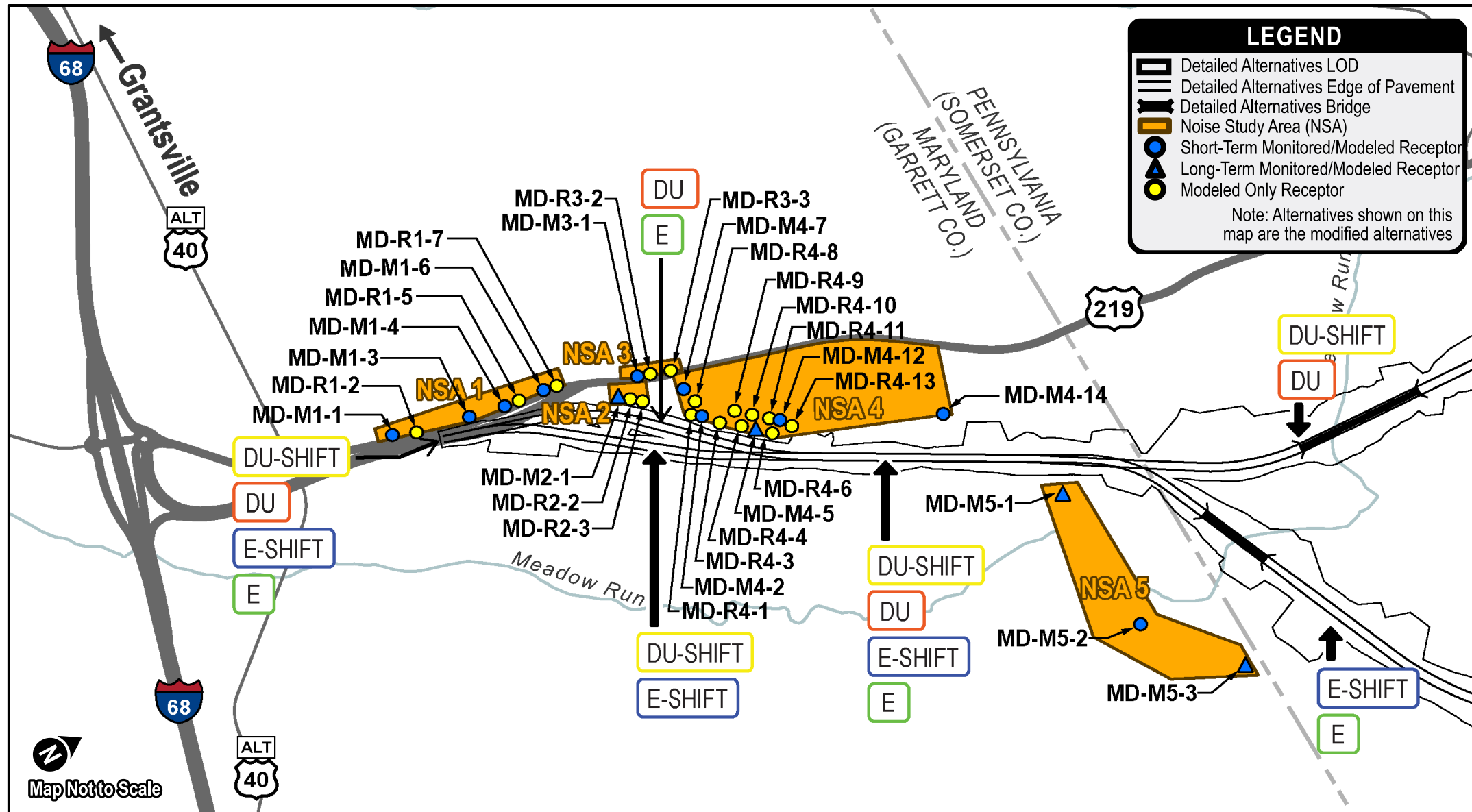


Figure 3-7: Noise-Sensitive Receptor and NSA Locations in Maryland

Monitored existing noise levels in Pennsylvania range from 40 dB(A) Leq(h) to 60 dB(A) Leq(h). Measured existing noise levels in Maryland range from 40 dB(A) Leq(h) to 69 dB(A) Leq(h). As expected, measured noise levels were greatest at those receptors in close proximity to existing U.S. 219, Mason Dixon Highway, and Chestnut Ridge Road. Refer to the *Preliminary Engineering Noise Report* located in **Appendix P** for a full list of the monitoring results of the 34 noise-sensitive receptors selected for monitoring, specifically Section 4.2.

B. Model Validation and Existing Conditions

The model validation process confirms the model's ability to reproduce the measured noise level under specific measured conditions. This comparison ensures that reported changes in noise levels between existing and future conditions are due to changes in traffic conditions and not due to discrepancies between monitoring and modeled conditions.

A TNM model was developed for both Pennsylvania and Maryland. These models included all pertinent roadways, terrain, and structural elements needed to adequately characterize the project area's existing noise environment. The model was validated by using the noise levels and traffic data collected at each monitoring site. Both PennDOT and SHA recognize a difference of +/-3 decibels between the monitored and modeled levels as

acceptable, since this is the limit of change detectable by typical human hearing.

Out of the 34 monitoring sites 20 (12 in Pennsylvania and 8 in Maryland) validated within +/- 3 decibels of the modeled TNM 2.5 noise levels. *The validation procedure is not applicable for the remaining 14 monitoring sites. At 10 monitoring sites, the existing noise environment is not dominated by an existing highway traffic noise source (the primary noise source is the natural ambient environment) and at 4 of the monitoring sites there were no occurrences of vehicles driving on the adjacent roadway.* Per PennDOT Pub 24 Section 2.5.3 *Model Validation Limitations*, a TNM model is not capable of accurately determining existing noise levels where highway traffic noise is not the dominant contributing acoustical characteristic. Refer to the *Preliminary Engineering Noise Report* located in **Appendix P** for detailed results of the TNM validation process, specifically Section 4.3.

Following model validation, an existing conditions worst-case noise model was developed comparing existing worst-case noise levels to 2050 design year noise levels. For all modeled receptors, exterior noise levels under existing conditions (2022) are predicted to range from 40 dB(A) Leq(h) to 59 dB(A) Leq(h) in Pennsylvania and 40 dB(A) Leq(h) to 68 dB(A) Leq(h) in Maryland. See **Table 3-9** for a summary of the existing worst case scenario noise

levels which are grouped by NSA and provided as a range. Refer to the *Preliminary Engineering Noise Report* located in **Appendix P** for detailed existing noise levels by receptor in each NSA, specifically Section 5.0.

3.12.3 Impacts

Future worst-case noise levels are predicted for both the No Build and build conditions to determine the effects of the project on the traffic noise levels at each of the 20 NSAs. Design year 2050 traffic was incorporated into the validated TNM model for both the No Build (existing conditions) and build conditions. The four build alternatives do not follow the same alignment, therefore, each of the build alternatives has some unique adjacent receptors that could be impacted by the proposed alternative.

Both PennDOT and SHA have determined that a traffic noise impact is present if a future design year noise level approaches or exceeds the defined NAC for the corresponding Land Use Activity Category and or the future design year noise levels substantially increase by 10 dB(A) or more above existing noise levels.

As shown in **Table 3-9**, two impacts from Existing Year (2022) traffic noise levels were identified in NSA 3 located in Maryland due to equaling or exceeding the NAC (66 dB(A) for residential land uses). The Existing Year noise levels can be attributed to the proximity of the noise sensitive

receptors to Chestnut Ridge Road. There are only four identified impacted receptors for the Design Year 2050 No Build due to predicted noise levels approaching or exceeding the NAC (66 dB(A) for residential land uses). These impacted receptors occur in NSAs 1 and 3 located in Maryland. Mitigation was not evaluated for these impacted receptors because No Build noise levels are used for comparison to existing and Build noise levels associated with the project.

As shown in **Table 3-9**, thirteen Design Year 2050 Build noise level impacts were identified for Alternatives DU Modified and E Modified, with eight receptors in Pennsylvania (NSAs 12, 13, 14 and 18) and five in Maryland (NSAs 1 and 4). These impacts are associated with predicted noise levels approaching or exceeding the NAC (66 dB(A) for residential land uses) or substantially exceeding existing noise levels by 10 dB(A) or more.

As shown in **Table 3-9**, nine noise impacts were identified for DU-Shift Modified and E-Shift Modified, with eight in Pennsylvania (NSAs 12, 13, 14 and 18) and one in Maryland (NSA 1). These impacts are associated with predicted noise levels approaching or exceeding the NAC (66 dB(A) for residential land uses) or substantially exceeding existing noise levels by 10 dB(A) or more.

Noise abatement consideration is not warranted for NSAs 2, 3, 5-11, 15, 16, 17 and 19 since no

Table 3-9: 2022 Existing and Proposed Worst-Case Traffic Noise Level Summary

1	2	3		4	5	6					7				
NSA	LU Cat.	No. of Receptors per NSA		2023 Measured Noise Level [dB(A)]	2022 Existing Worst-Case Traffic Noise Level [dB(A)]	2050 PM Peak Hour Predicted Noise Levels [dB(A)]					Summary of Impacted Receptors Per NSA by Project Alternative				
		Measured/ Modeled	Modeled Only			No Build	DU Mod.	E Mod.	DU-Shift Mod.	E-Shift Mod.	No Build	DU Mod.	E Mod.	DU-Shift Mod.	E-Shift Mod.
Pennsylvania															
6a	B	1	1	54	54	54	54	54	54	54	0	0	0	0	0
6b	B	0	1	-	54	54	54	54	54	54	0	0	0	0	0
7	B	1	0	45	45	45	45	50	45	50	0	0	0	0	0
8	B	1	0	56	56	56	56	56	56	56	0	0	0	0	0
9	B	1	0	46	46	46	49	49	49	49	0	0	0	0	0
10	B	0	1	-	46	46	49	49	49	49	0	0	0	0	0
11	B	1	3	40	40	40	42-48	42-48	42-48	42-48	0	0	0	0	0
12	B	1	1	41	41	41	54-44	54-44	54-44	54-44	0	1 ²	1 ²	1 ²	1 ²
13	B	1	5	52	40-57	43-59	43-60	43-60	43-60	43-60	0	1 ²	1 ²	1 ²	1 ²
14	B	1	6	44	41-48	41-50	43-60	43-60	43-60	43-60	0	1 ²	1 ²	1 ²	1 ²
15	B	2	2	53-54	50-54	51-54	54-58	54-58	54-58	54-58	0	0	0	0	0
16	B	1	1	60	50-58	55-60	54-64	54-64	54-64	54-64	0	0	0	0	0
17	B	1	1	50	50-52	50-54	51-54	51-54	51-54	51-54	0	0	0	0	0
18	B/C	4	19	49-56	39-59	41-60	43-70	43-70	43-70	43-70	0	5 ^{1,2}	5 ^{1,2}	5 ^{1,2}	5 ^{1,2}
19	B	4	8	52-54	41-54	42-57	43-56	42-56	43-56	42-56	0	0	0	0	0
Maryland															
1	B	4	3	59-64	61-64	62-66	63-66	63-66	63-66	63-66	1 ¹	2 ¹	2 ¹	1 ¹	1 ¹
2	B/C	1	2	51	49-55	51-56	53-55	53-55	49-53	49-53	0	0	0	0	0
3	B	1	2	69	65-68	66-69	62-65	62-65	62-65	62-65	3 ¹	0	0	0	0
4	B	5	9	35-55	44-56	41-57	46-55	46-55	42-55	42-55	0	3 ²	3 ²	0	0
5	B	3	0	42-47	42-47	42-47	43-53	46-54	43-53	46-54	0	0	0	0	0
TOTAL Impacted Receptors Per NSA by Project Alternative											4	13	13	9	9
1) Receptor(s) impacted due to predicted noise levels approach or exceed the Noise Abatement Criteria (66 dB(A) for residential land uses). 2) Receptor(s) impacted due to predicted noise levels substantially exceeding existing noise levels by 10 dB(A) or more.															

predicted future noise impacts were identified for the four build alternatives.

NSAs 1 and 18 have predicted future noise levels equaling or exceeding the NAC (66 dB(A) for residential land uses) or substantially exceeding existing noise levels by 10 dB(A) or more. While abatement is warranted, mitigation is not feasible due to driveway and roadway access. Any noise barrier built for NSAs 1 and 18 would need to be terminated at each driveway due to sight distance and safety requirements. These breaks in the noise barrier would create pathways for traffic noise from the adjacent road to pass through, hindering the barrier's effectiveness. Therefore, abatement was not further studied for these NSAs.

NSAs 4 and 12, 13 and 14 have predicted noise levels substantially exceeding existing noise levels by 10 dB(A) or more, therefore, noise abatement is warranted at NSA 4 in Maryland for predicted noise impacts from Alternatives DU Modified and E Modified and at NSAs 12, 13 and 14 in Pennsylvania for predicted noise impacts from all four build alternatives.

Refer to the *Preliminary Engineering Noise Report* located in **Appendix P** for more detailed noise impacts by receptor in each NSA, specifically Section 5.0.

3.12.4 Mitigation

For preliminary noise analysis purposes, noise barriers were considered to be the only feasible form of noise mitigation. *The Final Design noise study will consider where feasible* earth noise berms, traffic management measures, alternation of horizontal and vertical alignment, and acquisition of real property or interests therein (predominately unimproved property) to serve as a buffer zone to preempt development which would be adversely impacted by traffic noise. *Undeveloped lands will be analyzed for noise impacts in the Final Design Noise Report and the results will be shared with local officials.*

Preliminary noise barriers were evaluated for the four NSAs warranting noise abatement consideration with the build alternatives. FHWA, PennDOT and SHA require that feasible and reasonable noise abatement measures be considered and evaluated for the benefit of predicted build-condition traffic noise impacts.

The assessment of noise abatement feasibility, in general, focuses on whether it is physically possible to build an abatement measure (i.e. noise barrier) that achieves a minimally acceptable level of noise reduction. Barrier feasibility considers three primary factors: acoustics (PennDOT requires barriers to achieve a 5 dB(A) noise reduction at 50% of the impacted receptors, SHA requires barriers to achieve a 5 dB(A) noise reduction at 70% of the

impacted receptors), safety and access, and site constraints.

The assessment of noise abatement reasonableness, in general, focuses on whether it is practical to build an abatement measure. Barrier reasonableness considers three primary factors: viewpoints, design goal (PennDOT requires barriers to achieve a 7 dB(A) noise reduction for at least 1 impacted receptor, SHA requires barriers to achieve a 7 dB(A) noise reduction for at least three or 50% of the impacted receptors), and cost effectiveness (PennDOT threshold is 2,000 square feet per benefited receptor, SHA threshold is 700-2,700 square feet per benefited receptor depending on the scope of the project).

The preliminary noise barriers analyzed for NSAs 4 and 12, 13 and 14 were determined feasible but not reasonable per PennDOT's and SHA's traffic noise policy due to failing the cost per benefitted receptor criteria. Therefore, the preliminary noise barriers are not recommended for further consideration. **Table 3-10** presents a summary of these preliminary barriers for the build alternatives. Refer to the *Preliminary Engineering Noise Report* located in **Appendix P** for a detailed description of the preliminary noise barriers analyzed, specifically Section 6.2.

Additional noise analyses using more detailed engineering data *will* be conducted during the final

design stage of the project and documented in the *Final Design Noise Report*. The final design noise analysis *will* refine the noise modeling effort and verify abatement warrants, feasibility, and reasonableness. Only if noise abatement is warranted, feasible, and reasonable, this effort would then include coordination with the affected public to define the desires of the benefited communities.

3.13 Farmlands

3.13.1 Methodology

PennDOT and the SHA have studied the farmlands in the project area in accordance with applicable

state and federal regulations, including farmland soils pursuant to the Farmland Protection Policy Act (FPPA), 7 USC 4201; Productive Agricultural Land (PAL) pursuant to PA Act 1979-100; prime agricultural land pursuant to 4 Pa Code Chapter 7, §7.301 et seq., Agricultural Land Preservation Policy (ALPP); and land enrolled in the USDA Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) and Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP).

While Maryland does not have statewide farmland protection policies, they have a statewide farmland preservation program and a statewide preferential tax assessment program for farmland and farm

properties. Additionally, the Maryland Agricultural Land Preservation Foundation purchases agricultural preservation easements that restrict development on prime farmland and woodland.

Generally, farmland investigations included field surveys, farmer interviews, review of county tax parcel data, and coordination with local and county agricultural land preservation boards.

Refer to the *Agricultural Resources Existing Conditions Memorandum* in **Appendix R** for detailed information pertaining to pertinent regulations, methodology, and existing conditions of agricultural properties.

3.13.2 Existing Conditions

A. FPPA Farmland Soils

The FPPA protects soils designated by the USDA as prime farmland soils, unique farmland soils, farmland soil of statewide importance, and farmland soil of local importance. The FPPA does not require these farmland soils to be in active agricultural use for protection. FPPA is a federal program and applies to both Pennsylvania and Maryland. The act requires federal agencies to consider alternatives that could lessen adverse effects on farmland, and ensure federal actions are compatible with state and local government farmland protection programs and policies. The FPPA requires a Farmland Conversion Impact Rating Form be prepared. The prepared

Table 3-10: Summary of Preliminary Noise Barrier Systems

NSA	Modified Build Alternatives	Number of Impacted Receptors ¹	Total Number of Benefited Receptors ²	Preliminary Barrier Length (FT)	Height above Ground from TNM (FT)	Square Footage of Preliminary Barrier (SF)	SF/BR ³ (Square Footage per Benefited Receptor)	Feasible? / Reasonable?
NSA 4 (MD)	DU & E	3	3	1,004	16-21 (avg. 19.16)	18,850	6,283	Yes / No
NSA 12 (PA)	DU, DU-Shift, E & E-Shift	1	1	825	27-30 (avg. 28.73)	23,699	23,699	Yes / No
NSA 13 (PA) ⁴	DU, DU-Shift, E & E-Shift	1	1	600	30	18,000	18,000	Yes / No
NSA 14 (PA) ⁴	DU, DU-Shift, E & E-Shift	2	2	830	1-14 (avg. 13)	10,790	5,810	Yes / No

1. An impacted receptor is an individual receptor unit that has a future design year noise level that approaches or exceeds the NAC and/or that experiences a substantial noise level increase of 10 dB(A) or more above existing noise levels.

2. PennDOT and SHA define a benefited receptor an impacted or non-impacted receptor receiving a 5 dB(A) or greater insertion loss.

3. PennDOT maximum SF/BR = 2,000 and SHA maximum SF/BR = 2,700.

4. Based on preliminary engineering a retaining wall would be required to construct and maintain the preliminary noise barriers for NSAs 13 and 14. The square foot cost does not consider the retaining wall square footage and associated costs.

Farmland Conversion Impact Rating Form is in **Appendix S**. Additional information about existing conditions is provided in **Appendix R**, which contains the *Agricultural Resources Existing Conditions Memorandum*. **Figure 3-8** shows the FPPA soils. There are no Unique Farmland Soils or Soils of Local Importance present within the project area.

B. Active Farmland and Farm Operations

As described in detail in the *Agricultural Resources Existing Conditions Memorandum* (PennDOT, July 2023), there are 13 individual farm operations within the project area as described in **Table 3-11**. Refer to **Figure 3-9** for a map depicting the location of farmland and farm operations.

C. Preserved Farmland

There are no preserved farms or agricultural easements located within the project area.

D. Preferential Tax Assessment Parcels

According to Somerset County data, each of the Pennsylvania farm operations in the project area have parcels enrolled in Clean and Green preferential tax assessment program. PA Act 319, known as Clean and Green, bases property taxes on land use values rather than fair market values. This often results in a tax savings for farmland owners.

Maryland may grant farmland the Agricultural Use Assessment. This assessment appraises farmland according to its current use, and not according to the actual market value which, in many instances, would be substantially higher. Based on Maryland state tax records, all the farm operations within the project area have parcels enrolled in the Agricultural Use Assessment.

E. Agricultural Zoning

None of the municipalities in the project area have adopted zoning regulations pertaining to agricultural properties.

F. Prime Agricultural Land – Pennsylvania Only

The ALPP defines Prime Agricultural Land as land currently in active agricultural use (not including the growing of timber) which has been devoted to active agricultural use for the preceding three years and falls into one of the following five priorities:

- Priority 1: Preserved farmland
- Priority 2: Agricultural Security Areas (ASAs)
- Priority 3: Farmland enrolled in preferential tax assessments
- Priority 4: Farmland planned for agricultural use and subject to effective agricultural zoning
- Priority 5: Farmland classified as unique farmland or capability classes I, II, III, or IV land

Figure 3-8 depicts ALPP Prime Agricultural Land within the project area.

Table 3-11: Active Farmland & Farm Operations

ID#	Operation	Owner	Operation Type
1	Grube	Dennis & Kathy Grube	Livestock
2	Bittner	Dennis & Kathy Grube	Sugar Maple
3	Stern	Brandon M. Stern	Hay/Horse
4	Stutzman	James C. Stutzman et al	Crops/ Livestock
5	Yoder	Charles E. & Lois I. Clevenger	Crops
6	Mast	William & Sylvia Mast, Sandra Banker, & others	Crops/ Livestock/ Sugar Maple
7	Showalter	Michael D. & Patricia Ann Showalter	Hay/Horses
8	Deal/Miller	Myron Deal & Jennifer Miller Jerry L. & Jayne K. Deal	Crops/ Livestock/ Sugar Maple
9	Markowitz	Sidney S. & Carolyn S. Markowitz Revocable Trust	Crops
10	Carey	Maust-Snyder Linda Lif Int, Palmer Charles W Rem	Crops
11	Garlitz Brothers	Richard J. & Marsha McKenzie	Crops
12	Camp	Richard D. & Eileen R. Yoder	Crops
13	Merrill	John D. & Sandra S. Hershberger et al	Crops

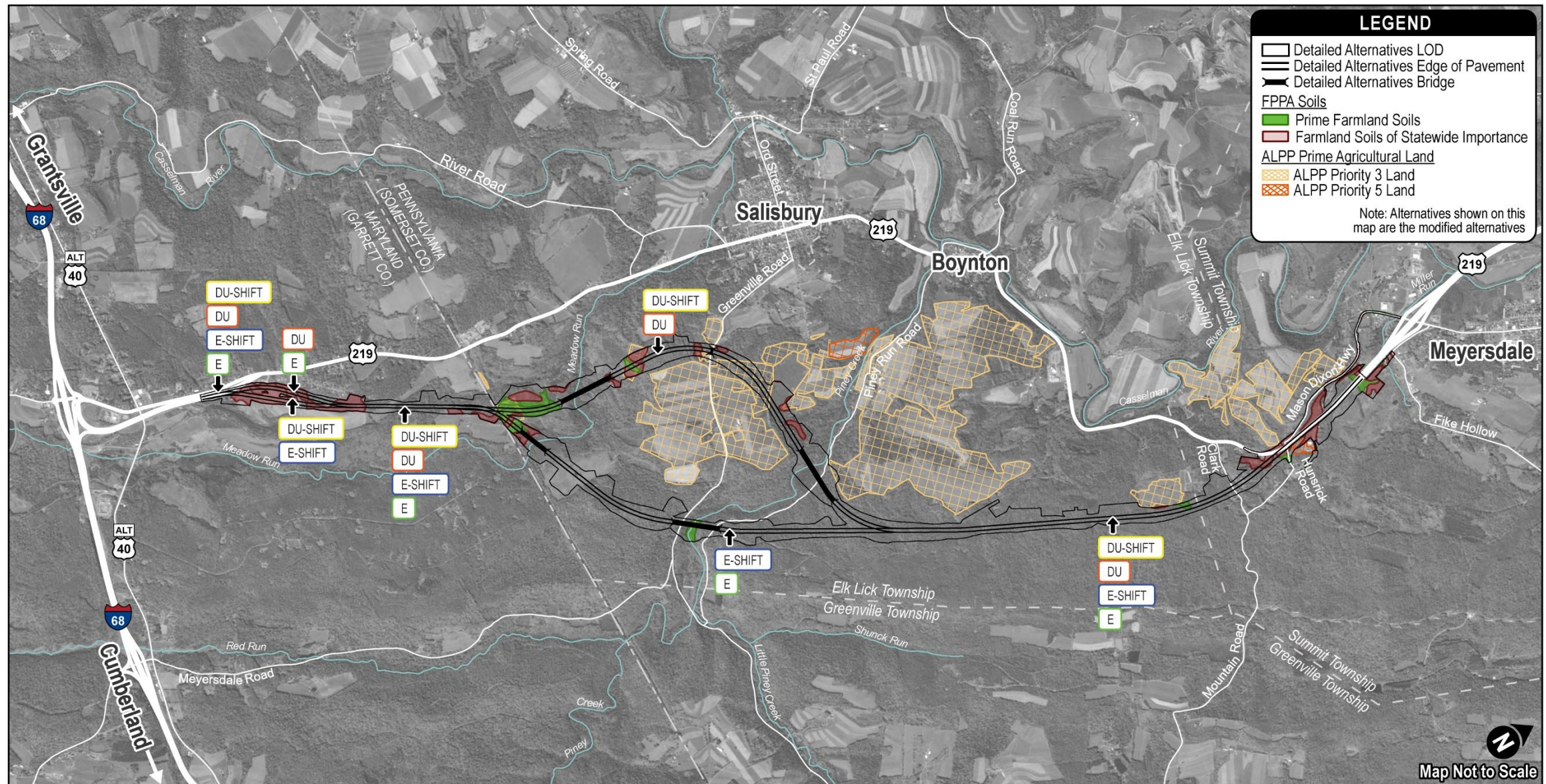


Figure 3-8: FPPA Soils and ALPP Prime Agricultural Land

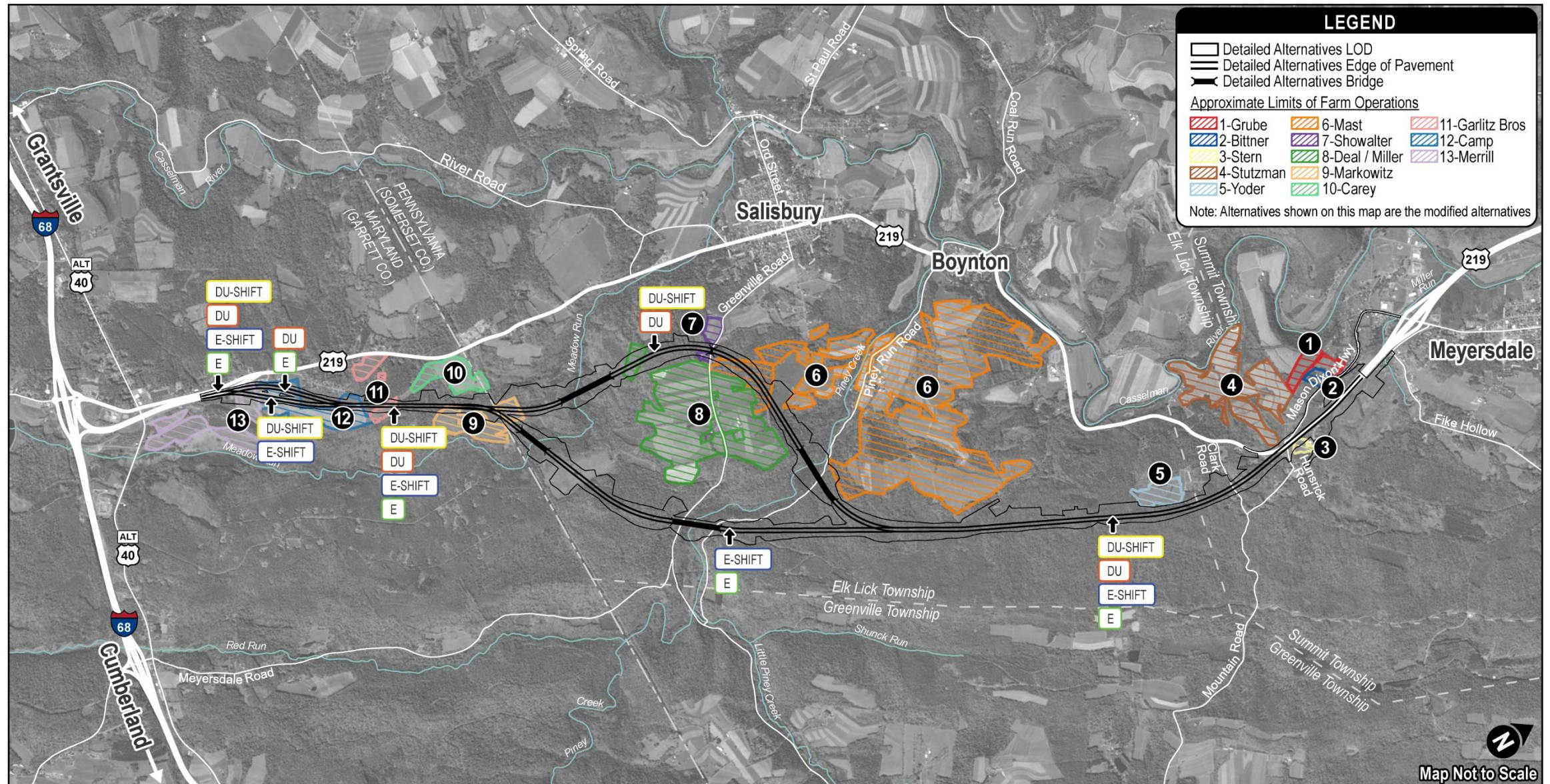


Figure 3-9: Productive Farmland and Farmland Operations

G. Productive Agricultural Land (PA Act 1979-100) – Pennsylvania Only

PA Act 1979-100 (also known as Act 100) established the Agricultural Lands Condemnation Approval Board (ALCAB) which has approval authority for the condemnation of productive agricultural land for new highway projects. PennDOT defines PAL as “any land used for production, for commercial purposes of livestock, and livestock products. Agricultural production includes the processing or retail marketing of such crops, livestock, or livestock products if more than 50 percent of such processed or merchandised products are produced by the farm operator.

PennDOT policy also considers barns and other agricultural buildings, land lying fallow due to crop rotation, and subsistence farms where the farm operator has land in agricultural production for his own ‘subsistence’ use rather than primarily for commercial purposes, as “PAL” (PennDOT Publication No. 324, *The Agricultural Resources Evaluation Handbook*, PennDOT 2016). Note, because Act 100 is a Pennsylvania law, it is not applicable to the portion of the project area in Maryland. There are approximately 50 acres of PAL in the Pennsylvania portion of the project area.

H. Agricultural Security Area (ASA)

No ASAs were identified within the project area.

3.13.3 Impacts

Impacts were assessed by overlaying the LOD for each alternative with the existing agricultural resources. **Table 3-12** summarizes impacts to the prime agricultural land located within the Pennsylvania portion of the project area.

Table 3-13 identifies impacts to overall farmland resources. **Table 3-14** identifies impacts to farmlands as per Pennsylvania regulations and policy.

Table 3-12: Impacts to Farmland Resources – Pennsylvania Only

Farmland Resources (acres)	No Build	DU Mod.	DU Shift Mod.	E Mod.	E Shift Mod.
Primary Agricultural Land – Pennsylvania¹					
Priority 3 (Preferential Tax Assessment)	0	40.28	40.28	1.94	1.94
Priority 5 (Capability Class I, II, III, and IV land)	0	1.72	1.72	1.72	1.72
Productive Agricultural Land – Pennsylvania					
Productive Agricultural Land	0	41.99	41.99	3.67	3.67

¹No Priority 1, Priority 2, or Priority 4 land is present in the project area. Regarding Priority 5, there are no unique farmland soils present in the project area.



Photograph 3-13: Farmland at the Markowitz Operation in Somerset County



Photograph 3-14: Maust Farm Property in Somerset County

Regarding FPPA Farmland Soils, a completed *NRCS Farmland Conversion Impact Rating Form* is included in **Appendix S**. Part VI of the form is the Corridor Assessment Criteria with points assigned to each alternative based on criteria such as the farm size, area, farm investments, *reasonably foreseeable effects*, etc. in each build alternative LOD. The assessment concluded, with concurrence from the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS), the project would not impact NRCS interests (i.e. farmland soils). Further farmland soil avoidance alternatives are not warranted.

As noted in the tables, there are no impacts from the No Build Alternative. Alternatives DU Modified and DU-Shift Modified are very similar to each other, and Alternatives E Modified and E-Shift Modified are

also similar to each other. Alternatives DU Modified and DU-Shift Modified impacts to farmland are about twice the amount of impact compared to

Alternatives E Modified and E-Shift Modified. This is mainly due to the placement of the alignments of Alternatives E Modified and E-Shift Modified to the east along Meadow Mountain, thereby avoiding productive agricultural land in Pennsylvania. Impacts to farmlands in Maryland are very similar between all the alternatives. In addition, short-term dust and emissions from construction could temporarily hinder crop growth and livestock.

Table 3-15 identifies both direct and *reasonably foreseeable effects (RFEs)* to the farm operations. *RFEs* are those remaining portions of farm fields

that are too small to farm or have become inaccessible due to the project. The *RFEs* to farmland for each alternative is more than 100 acres, except for Alternative E-Shift Modified, which has the least *RFE* impacts, at 92.11 acres.

Overall, Alternative E-Shift Modified would result in the least amount of impact on farm operations in the project area. Additional refinements would be made to the Selected Alternative during final design. The project team would work with farmers to minimize farmland impacts and provide access to remnant parcels where possible.

For Pennsylvania farmland impacts, if the project will require the condemnation of productive agricultural land, then the ALCAB will review the

Table 3-13: Impacts to Prime Agricultural Land Priority Areas

Farmland Resource (acres)	No Build	DU Mod.	DU-Shift Mod.	E Mod.	E-Shift Mod.
FPPA Farmland Soils					
Prime Farmland Soils	0	34.2	34.2	21.2	21.2
Farmland Soils of Statewide Importance	0	104.3	104.3	83.4	83.3
Active Farmland and Farm Operations					
Active Farmland (acres)	76.1	76.3	37.4	37.6	76.1
Farm Operations (#)	0	11	11	8	8
Preferential Tax Assessment Parcels					
Preferential Tax Assessment Parcels	0	74.39	74.65	35.84	36.05

Table 3-14: Impacts to Farmland Resources

ALPP Prime Agricultural Land Priority Areas	Pennsylvania Project Area (Acres)
Priority 1: Preserved Farmland	0
Priority 2: Agricultural Security Areas	0
Priority 3: Farmland Preferential Tax Assessment	45.16
Priority 4: Planned Agricultural Use or Zoning	0
Priority 5: Unique Farmland or Capability Class I, II, III, and IV land	5.06

project, as required by PA Act 100. PA Act 100 requires ALCAB approval for the condemnation of agricultural lands for highways unless the property acquisition is within the existing highway exemption. This would include the development of a Farmland Assessment Report to outline farmland impacts and minimization measures for the Selected Alternative.

3.13.4 Mitigation

Mitigation for farmland impacts *will* include compliance with the Federal Uniform Relocation Assistance and Real Property Acquisition Act Policies, and state requirements based on this act, as appropriate, for farmland acquired by the project.

During Final Design, the Selected Alternative will be refined, and farmland avoidance and minimization measures will be considered. This will include coordination with property owners and farm operators to reduce farmland impacts, provide access to remnant parcels where possible, develop a suitable schedule for detours, and/or provide access during construction, etc. This process will be documented in the Farmland Assessment Report for the Selected Alternative, if applicable, and the project technical files.

Table 3-15: Active Farmland & Farm Operations Direct Foreseeable Effects (RFE)

ID#	Operation	No Build	DU Mod. (acres)		DU-Shift Mod. (acres)		E Mod. (acres)		E-Shift Mod. (acres)	
			Direct	RFE	Direct	RFE	Direct	RFE	Direct	RFE
1	Grube	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
2	Bittner	0	0.08	0	0.08	0	0.08	0	0.08	0
3	Stern	0	1.16	0	1.16	0	1.16	0	1.16	0
4	Stutzman	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
5	Yoder	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
6	Mast	0	23.44	11.48	23.44	11.48	0	0	0	0
7	Showalter	0	1.13	0.72	1.13	0.72	0	0	0	0
8	Deal/Miller	0	8.86	2.28	8.86	2.28	0	0	0	0
9	Markowitz*	0	11.12	37.52	11.12	37.52	5.62	43.02	5.62	43.02
10	Carey*	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
11	Garlitz Brothers*	0	3.54	3.03	3.45	3.03	3.68	3.03	3.68	3.03
12	Camp*	0	20.06	49.51	20.07	37.14	20.09	49.48	19.99	37.22
13	Merrill*	0	6.67	9.15	7.02	8.8	6.67	9.15	6.98	8.84
TOTAL		0	76.62	113.69	76.88	100.97	37.86	104.68	38.07	92.11
*These operations are located in Maryland. The Markowitz Operation has parcels in both Pennsylvania and Maryland.										

3.14 Hazardous or Residual Waste Sites

3.14.1 Methodology

A Phase I Environmental Site Assessment (ESA), included in **Appendix T**, was conducted in accordance with PennDOT Publication No. 281, *The Transportation Project Development Process: Waste Site Evaluation Procedures Handbook* (PennDOT, May 2019) to identify potential Areas of Concern (AOC) within the project area. Several potential areas of environmentally regulated substance release(s), referred to as AOC, were identified within the project area and along the proposed build alternatives.

The Phase I ESA investigation report, dated January 17, 2024, included a review of current federal and state environmental databases provided by Environmental Data Resources, Inc. (EDR), PA DEP and MDE records review related to properties within or adjacent to the build alternatives, a physical settings review of the project area, review of historical aerial photographs and topographic maps, and a site reconnaissance. Interviews were attempted with individuals associated with property within the project area to obtain information indicating environmental concerns associated with the proposed alternatives.

3.14.2 Existing Conditions

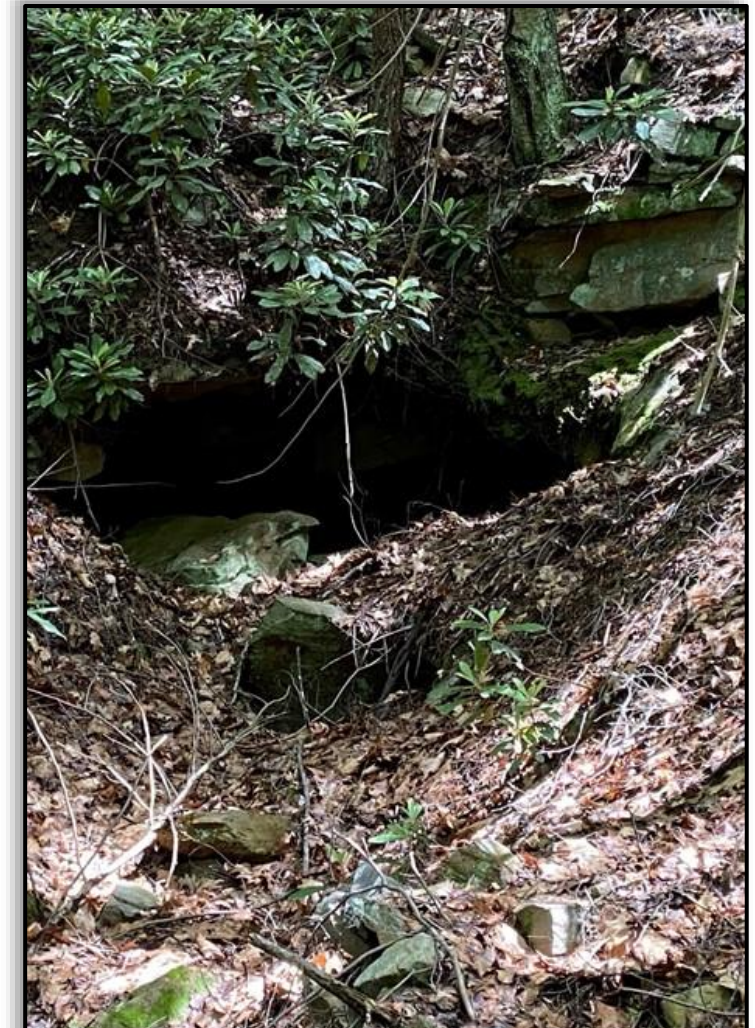
The project area is mostly rural with residential and small commercial facilities, large areas of forested land, and farmland. Several portions of the project area have been farmland since at least 1939 through present. Portions of all build alternatives have historically been used for mining activities from at least 1958 through 1974 or later and abandoned mine land (AML) is present within and adjacent to the build alternatives alignments in the northern portion of the project area. Refer to **Figure 3-10** for the location of historic mining activities within the project area.

3.14.3 Impacts

The findings of the Phase I ESA investigation identified potential impacts to each alternative. The impacts are generally divided into No Build Alternative, mining impacts, and hazardous waste/petroleum impacts. Refer to **Figure 3-10** and **Figure 3-11** for the locations of the AOC, or impacts, identified by the assessment.

A. No Build Alternative

The No Build Alternative would not result in the construction of roadways and would have no impact on hazardous waste sites or AOC.



Photograph 3-15: Abandoned Mine Land in Somerset County

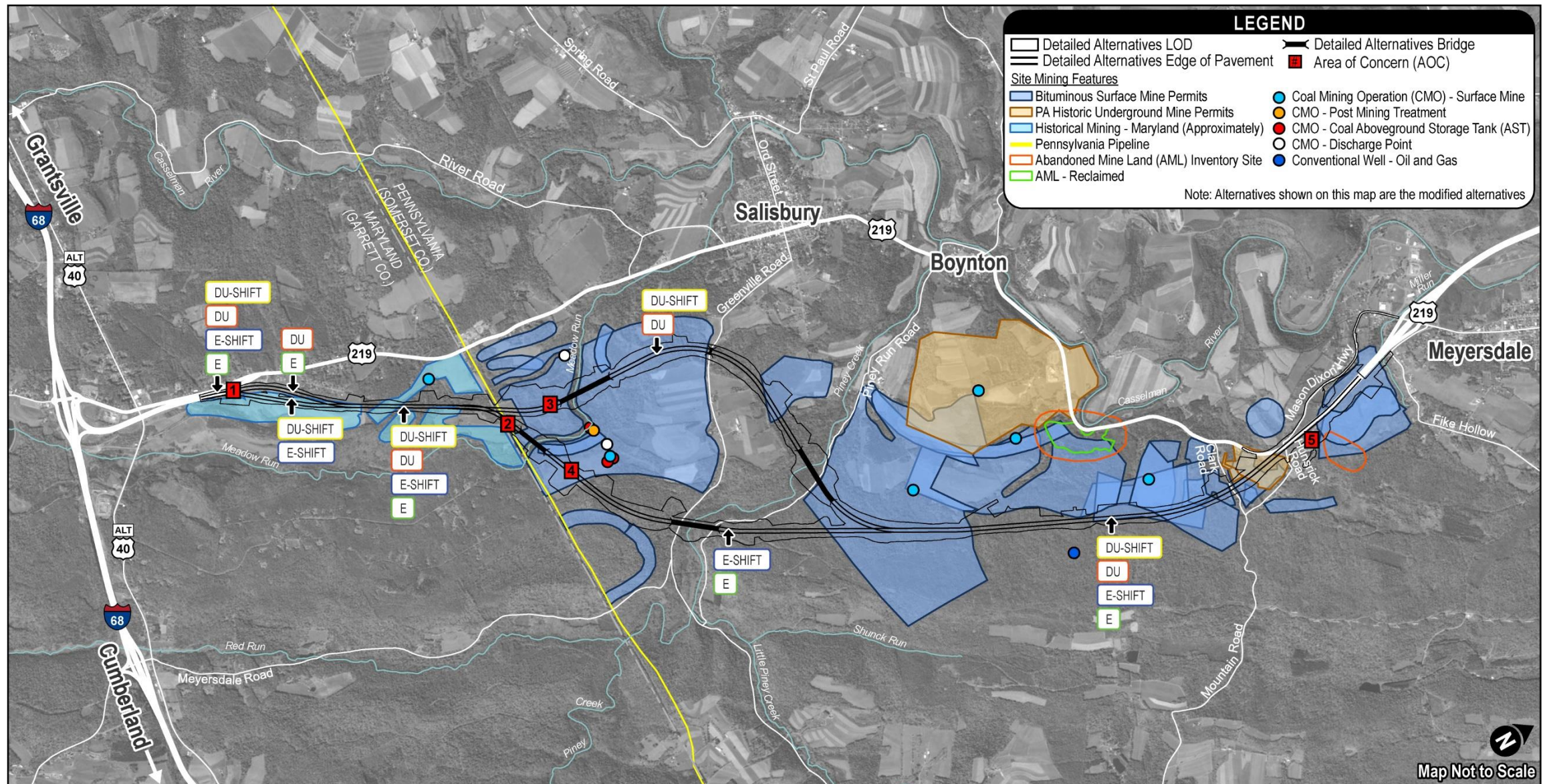


Figure 3-10: Historic Mining Features within Project Area



Figure 3-11: Phase I ESA Areas of Concern

B. Abandoned Mine Land Residual Waste

Numerous surface and underground mining permits, and historical mining are within and adjacent to all build alternatives. The possibility of residual waste from mining activities would impact all build alternatives.

According to the PA DEP eMapPA database, AML is present within and adjacent to the east of the common northern portion of all build alternatives. Within this AML are an “impacted water source” and an “open mine shaft”, located approximately 0.10 and 0.16 miles east of the common portion of the build alternatives and northeast of Mountain Road. The AML identified within and adjacent to this section of the build alternatives and the possible presence of subsurface mining features within this section would impact all build alternatives. Surface and underground abandoned mines, and associated spoil and refuse piles, may produce an ongoing source of acid mine drainage and toxic heavy metals that can have long-term impacts on soil, surface water, and groundwater. Elevated concentrations of metals and erosion caused by disturbed land and unprotected slopes may be found in AML areas. Excavation in the project area may encounter heavy metal contamination and areas of eroded and unstable land associated with AML.

Two locations of significant mounds of spoils, assumedly associated with abandoned mines, were identified at the site. Mounds of spoils were situated

adjacent to the southeast of Alternatives E Modified and E-Shift Modified, just south of the Pennsylvania/Maryland state line.

A large, stagnant pond was located near the mounds. Mounds of spoils were also observed adjacent and to the west of Alternatives DU Modified and DU-Shift Modified, roughly 0.78 miles north of the Pennsylvania/Maryland state line. The mounds of spoils reside within documented historic mining locations and/or permitted areas and would impact all build alternatives.

During the site reconnaissance, stained surface soil was within a sludge drying bed within Alternatives E Modified and E-Shift Modified. According to information obtained from PA DEP, the sludge drying bed is part of a nearby active water treatment operation and is located in the footprint of the historic Weimer Strip and Auger mine. Multiple treatment lagoons and two caustic soda aboveground storage tanks associated with the water treatment operation were adjacent to the north of Alternatives E Modified and E-Shift Modified. The sludge drying bed associated with the nearby active water treatment operation and the possibility of residual waste from mining activities is impacted by Alternatives E Modified and E-Shift Modified. The sludge drying bed within these build alternatives would need to be moved or avoided.



Photograph 3-16: Weimer Strip & Auger Post Mining Remediation Sludge Drying Bed

C. Hazardous/Residual Waste Petroleum Impacts

The presence of stained surface soil; dumping of 55-gallon drums, metals, and auto parts; a 1,000-gal diesel aboveground storage tank (AST); and several 250-gallon totes of varying levels of used motor oil were observed during site reconnaissance at the 1537 Mountain Road property within the common northern portion of the four build alternatives. The build alternatives impact the presence of stained surface soil and dumping within this section.

Historical releases of petroleum products and stained surface soil were reported at the Orner & Sons Trucking Inc. property at 3641 Chestnut Ridge Road, about 800 feet north of the southern terminus of the four build alternatives. The property is located on the east side of Chestnut Ridge Road. A 6,000-gallon diesel AST was also at the property during the site reconnaissance. All build alternatives impact the proximity of potential subsurface excavations adjacent to known historical releases of petroleum products and observed stained surface soil areas.

A buried gas pipeline is within all build alternatives. This pipeline is approximately 0.01 miles north of the Pennsylvania/Maryland state line and all build alternatives would traverse over the line. The project team will need to further investigate the depth of the pipeline to determine if it could be avoided.

Dumping of wooden and metal debris, including an

empty 55-gallon drum, was observed just northeast of the sludge drying bed (1,100 feet) within Alternatives E Modified and E-Shift Modified. The location is approximately 0.55 miles to the southwest of Greenville Road. Alternatives E Modified and E-Shift Modified impact the dumped debris and material.

An abandoned gas well, located approximately 0.13 miles to the east of the common northern portion of all build alternatives, was an AOC within the project area. None of the four build alternatives impact this feature. If the property of the abandoned gas well becomes part of the anticipated LOD, further due diligence would be required.

D. Conclusion

If not properly evaluated and mitigated prior to construction, abandoned mine land and associated

residual wastes can have detrimental effects to natural resources and worker safety during construction. Petroleum and other hazardous wastes pose similar environmental and health risks. Soil, groundwater, or waterway contamination and chemical exposure of construction personnel or nearby residents can result from the mismanagement of polluted soils, water, or other construction debris.

3.14.4 Mitigation

Table 3-16 provides a summary of the Phase I ESA recommendations for each identified AOC. A waste management plan and/or a Phase II/III ESA (i.e., geophysical survey, soil, and groundwater sampling) *will* include assessment of potential impacts and the handling and disposal of waste encountered during construction within the selected alternative. Undocumented hazardous waste sites

Table 3-16: Summary of Phase I ESA Recommendations

AOC #	AOC Name	Alternative Impacted	Recommendation
AOC-1	Orner & Sons Trucking	DU Modified and E Modified	Waste Management Plan and/or Phase II/III ESA
AOC-2	Gas Pipeline/ Abandoned Mine	All Four Build Alternatives	Geophysical Survey with Contingent Phase II/III ESA
AOC-3	Abandoned Mine	DU Modified/ DU-Shift Modified	Waste Management Plan and/or Phase II/III ESA
AOC-4	Weimer Strip & Auger Post Mining Remediation	E Modified/ E-Shift Modified	Waste Management Plan and/or Phase II/III ESA
AOC-5	Mountain Road, AML & Underground Mining Permits	All Four Build Alternatives	Waste Management Plan, Geophysical Survey, and/or Phase II/III ESA

or contaminants encountered during construction *will* be managed and remediated in accordance with applicable federal, state, and local requirements.

If the sludge drying bed associated with the Weimer Strip and Auger post mining remediation site would be displaced, PennDOT will incur the cost to design, relocate, and build a new sludge drying bed. The sludge drying bed will be relocated to a similar environment on the same property and its function and access will be restored. The relocated sludge drying bed will not be sited within a floodplain or wetland.

3.15 Geology, Hydrology, & Groundwater

3.15.1 Methodology

The methodology used in the collection of data consisted of the following:

- Background geologic research on the geology of Somerset County, Pennsylvania and Garrett County, Maryland
- Discussions with state agencies including PA DEP and MDE
- Conversations with local residents
- Subsurface exploration consisting of preliminary geotechnical test borings with soil sampling, rock coring, and ground water readings

Additional geotechnical information is available in **Appendix U**, which contains the *Geotechnical Alternatives Analysis Report*.

3.15.2 Existing Conditions

The project area is situated within the Allegheny Mountain section of the Appalachian Plateau physiographic province and lies on the eastern limb of the Berlin syncline. The bedrock beneath the project site dips towards the Casselman River Valley at a rate of 1200± feet per mile (or 13-degree dip) and is divided into six groups and formations based on their lithologic characteristics.

Table 3-17 identifies the estimated thickness in descending order of the groups and formations present in the project area.

The Casselman and Glenshaw Formations make up the Conemaugh Group and are similar in character, containing thin, non-persistent coals, and discontinuous limestones or calcareous zones. The formations also contain red beds, which are composed of red shales and claystones that are associated with landslides throughout the region. The main difference is that the Glenshaw Formation contains greater amounts of red beds and persistent coal beds than the Casselman Formation. All build alternatives encounter the Casselman and Glenshaw Formations at the northern terminus of the project in Pennsylvania and southern terminus of the project in Maryland. Alternatives DU Modified

and DU-Shift Modified also encounter the Conemaugh Group of rocks along the western limits of the project site when they are separate from Alternatives E Modified and E-Shift Modified.

The Allegheny Group is comprised predominantly of shale, siltstone, and sandstone; however, the most notable feature in this group is the multiple economically mineable coal beds. All build alternatives would cross through the Allegheny Group along the northern segment of the project prior to the split; Alternatives DU Modified and DU-Shift Modified would cross through this group on the southern ridge overlooking Piney Creek; and Alternatives E Modified and E-Shift Modified would cross this group as they approach the northern ridge overlooking Meadow Run.

The Pottsville Group consists of thin, economically unimportant coal and shale beds “sandwiched” between relatively thick sandstone and

Table 3-17: Estimated Thickness of Formation and Groups

Formation/Group	Estimated Thickness
Casselman Formation	500 Feet
Glenshaw Formation	375 Feet
Allegheny Group	280 Feet
Pottsville Group	200 Feet
Mauch Chunk Formation	200 Feet
Loyalhanna Limestone (Greenbrier in Maryland)	50 Feet

conglomerate members. The sandstone and conglomerate members range in thickness from 10 feet to greater than 80 feet where they locally coalesce. The rocks of the Pottsville Group would have little to no impact on Alternatives DU Modified and DU-Shift Modified, as this group is found higher up along the side of Allegheny Mountain. The Pottsville Group can mainly be found along the ridges in the Piney Creek valley along Alternatives E Modified and E-Shift Modified.

The Mauch Chunk Formation is composed of red and green mottled shale and claystone, and greenish gray sandstones and siltstones, with minor amounts of limestone. The underlying Loyalhanna (Pennsylvania)/Greenbrier (Maryland) Formation is a reddish sandy limestone approximately 50 feet thick. These formations would only be encountered along Alternatives E Modified and E-Shift Modified in the lower elevations of the Piney Creek valley.

The greatest ground water yields are from sandstones and limestones, which have greater permeability than shales, siltstones, and claystones. Fractures created during folding of the bedrock during the mountain building process is responsible for most of the permeability in the sandstone and limestone. Recharge to the bedrock water-bearing zones is by infiltration into joint systems. Most of the residential wells within the project area penetrate the Casselman and Glenshaw Formations and have yields ranging from 4 gallons per minute (gpm) to 90

gpm. The Allegheny Group contains several sandstone members that yield from 50 gpm to 150 gpm, while the Pottsville Group strata yield from 40 gpm to greater than 300 gpm. The Pottsville Group is an important aquifer but reportedly produces hard water. Water may contain excessive iron and hydrogen sulfide. The Mauch Chunk Formation is the most valuable water-bearing formation, yielding as much as 1000 gpm of good quality water. Water-bearing units lying at depths greater than 100 feet below drainage may be saline or brackish.

A flowing artesian spring (Findley Spring) located approximately 3.5 miles to the southeast supplies groundwater to the Borough of Salisbury. The spring flows from the Loyalhanna limestone on the steep, east flank of the Berlin Syncline (Allegheny Mountain). A pipeline along the Piney Creek valley carries the water to an underground reservoir located in Salisbury. Findley Spring maintains a constant flow of 90 gpm; and the water is high quality, with the only treatment being chlorination. Seeps also occur in other rock types in the project area. However, flow is not consistent; and water quality is reportedly poor.

Many of the residents who live in the project area are dependent on private wells for their sole source of potable water.

The Sole Source Aquifer (SSA) Program (authorized by Section 1424(c) of the Safe Drinking

Water Act) allows communities to petition the U.S. EPA for protection when a community is dependent on a single source of drinking water. There are no sole source aquifers within the project area.

3.15.3 Impacts

Geologic features within the project area would remain undisturbed if the No Build Alternative is selected. All build alternatives are anticipated to encounter similar geologic conditions, and therefore, no constructability or design advantage was identified for any of the build alternatives with respect to local geology. However, geologic features would impact potential construction methods.



Photograph 3-17: Findley Spring outside of the Borough of Salisbury

Sandstones, siltstones, and limestones are moderately resistant to weathering; however, claystone, shale, and coal can be deeply and extensively weathered. Joints are poorly to moderately well formed, vertical to sub-vertical, and open. Moderate to steep natural slopes are stable except where red beds occur. Cut slope stability is good to fair; however, disintegration of claystones and shales under resistant sandstones and siltstones results in rock falls, slumps, and landslides. This can pose a threat to residents or motorists and impact surrounding buildings, roadways, utilities, and natural habitat.

Excavations into the rocks within the project area exhibit a potential for exposing acid bearing rock that can have damaging long-term effects to all build alternatives. The source of acidity (iron sulfides) is typically depositional, although structural features may enhance the occurrence of sulfides. Sulfide materials are typically associated with coal-bearing rocks, some underclays, and black carbonaceous shales. The Allegheny Group has the highest potential for acid bearing rock; however, all other formations, except the Mauch Chunk and Loyalhanna, have at least some potential for acid bearing rock. If not properly mitigated, exposed acid bearing rock and acid rock drainage can also be harmful to aquatic habitat and contaminate drinking waters supplies.

Springs and seeps reside where ground water discharges to the surface along fractures, bedding planes, between two rock types of differing permeability, and where a significant change in slope truncates the water table. Seeps and springs are abundant across all build alternatives, particularly as they traverse along the flank of Allegheny Mountain in the Pottsville Group just before they split, and in Alternatives E Modified and E-Shift Modified just after the split. Ground water and seeps may indicate a variation in bedrock lithology such as permeable sandstone resting on impervious clay. Cuts performed in this geologic environment may truncate springs and create a potential slide susceptible scenario.

Surface and deep mining of coal and clay in some areas altered the normal flow paths of the ground water. In addition, undermining of water-bearing units has resulted in dewatering at some locations, while proximity to mined areas has degraded water quality in others. Excavations or borings may encounter artesian conditions or truncate water bearing zones, disrupting the local hydrogeology and impacting the private wells of the local residents. The magnitude of the impact would depend on the depth of the proposed cuts, rock type, and the degree of interconnectivity of the fractures.

3.15.4 Mitigation

The future boring programs for preliminary engineering and final design *will* follow the

guidelines set forth in Table 3.2.4-1 and Table 3.2.4-2 of PennDOT Publication No. 293, *Geotechnical Engineering Manual* (PennDOT, 2022). Roadway borings in preliminary engineering *will* be located every 500± to 1,000± feet while roadway borings for final design *will* be located every 300± feet. Additional borings *will* be drilled at locations of deep cuts and high fills during both phases. Individual boring programs *will* be completed during final design for the two proposed structures over Piney Creek and Meadow Run and *will* consist of a minimum of two borings per substructure unit. Additional borings for smaller structures such as culverts and retaining walls *will* likely be included, but locations of these structures have not been finalized at this time.

Roadway borings at embankments *will* extend a depth of two-times the embankment height unless competent material with sufficient thickness is encountered. Roadway borings in the cuts *will* extend ten feet below the proposed subgrade elevation. Finally, roadway borings at grade *will* extend to a depth of five feet below subgrade.

At this time, it is assumed that the Piney Creek and Meadow Run structure foundations *will* consist of spread footings on bedrock or piles bearing on/in bedrock. In this instance, the borings *will* extend to a depth of ten feet below bottom of footing or pile tip elevation unless claystone is encountered, in which

case the boring *will* be extended an additional ten feet into bedrock.

Future boring programs would likely include supplemental borings for acid bearing rock. The number of borings would be based on the minimum boring requirements shown on Table 10.5.1-1 of the PennDOT Publication No. 293, *Geotechnical Engineering Manual* (PennDOT, 2022).

Detailed soil and rock slope stability analyses using site specific information *will* be conducted to determine a slope ratio that ensures an acceptable factor of safety is achieved. Benching on the cut slopes may reduce the potential for rock falls encroaching on the constructed roadway. If benching or flattening of the rock cuts cannot be achieved, other appropriate measures such as rock fall collection zones at the toe of the cut, rock removal (scaling, trimming), or rock reinforcement with mesh may be designed.

Alkaline materials or a surface barrier that limit exposure to oxygen can treat acid bearing rock exposed on cut slopes. Excavated acid bearing rock can be treated with alkaline materials or encapsulated in roadway embankments placed above the ground water table. Additional Acid Base Accounting (ABA) tests would be performed on rock samples obtained from future test borings to better determine the extent of acid bearing rock along the selected alternative and the appropriate treatments.

Piezometers *will* be set in several test borings along the selected build alternative to measure and continuously monitor the ground water level and to collect samples for testing to identify potential impacts and to assist in design of positive mitigation measures. Intercepting springs during construction is highly likely and *will* require the construction of drainage swales, rock blankets, and finger drains to convey water away from the cut slopes. Properly sized stormwater management basins *will* also be required.

Special provisions *will* be included in the contract stating that the contractor would coordinate with the Borough of Salisbury to ensure that there are no interruptions in water flow or degradation of water quality caused by construction activities. Temporary rerouting of the water supply from Findley Spring may be required if construction along the selected alternative interferes with the water supply line located within the Piney Creek valley. *Prior to construction, the project team will meet with the Salisbury Borough Water Commission to discuss the location of water lines within the project LOD. The project team will also work with the Salisbury Borough Water Commission to verify the location of the water lines. Water quality from Findley Spring also will be monitored during construction to identify possible construction impacts.*

Special provisions *will* also be included to perform water quality tests (pH, Sulfate Content, Chloride

Content, Minimum Resistivity) and sounding to static water level on residential wells before, during, and after construction to verify that the well water quality and volume has not been negatively impacted by facets of construction, such as acid mine drainage and dewatering the water bearing zone. If private wells are determined to be impacted resulting in the loss of water or degradation of water quality, the wells can be replaced or remediated, as appropriate.

As part of the construction phase, a monitoring program of perennial watercourses is anticipated. This program is planned to consist of pre-construction, ongoing construction, and post construction sampling at locations upstream, within, and downstream of the constructed alignment.

3.16 Mining

3.16.1 Methodology

The methodology used in the collection of data consisted of conducting background geologic research on the coal resources of Somerset County, Pennsylvania and Garrett County, Maryland. Additionally, discussions occurred with state agencies including PA DEP and MDE, particularly the Bureau of Abandoned Mine Reclamation (PA), Office of Surface Mining (PA), Bureau of Mining Programs (PA), Bureau of District Mining Operations (PA), and Bureau of Mines (MD) and local residents. Finally, subsurface exploration

consisting of preliminary geotechnical test borings strategically located in known deep and surface mine permitted areas were completed.

3.16.2 Existing Conditions

The project area has been extensively mined for coal using both deep and surface mining methods (see **Figure 3-10**). Thirteen coal seams are known to have been mined in the project area.

The most coal mining and currently active coal permits are located west of the Casselman River



Photograph 3-18: Acid Mine Drainage

valley. The Berlin Syncline houses coal from the Monongahela Group rocks, notably the Pittsburgh coal, which has been mined on and off since the early 1900s. The current project area lies east of the Casselman River where the Allegheny Group coals are present. The Allegheny Group coals consist of (from top to bottom) Upper Freeport, Lower Freeport, Upper Kittanning, Middle Kittanning, Lower Kittanning, Clarion, and Brookville coals. The Upper Freeport through the Lower Kittanning coals have been extensively strip mined and reclaimed. The current build alternatives follow the western flank of Allegheny Mountain and are located upslope of most of the previously permitted areas.

No active deep or surface coal mine operations are known to exist near the current build alternatives. Some active surface mine permits are in place for ongoing water treatment facilities.

In addition to coal mining, the Wymps Gap limestone was historically mined adjacent to Piney Creek and used for agricultural lime. However, there are no known active limestone quarries in the project area. At least 15 limestone beds are present in the project area that may be suitable for use as concrete aggregate, road metal, road base, and riprap.

Sandstone has also been quarried near the project area for use as building stone or crushed for aggregate. A small sandstone quarry was observed during the field reconnaissance on Meadow

Mountain within a private residential community, the Highlands. It appears that the sandstone is used on a local basis only. Although both flint and plastic clays have been mined near the project area, there are no reports of active mining.

3.16.3 Impacts

There is no impact to surface or deep mining permitted areas with the No Build Alternative.

The greatest impacts from a mining standpoint occur at the northern end of the project area where all build alternatives include a large swath of land that has been both deep mined and strip mined. Looking at the build alternatives individually, (see **Table 3-18**), it can be concluded that the surface mine permitted areas would have a greater impact on Alternatives DU Modified and DU-Shift Modified when compared to Alternatives E Modified and E-Shift Modified, while the impact on all build alternatives from the deep mining permitted area would be relatively similar.

Table 3-18: Extents of Surface and Deep Mining Permitted Areas

Permitted Mining Areas (acres)	No Build	DU Mod.	DU-Shift Mod.	E Mod.	E-Shift Mod.
Surface Mine Boundaries	0	321.0	320.9	214.0	214.0
Deep Mine Boundaries	0	24.1	24.1	24.2	24.2

The geotechnical impact from the deep mining includes the potential for mine related subsidence beneath the proposed roadway. The primary geotechnical impact from the strip (surface) mining includes the potential for excessive settlement of thick, unconsolidated (greater than 100± feet) mine spoil, particularly when high fill embankments are constructed over these areas. Cut slopes constructed through the surface mine spoil are more subject to erosion and slope failure due to the lack of cohesion within this material. Additionally, the surface mine spoil is more likely to be contaminated by acid mine drainage which presents the potential for a corrosive environment.

At the northern end of the project, all build alternatives cross adjacent surface mine and deep mine permitted properties. The cut made for all build alternatives will encounter surface mine spoils and a mine highwall prior to exposing the abandoned deep mine near proposed finished grade. It is likely that any water trapped within this mine will be contaminated by acid mine drainage.

3.16.4 Mitigation

In areas where the overburden above the deep mine is relatively thin, concern for future mine subsidence *will* be mitigated by means of deep mine grouting.

Methods such as deep dynamic compaction, stone columns, or pre-loading *will* mitigate settlement of thick unconsolidated strip mine spoils beneath

roadways and embankments. Properly sized rock toes or bonding benches *will* be incorporated in sidehill fills while flatter slope ratios *will* be used for cut slopes to make sure an acceptable factor of safety can be achieved.

Acid mine drainage *will* be collected and treated following all environmental regulations. Corrosive soils can be mitigated by the same means as acid bearing rock (as discussed in **Chapter 3.15.4**).

3.17 Soils & Erosion

3.17.1 Methodology

The methodology used in the collection of data consisted of a review of background geologic research on the geology of Somerset County, Pennsylvania and Garrett County, Maryland, geotechnical field reconnaissance; and subsurface exploration consisting of preliminary geotechnical test borings with soil sampling, rock coring, and ground water readings. Soil surveys from the USDA NRCS were also reviewed.

3.17.2 Existing Conditions

Three naturally occurring soil types exist within the project area: residual, alluvial, and colluvial soils. Residual soils are a product of the weathering of the underlying bedrock and generally reflect the texture and characteristics of the parent rock. Soils weathered from shales, claystones, and limestones

are generally fine-grained clays and silts, while sandstones and sandy shales decompose to form predominantly sandy to gravelly soils. The thickness of residual soils would vary generally from about 5± feet to 20± feet, though occasionally deep weathered soil cover overlying less competent claystone/clay shale can be expected.

Often, the upper 3 to 5 feet of soil cover is fine-grained regardless of the parent rock because of extensive weathering and decomposition. Similarly, the lower part of most residual soils contains an increasing percentage of coarse-grained particles. The consistency or relative density of residual soils generally increases with depth. Clays and silts have low strength and moderate compressibility. Sandy and gravelly soils have moderate shear strength and low to moderate compressibility.

Alluvial soils are formed by the erosion, transportation, and decomposition of soil and rock along floodplains and consist of uncemented deposits of sand, gravel, silts, and clays. Extensive alluvial deposits are along the Casselman River and its tributaries. Smaller creeks may contain narrow bands of alluvium as well.

Colluvial soils originate from residual soils and are formed by the downslope migration of soils under gravity, ground water migration, and surface water runoff.

Review of the available soil surveys indicated the following general soil types present: Rayne-Gilpin-Wharton-Cavode and Hazelton-Cookport (Pennsylvania) and Dekalb-Gilpin-Cookport association (Maryland). All the soil types have similar properties and would equally impact all build alternatives. An in-depth description of the soil types is available in **Appendix U**.

3.17.3 Impacts

Soils would not have an impact on the No Build Alternative, and no erosion impacts are associated with the No Build.

Clay horizons associated with the various coal beds may reach a thickness of 15 feet to 40± feet. If exposed in road cuts, the clay horizons would be highly susceptible to erosion, have a high potential for landslides, and would require flatter slopes. These clay horizons would have a bigger impact on Alternatives DU Modified and DU-Shift Modified as cut slopes along these alternatives would be made through the Conemaugh group rocks. Clays also have low shear strength and moderate compressibility and would require special subgrade treatment if exposed immediately below the roadway grades.

Cuts made into coarser soils, such as those derived from the sandstone bedrock of the Pottsville group rocks which Alternatives E Modified and E-Shift Modified track through, would be more stable than

cuts made into fine-grained soils and would have a higher factor of safety or may be cut at steeper slopes for the same factor of safety. Similarly, fill embankments comprised of coarser soils may be constructed on steeper slopes with a sufficient factor of safety. Settlement of embankments due to consolidation of residual soils under the weight of fill or post-construction consolidation of fill under self-mass would be smaller and faster in coarse soils compared to fine-grained soils.

Due to proximity of alluvial soils to the streams, ground water is generally shallow, making these deposits soft with low shear strength and high compressibility, especially if they are fine-grained. Site topography is such that these deposits would rarely lie directly under the pavement. General fill would be placed in the narrow gullies to achieve the roadway grades.

The downslope movement of the colluvial soils leads to the development of shear planes. As a result, these soils require relatively flat cut slopes. Colluvial soils are usually moderately to highly compressible. Colluvial soils would have a larger impact on Alternatives E Modified and E-Shift Modified as thick colluvial zones comprised of large sandstone float from the sandstone outcrops along Allegheny Mountain have been documented both through field reconnaissance and preliminary test borings.

In addition to the natural soils, human-made fill and strip mine spoil (as discussed in **Chapter 3.15**) also occur throughout the project area.

Unconsolidated thick deposits of man-made fill, colluvial soils, or strip mine spoils present potential settlement problems and may be subject to extensive surface erosion and potential slope stability problems in cut and fill areas.

3.17.4 Mitigation

Special subgrade treatment for low strength clays exposed immediately below roadway grades may involve undercutting and backfilling with more suitable material, base reinforcement with geogrids, or surficial treatment with moisture resistant solutions. When incorporated in fill embankments, their mixing with better materials or selective placement may be suggested.

Soft alluvial soils encountered in narrow gullies at the base of fill embankments may have to be removed and replaced with coarser material either as rock toe or rock base.

The same means that mitigate strip mine spoils, can mitigate settlement of embankments due to consolidation of thick colluvial and man-made fill deposits (as discussed in **Chapter 3.15.4**).

Cuts and sidehill fills through these same soils would require similar mitigation as the strip mine spoils (as also discussed in **Chapter 3.15.4**).

Implementing standard erosion and sediment pollution control (E&SPC) best management practices (BMPs) in accordance with the *PA DEP Erosion and Sediment Pollution Control Program Manual*, 25 PA Code Chapter 102 Erosion and Sediment Control, Code of Maryland Regulations (COMAR) 26.17.01 Erosion and Sediment Control, and the *Maryland Standards and Specifications for Soil Erosion and Sediment Control* would mitigate erosion and sediment pollution during construction. E&SPC BMPs implemented may include but not be limited to compost filter sock, silt fence, pumped water filter bags, drainage inlet protection, rolled erosion control products, sediment traps and basins, rock armoring, flocculants, natural vegetation for both temporary and permanent stabilization, and construction sequencing to limit exposed earth. National Pollution Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permits would authorize earth disturbance required for construction in both Pennsylvania and Maryland. E&SPC BMPs would be designed in coordination with the Post Construction Stormwater Management (PCSM) plan to ensure that temporary BMPs such as sediment traps and basins can be converted to permanent stormwater management BMPs with minimal disturbance to the features constructed. Furthermore, areas subject to PCSM infiltration BMPs shall have compaction minimized during construction to promote infiltration of stormwater. Refer to **Chapter 3.18** for further information on Stormwater Management design.

Additional test borings would be drilled along the selected alternative and at all major cut slopes and fill embankments to better evaluate any soft soil or slope stability related issues, respectively.

3.18 Stormwater Management

3.18.1 Methodology

The Pennsylvania Code (25 Pa. Code Chapter 102.8 PCSM Requirements) and COMAR 26.17.02 (Stormwater Management) provide the regulatory framework of requirements to manage post construction stormwater due to changes in land cover. Changes in land use cover due to development may result in increases to peak rate of stormwater runoff, increases in volume of stormwater runoff and degradation of water quality. The *Pennsylvania Stormwater Best Management Practices Manual* and *Maryland Stormwater Design Manual, Volumes I and II* provide design guidelines for various Stormwater Control Measures (SCMs), also referred to as BMPs, to effectively manage stormwater runoff changes as a result of land cover changes. A combination of SCMs/BMPs would be implemented to ensure stormwater is managed appropriately in accordance with the regulations to protect adjacent wetland and waterway resources.

3.18.2 Existing Conditions

The project area consists of forested land and agricultural fields. Existing road infrastructure

consisting of a divided four-lane roadway is located at the build alternatives tie-in locations to the north and south. Currently, stormwater runoff within most of the project area is unmanaged, given the nature of the existing land cover. *Existing landcover is shown in Figure 3-1*. Runoff from forested areas and agricultural areas flows naturally to streams and wetlands located throughout the project site. Stormwater runoff encountered along existing roadways is conveyed by roadside channels, pipes, and inlets to stormwater management facilities, if present, or to nearby streams and wetlands.

3.18.3 Impacts

The No Build Alternative would result in no changes to existing stormwater runoff within the project area. All build alternatives would result in impacts to stormwater runoff within and adjacent to the project area due to affecting existing drainage patterns, adding impervious area, compacting soils, and introducing additional pollutants such as deicing materials, vehicular oils, and thermal pollution. These alterations produce an increase in peak rate of stormwater runoff, volume of stormwater runoff and water quality degradation that needs to be mitigated.

3.18.4 Mitigation

Stormwater generated from the project area *will* be managed utilizing a multitude of structural and non-structural SCMs/BMPs that implement peak rate

control, volume control and water quality improvements. These SCMs/BMPs may include:

- Detention basins,
- Infiltration basins and/or trenches,
- Bioretention and/or Microbioretention,
- Constructed Wetlands and/or Submerged Gravel Wetlands,
- Amended soil to improve absorption and water quality,
- Managed Release Concept (MRC) basins for areas with poor infiltration,
- Level spreaders,
- Bioswales/Vegetated swales,
- Vegetated filter strips,
- Disconnection from storm sewers,
- Revegetation/reforestation, and
- Minimization of disturbed areas

These stormwater control features are intended to maximize infiltration to improve water quality, reduce rate of runoff to pre-project conditions and reduce volume of runoff from impervious surfaces. Additionally, runoff flowing from impervious surfaces can exhibit increased temperatures during warmer months, known as thermal pollution which can degrade adjacent wetlands and waterways. The SCMs/BMPs would aid in reducing thermal pollution by providing shade, detention time, and infiltration of runoff, in conjunction with vegetated channels where practical.

In Pennsylvania, standard PennDOT provisions for

long-term monitoring and maintenance of SCMs and BMPs are set forth in PennDOT Design Manual 3 Chapter 6; PA DEP Construction Activity NPDES PCSM Module 2; and PennDOT Publication No. 888 (Stormwater Control Measure Maintenance Manual).

In Maryland, standard provisions for monitoring and maintenance of SCMs and BMPs are set forth in 2000 MDE Stormwater Management Manual Chapter 5, 2011 Maryland Erosion and Sediment Control Manual, MDE Technical Memorandum #9, and MDE General Permit for Stormwater Discharge Associated with Construction Activity Maryland General Permit No. 20-CP.

The Pennsylvania Construction Activity NPDES Permit program obligates permittees to provide Anti-Degradation Best Available Control Technology (ABACT) when construction stormwater discharge to high quality and exceptional value (HQ&EV) waters cannot be avoided. Similarly, in Maryland, the Construction Activity NPDES Permit program obligates permittees to provide higher level controls in Tier II waterways, however none are present in the project area. Maryland also requires monitoring of construction runoff turbidity if the receiving water is a total suspended solid total maximum daily load (TMDL) watershed, which is not the case in the project watershed. The respective state E&SC design guidance gives specific requirements for ABACT SCMs/BMPs.

Both states' programs also obligate permittees to identify naturally-occurring soil and rock as well as man-made contaminants and provide technical solutions to control pollution. In Pennsylvania, presence of potentially polluting soil and rock or potential contamination must be addressed by all NPDES Construction Activity applicants under 25 PA Code Chapter 102 and will disqualify the project from coverage under a general NPDES permit in favor of an Individual Permit application. Similarly in Maryland, permittees must also identify and mitigate potential pollutants in the NPDES Construction Activity.

Both states' NPDES programs as well as standard highway design procedures require design of slopes and ponds for stability.

3.19 Waterways, Watersheds, Surface Water Quality & Aquatic Biota

3.19.1 Methodology

U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) maps, National Wetlands Inventory (NWI) maps, FEMA floodplain data, the city/county soil survey, and field reconnaissance identified surface waterways and watersheds. Per U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) guidance, stream limits were flagged and surveyed at the observed ordinary high-water mark (OHWM), which is a line on the shore established by

the fluctuations of water and identified by physical characteristics, including soil impressions or changes, vegetation changes, and the presence of leaf litter and detritus. MDE also uses the OHWM to determine stream boundaries and PA DEP uses the top of bank as the stream boundary. For streams identified in the project area, the OHWM was often the same as the top of bank.

Investigations were also performed in accordance with 25 Pa. Code Chapter 105 and COMAR standards 26.17 and 26.23. The field investigation was performed from spring 2022 through fall 2023. See **Appendix Q** for the locations of the delineated streams.

Pennsylvania Chapter 93 Designated Water Uses (PA Code, Title 25, Chapter 93) and the COMAR Stream Segment Designations (COMAR 26.08.02.08) were reviewed for stream use class. The Pennsylvania Fish and Boat Commission (PFBC) trout classifications were reviewed for Pennsylvania streams. *Keystone Canoeing: A Guide to Canoeable Waters of Eastern Pennsylvania* (Gertler, 2004) identified any recreational navigable streams within the project area in Pennsylvania. The MDE Maryland Tier II High Quality Waters Map and MDE Maryland Trout Stocking Activities Map were reviewed. Field identified streams were assessed based on the qualitative components of the U.S. EPA

Bioassessment Protocols for Physical Characterization. Waters of the U.S. were classified based on the 2023 “waters of the United States” definition¹. Relatively permanent waters were categorized as *seasonal* or perennial.

Within this FEIS, in Pennsylvania, all perennial or seasonal streams within the basin of designated Wild Trout Waters received the Wild Trout Water designation. Additionally, all perennial or seasonal streams within 0.5 miles of Stocked Trout Water receive the Stocked Trout Water designation. It should be noted that in the DEIS, a stream was considered Wild Trout Waters if it was within 0.5 miles of a stream segment designated Wild Trout Waters.

Designated uses for MD streams are found in COMAR 26.08.02.08.

Refer to the *Aquatic Resources Report* (PennDOT, December 2023) in **Appendix V** for detailed information regarding pertinent regulations, investigative methodology, and existing conditions of the aquatic resources. Note, the *Aquatic Resources Report* identified resources in a larger project area and the Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) is focused on the LOD for the alternatives studied in detail, therefore, there are minor differences in the total length of surface waterway resources.

3.19.2 Existing Conditions

The Pennsylvania portion of the project area is located within the Tub Mill Run-Casselman River, Little Piney Creek-Piney Creek, and Miller Run-Casselman River watersheds, which are within the larger Youghiogheny River watershed. Meadow Run, Miller Run, Piney Creek, and other tributaries to the Casselman River flow through the project area. The Pennsylvania Chapter 93 Designated Use for the Casselman River and unnamed tributaries to the Casselman River from Coxes Creek to its mouth



Photograph 3-19: Piney Creek near Greenville Road

¹U.S. Environmental Protection Agency & U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. (2024). Waters of the United States: Rapanos v. United States & Carabell v. United States. Retrieved from EPA website

is Warm Water Fishes (WWF). Unnamed tributaries to the Casselman River from its source to Coxes Creek are classified as Cold Water Fishes (CWF). Meadow Run, Piney Creek, and Miller Run also have designated uses for CWF.

According to the Pennsylvania 303(d) List of Impaired Waterways, Meadow Run, Piney Run, and Miller Run are Category 2, “Supporting” for Streams Aquatic Life Use. Casselman River, and several unnamed tributaries to Casselman River (S2 and S7) are Category 5, “Impaired” for Streams Aquatic Life Use due to acid mine drainage (AMD) and metals. In addition, AMD was observed in streams S3 and S56 during the field investigations.

In Pennsylvania, Piney Creek is a Wild Trout Water and a Stocked Trout Water per the PFBC. This classification includes the basin and any unnamed tributaries to Piney Creek. Wild fingerling trout were identified in Meadow Run during a PFBC field survey in 2023; therefore, Meadow Run would also be considered a Wild Trout Water for the purposes of this project. A portion of Piney Run outside of the project area is classified as a Wilderness Trout Stream. No PFBC designated Class A Wild Trout Waters or Wilderness Trout Waters are located within the project area.

The Maryland portion of the project area is located within the Casselman River watershed. Tributaries to Meadow Run and Casselman River cross the

project area. *Based on coordination with the Maryland Department of Natural Resources*, the Maryland Surface Water Use Designation for streams within the project area is Use *III*, pursuant to which they are protected *as “Nontidal Cold Water” suitable as natural trout streams* (COMAR 26.08.02.08). According to the Maryland Tier II High Quality Waters map, the project area is not within a Tier II High Quality watershed (MDE, continuously updated). According to the Maryland 303(d) List of Impaired Waterways, the Casselman River watershed is listed as Category 4a – impaired, TMDL complete for pH (acid mine drainage) and Category 5 – impaired, TMDL needed for ions (Chlorides). The streams within the project area in Maryland are not trout waters.

None of the stream segments within the project area are federal or state wild or scenic rivers. None of the streams are recreationally navigable. The Casselman River is a recreationally navigable river but is not within the project area. *Additional analysis regarding the Casselman River is provided in Chapter 3.24.*

Refer to the *Aquatic Resources Report* (December 2023) in **Appendix V** for detailed information pertaining to the existing conditions of waterways and watersheds. Note, those streams identified in the *Aquatic Resources Report* as both perennial and *seasonal* are counted here as only perennial. **Table 3-19** summarizes the number of existing waterways

in the project area. See **Figure 3-12** for locations of waterways in the project area.

3.19.3 Impacts

Impacts were assessed using GIS by overlaying the LOD for each alternative onto the existing surface waterway resources. See **Table 3-20** for waterway impacts per alternative in each state. The No Build Alternative would have no direct impacts to waterways. As noted in **Table 3-20**, impacts between Alternatives DU Modified and DU-Shift Modified are very similar, while impacts for Alternatives E Modified and E-Shift Modified are similar. In Pennsylvania, Alternatives E Modified and E-Shift Modified have higher perennial and lower *seasonal* stream impacts compared to the Alternatives DU Modified and DU-Shift Modified.

Table 3-19: Existing Waterways in Project Area

Stream Type (#)	Pennsylvania	Maryland
Perennial Streams	51	2
<i>Seasonal</i> Streams	21	8
TOTAL	72	10
Trout Streams (#)		
Wild Trout Streams ¹	26	11
Trout Stocked Streams ¹	15	N/A
TOTAL	41	11
¹ According to PFBC designation for Pennsylvania waterways or MD DNR for Maryland waterways		

Alternatives E Modified and E-Shift Modified have fewer impacts to Wild Trout Waters than Alternatives DU Modified and DU-Shift Modified.

Impacts in Maryland are almost identical among all the build alternatives. Alternatives DU Modified and DU-Shift Modified impact an additional 38-53 linear feet of waterways compared to Alternatives E Modified and E-Shift Modified.

Alternative E-Shift Modified is the Preferred Alternative. This alternative results *in slightly fewer waterway impacts* than Alternative E Modified and *significantly fewer waterway* impacts than Alternatives D Modified and D-Shift Modified.

3.19.4 Mitigation

Impacts to waterways required that PennDOT and SHA receive provisional notification for a Section 404 Permit from the Pittsburgh District of USACE (in coordination with the Baltimore District), PA DEP, and MDE, contingent on receiving a Section 401 Water Quality Certification from the PA DEP and MDE.

The Section 404 Permit and Section 401 Water Quality Certifications *will* address avoidance and minimization to Waters of the US, along with the plan to compensate for unavoidable impacts. Additionally, Pennsylvania and Maryland have state regulations governing waterway encroachments and alterations, including Pa. Code Title 25, Chapter

105 in Pennsylvania and Title 5 in Maryland, that require project review by state environmental agencies. Typically, permits under these regulations would be issued jointly, alongside the Section 404 Permit. However, in Pennsylvania, PennDOT would request a Section 401 Water Quality Certification in conjunction with the Section 404 Permit and would apply for a Chapter 105 Permit during final design.



Photograph 3-20: Casselman River near Salisbury Borough

Table 3-20: Waterway Impacts per Alternative

Stream Type (Linear Feet)	No Build	DU Mod.	DU-Shift Mod.	E Mod.	E-Shift Mod.
Pennsylvania Streams/Channels ¹					
Perennial	0	15,910	15,910	16,457	16,451
Seasonal	0	4,188	4,188	1,830	1,829
Wild Trout* ²	0	8,509	8,509	6,709	6,708
Trout Stocked* ³	0	3,070	3,070	3,152	3,150
Maryland Stream/Channels ¹					
Perennial ⁴	0	1,433	1,433	1,433	1,433
Seasonal ⁴	0	3,466	3,481	3,428	3,428
Wild Trout*	0	4,739	4,754	4,701	4,701
TOTAL (PA/MD)	0	24,997	25,012	23,148	23,141

¹Only the surface channels of streams are included in the waterway impacts. *Where present, culverted channels are included in the waterway impacts.*

²Construction timing restrictions would apply to these Wild Trout Waters and their tributaries. In-stream work is not allowed between October 1 and December 31, per PFBC. These lengths are not included in the total calculation as they were accounted for in the Perennial or Seasonal totals.

³Construction timing restrictions would apply to these Trout Stocked Waters and their tributaries. In-stream work is not allowed between February 15 and June 1, per PFBC.

⁴In-stream work may not be conducted in Maryland Use III waters during the period of **October 1** to **April 30**, inclusive, during any year (COMAR 26.08.02.11). This restriction applies to all **regulated** streams in the Maryland portion of the project area.

**This stream type is not included in the total (PA/MD) impact calculation, as this stream type is also included in the Perennial or Seasonal length totals.*

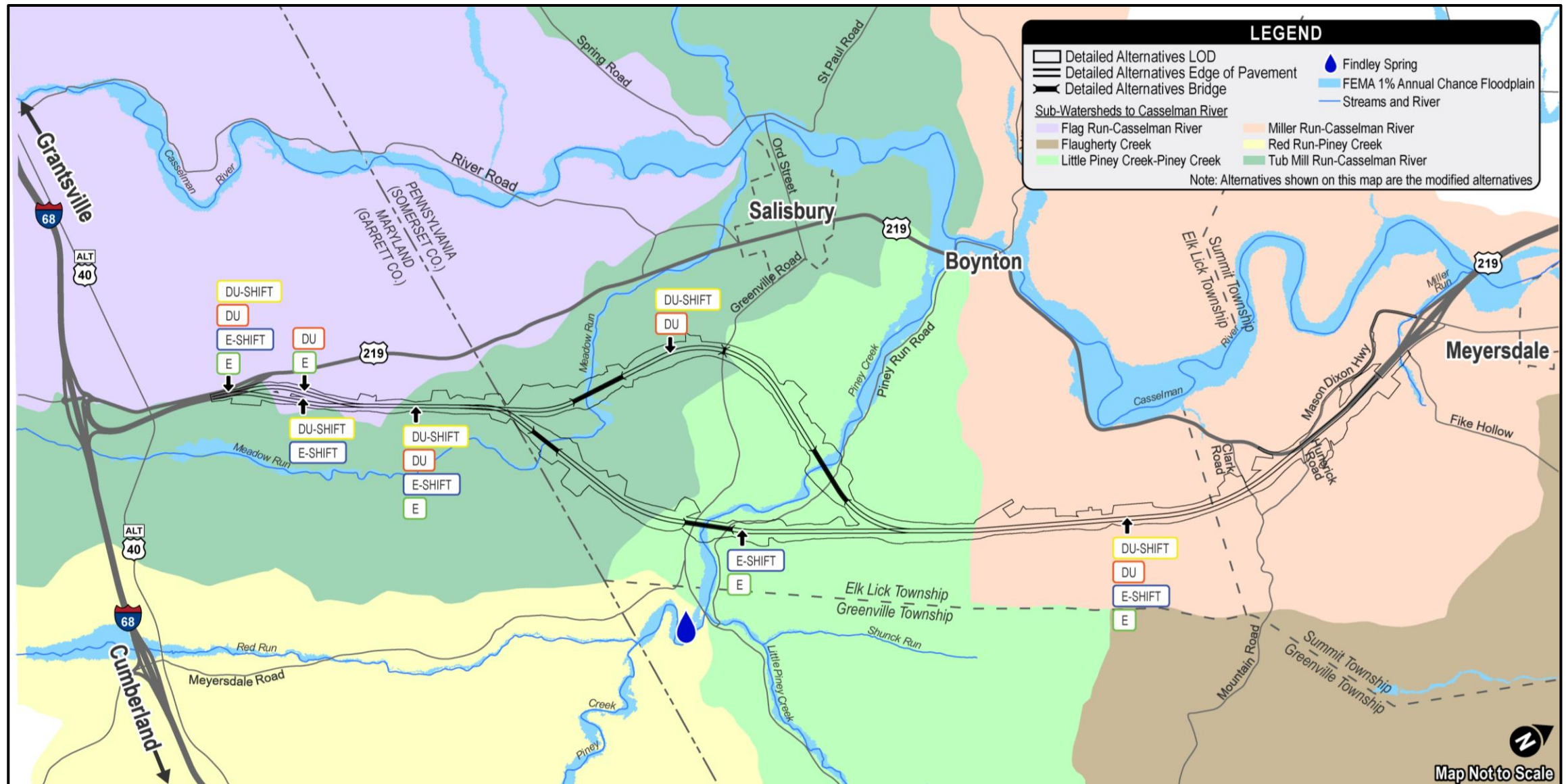


Figure 3-12: Water Resources

As the project progresses into final design, the team *will* endeavor to avoid and minimize stream impacts to the maximum extent practicable. In addition, permanent impact totals *will* likely decrease, as the detailed design may enable reclassification of some impacts from permanent to temporary.

Construction timing restrictions *will* apply to Wild Trout Waters and Stocked Trout Waters and their tributaries in Pennsylvania. These streams include Piney Creek and its tributaries and Meadow Run. The PFBC restricts in-stream work between the dates of February 15 and June 1, inclusive, for Stocked Trout Waters and restricts in-stream work between the dates of October 1 and December 31, inclusive, for Wild Trout Waters.

In Maryland, all *regulated* streams are Use III. In-stream work *will* not occur within Use III waters during the period of *October 1* to *April 30*, inclusive, during any year (COMAR 26.08.02.11).

The following design and construction activities *will* be evaluated during preliminary engineering and final design to minimize potential impacts to waterways:

- Design access roads and channel spanning structures using culverts, open channels, and diversions that will pass both low and high water flows, accommodate fluctuating water levels, and maintain water circulation.

- Minimize placement of fill in streams and minimize in-stream disturbance activities during construction. Construct bridges and culverts during low-flow conditions.
- Minimize the length and width of stream impacts at each proposed stream crossing.
- To the extent practicable, each perennial watercourse intersected by the proposed highway will be culverted directly through the roadway embankment and discharged into its original channel, downslope of the roadway.
- Provide protection to waters outside of the area of direct disturbance using compost filter sock or silt fence and other measures.

Compensatory mitigation is required for unavoidable permanent impacts to streams. Compensatory mitigation *will* be state specific. PennDOT *will* compensate for stream impacts occurring within Pennsylvania and SHA *will* compensate for stream impacts occurring in Maryland. Federal and state permitting processes *will* coordinate and approve specific compensatory stream mitigation.

PennDOT and SHA will avoid and minimize impacts to streams. Efforts to minimize stream impacts could include crossing streams at right angles and using retaining walls in areas of cut or fill. In-kind stream relocations would be constructed where practicable to reduce the total compensatory stream mitigation required.

In Pennsylvania, PennDOT *will* purchase credits from an approved private mitigation bank. Maryland does not have a private mitigation bank that can service the impacts related to the project. SHA *will* develop a permittee responsible mitigation (PRM) plan.

The Rock Lodge Road (SSS-110026) site is proposed to meet the Preferred Alternative mitigation requirements in Maryland. The site is located in the same HUC-8 watershed (Youghiogheny) and MDE 8-digit watershed (Casselman River) as the Preferred Alternative impacts. The Rock Lodge Road site has the potential to provide 4,790 functional feet of stream mitigation credit, which exceeds the Preferred Alternative mitigation requirement.

3.20 Wetlands

3.20.1 Methodology

Wetland delineations used the criteria outlined in the USACE *Wetlands Delineation Manual* (Environmental Laboratory, 1987) and the *Regional Supplement to the USACE Wetland Delineation Manual: Eastern Mountains and Piedmont Region* (Environmental Laboratory, 2012). This methodology included the background review of USGS maps, NWI maps, FEMA floodplain data, and the city/county soil survey. Wetlands Functions and Values were identified using The Highway Methodology Workbook Supplement in accordance

with the USACE Descriptive Method for Wetlands.

Refer to the *Aquatic Resources Report* (PennDOT, December 2023) in **Appendix V** for detailed information regarding pertinent regulations, investigation methodology, and existing conditions of wetlands. Note, the *Aquatic Resources Report* identified resources in a larger project area and the EIS is focused on the LOD for the alternatives studied in detail, therefore, there are minor differences in the calculated areas of wetland resources.

3.20.2 Existing Conditions

The field investigation took place from Spring 2022 through Fall 2023. **Table 3-21** shows a summary of wetlands identified within the project area. See **Appendix Q** for maps depicting the locations of delineated wetlands. Refer to the *Aquatic Resources Report* in **Appendix V** for detailed information pertaining to each wetland resource.

The primary functions of wetlands in the project area include groundwater recharge/discharge, sediment/toxicant retention, wildlife habitat, nutrient removal, and flood flow alteration. Additional details can be found in the *Aquatic Resources Report* in **Appendix V**.

PFBC designates Piney Run and its tributaries as Trout Stocked Waters and Wild Trout Waters. Wild fingerling trout were identified in Meadow Run during a PFBC field survey, and Meadow Run will

be considered a Wild Trout Water for the purposes of this project.

In accordance with 25 Pa. Code, Chapter 105.17(1)(iii), wetlands located in or along the floodplain of the reach of a Wild Trout Water and wetlands within the floodplain of a tributary to a Wild Trout Water, are Exceptional Value (EV) Wetlands. In addition, 25 Pa. Code, Chapter 105.17(1)(iv) categorizes wetlands located along an existing public or private drinking water supply, including both surface water and groundwater sources, that maintain the quality or quantity of the drinking water supply, as EV wetlands. Of the 85 wetlands in the Pennsylvania portion of the project area, 37 are considered EV wetlands based on these criteria.

In Maryland, the project is subject to COMAR 26.17 and 26.23. COMAR 26.17 presents the regulations for erosion and sediment control and stormwater management to reduce and manage stormwater runoff necessary to decrease stream erosion, pollution, and flooding. COMAR 26.23 is known as the Maryland Nontidal Wetlands Act. These regulations require permits for activities that disturb the nontidal wetland area and/or the associated 25-foot wetland buffer. Three vernal pools are located within the Maryland portion of the project area. These wetlands provide significant wildlife habitat as they are often used by amphibians in the spring.



Table 3-21: Existing Wetlands in Project Area

Wetlands (#)	PEM	PEM/ PFO	PFO	PFO/ PSS	PSS	POW	Total
Pennsylvania	46	1	21	1	15	1	85
Maryland	7	0	6	0	0	N/A	13
TOTAL	53	1	27	1	15	1	98

PEM= Palustrine Emergent, PFO= Palustrine Forested, PSS= Palustrine Scrub-Shrub, POW= Palustrine with Open Water

3.20.3 Impacts

Impacts were assessed using GIS by overlaying the LOD for each alternative onto the existing wetland resources. See **Table 3-22** for impacts per alternative in each state. **Table 3-23** shows the impacts to the Pennsylvania Exceptional Value Wetlands per alternative.

In Pennsylvania, the wetland impacts from DU Modified and DU Shift Modified are very similar, as are E Modified and E Shift Modified. The main difference is that Alternatives DU Modified and DU-Shift Modified have **10.65** acres of wetland impacts, compared to Alternatives E Modified and E-Shift Modified, which have **9.42** acres of impacts. The Alternatives DU Modified and DU-Shift Modified impacts are higher mainly due to the westerly alignment through the floodplains of Meadow Run and its tributaries. In addition, because Meadow Run is considered a Wild Trout Water, Alternatives DU Modified and DU-Shift Modified have greater impacts to Exceptional Value wetlands than Alternatives E Modified and E-Shift Modified.

In Maryland, the paths of the four build alternatives are very similar. However, at the southern limit, just south of Old Salisbury Road, Alternatives DU-Shift Modified and E-Shift Modified are located further to the east, before the tie in with the existing U.S. 219. This shift minimizes the impacts to Wetland WP026, thus reducing overall wetland impacts associated with the shift alternatives.

Overall, Alternative E-Shift Modified has the fewest impacts to wetlands (**10.02** acres) and exceptional value wetlands (**3.13** acres). Alternative E-Shift Modified is the Preferred Alternative.

3.20.4 Mitigation

At this point in the design process, the LOD is conservative to allow for flexibility as the project design continues to progress. It is expected that the LOD will become smaller and permanent impact totals will likely decrease. Once final impact numbers are determined, PennDOT *will* complete a functional assessment of impacted wetlands in Pennsylvania, prior to applying for a PA DEP Water Obstruction and Encroachment Permit.

Compensatory mitigation is required for unavoidable permanent impacts to wetlands. Compensatory wetland mitigation *will* be state specific. *Five years of monitoring for specific wetlands that are partially impacted by construction of the project will also be conducted. The purpose of this monitoring is to ensure there are no unanticipated secondary impacts to those resources. Furthermore, additional compensatory mitigation will be required for temporary fills that remain in place for longer than 12 months to address the associated temporal loss to the resources.*

PennDOT *will* mitigate wetland impacts occurring in Pennsylvania and SHA *will* mitigate wetland impacts occurring in Maryland. Specific compensatory

Table 3-22: Wetland Impacts per Alternative

Wetland Type (Acres) ¹	No Build	DU Mod.	DU-Shift Mod.	E Mod.	E-Shift Mod.
Pennsylvania					
PEM	0	2.25	2.25	1.50	1.50
PFO	0	4.51	4.51	4.16	4.16
PEM/PFO	0	0.50	0.50	0.50	0.50
PSS	0	1.42	1.42	1.28	1.28
PFO/PSS	0	1.97	1.97	1.97	1.97
POW	0	0	0	0.01	0.01
Pennsylvania Total	0	10.65	10.65	9.42	9.42
Maryland²					
PEM	0	0.59	0.45	0.59	0.45
PFO	0	0.14	0.15	0.14	0.15
PSS	0	0	0	0	0
Maryland Total	0	0.73	0.60	0.73	0.60
TOTAL (PA/MD)	0	11.38	11.25	10.15	10.02

¹PEM – palustrine emergent, PFO – palustrine forested, PSS – palustrine scrub/shrub, POW – palustrine open water ²POW is not a recognized wetland type in Maryland

Table 3-23: Pennsylvania Exceptional Value Wetland Impacts per Alternative

EV Wetlands (Acres)	No Build	DU Mod.	DU-Shift Mod.	E Mod.	E-Shift Mod.
Exceptional Value Wetlands ¹	0	4.57	4.57	3.13	3.13

¹Applies to Pennsylvania wetlands only, per 25 Pa. Code, Chapter 105.17(1)(iii), (iv)

wetland mitigation *will* be coordinated and approved through the federal and state permitting processes.

In Pennsylvania, PennDOT intends to purchase credits from an approved private wetland mitigation bank. Maryland does not have a private wetland mitigation bank that can service the impacts related to the project; SHA *will* develop a PRM plan.

The Rock Lodge Road (SSS-110026) PRM site is proposed to meet the Preferred Alternative mitigation requirements in Maryland. The site is located in the same HUC-8 watershed (Youghiogheny) and MDE 8-digit watershed (Casselman River) as the Preferred Alternative impacts. The Rock Lodge Road site has the potential to provide 47,205 square feet (1.09 acres) of wetland mitigation credit, which exceeds the Preferred Alternative mitigation requirement.

3.21 Floodplains

3.21.1 Methodology

EO 11988 prioritizes the avoidance of adverse impacts to floodplains and the avoidance of floodplain development. The EO also requires that federal agencies take action to reduce the risk of flood loss, to minimize the impact of floods on human safety, health and welfare, and to restore and preserve the natural and beneficial values served by floodplains. For the purposes of this EO, floodplain is defined as relatively flat areas adjoining

inland and coastal waters, including at a minimum, that area subject to a one percent or greater chance of flooding in any given year.

Furthermore, 25 PA Code Chapter 106 Floodplain Management *and the Code of Maryland Regulations 26.17.04* contain planning and development regulations regarding floodplains. These regulations apply to highways obstructions or other obstructions.

Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) flood data was reviewed to identify and map floodplains within the project area (FEMA Panel No. 24023C0080D, 42111C0567D, 42111C0570D, 42111C0705D, and 42111C0710D).

3.21.2 Existing Conditions

The recorded 1% annual chance floodplains in the project area include Miller Run and Piney Creek in Pennsylvania, and Meadow Run and the Casselman River in both Pennsylvania and Maryland. The 1% annual chance floodplain refers to the areas along or adjacent to a stream or body of water that are capable of storing or conveying floodwaters during a 1% annual chance storm. The 1% annual chance storm is a rainfall event that statistically has a 1% chance of occurring in any given year. The approximate locations of the 1% annual chance floodplains of all major streams have been identified for the project area, as shown in **Table 3-24**.



Photograph 3-22: Floodplain of Meadow Run

The floodplain of Miller Run is small and is confined by existing U.S. 219. The floodplain extends from the Casselman River, along U.S. 219 and turns eastward, going under U.S. 219, just south of the ramps to the Meyersdale Interchange. Piney Creek is wide throughout the project area corridor; however, a valley through the Engles Mill area confines this floodplain, just west of its confluence with the Casselman River.

Meadow Run originates near the base of Meadow Mountain in Maryland and flows northwest into Pennsylvania, staying south of Greenville Road and

the Borough of Salisbury. Meadow Run has a small floodplain in Maryland, extending no further than 50 feet on either side but then expands in Pennsylvania and measures 381 feet in some places. The Casselman River has a wide floodplain throughout the project area, in some cases, extending to 1,000 feet wide. The floodplain in this area mainly traverses through agricultural fields.

3.21.3 Impacts

The No Build Alternative would consist of taking no action to improve the existing transportation facilities; therefore, it is not anticipated to impact any of the four FEMA 1% annual chance floodplains within the project area.

None of the build alternatives would result in a significant floodplain encroachment per [EO 11988](#). All four build alternatives would have a very minor impact to the Miller Run FEMA floodplain and an impact to the Piney Creek FEMA floodplain. Alternatives DU Modified and DU-Shift Modified would also have an impact to the Meadow Run floodplain. The impact to Miller Run is the result of the roadway reconfiguration to provide local access at the northern end of the project and would be associated with all four build alternatives. The vertical clearance over Piney Creek would be approximately 185 feet. All build alternatives would span Piney Creek to the east of existing U.S. 219, just south of Piney Run Road. The bridge in this location would cross both Piney Run Road and

Piney Creek.

Alternatives DU Modified and DU-Shift Modified cross Piney Creek in the same location, about 2,200 feet from where Alternatives DU Modified and DU-Shift Modified split from Alternatives E Modified and E-Shift Modified and head east towards existing U.S. 219. Alternatives E Modified and E-Shift Modified cross over Piney Creek at the same location just north of Greenville Road, as shown in **Table 3-24** The span arrangement of the bridge may be able to reduce the impact even further or possibly eliminate it. This assumption is based on the fact that the floodplain in the area of the bridge crossings is small due to the steep topography of the area. With any one of the four build alternatives, there may be a pier located in proximity to the floodplain, but it would be well outside of the over bank areas.

All four build alternatives equally impact the Miller Run 1% annual chance floodplain located at the northern end of the project area. All four build alternatives are common in this portion of the project and would impact 0.6 acres of the Miller Run

floodplain as shown in **Table 3-24**. Alternatives DU Modified and DU-Shift Modified impact 4.6 acres of the Meadow Run floodplain while Alternatives E Modified and E-Shift Modified have no impact to the Meadow Run floodplain. Alternatives E Modified and E-Shift Modified would impact approximately 4.1 acres of Piney Creek FEMA floodplain, and Alternatives DU Modified and DU-Shift Modified would have a greater impact of 7.1 acres to Piney Creek floodplains. **Table 3-24** for a breakdown of impacts to FEMA 1 % Annual Chance Floodplain by Alternative.

None of the four build alternatives would impact the Casselman River floodplain.

Given the proposed vertical clearances of each alternative, no impacts to the Casselman River or Meadow Run floodplains are anticipated. Minor impacts to the Piney Creek floodplain could occur depending on the final placement of pier locations. These impacts would be authorized under 25 PA Code Chapter 106 through the joint Section 404/PA Chapter 105 Permit process.

Table 3-24: Impacts to FEMA 1% Annual Chance Floodplain by Alternative

Floodplain	No Build	DU Mod.	DU-Shift Mod.	E Mod.	E-Shift Mod.
Miller Run Hectares (acres)	0.0 (0.0)	0.24 (0.6)	0.24 (0.6)	0.24 (0.6)	0.24 (0.6)
Piney Creek Hectares (acres)	0.0 (0.0)	2.87 (7.1)	2.87 (7.1)	1.66 (4.1)	1.66 (4.1)
Meadow Run Hectares (acres)	0.0 (0.0)	1.86 (4.6)	1.86 (4.6)	0.0 (0.0)	0.0 (0.0)
TOTAL Impacts Hectares (acres)	0.0 (0.0)	4.97 (12.3)	4.97 (12.3)	1.9 (4.7)	1.9 (4.7)

3.21.4 Mitigation

Alternative E-Shift Modified is the Preferred Alternative and efforts to minimize and avoid impacts to FEMA 1% annual chance floodplains will continue throughout the final design process. Impact minimization efforts may include design refinements and resulting reductions in the proposed limit of disturbance, hydrologic and hydraulic modeling to identify flood risk and determine the type and size of proposed infrastructure, and stormwater management and impoundment. During final design and prior to construction, permitting procedures *will* be instituted in accordance with PA DEP, MDE, and USACE. All action taken with respect to construction *will* conform to Executive Order 11988 (Floodplain Management).

3.22 Vegetation, Terrestrial Habitat, & Terrestrial Wildlife

The Vegetation, Terrestrial Habitat, and Wildlife investigation consisted of classifying the project area using the Anderson and Fike methods following Pennsylvania and Maryland guidance and accepted methodologies. Detailed Terrestrial Habitat use can be found in the *Terrestrial Habitat Assessment Report* (PennDOT, July 2023), in **Appendix W**. The wildlife investigation consisted of identification of well used wildlife trails, scat, etc. The information collected will be used for locating any potential wildlife crossings. A detailed inventory of

invasive vegetation was not completed, however numerous common invasive species were observed.

3.22.1 Methodology

A. Anderson Method

Pennsylvania and Maryland - *A Land Use and Land Cover Classification System for Use with Remote Sensor Data* (Anderson, et. al. 1976) (Anderson) assisted in classifying habitat units in the project area. The Anderson Method allows for classification to four levels of detail, Level I being the least detailed and Level IV being the most detailed. The target of this study was to classify terrestrial habitat in the project area to a Level III.

This method begins with an identification of land cover types within the project area utilizing readily available aerial photography. This study used the ESRI World Imagery aerial photography dated October 24, 2022. Land cover types were classified to Level II utilizing aerial photography and a draft Anderson terrestrial habitat map was created. This map was utilized by field crews for ground truthing. Field crews then walked the project area to confirm the Level II classifications and further classify the habitats within the project area to a Level III classification. Field work occurred on numerous days between the spring of 2022 and spring of 2023. The results of the field investigations and land cover classifications were then used to develop final Level

III Anderson mapping.

B. Fike Method

The second part of the terrestrial habitat assessment used the *Terrestrial and Palustrine Plant Communities of Pennsylvania* (Fike, 1999) method. Utilizing the methodologies described in this classification method, different plant communities were identified within the project area. The Fike method divides the state into eleven Ecological Regions of Pennsylvania. The project area is located within the Western Allegheny Mountains region. Global Positioning Survey (GPS) survey technology with sub-meter accuracy recorded the differing plant communities on hard copy field maps. Finally, each area received a specific habitat type appropriate for the region.

C. Pennsylvania

The project area has a history of vehicle collisions with deer as shown in **Figure 3-13** below. Additionally, the existing U.S. 219 is the western boundary for the PA Game Commission Chronic Wasting Disease (CWD) Disease Management Area (DMA) 2, as depicted in **Figure 3-14**. During field reconnaissance, any highly used wildlife trails, scat, etc., which were observed, were surveyed with GPS. To better help evaluate the best potential wildlife crossing areas, only highly used wildlife trails were delineated.

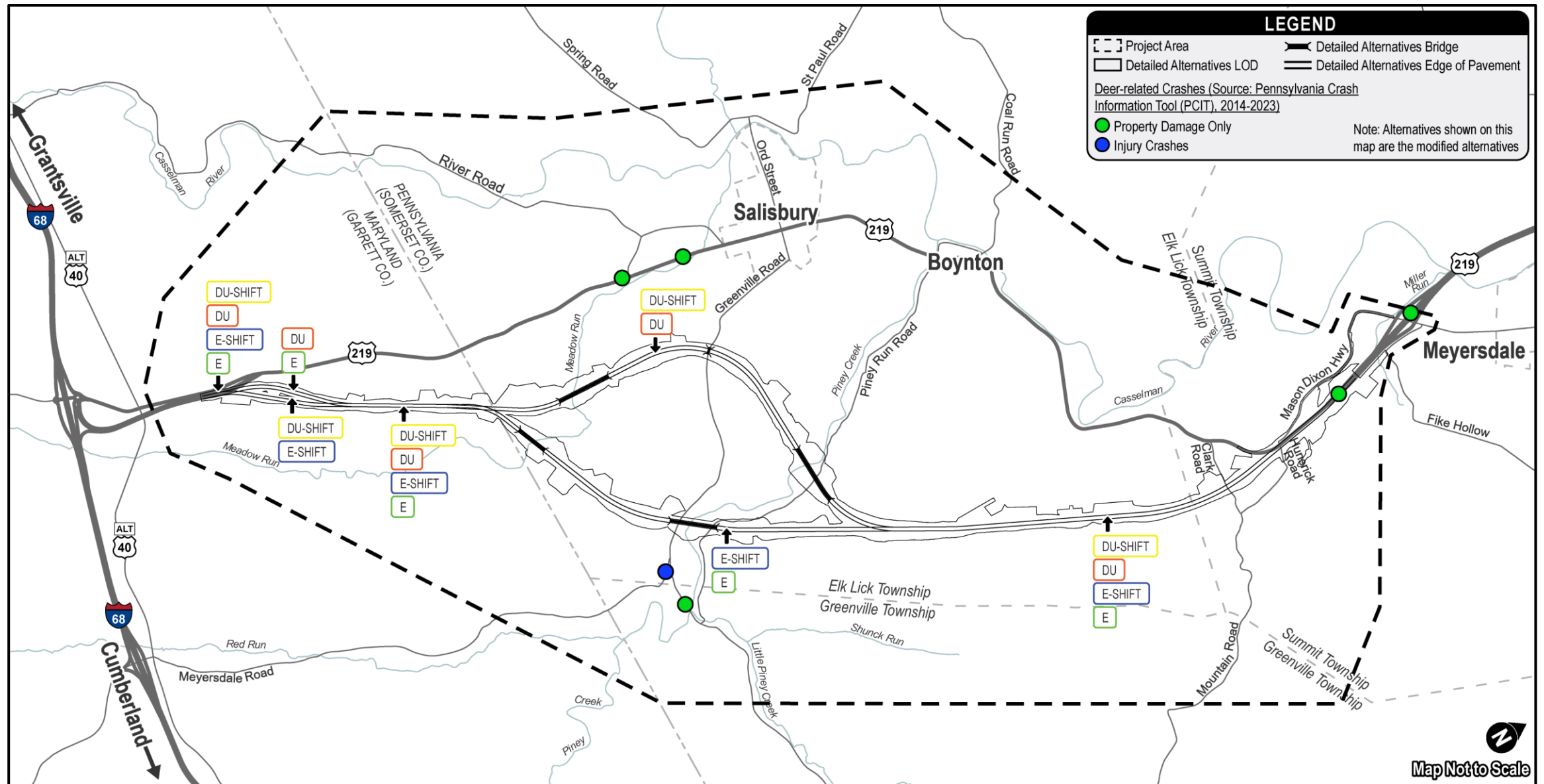


Figure 3-13: Deer-related Crashes within Study Area

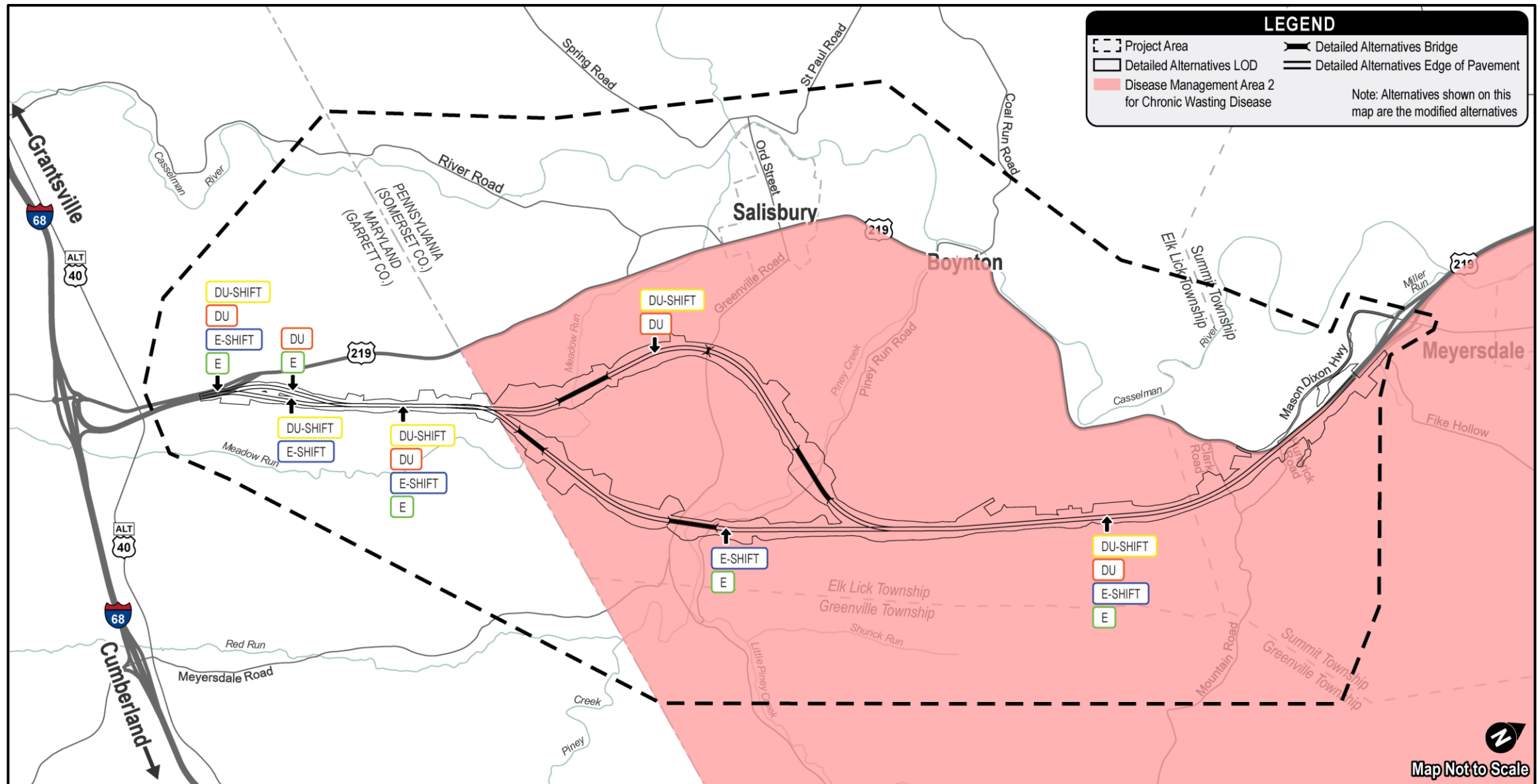


Figure 3-14: Chronic Wasting Disease Management Area

D. Maryland

Specimen trees, defined as trees having a diameter at breast height (DBH) greater than or equal to 30-inches, and champion trees, defined as trees within 75% or more of the diameter of the current state champion tree, were identified in the field, measured using a DBH tape, and located and mapped using a GPS receiver.

Targeted Ecological Areas (TEAs) are lands and watersheds of high ecological value and the Maryland Department of Natural Resources (MD DNR) identifies them as conservation priorities for natural resource protection. These areas represent the most ecologically valuable areas in the State.



Photograph 3-23: Forest Habitat
Near Piney Creek

Maryland's Watershed Resources Registry (WRR) interactive mapping tool aided in the identification of TEAs and GI hubs and corridors. Layers reviewed included protected lands, priority conservation areas, nature's network, and biota.

The presence of protected lands was investigated through the Maryland iMAP ArcGIS Online for Maryland, Maryland Protected Lands – Forest Conservation Act Easements dataset and the MD DNR and Maryland Environmental Resources and Land Information Network (MERLIN) online GIS system. No protected lands were identified.

Forest Interior Dwelling Species (FIDS) are regulated as a protected resource within the Chesapeake Bay Critical Area (Critical Area) (COMAR 27.01.09.04). Although there are no Critical Areas within or near the project area, and FIDS are not specifically regulated outside of the Critical Area, MD DNR encourages avoidance of impacts to FIDS habitat throughout the state. FIDS habitat includes documented FIDS breeding areas within existing riparian forests that are at least 300 feet in width and that occur adjacent to streams, wetlands, and other forest areas used as breeding areas by FIDS. Potential FIDS habitat was identified using GIS data obtained from the MERLIN mapping system, Living Resources layer. This layer identifies potential FIDS habitat that is the result of modeling depicting where FIDS habitat might occur based on certain criteria but has not been field tested.

Following the identification and mapping of potential FIDS habitats, the areas were evaluated using ArcGIS to determine if the project area contained forests of at least 50 acres in size with 10 or more acres of forest interior habitat (i.e., forest greater than 300 feet from the nearest forest edge).

3.22.2 Existing Conditions

A. Pennsylvania

The completion of the Anderson Method determined that 19 Anderson Level III habitat types are located within the project area. **Table 3-25** provides a summary of the total acreage of each habitat type. **Figure 3-15** also depicts these habitat types. The completion of the Fike Method determined that nine Fike habitat types are located within the project area. **Table 3-26** provides a summary of the total acreage of each Fike habitat within the project area. Additionally, **Figure 3-16** depicts the habitat types.

B. Maryland

The completion of the Anderson Method determined that seven Anderson Level III habitat types are located within the project area. **Table 3-27** summarizes the total acreage of each Anderson habitat type within the project area. **Figure 3-15** depicts these habitat types.

A total of 31 trees of specimen size reside within the project area during field reconnaissance. None of these trees are champion trees or are within 75

percent of the state champion tree for a given species. **Table 3-28** summarizes the specimen trees identified and located on the Anderson Terrestrial Habitat Mapping (**Appendix W**). A total of six different species reside in the project area and the largest tree found was a sugar maple with a 48-inch DBH measurement.

Small portions of TEAs and GI hubs and corridors are present within the project area. A large TEA is

present east of existing U.S. 219, with a small portion of it crossing U.S. 219 and extending into the western portion of the project area along Old

Salisbury Road. A large GI hub associated with Meadow Run and Meadow Mountain is present to the east of the project area with a small finger of the GI hub extending into the project area. There is also a GI corridor mapped between the northern limit of Old Salisbury Road and U.S. 219. The corridor

connects the GI hub to the east of the project with a GI hub west of U.S. 219. These TEAs and GI hubs are depicted in the *Terrestrial Habitat Assessment Report, Appendix L*, contained in **Appendix W** of this document.

Two small areas of FIDS habitat were within the project area. Both areas are in the northern portion of the Maryland section, north of Old Salisbury Road. FIDS Area #1 is located just south of the Pennsylvania/Maryland line and the FIDS habitat consists of approximately 1.0 acre of deciduous forestland. FIDS Area #2 is located approximately 700 feet to the south and the FIDS habitat consists

Table 3-25: Anderson Land Use/Land Cover Type Summary (Pennsylvania)

Level I Habitat Type	Level II Habitat Type	Level III Habitat Type	Acres
1. Urban or Built-up Land	11. Residential	111. Single Family Units	37.8
	14. Transportation, Communications, and Utilities	141. Highway ROW	51.3
		145. Roadway ROW	13.2
		151. Commercial Complex	1.9
	17. Other Urban or Built-up Land	171. Sediment Pond (Water Control Structure)	0.7
2. Agricultural Land	21. Cropland and Pasture	212. Pastureland	2.2
		213. Hayfield	12.9
3. Rangeland	31. Herbaceous Rangeland	312. Early Succession Old Field	46.1
	33. Mixed Rangeland	331. Moderate- Dense	17.2
		332. Grazed or Thin	40.2
4. Forest Land	41. Deciduous Forest Land	415. Mature Stage, Shrub Moderate- Dense	178.1
		416. Mature Stage, Shrub Grazed or Shrub Sparse.	141.3
	42. Evergreen Forest Land	425. Mature Stage, Shrub Moderate- Dense	11.4
	43. Mixed Forest Land	435. Mature Stage, Shrub Moderate- Dense	217.6
		436. Mature Stage, Shrub Grazed or Shrub Sparse	116.4
5. Water	51. Streams and Canals	511. Streams	11.9
7. Barren Land	75. Strip Mines, Quarries, and Gravel Pits	751. Strip Mine Total	21.7
	76. Transitional Areas	761. Fill Slope Total	1.6
NA	Wetland	Wetland	17.5
TOTAL			941.1

Table 3-26: Fike Classifications (Pennsylvania)

Fike Habitat Type	Acres
Aspen/ Gray (Paper) Birch Forest	1.2
Dry Oak- Heath Forest	49.8
Dry Oak- Mixed Hardwood Forest	152.4
Hemlock- Northern Hardwood Forest	51.3
NA (No Fike Category) ¹	258.9
Red Maple Terrestrial Forest	190.3
Red Maple Terrestrial/Red Oak- Mixed Hardwood Forest	69.4
Red Oak- Mixed Hardwood Forest	150.3
Wetland	17.5
TOTAL	941.1

¹NA indicates that no applicable Fike Habitat category is available for these areas.

of approximately 8.0 acres of deciduous forestland. Logging and mining activities in the mid to late 1900s disturbed both of these areas. Early mid successional forest habitat currently dominates the areas.

MD DNR analysis also suggests that the forested area on or adjacent to the project area contains Forest Interior Dwelling Bird habitat. This habitat supports populations of Forest Interior Dwelling Bird Species, which are declining in Maryland.

C. Wildlife

The evaluation of potential wildlife crossings in the Pennsylvania section revealed a widespread variety of species and concentrations throughout the project area. Wildlife use of the Pennsylvania portion of the project area is evident from observation of individuals and scat as well as through the observation of wildlife trails. Deer, bear, rabbit, fox, coyote, and raccoon tracks were the dominant species tracks observed during field work.

Wildlife sightings within the Maryland portion of the project area included deer, raccoons, squirrels, chipmunks, newts, frogs, and various bird species.

Large portions of the Pennsylvania project area are open forest, and the concentration of wildlife trails is sporadic in these areas. Trails appear in confining areas such as rhododendron stands, steep valleys or along field edges only to dissipate as the trails return to open forests. **Appendix W** presents the location of the heaviest wildlife trails. The findings indicate that the potential for wildlife collisions exists within the project area.

Given the dense forestland and presence of SGL 231 in Pennsylvania, a concerted effort would be made to provide wildlife crossings in the Pennsylvania portion of the project area where appropriate (for example along established game trails identified by the project team during field work). The large bridges spanning the Meadow Run and

Table 3-27: Anderson Land Use/Land Cover Type Summary (Maryland)

Level I Habitat Type	Level II Habitat Type	Level III Habitat Type	Acres
1. Urban or Built-up Land	11. Residential	111. Single Family Units	3.1
	14. Transportation, Communications, and Utilities	141. Highway ROW	19.9
		145. Roadway ROW	0.0
		151. Commercial Complex	0.8
	17. Other Urban or Built-up Land	171. Sediment Pond (Water Control Structure)	0.0
2. Agricultural Land	21. Cropland and Pasture	212. Pastureland	47.9
		213. Hayfield	30.7
3. Rangeland	31. Herbaceous Rangeland	312. Early Succession Old Field	0.8
	33. Mixed Rangeland	331. Moderate- Dense	1.6
		332. Grazed or Thin	0.0
4. Forest Land	41. Deciduous Forest Land	415. Mature Stage, Shrub Moderate- Dense	19.4
		416. Mature Stage, Shrub Grazed or Shrub Sparse.	52.1
	42. Evergreen Forest Land	425. Mature Stage, Shrub Moderate- Dense	1.9
	43. Mixed Forest Land	435. Mature Stage, Shrub Moderate- Dense	0.0
		436. Mature Stage, Shrub Grazed or Shrub Sparse	0.7
5. Water	51. Streams and Canals	511. Streams	1.0
7. Barren Land	75. Strip Mines, Quarries, and Gravel Pits	751. Strip Mine Total	0.0
	76. Transitional Areas	761. Fill Slope Total	0.0
NA	Wetland	Wetland	1.7
TOTAL			181.5

Table 3-28: Specimen Trees in Maryland

Common Name	Scientific Name	# of Specimen (≥30" DBH)
Red Maple	Acer rubrum	4
Sugar Maple	Acer saccharum	13
Black Cherry	Prunus serotina	5
Northern Red Oak	Quercus rubra	6
American Basswood	Tilia americana	1
Cucumber Tree	Magnolia acuminata	2
TOTAL		31

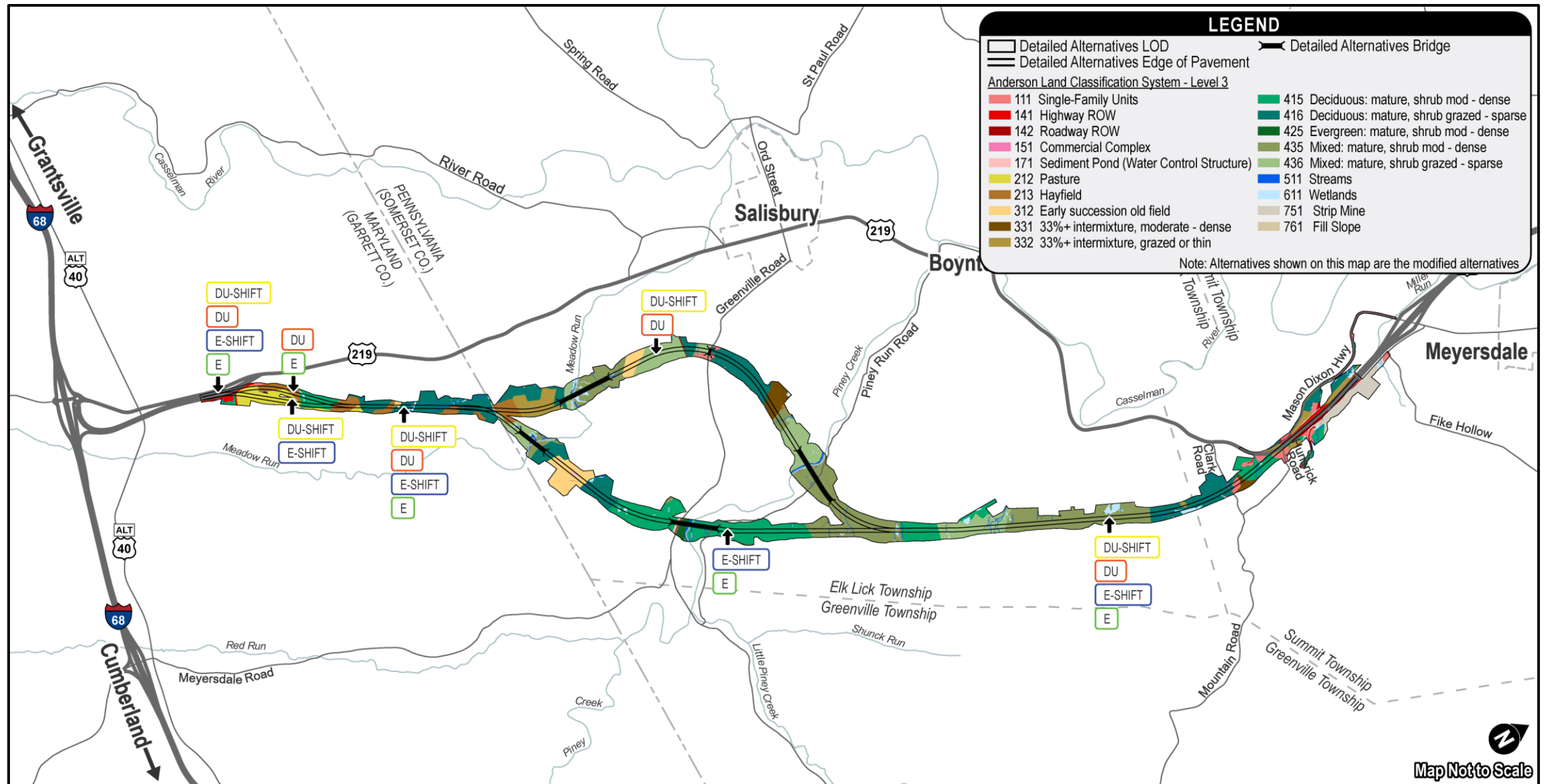


Figure 3-15: Anderson Land Use Classifications within Alternatives

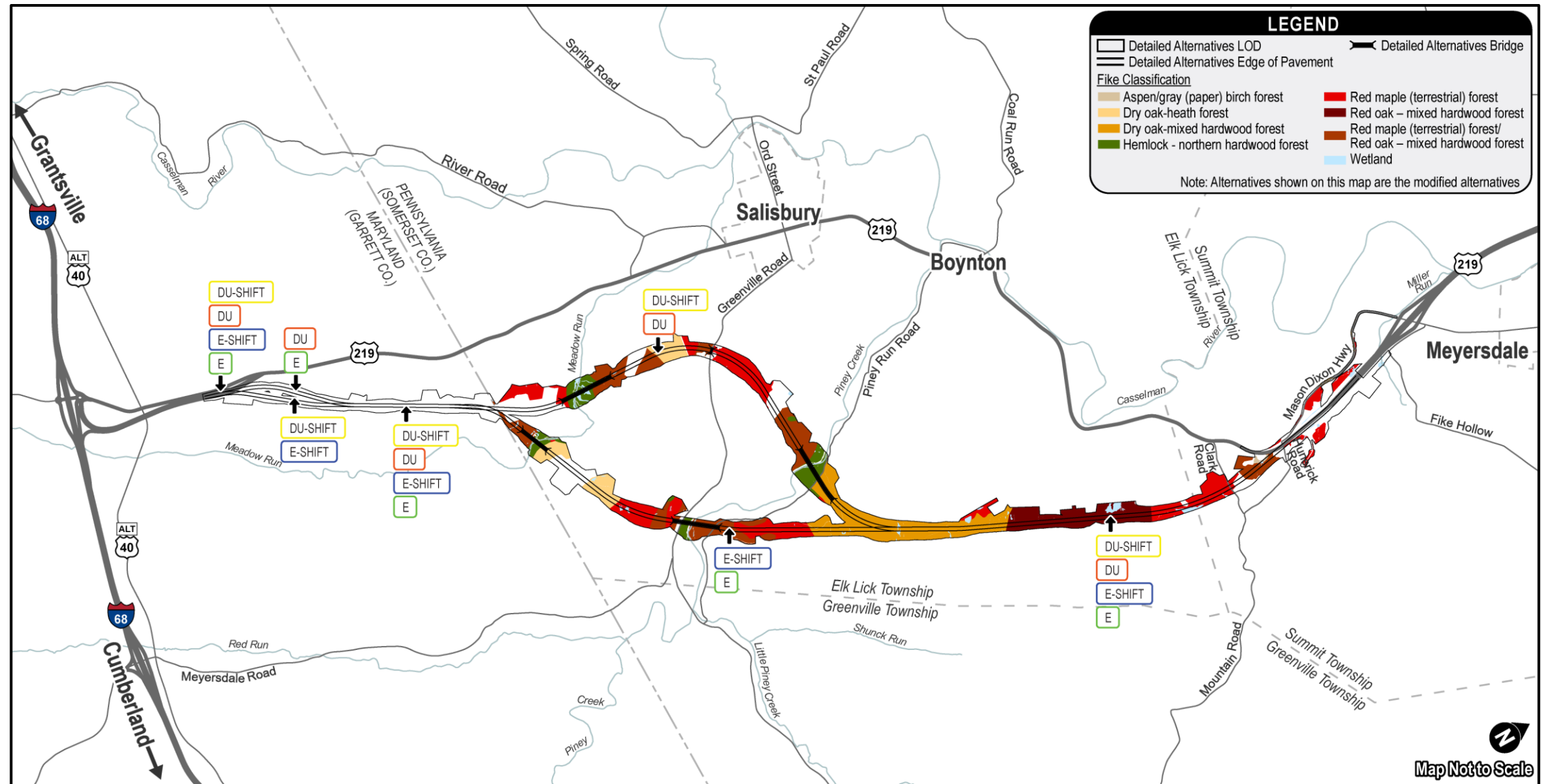


Figure 3-16: Fike Classifications within Alternatives

Piney Creek Valleys would also function as wildlife crossings. Because no game trails were identified within the Maryland portion of the project area and the terrain is not conducive to a structure no wildlife crossings are being investigated within Maryland.

3.22.3 Impacts

The No Build Alternative would consist of taking no action to improve the existing transportation facilities. Therefore, it is not anticipated to impact vegetation, habitat, or wildlife within the project area. Various terrestrial land uses will be impacted within the proposed project area.

A. Pennsylvania

The largest land use impact in Pennsylvania will be forestland. Forestland impacts including deciduous forest land, evergreen forestland and mixed-use forestland make up 664.8 acres across all four build alternatives. All build alternatives have similar potential forest land impacts, with Alternatives E Modified and E-Shift Modified having the lowest impacts, as they affect the smallest area of forest land. The second largest land use type impact in Pennsylvania is urban or built up land, which makes up 104.9 acres across all four build alternatives. Impacts to agricultural land include 15.1 acres across all four build alternatives.

B. Maryland

The largest land use impact in Maryland will be

agriculture. Agricultural land makes up 78.6 acres across all four build alternatives. Forestland in Maryland makes up 74.1 acres across all four build alternatives. Urban or built up land makes up 50.9 acres across all four build alternatives.

Regarding impacts to specimen trees, Alternatives DU Modified and DU Shift Modified impact 25 specimen trees and Alternatives E Modified and E Shift Modified impact 24 specimen trees.

C. Overall

The largest land use among all build alternatives across the entire project is forestland. All build alternatives would have similar forestland impacts. Alternative DU Modified alternative would impact 431.4 total acres of forestland, Alternative DU-Shift Modified would impact 430 acres of forest land, Alternative E Modified would impact 389.7 acres, and Alternative E-Shift Modified would impact 388.8 acres. As such, forestland impacts will be the largest land use impacted by the project.

The second largest land use across the project area is farmland. Alternative DU Modified would impact 76.1 acres of Productive Cropland/ Pasture, Alternative DU-Shift Modified would impact 76.3 acres, Alternative E Modified would impact 37.4 acres, and Alternative E-Shift Modified would impact 37.6 acres. Additional detail on farmland impacts can be found in Section 3.13.

Impacts associated with wetlands and waterways

are summarized in Sections 3.20 and 3.19 respectively. Total impacts to Terrestrial and Aquatic Habitats are summarized in **Table 3-29**.

3.22.4 Mitigation

Coordination of mitigation is ongoing between PennDOT, SHA, and the respective agencies. These mitigation efforts include, but are not limited to, following approved E&SPC plans which include native seed mixes and plantings. The usage of these native seed mixes would help to prevent the spread and establishment of invasive species. The project team *will* utilize best management practices from PennDOT Publication No. 756, *Invasive Species Best Management Practices* (PennDOT, 2014).

Additionally, wildlife crossings will be considered at locations to be determined along the alignment in order to facilitate safe wildlife crossing and to prevent collisions. PennDOT will continue to evaluate the use and locations of wildlife crossings in the design phase and will coordinate with U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS), Pennsylvania Game Commission (PGC) and the PFBC to ensure that habitat connectivity is maintained as much as possible. The project team has committed to incorporating at least one wildlife crossing into the project. However, the exact location(s) have not been established at this time. The location(s) for the wildlife crossing will be determined once a selected alternative has been identified. The proposed large bridges spanning the Piney Creek and Meadow Run

valleys will act as wildlife crossings. Following selection of an alternative and anticipated design modifications to the roadway alignment (possible reductions to the median width and consideration of bifurcating the northbound and southbound lanes) in order to reduce the limit of disturbance, the location of the crossings will be evaluated by the design team and coordinated with the appropriate state and Federal agencies. The location, frequency and type of crossings will be coordinated. The area near State Game Land 231 is one logical location for a crossing in which the Pennsylvania Game Commission will be consulted. Other logical locations to consider crossings are where streams will cross the roadway.

These areas will be evaluated to determine if these can be enhanced to facilitate wildlife crossings for large mammals, as well as smaller mammals and reptiles. The details of these mitigation efforts *will* be finalized in final design and will follow guidance from PennDOT Publication No. 13M, *Design Manual Part 2 Highway Design– March 2015 Edition* (PennDOT, 2024).

In Maryland, the Maryland Reforestation Law regulates project impacts to forests. Before in-kind forest replacement is considered, every reasonable effort must be made to minimize the cutting or clearing of trees. When prudent minimization efforts have been considered and one acre or more of forest clearing is still required, replacement of the forests must occur on a one-to-one basis. SHA

Table 3-29: Terrestrial and Aquatic Habitat Impacts

Terrestrial and Aquatic Resources	DU Mod	DU-Shift Mod	E-Mod	E-Shift Mod.
Forestland (acres)	431.4	430	389.7	388.8
Deciduous Forestland	185.6	184.2	245.8	244.8
Evergreen Forestland	0	0	3.8	3.8
Mixed Forestland	245.8	245.8	140.2	140.2
Farmland				
Productive Cropland/ Pasture (acres)	76.1	76.3	37.4	37.6
Maple Sugar Production Forest (acres)	23.1	23.1	0.1	0.1
Productive Farms (#)	9	9	6	6
Prime Farmland Soils (acres)	34.2	34.2	21.2	21.2
Soils of Statewide Importance (acres)	104.3	104.3	83.4	83.3
Preferential Tax Assessment (acres)	74.6	74.9	35.8	36.1
Other				
FEMA 1% Annual Chance Floodplain (acres)	12.3	12.3	4.7	4.7
Potential Bat Hibernacula (#)	3	3	0	0
Wetland (acres)	11.38	11.25	10.15	10.02
PEM	2.84	2.70	2.09	1.95
PEM/PFO	0.50	0.50	0.50	0.50
PFO	4.65	4.66	4.30	4.31
PFO/PSS	1.97	1.97	1.97	1.97
PSS	1.42	1.42	1.28	1.28
POW	0	0	0.01	0.01
Streams (linear feet)	24,997	25,012	23,148	23,141
Perennial Streams	17,343	17,343	17,890	17,884
Seasonal Stream	7,654	7,669	5,258	5,257

would need to locate state or publicly owned land of equivalent size to be reforested. If no state or publicly owned land is available, SHA *will* pay into the MD DNR Reforestation Fund. *Reforestation of approximately 72 acres would be proposed in an acre-for-acre replacement. All four build alternatives have similar alignments through Maryland and would impact similar amounts of forestland within the state.*

Acre-for-acre reforestation either within the immediate project right-of-way, within other SHA-owned land, or payment into the MD DNR Reforestation Fund *will* mitigate unavoidable



Photograph 3-24: Tree Plantings Along U.S. 219 in Garrett County

impacts to forest resources. Reforestation plans *will* be coordinated by SHA's Landscape Operations Division, and a MD DNR Reforestation Site Review form *will* be prepared during final design.

3.23 Rare, Threatened, & Endangered Species

3.23.1 Methodology

Multi-agency coordination has identified federally and state-listed rare, threatened, and endangered (RT&E) species known to be present within the project area and, if necessary, develop alternative, conservation, or avoidance measures for the protection of identified RT&E resources. Federal and state regulations such as the Endangered Species Act (ESA) of 1973, which establishes protections for threatened or endangered fish, wildlife, and plants, regulates RT&E species. Coordination for federally protected RT&E resources is ongoing through the USFWS-Pennsylvania and Chesapeake Bay Field Offices. State-level interagency coordination for RT&E species within the project area involved the following resource agencies: PFBC, PGC, Pennsylvania Department of Conservation of Natural Resources (DCNR), Maryland Department of Natural Resources - Wildlife and Heritage Service, and the Maryland Department of Natural Resources - Environmental Review Program. Refer to the *Rare, Threatened and Endangered Species*

Report (PennDOT, November 2023), included in **Appendix X**, for detailed information pertaining to RT&E findings for the project area.

A. State Coordination - Pennsylvania

The Pennsylvania Natural Diversity Inventory (PNDI) environmental review request for the project area initiated RT&E species resource agency coordination in Pennsylvania. State and Federal agencies responsible for the management and protection of species listed as endangered, threatened, and special concern species and resources within Pennsylvania include PGC, PFBC, DCNR, and USFWS Pennsylvania Field Office. A PNDI environmental review utilizing the Pennsylvania Conservation Explorer (PACE) web tool was completed on August 11, 2021 (PNDI-738552) and updated on May 12, 2023 (PNDI-786952) due to minor modifications to alternatives. **Appendix X** contains copies of PNDI-738552 and PNDI-786952 review receipts, in addition to relevant resource agency correspondence.

A MD DNR Environmental Review request for the project area in 2021 and again in 2023 initiated RT&E species resource agency coordination in Maryland. State and Federal agencies responsible for the management and protection of species listed as endangered, threatened, in need of special conservation include the MD DNR Wildlife and Heritage Service and USWFS Chesapeake Bay Field Office. **Appendix X** contains copies of all

correspondence with the Maryland resource agencies.

B. Federal Coordination - USFWS Pennsylvania and Chesapeake Bay Field Offices

Coordination on federally listed RT&E species with the USFWS initially started in May 2002 with a request for information on species within the project area and recommendations for seasonal tree-cutting restrictions. Over the years in coordination with the USFWS, it was determined that formal consultation under Section 7 of the ESA is required because the Proposed Action may affect and is likely to adversely affect federally listed bat species. Additional studies were conducted for bat roosting and hibernacula as described in **Chapter 3.23.2**. In August 2023, USFWS formally recommended a new Biological Assessment that is compliant with Section 7(a)(2) of the ESA and 50 CFR part 402. A Biological Assessment, for U.S. 6219, Section 050 has been prepared and submitted to the USFWS offices along with a request from FHWA to initiate formal consultation. (PennDOT, 2024). The Biological Assessment, included as **Appendix Y**, covers the Indiana bat (*Myotis sodalis* – federally endangered), the northern long-eared bat (*Myotis septentrionalis* – federally endangered) and the tricolored bat (*Perimyotis subflavus* – proposed federally endangered). *A Biological Opinion was issued by USFWS on March 26, 2025, and is included as*

Appendix Z.

3.23.2 Existing Conditions

A. Pennsylvania

Potential conflicts with species under the jurisdiction of PGC, PFBC, and USFWS-Pennsylvania Field Office exist within the project area. All RT&E species with a historic range within the state limits of Pennsylvania of the project area include:

- Indiana bat (*Myotis sodalis*) | Federally Endangered | Mammal
- Northern Long-eared Bat (*Myotis septentrionalis*) | Federally Endangered | Mammal
- Little Brown Bat (*Myotis lucifugus*) | State Endangered | Mammal Species
- Eastern Small-footed Bat (*Myotis leibii*) | State Threatened | Mammal
- Tricolored Bat (*Perimyotis subflavus*) | Proposed Federally Endangered | State Endangered | Mammal
- Long Nosed Sucker (*Catostomus Catostomus*) | State Endangered | Fish

The PGC noted that a significant winter bat hibernaculum (Special Concern) is known to be located in close proximity to the project area. The following surveys and assessments were conducted to confirm the presence of RT&E bat species:

- Habitat and Use Assessment – Fall 2005



Photograph 3-25: Northern Long-Eared Bat Identified within Project Area



Photograph 3-26: Tricolored Bat Identified within Project Area

- Mist Netting – Summer 2014
- Habitat and Use Assessment – Fall 2014
- Trapping – Fall 2014
- Trapping – Fall 2022
- Acoustic Monitoring – Summer 2022
- Hibernacula Assessment – Spring 2023
- Trapping/Acoustic Monitoring – Fall 2023

B. Maryland

According to MD DNR, three geographical areas within the project area are known to support RT&E species and species in need of conservation. These three geographic areas, identified by MD DNR as Sensitive Species Project Review Areas (SSPRAs), include parts of the Casselman River, Meadow Mountain, and a segment of Piney Creek. In the western part of the project area, the Casselman River is known to support 13 species listed as rare, threatened, endangered, or in need of conservation, and three species currently on the watchlist. Within the area of Meadow Mountain which encompasses the project area, records exist for two species listed as rare, and one species currently on the watchlist. In the eastern part of the project area, a segment of Piney Creek is known to support six species listed as rare, threatened, and in need of conservation. Refer to **Appendix X** for the complete listing of RT&E species known to exist within the project area as identified by MD DNR.

Three streams having classifications of Use Class I or Use Class III exist within the project area, as defined by MDE. Use Class I streams represent waterways that support water contact recreation and nontidal warm water aquatic life. Use Class III identifies nontidal cold water streams. Use Class I and Use Class III streams within the project area include:

- Meadow Run (Use Class I)
- Unnamed Tributary to Casselman River (Use Class I)
- Unnamed Tributary to Casselman River (Use Class III).

Consultation with USFWS-Chesapeake Bay Field Office resulted in an official species list, confirming the potential presence of two federally endangered species within the project area. RT&E species listed on the official species list include:

- Indiana bat (*Myotis sodalis*) | Federally Endangered | Mammal
- Northern long-eared bat (*Myotis septentrionalis*) | Federally Endangered | Mammal

3.23.3 Impacts

The No Build Alternative would not result in any project-related construction and would therefore not directly impact threatened, endangered, or special status species or their habitat.

The Biological Assessment has determined that the proposed action “may affect, likely to adversely affect” the Indiana bat, northern long-eared bat, or tricolored bat. Additional details regarding the analysis are in the Biological Assessment in **Appendix Y. *The Biological Opinion, included as Appendix Z, concurred with this determination.***

None of the four build alternatives would have direct or *reasonably foreseeable effects* on a known large mine-cave hibernaculum within the project area. *Direct and reasonably foreseeable effects are discussed later in Section 6.24.*

Alternatives DU Modified and DU-Shift Modified would directly affect three known hibernacula. No threatened or endangered federal or state species were found during the studies at these hibernacula. No known hibernacula are directly affected with Alternatives E Modified and E-Shift Modified.

All four build alternatives would permanently impact less than 2% of the total forested land within a 5-mile radius (29,809 acres) of the Proposed Action Area that is potentially used by the protected bat species.

All four build alternatives would permanently affect 17% of the potential roosting habitat (forest habitat) in the Proposed Action Area.

No known maternity roosts exist in the Proposed Action Area, but those areas most likely to possess maternity roost trees have been avoided to the

fullest extent possible.

None of the four build alternatives would have a direct effect on any identified rocky habitats.

All four build alternatives may affect hibernating northern long-eared bats, Indiana bats, and tricolored bats from blasting, pile driving, and other ground-disturbing activities.

The proposed bridges over Piney Creek with any of the build alternatives would provide a more than adequate travel corridor under the structure for bats to travel between the large known mine-cave and foraging areas, thus reducing the potential for adverse effects due to roadkill. No lighting is proposed along new roadway.

A. Pennsylvania

The four build alternatives avoid impacts to SGL 231; therefore, no further coordination with PGC related to SGL 231 is required.

The four build alternatives would bridge known habitat associated with the longnose sucker, specifically Meadow Run and Piney Creek. The locations of new bridges, piers, causeways, and staging areas are currently unspecified at this phase of preliminary design. However, the build alternatives would avoid pier and fill placement and the staging of materials within habitat known to support the longnose sucker. Coordination between PFBC and PennDOT is ongoing to conduct field

investigations and surveys to evaluate Meadow Run and Piney Creek for the presence or absence of the longnose sucker.

B. Maryland

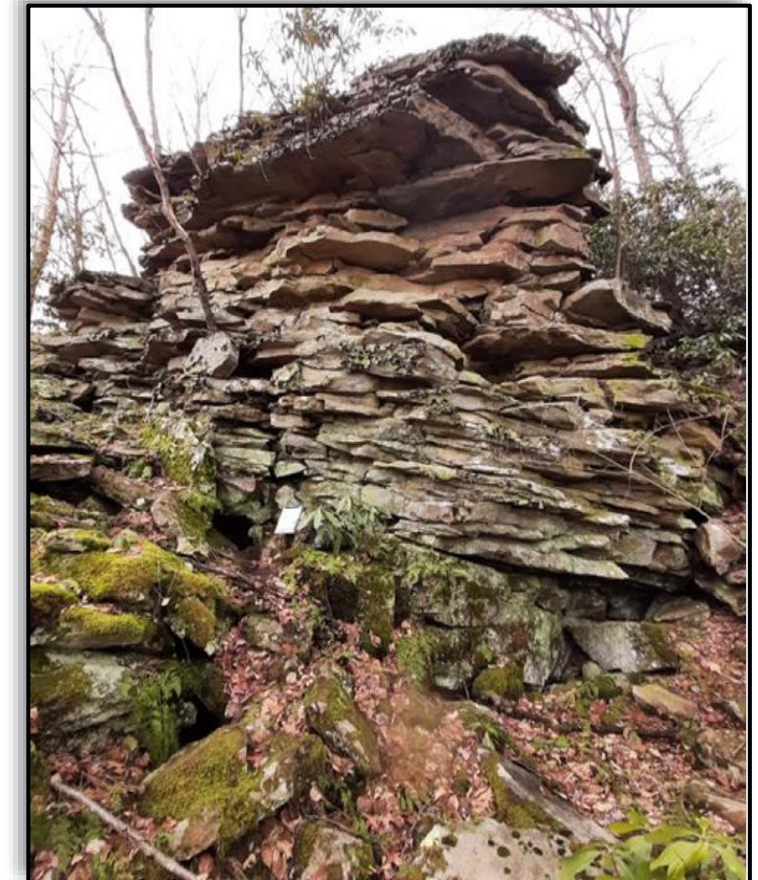
The four build alternatives through Maryland would avoid the Casselman River and Piney Creek and would only cross through the Meadow Mountain area. RT&E species identified within the Meadow Mountain area include:

- Linear-leaved Willowherb (*Epilobium leptophyllum*) | Rare | Plant
- Alder Flycatcher (*Empidonax alnorum*) | Rare (breeding) | Bird
- North American Porcupine (*Erethizon dorsatum*) | Watchlist | Mammal

None of these species within the area of Meadow Mountain are listed as threatened or endangered. Additionally, the build alternatives would avoid bridging streams classified as Use Class I and Use Class III by MDE; therefore, in-stream restrictions are not applicable based on the current design.

At this time, the only known development is a park and ride lot proposed by SHA to be constructed at the northeast corner of U.S. 40 Alt., U.S. 219 and Business 219. The 35-space park and ride lot on 0.79 acres is situated north of U.S. 40 Alt. and between Business 219 northbound lanes and U.S. 219 Southbound lanes. Plans for this park and ride are included in **Appendix AA**.

This park and ride lot, in combination with the U.S. 219 project, would not jeopardize any threatened or endangered species within the proposed action area. The park and ride lot location is currently a gravel lot, offering no habitat.



Photograph 3-27: Potential Bat Hibernaculum Identified in Somerset County

3.23.4 Mitigation

A. Project-Wide

The 2024 Biological Assessment (**Appendix Y**) proposed numerous mitigation measures to compensate for the impacts to protected bat species. These measures were finalized based on consultation with the USFWS *through the Biological Opinion (Appendix Z) issued by USFWS on March 26, 2025. Avoidance, minimization, and conservation measures will include:*

- *Direct impacts to hibernacula outside of the LOD identified within the Biological Opinion must be avoided.*
- *To avoid harming or disturbing hibernating Indiana bats, northern long-eared bats and tricolored bats, all earth disturbance activities within 0.5 miles of any known hibernaculum will only occur from April 1 to November 15.*
- *All trees shall be cut from November 15 to March 31. This includes tree-cutting necessary for site preparation, road construction, road maintenance, access, laydown and staging areas, and utility relocation.*
- *Demolition of buildings or structures shall occur from November 15 to March 31. Alternatively, an emergence survey may be conducted. If no bats are detected during the emergence survey, the building or structure*

may be demolished immediately, or as soon as possible after sunrise on the following day.

- *All disturbance of rocky bat habitat (i.e., construction activities and associated noise) shall occur from November 15 to March 31. Where feasible, identified rocky habitats may be avoided.*
- *No materials, waste, or fill will be deposited in areas that would result in additional forest clearing or sedimentation to any streams in areas providing habitat to Indiana bats, northern long-eared bats, or tricolored bats.*
- *All temporary lighting concurrent with construction activities shall be directed downward to face the work area.*
- *A Pollution Prevention and Contingency Plan will be developed and maintained.*
- *A dust control strategy will be developed and be reviewed by USFWS. The strategy will detail efforts to mitigate air quality concerns during construction and control dust. This strategy shall adhere to PennDOT Publication No. 408/2020-7.*
- *A blasting plan will be prepared by the contractor to meet DEP and PGC guidelines and be submitted to the USFWS, PGC, and PennDOT for review and approval prior to the commencement. All blasting will be monitored with sound and seismographic equipment and monitoring points will be coordinated with the USFWS and PGC. Blasting shall be conducted between*

November 1 to March 31. Blasting will not be permitted within one mile to the north and south of the Piney Creek bridge during the winter hibernation period from October 31 to March 31. No blasting shall occur within 0.2 miles of any known hibernacula. The blasting plan will include specific measures to avoid and minimize habitat disturbances as a result of their blasting activities, including components such as: implementing a blasting time-of-day restriction (i.e., from 9 am to 4 p.m., etc.); outlining a means to monitor and minimize vibrations that may disturb bats; establish a vibration monitoring program; establish air blasting thresholds; establishing a maximum peak particle velocity (i.e., not to exceed two inches per second in the transverse, vertical or longitudinal planes at 40 Hz or greater); when to cease blasting; who to notify of exceedance of thresholds; when to resume blasting; and other components. The blasting plan shall be submitted to USFWS for review and concurrence at least 60 days prior to the start of blasting. A record of each blast shall be maintained for a period of five years.

- *FHWA, through PennDOT and MD SHA, will develop a system to track the implementation of each mitigation measure, the completion date, and results of the mitigation action. The tracking system summary will be provided to the Service quarterly, and available upon request. Additionally, FHWA, PennDOT, and*

MD SHA will provide an Environmental Monitor that has appropriate authority and professional experience to ensure compliance with relevant conservation commitments (particularly regarding areas of tree removal) and other applicable environmental rules and regulations. The Environmental Monitor will monitor and report acreage of forest impacts.

- A planting plan will be developed, in coordination with the USFWS/PGC and DNR guidance, that supports safe highway design and minimizes future roadway mortality, as bats will be able to fly above the roadway utilizing a higher canopy the plantings will provide. The plan will include monitoring of the vegetation's survival and effectiveness at minimizing bat roadway mortality, and be provided to USFWS for concurrence.
- FHWA, PennDOT, and MD SHA will offset the total loss of 400 acres of forest habitat by purchasing the large mine-cave rights or a perpetual easement on this property for perpetual protection of bats and their habitat to offset impacts to hibernacula and suitable forest habitat. Following construction of the project, the property or easement will be transferred to a land manager.
 - If purchase of the large mine-cave is unsuccessful, FHWA, PennDOT, and MD SHA will offset impacts to hibernacula and suitable forest habitat in the form of purchasing conservation

credits from a USFWS-approved conservation banking entity to compensate for the loss of 400 acres of forested habitat.

- Additionally, PennDOT will consider the purchase and installation of four artificial roost structures, designed to the PGC/USFWS requirements, at locations designated by the USFWS and the PGC, or similar effort to offset direct impacts to known hibernaculum.
- FHWA, PennDOT, and MD SHA will provide pre-construction, two years of construction, and one-year post-construction monitoring of the large mine-cave opening. Monitoring results will be shared with PennDOT, SHA, FHWA, PGC, and the USFWS. A monitoring plan will be developed and submitted for USFWS review and concurrence at least 90 days prior to commencing construction. Large mine-cave monitoring reports to the Service within 90 days of the completion of pre-construction monitoring, construction monitoring, and post-construction monitoring.
- Any dead Indiana bats, northern long-eared bats, or tricolored bats found in the action area will be reported to USFWS within 48 hours of discovery.

- Construction equipment will be fitted with properly functioning mufflers to minimize noise impact. To minimize impacts to air quality, the contractor will comply with Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection Rules and Regulations, Title 25.
- To offset unavoidable impacts to rocky outcroppings, FHWA/PennDOT/SHA, with input from bat experts, proposes to design, create and/or rebuild rock outcroppings that are conducive to bat roosting and potential hibernation. Although anticipated to be minor in occurrence, these impacts and coordination can occur during final design activities.
- Excavation will occur during daytime hours to avoid impacts during nighttime foraging.
- An approved erosion, sedimentation, and pollution control plan will be implemented to avoid degradation of receiving waters.
- Lengths of stream crossing culvert structures will be minimized to the extent possible to reduce alteration to existing aquatic habitats that serve as potential habitats and flyways.

Additional information about the proposed conservation and mitigation measures for protected bat species are available in **Appendix Y** and **Appendix Z**.

B. Pennsylvania

Pertaining to the longnose sucker, the design of avoidance measures would be evaluated and provided to PFBC for their review upon finalization of the ongoing field investigations. E&SPC BMPs would be implemented to control sedimentation and minimize habitat impacts. Additionally, stormwater management would be designed to ensure that discharge into streams would minimize elevated stream temperatures, as requested by PFBC. *The cutting of trees along stream corridors will also be kept to a minimum. Furthermore, in-stream construction restrictions will be implemented from March 15 to July 1 for streams known to support longnose suckers and their tributaries, including the Casselman River and its tributaries.*

C. Maryland

MD DNR requires sediment and erosion controls with supplemental measures and maximizing stormwater infiltration to avoid degrading wetland areas supporting rare species along Meadow Run. *Meadow Run also contains brook trout, which is identified as a Species of Greatest Conservation Need in Maryland.* For projects involving the use of grout, mortar, or concrete in or near the stream channel, caution *will* also be used to avoid significant instream pH changes on-site and downstream of the project area. Project design should maintain or enhance fish passage through

the project area, particularly during low flow periods. Additionally, the conservation of Forest Interior Dwelling Bird Species habitat is strongly encouraged.

Coordination with state resource agencies, USFWS, PennDOT, and SHA is ongoing and *will* be needed to finalize mitigation measures required for the project.

3.24 Reasonably Foreseeable Effects

3.24.1 Methodology

NEPA requires the examination of direct and reasonably foreseeable *effects* of a project. *An analysis was conducted in accordance with NEPA, FHWA implementing regulations (23 CFR 771), Section 139 (23 USC 139), and the Fiscal Responsibility Act of 2023 (Pub. L. No. 118-5, 137 Stat. 10). These documents require EIS projects to review reasonably foreseeable effects (RFE) of the proposed agency action.*

Direct effects are caused by the action and occur at the same time and place as the action. *According to the FHWA guidance, determination or estimation of future impacts is essential to analyzing reasonably foreseeable effects. However, the focus must be on those actions that are likely to occur or probable, rather than those that are merely possible. Table 3-*

30 below outlines the differences between direct and reasonably foreseeable effects.

The discussion of significance addresses how potential effects would impede or help advance the local, county, regional, or state goals. The assessment will identify if the potential effect would be substantial enough to further impair the resource to irretrievable levels or to the point that mitigation is required.

Reasonably foreseeable effects attributable to a build alternative include land use changes and associated impacts on environmental resources, along with future degradation of streams or wetlands due to sedimentation, runoff, or changes in hydrology.

Table 3-30: Direct and Reasonably Foreseeable Effects Impacts

Type of Effect	Direct	Reasonably Foreseeable
Nature of Effect	Typical/Inevitable/Predictable	Probable
Cause of Effect	Project	Project’s direct and reasonably foreseeable effects
Timing of Effect	Project Construction and Implementation	At some future time after direct effects
Location of Effect	Within project impact area	Within boundaries of systems affected by project

This project proposes a limited access facility on new alignment to better accommodate through traffic. The project termini would not provide direct access to adjacent parcels since there are no interchanges or intersections proposed at either end.

The project has the potential to induce and facilitate regional growth by improving system linkage and providing infrastructure that supports economic development. The potential for the four build alternatives to induce growth or substantial land use changes in the surrounding area is moderate based on review of comprehensive plans *from the Southern Alleghenies Region, Grantsville, Maryland and Garrett County, Maryland.*

Development that may result from increased access provided by this project is subject to the established approval process of the appropriate county government. The Somerset County Subdivision and Land Development Ordinance was adopted in 2022 by the Somerset County Commissioners to regulate subdivision and land development within Somerset County. The Somerset County Planning Commission *is the delegated authority* to administer and enforce all provisions of this ordinance.

Similarly, the Garrett County Code of Ordinances directs the Planning and Land Management Division and Permits and Inspection Division of the

Department of Community Development to administer requirements for development.

There is also moderate potential for the build alternatives to result in effects from encroachment alterations. These are defined as alteration of the behavior and functioning of the affected environment caused by study encroachment (physical, biological, socioeconomics) on the environment. The resources to be considered in the RFE are those that would be directly impacted by the build alternatives in addition to reasonably foreseeably impacted natural, cultural, and socioeconomic resources.

Table 3-31 summarizes the currently proposed direct impacts of the build alternatives.

The Reasonably Foreseeable Effects Report for the project is included as **Appendix AB**.

A. Study Areas for Reasonably Foreseeable Effects (RFE)

The *RFE* geographical boundaries for natural, environmental, cultural, and socioeconomic resources are based on sub-boundaries including U.S. Census block groups, sub watersheds, and transportation data. These boundaries accommodate the build alternatives and land use goals that may interact with them. The boundaries also include any other reasonably foreseeable projects or actions in the vicinity.

U.S. Census block group (BG) boundaries served as tools to develop the Socioeconomic Resources *RFE* Study Area (**Figure 3-17**) to represent the socioeconomic resources potentially affected. *The Socioeconomics RFE Study Area boundary was developed by combining the outer boundaries of all BGs that abut the established Study Area.*

The Natural Resources *RFE* Study Area boundary is sized to capture potential direct and *reasonably foreseeable effects* downstream of the build alternatives. As shown in **Figure 3-18** *the natural resources RFE study area is comprised of the following six hydrologic unit code (HUC) 12 watersheds:*

- Flag Run-Casselman River
- Tub Mill Run-Casselman River
- Red Run-Piney Creek
- Little Piney Creek-Piney Creek
- Miller Run-Casselman River
- Flaughtery Creek.

The RFE Study Area is of sufficient size to capture potential impacts within the natural, cultural, and socioeconomic resource sub-boundaries associated with the project. Historically, growth and conversion of existing forest and agricultural lands to residential or urban land uses in both Somerset County and Garrett County has been slow. Currently, the only reasonably foreseeable future action in the RFE Study Area is the Casselman

Farms Development.

However, anywhere within the RFE Study Area, unforeseen potential impacts may occur directly from other actions/factors that are wholly independent of this project. Such impacts would be subject to the implementation of comprehensive federal, state, and local laws protecting forests, wetlands, streams, floodplains, agricultural areas, and other resources as applicable. Any required mitigation would be the responsibility of the entity causing the direct impact.

The Cultural Resources RFE Study Area boundary (see **Figure 3-19**) includes the area of potential effects within which effects to cultural resources could occur from visual, audible, and atmospheric elements that could diminish the integrity of cultural resources. Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act compliance considers reasonably foreseeable effects as well as direct effects to historic properties.

Table 3-31: Summary of Direct Impacts to Environmental Resources

Resource	No Build	DU Mod.	DU-Shift Mod.	E Mod.	E-Shift Mod.
Socioeconomic Resources					
Parcels Intersected by LOD (#)	0	124	121	113	110
Displacements (#) (Residential/Commercial)	0/0	11/2	11/2	10/2	10/2
Impacted Noise Receptors	4	13	9	13	9
Cultural Resources					
Historic Resources (#/acres)	0/0	3/40.2	3/40.2	1/0.78	1/0.78
Areas of High Probability Pre-Contact Archaeology (acres)	0	50.2	50.2	48.8	48.8
Areas of High Probability Historic Archaeology (acres)	0	17.1	17.1	14.4	14.4
Natural Resources					
Forestland	0	431.4	430.0	389.7	388.8
Active Farmland (acres)	0	76.1	76.3	37.4	37.6
Maple Sugar Production Forest (acres)	0	23.1	23.1	0.1	0.1
Productive Farms (#)	0	9	9	6	6
Prime Farmland Soils (acres)	0	34.2	34.2	21.2	21.2
Soils of Statewide Importance (acres)	0	104.3	104.3	83.4	83.3
Preferential Tax Assessment – Total (acres)	0	74.9	75.2	36.1	36.4
FEMA 1% Annual Chance Floodplain (acres)	0	12.3	12.3	4.7	4.7
Potential Bat Hibernacula (#)	0	3	3	0	0
Wetland (acres)	0	11.38	11.25	10.15	10.02
Streams (linear feet)	0	24,997	25,012	23,148	23,141

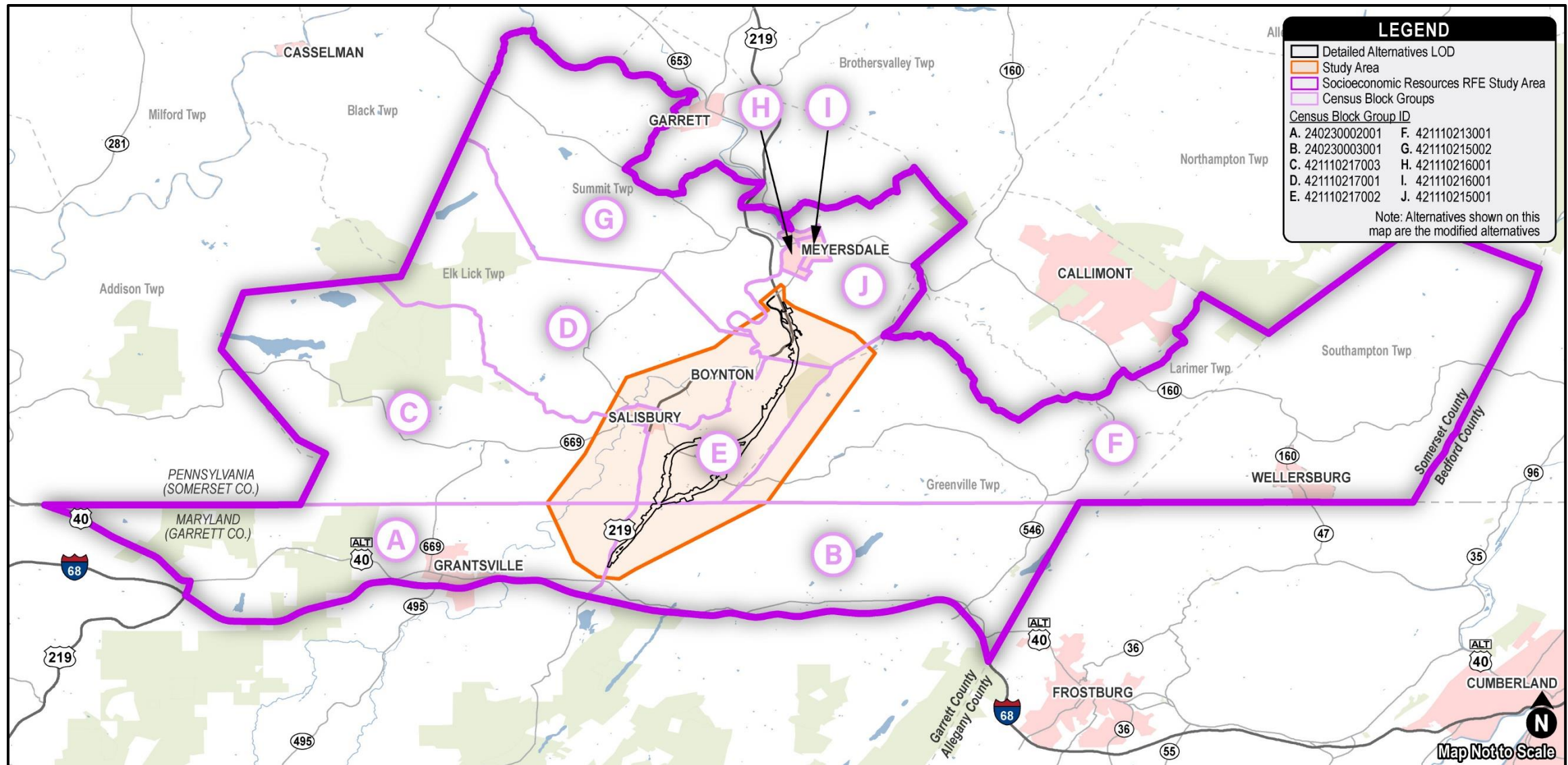


Figure 3-17: Socioeconomic Resources *RFE* Study Area

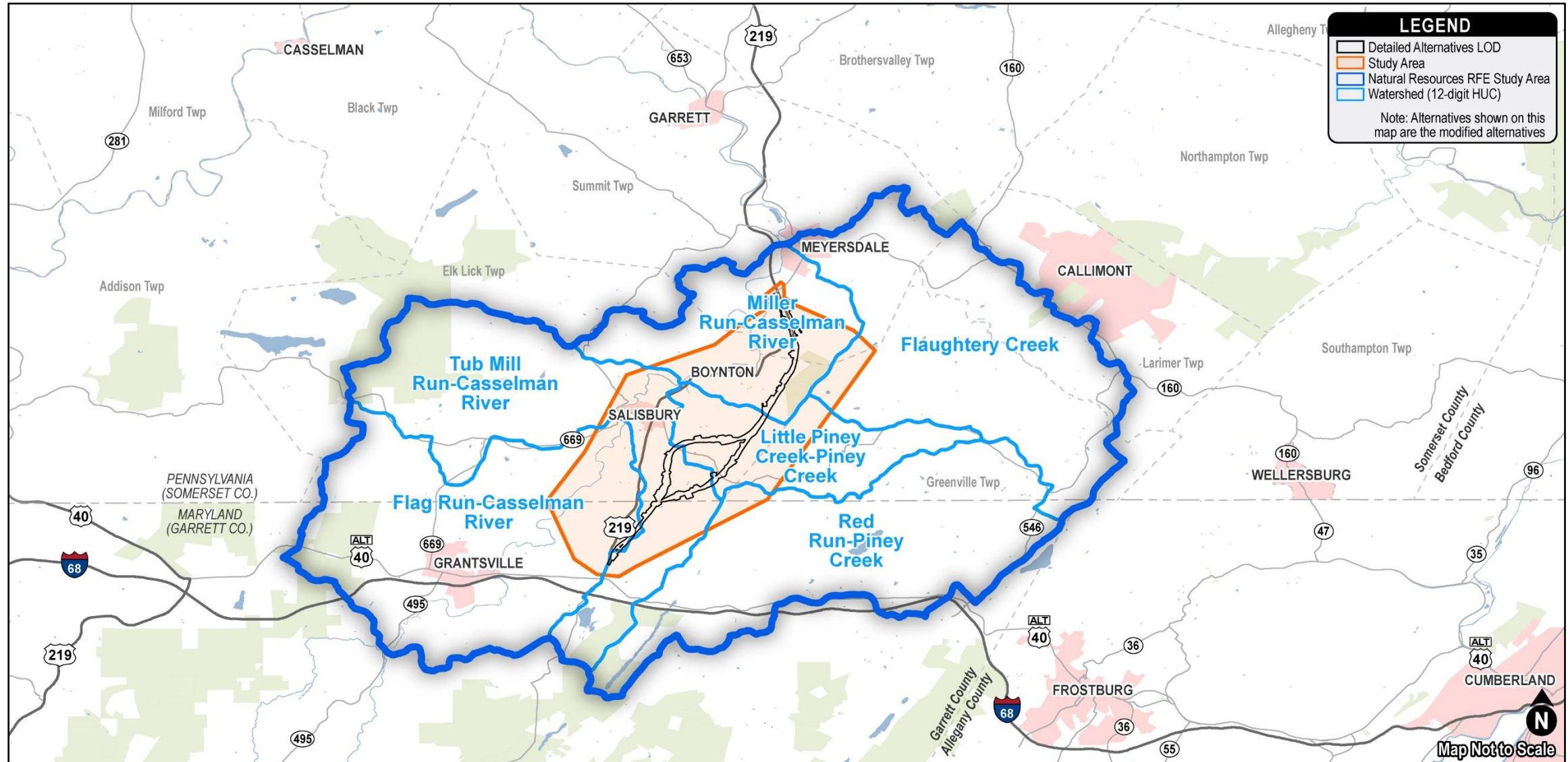


Figure 3-18: Natural Resources *RFE* Study Area

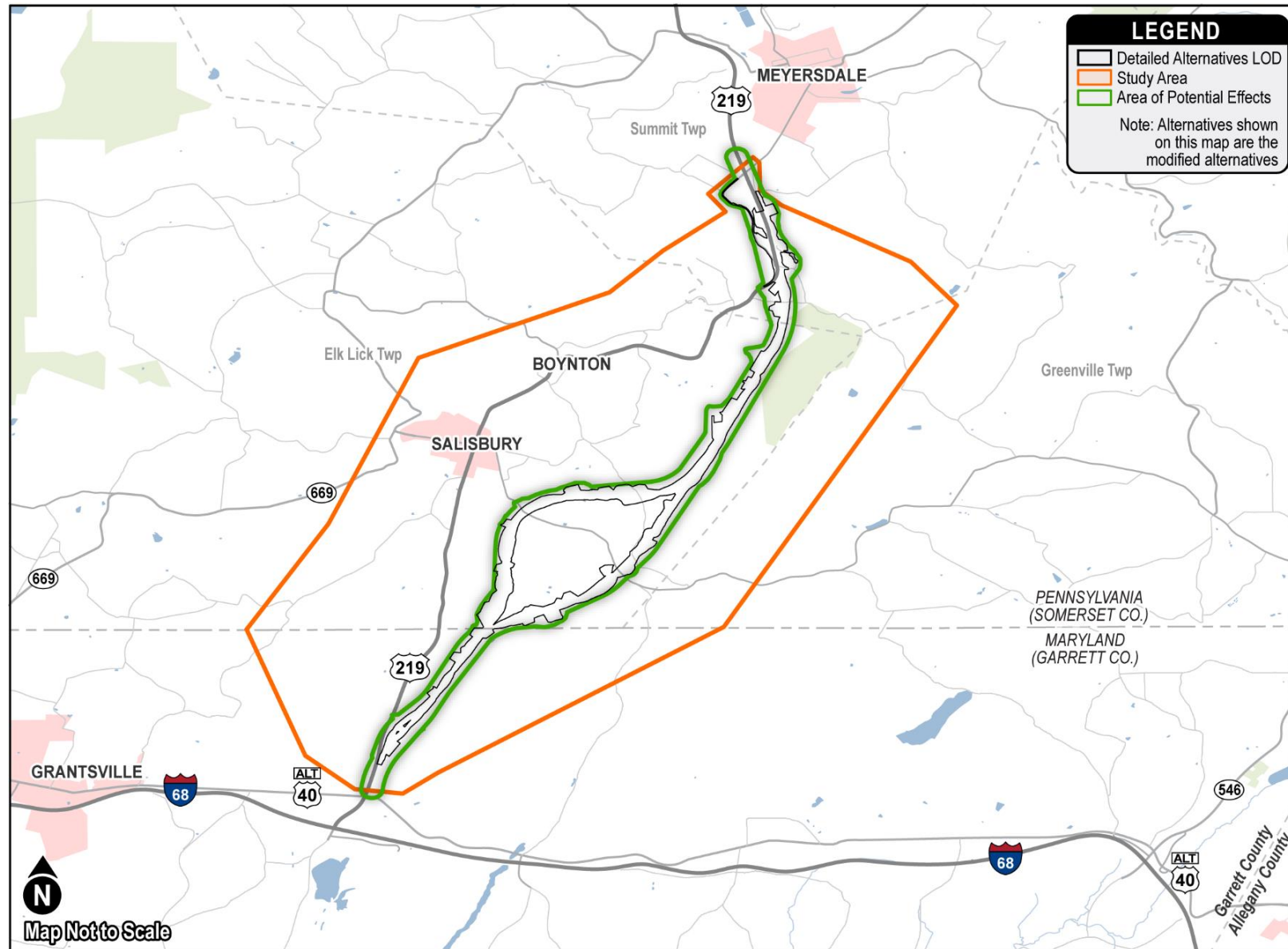


Figure 3-19: Cultural Resources *RFE* Study Area

3.24.2 Existing Conditions

A. *Present* Land Use

Concentrated areas of development within the Somerset County portion of the study area include the area outside Meyersdale Borough, the unincorporated community of Boynton, and Salisbury. A low-density residential area is between Salisbury and the Pennsylvania-Maryland border. In Garrett County, the U.S. 219 corridor includes medium density residential development and commercial development is present near I-68.

Agricultural land is prevalent throughout the study area and is essential to the economy of both counties. In Somerset County approximately 1,150 farms totaling over 200,000 acres account for over one-quarter of the land. In Garrett County, about 700 farms totaling approximately 90,000 acres represent about one-fifth of the land.

Local, state, and federal governments have existing initiatives in place to encourage economic growth, especially in Maryland. The Chestnut Ridge area in the southwest end of the study area was designated as a Potential Employment Area by Garrett County. The proposed 1.8-mile relocated portion of U.S. 219 from the Maryland-Pennsylvania state line to the northern terminus of the recently constructed roadway at Old Salisbury Road is not within a designated Priority Funding Area (PFA).

B. Land Use Plans and Policies

The 2022 Garrett County Comprehensive Plan encourages growth in designated growth locations, while maintaining forested and agricultural land. The plan also states that the U.S. 219 project is needed to improve access, reduce travel time, and promote economic development. Furthermore, the plan proposes future land uses, including agricultural resources, suburban residential, town residential, and general commercial uses.

The Grantsville Comprehensive Plan encourages growth within appropriate areas while minimizing sprawl and natural resource impacts. The Garrett County Comprehensive Plan reflects areas that Grantsville identifies for future annexation primarily within PFAs. Maryland Smart Growth policy defines PFAs as existing communities and places designated by local governments indicating where they want state investment to support future growth. Near U.S. 40, the area west of U.S. 219, including the Chestnut Ridge Development Corridor, is within a Garrett County PFA.

Somerset County adopted The Comprehensive Plan for the Southern Alleghenies Region in 2018. County priorities include the completion of U.S. 219 to encourage new business and workforce development along a future new alignment.

C.

Since the issuance of the DEIS on November 15, 2024, and in compliance with new EOs and policies, this section is no longer required for federal actions.

D. Natural Resources Trends

This section describes the natural resources trends within the Natural Resources RFE Study Area based on available data. Data was derived from the Multi-Resolution Land Characteristics Consortium National Land Cover Database (MRLC NLCD).

A. Water Resources -The Casselman River Watershed encompasses the Natural Resources RFE Study Area and extends into both Somerset County and Garrett County. The PA DEP identifies the Casselman River Watershed as a restoration priority watershed meaning this watershed has a high number of impaired waterbodies.

Table 3-32 shows in 2022, open water decreased to 246.4 acres from 270.4 acres in 2012. Open water within the Natural Resources RFE Study Area decreased by approximately 9 percent in comparison to 2012.

Table 3-32 shows in 2022, wetland areas increased to 612.9 acres from 538.2 acres in 2012. Between 2012 and 2022 wetland areas within the Natural Resources RFE Study Area increased by approximately 14 percent.

Terrestrial Habitat – As shown in **Table 3-32**, the Natural Resources RFE Study Area land cover largely consists of forested land. In 2022 forested land was 48,104 acres (approximately 60 percent of the Natural Resources RFE Study Area). In 2022 forested land in the Natural Resources RFE Study Area increased 54.7 acres from 2012.

The Maryland portion of the project area is located within the Casselman River watershed. Tributaries to Meadow Run and Casselman River cross the project area. Based on coordination with the MD DNR, the Maryland Surface Water Use Designation for streams within the project area is Use III, pursuant to which they are protected as “Nontidal Cold Water” suitable as natural trout streams (COMAR 26.08.02.08).

Prime Farmland and Statewide Important Farmland Soils - **Table 3-33** displays county farmland trends from 2012 to 2017 for Somerset County and Garrett County. In 2017, there were 1,152 farms and 219,046 acres of farmland in Somerset County (USDA, 2017a). In 2017, Garrett County had 707 farms and 90,357 acres of farmland. Although both Counties have more farms in 2017 than in 2012, the acres of farmland decreased, and this can be associated with the increase in smaller farms in 2017. In addition, Pennsylvania has strict farmland laws that afford protection to various types of farmlands.

In Somerset County, the number of farms decreased from 1,152 in 2017 to 998 in 2022, which is a 13 percent decrease in the total number of

farms. In Garrett County the number of farms decreased from 707 in 2017 to 680 in 2022, which is a 4 percent decrease in the total number of farms.

Table 3-32: Natural Resources Land Cover Trends within the Natural Resources RFE Study Area

Land Cover Type	2012 (acres)	2022 (acres)	2012-2022 Change (acres)	2012-2022 % Change
Barren Land	818.9	462.1	-356.8	-44%
Forest	48,049.5	48,104.2	+54.7	0%
Shrub/Scrub	581.8	493.9	-87.9	-15%
Grassland/Herbaceous	1,071.1	1,438.9	+367.8	+34%
Agriculture	21,604.8	21,479.1	-125.7	-1%
Wetlands	538.2	612.9	+74.7	+14%
Open Water	270.4	246.4	-24	-9%

Source: Multi-Resolution Land Characteristics Consortium National Land Cover Database

Table 3-33: Summary of Direct Impacts to Environmental Resources

Item	2017	2022	2017-2022 Change	2017-2022 % Change
Somerset County				
Number of farms	1,152	998	-154	-13%
Land in farms (acres)	219,046	197,565	-21,481	-10%
Average size of farm (acres)	190	198	+8	+4
Garrett County				
Number of farms	707	680	-27	-4%
Land in farms (acres)	90,375	95,546	+5,171	+6%
Average size of farm (acres)	128	141	+13	+10%

Source: U.S. Department of Agriculture, 2022

These decreases in farmland can be attributable to an increase in developed land.

E. Socioeconomic Trends

This section describes the socioeconomic trends within the Socioeconomic Resources RFE Study Area based on available data. These trends provide an overview of the socioeconomic conditions within the Socioeconomic Resources RFE Study Area in addition to identifying the potential influence on growth and land use.

Population – Somerset County and Garrett County both have demographic and economic concerns related to decreasing and aging populations. **Table 3-34** shows the projected population for Somerset County and Garrett County through 2045. Somerset County is projected to experience a decline in population from 2020 to 2045 with a growth rate of -2.7 percent. Garrett County is projected to experience a slight increase in population from 2020 to 2045 with a growth rate of 1.5 percent. These low to negative population projections shown in **Table 3-34** could be a result of the aging population Somerset County and Garrett County are experiencing. As shown in **Table 3-35**, Approximately 22 percent of the population in Garrett County is age 65 and over, compared to 15 percent in Maryland, and 22 percent of the population in Somerset County is age 65 or older, compared to 18 percent in Pennsylvania.

Housing – Potential effects to population could

occur from transportation projects that induce growth, involve many residential acquisitions, or

make an area less desirable for residential land use. The amount of available housing within the Socioeconomic Resources RFE Study Area Census BGs could indicate whether residents undergoing acquisitions could find replacement housing in the same area and thus reduce impacts to population.

Housing in the Socioeconomic Resources RFE Study Area Census BGs consist mainly of single-

family homes. An estimated 5,518 housing units are in the Socioeconomic Resources RFE Study Area Census BGs. Of those, 4,568 (approximately 83 percent) are occupied. Shown in **Table 3-36** is a breakdown of occupied and vacant housing units within the Socioeconomic Resources RFE Study Area in addition to Garrett County, Somerset County, and their respective states.

Employment – **Table 3-37** presents unemployment rates in Somerset County and Garrett County compared to statewide rates from 2010 to 2022.

Table 3-35: Population Projection (2020 to 2045)

Location	2020	2025	2030	2035	2040	2045
Somerset County, PA	77,020	72,772	71,573	70,187	68,632	67,079
Growth %	1.43%	-5.52%	-1.65%	-1.94%	-2.22%	-2.26%
Garrett County, MD	28,806	29,700	30,250	30,510	30,760	31,000
Growth %	-2.68%	3.10%	1.85%	0.86%	0.82%	0.78%

Sources: 1) Maryland Department of Planning, Projections and State Data Center, December 2020. 2) Pennsylvania State Data Center for the Center for Rural Pennsylvania.

Table 3-34: Age of Population

Age	Socioeconomic Resources Boundary	Somerset County, PA	Garrett County, MD	Pennsylvania	Maryland
Under 18	22%	18%	19%	21%	22%
18-64	58%	60%	59%	61%	62%
65 and over	20%	22%	22%	18%	15%
Median Age	43	46	47	41	39

Source: U.S. Census Bureau American Community Survey (ACS) 2016-2020 Tables B01001 and B01002 (U.S. Census Bureau, 2020a)

Table 3-36: Occupied and Vacant Housing Units

Housing Characteristics	Socioeconomic Resources Boundary	Somerset County, PA	Garrett County, MD	Pennsylvania	Maryland
Total Housing Units	5,518	38,523	19,428	5,713,345	2,459,650
Tenure Status					
Occupied Housing Units	4,568	29,518	12,745	5,106,601	2,230,527
Owner Occupied	77%	80%	79%	69%	67%
Rented	23%	20%	21%	31%	33%
Vacancy Status					
Percent of Units Vacant	17%	23%	34%	11%	9%
Percent of Vacant Units Seasonal	31%	61%	69%	28%	25%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau American Community Survey (ACS) 2016-2020 Tables B25001, B25003 and B25004 (U.S. Census Bureau, 2020b)

the build alternatives would not provide access to these resource land areas. Secondly, the project area includes historically low growth areas.

The four build alternatives may have potential to change land development patterns. Garrett County included both Grantsville and the Chestnut Ridge Development Corridor (CRDC) within a PFA (see **Figure 3-20**). The *Town of Grantsville 2009 Comprehensive Plan* highlights both areas. Although not approved, Grantsville is currently updating its Comprehensive Plan and is considering extending water service from Grantsville eastward toward the CRDC.

*At this time, the only known development is a park and ride lot proposed by SHA to be constructed at the northeast corner of U.S. 40 Alt., U.S. 219 and Business 219. Plans for this park and ride are included as **Appendix AA**. Related to this development is the evaluation of a potential connection from any of the build alternatives. This*

Unemployment rates within each county between 2010 and 2022 have been higher than their respective states. In 2020 unemployment rates grew again due to the loss of jobs experienced during the COVID-19 pandemic. According to the Maryland Department of Planning (MDP) total employment in Garrett County between 2020 and 2030 is expected to increase 6.2 percent. Somerset County is in the Southern Alleghenies Workforce Development Area (WDA) and according to the Pennsylvania Department of Labor and Industry, a 2.8 percent growth in employment within Southern Alleghenies WDA is projected.

3.24.3 Impacts

F. Potential for Project Related Growth Effects

Reasonably foreseeable impacts include project-related induced growth impacts. *Transportation alternatives may have the potential for changing or creating new land development patterns. For example, project related development could be the construction of a planned distribution warehouse in the vicinity of a new interstate highway interchange. However, induced growth in rural and resource land areas would be unlikely due to two factors. Firstly,*

Table 3-37: Unemployment Rates (Annual Average)

Location	2010	2020	2022
Somerset County, PA	9.3%	9.3%	5.4%
Garrett County, MD	8.9%	6.4%	3.5%
Pennsylvania	8.2%	8.9%	4.4%
Maryland	7.7%	6.5%	3.2%

Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics, U.S. Department of Labor

potential future connection is not part of this project, but its need has been coordinated with Garrett County. This connection is being evaluated *to support the CRDC development including the proposed Casselman Farm development in a PFA, which could be a potential future foreseeable impact that could occur after construction of improved U.S. 219*. Alternatives DU-Shift Modified and E-Shift Modified may accommodate a compressed interchange.

Figure 3-21 shows a concept of an Alternative DU Modified and E Modified at-grade intersection and a conceptual Alternative DU-Shift Modified and E-Shift Modified compressed interchange that could be considered if future development and traffic warrant.

The following section addresses potential new development in this area. However, development in this area has not been approved and should not be considered imminent. For illustrative purposes only, environmental resources within undeveloped parcels that theoretically could undergo future development are shown in **Figure 3-22**.

The Grantsville CRDC and Garrett County identification of a PFA enveloping the development corridor indicates the desire to stimulate economic growth in this area. Areas currently undeveloped have been highlighted as potential areas where future development has the possibility to be considered by property owners. These areas have been highlighted in attempt to identify potentially

affected environmental resources within these parcels. For study purposes, a 1-mile radius was drawn around the I-68 interchange as an indicator of land parcels most likely having the greatest development attraction. **Figure 3-22** shows this one-mile radius in relation to:

- The Garrett County PFA
- Casselman Farms Development
- Current undeveloped land tracts within a 1-mile radius around the I-68 interchange
- Location of a potential future at-grade intersection connection to existing U.S. 219 with Alternatives DU Modified and E Modified

Location of a potential future at-grade intersection or grade separated interchange to existing U.S. 219 with Alternatives DU-Shift Modified and E-Shift Modified.

The historic *Tomlinson Inn* and the Little Meadows property and the Savage River State Forest are also contained within the 1-mile potential development radius around the I-68 interchange and afford protections preventing or limiting future development. Also, within the 1-mile radius are active farmland, residences, Meadow Run, and Little Meadow Lake.

G. Potential for Encroachment Alteration Effects

Encroachment alteration effects are physical, chemical, or biological changes in the environment

that occur as a result of the project but are separate in time or distance from the direct effects. The following sections discuss the potential for the project to result in encroachment effects. The resources considered for potential encroachment impacts are based on the direct impacts described in **Table 3-31**.

With the No Build Alternative, no new U.S. 219 connection from Meyersdale to I-68 would be constructed, and the existing two-lane alignment of U.S. 219 would remain. The No Build Alternative would experience lower levels of service in 2050, and increased congestion could result in noise and air impacts and adverse *reasonably foreseeable effects* from relocations to reduce transportation-related costs.

Socioeconomic Resources

Community Facilities and Services - While there may be temporary disruptions to travel patterns during construction, there would be no long-term disruption to access as most of the community facilities and services within the Socioeconomic Resources *RFE* Study Area are located in the towns of Grantsville, Salisbury and Meyersdale which are far removed from the four build alternatives. *Reasonably foreseeable* impacts to community facilities and services are not expected.

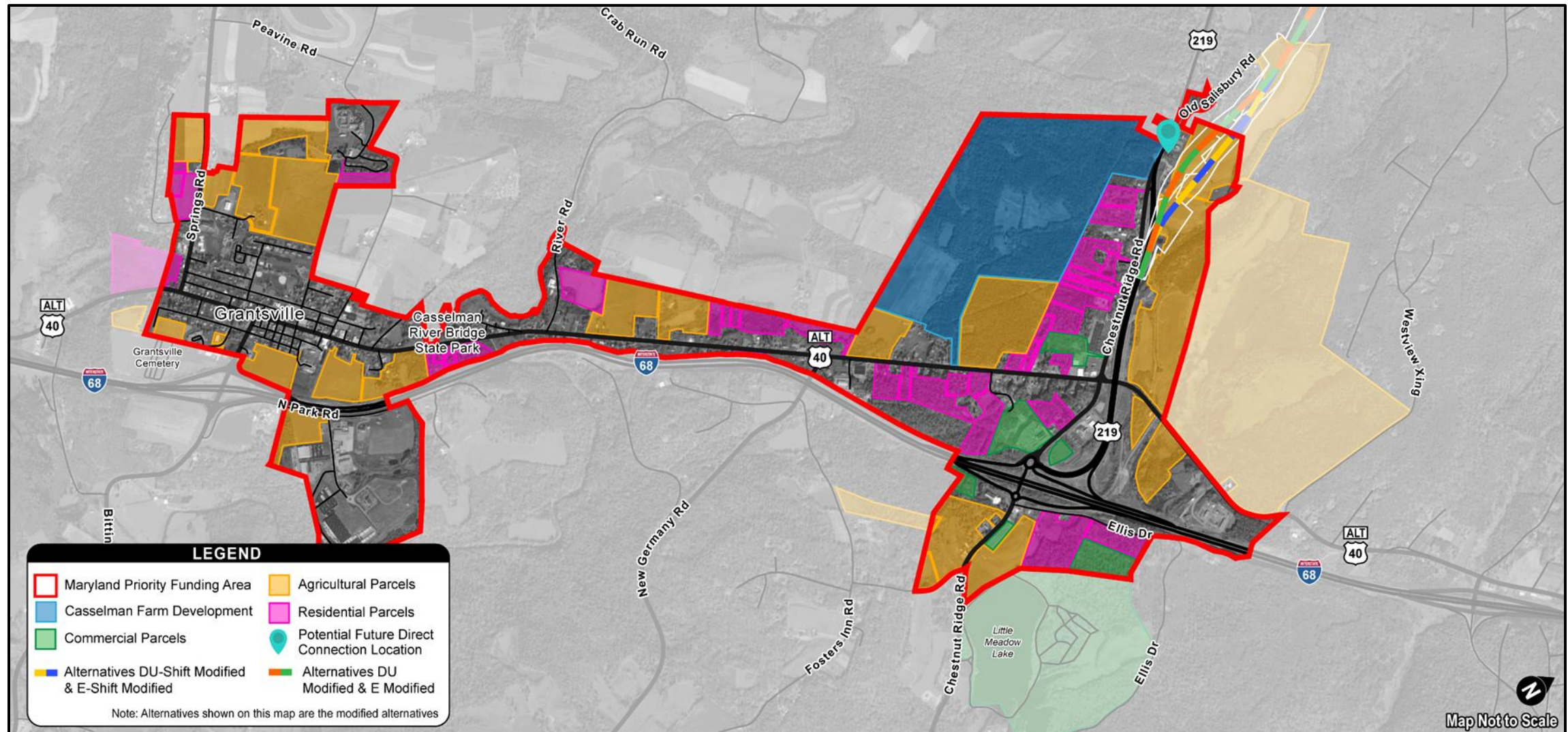


Figure 3-20: Map of Maryland PFA in Relation to Casselman Farm and the CRDC

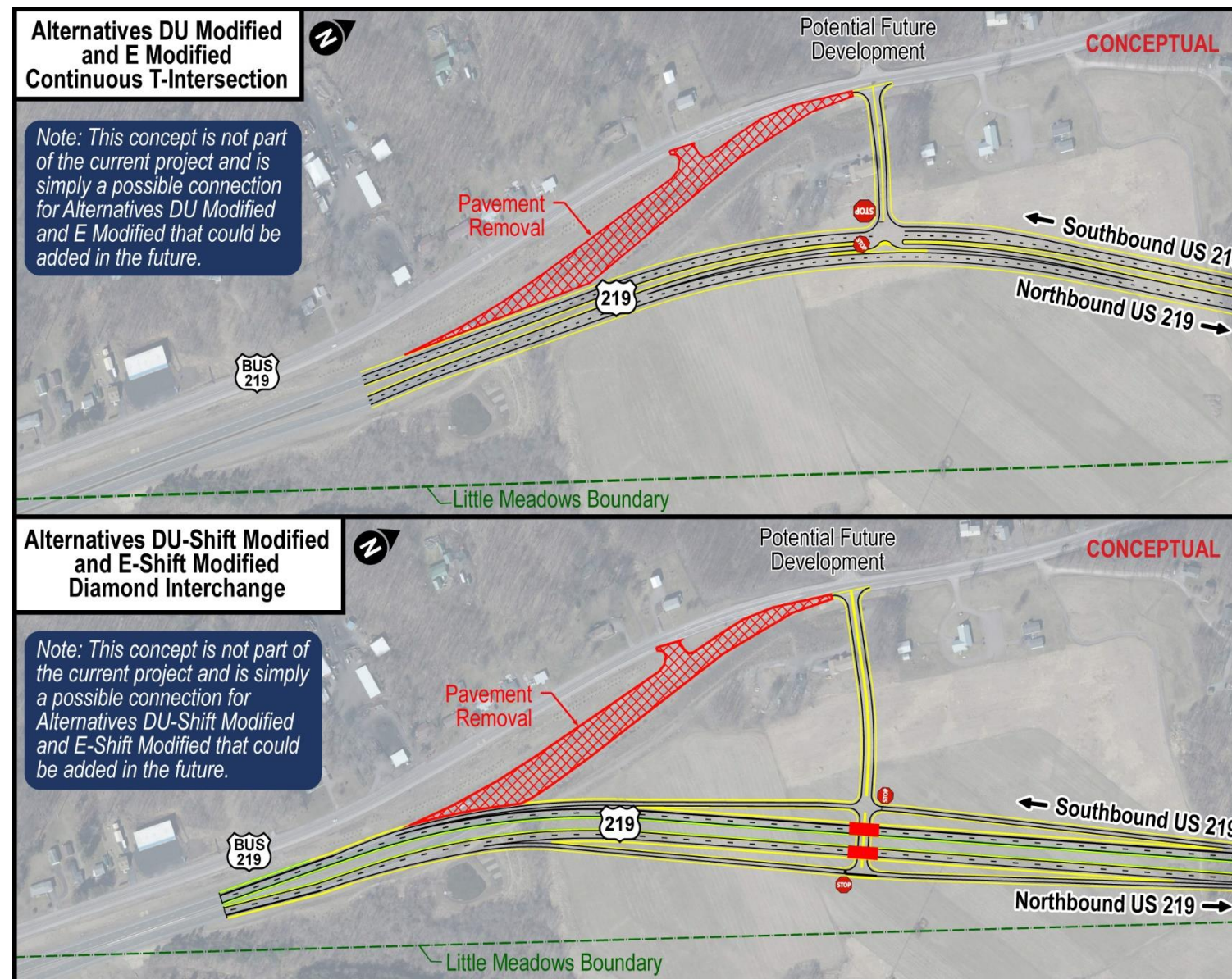


Figure 3-21: Conceptual Direct Connections in Maryland

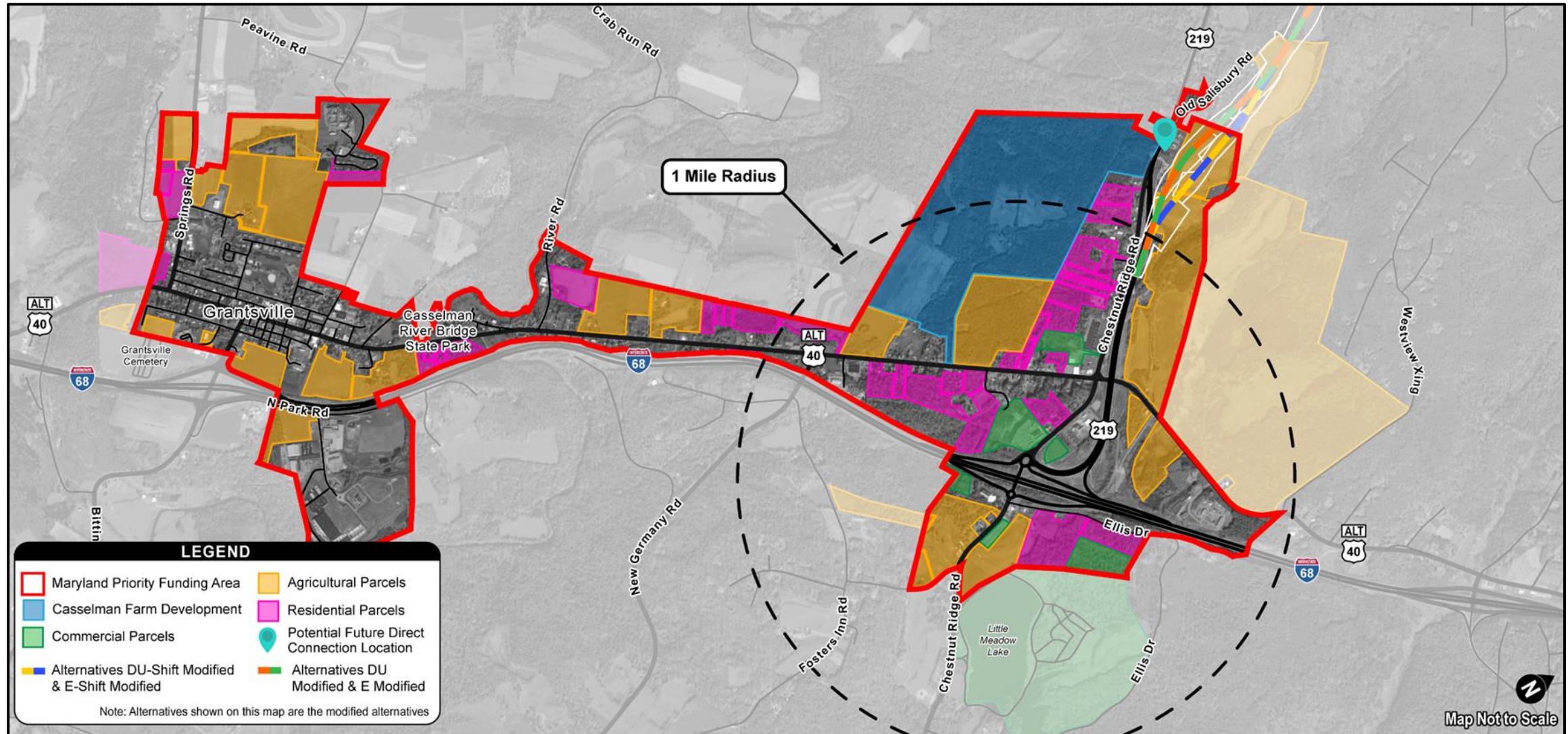


Figure 3-22: Parcels Around the I-68 Interchange with the Greatest Development Attraction

Parks and Recreational Facilities - None of the four build alternatives would impact Pennsylvania SGL 231. The four build alternatives are not likely to change the use of the State Game Land.

Land Use, Property, and Right-of-Way - Each build alternative would convert land used for residential and commercial uses to transportation right-of-way. It is anticipated that DU Modified and DU-Shift Modified would *cause eleven (11) residential and two (2) commercial displacements*. E Modified and E-Shift Modified would cause *ten (10) residential and two (2) commercial displacements*. Alternative DU Modified would impact *124* parcels and Alternative DU-Shift Modified would impact *121*. Alternative E Modified *would* impact *113* parcels and Alternative E-Shift Modified impacts *110*. Proposed temporary and permanent right-of-way acquisition would not change overall land use in the area; therefore, direct impacts to socioeconomic resources would be limited, minimizing the potential for substantial *reasonably foreseeable effects*. Each build alternative would also not divide any communities. While there may be temporary disruptions to travel patterns there would be no long-term disruption to access. The project is not anticipated to result in any encroachment alteration effects to existing land uses.

Population and Housing - Each build alternative would result in residential relocations with Alternatives DU Modified and DU-Shift Modified

involving *eleven (11) residential displacements* and Alternatives E Modified and E-Shift Modified resulting in *ten (10) residential displacements*. The *impacts* would likely be short-term as ample comparable *housing opportunities and vacant land are available for the use of potential relocation*.

The U.S. 219 project would result in increased economic opportunity and connectivity providing improved access to labor markets in the region. The proposed new U.S. 219 would not be tolled, and all populations would have free and equal access.

Each build alternative would result in slight splitting of existing residential areas. The Socioeconomic Resources *RFE* Study Area largely consists of forested and agricultural land, with concentrated areas of low to medium density development outside Meyersdale, within Salisbury, within the unincorporated community of Boynton, and in northern Garrett County along existing U.S. 219.

Noise - Each build alternative may impact noise levels for sensitive receptors to varying degrees depending on where the receptors are located. *Reasonably foreseeable impacts of traffic noise would be assessed as part of future noise modeling*. Noise analysis uses traffic volumes that include the future users attracted to the proposed action. Receptors are identified for undeveloped land and undeveloped land permitted for development. Therefore, the noise levels predicted by traffic

modeling already incorporate anticipated *reasonably foreseeable traffic* noise impacts and would be analyzed and mitigated for as a direct impact.

Air Quality - Somerset County, Pennsylvania and Garrett County, Maryland are in attainment for all transportation-related pollutants. Therefore, regional and project-level conformity determination under the CAA is not required. Air quality analysis includes modeling future traffic conditions of the alternatives. The *U.S. 219 Project Air Quality Memorandum* (PennDOT, 2023a) addresses the *reasonably foreseeable* effects of air quality.

Economic Resources - Each build alternative may potentially have a positive impact on business in the Socioeconomic Resources *RFE* Study Area. *The system linkage in the region will be improved, providing safe and efficient access for motorists, and a transportation infrastructure to support economic development within the Appalachian region. This benefit is anticipated to induce additional development within designated growth areas. Short-term construction effects to businesses from temporary detours could occur, causing some customer losses and making deliveries more difficult. Such effects would be temporary and minimized by advanced notice of closures and directional signing*. Additionally, increases in job opportunities could be expected due to short-term construction hiring and long-term maintenance of

the new road.

Visual and Aesthetic - Each build alternative would likely result in visual and aesthetic impacts. The existing rural character of the landscape would be transformed by the proposed U.S. 219 alignment which includes a four-lane divided highway with 12' wide travel lanes, 8' wide inside shoulders, and 10' wide outside shoulders. Potential changes in vegetation patterns over time in areas cleared for road construction and areas of cut and fill slopes could result in minimal to moderate impacts to the visual landscape.

Natural Environmental Resources

No construction or changes to the natural environment would occur with *the* implementation of the No Build Alternative. Therefore, no project-related encroachment impacts to natural resources in the Natural Resources *RFE* Study Area would occur.

Water Resources - The four build alternatives may potentially result in short and long term minor adverse degradation of water resources. Each build alternative would potentially directly affect wetlands and streams. *Alternative DU Modified would impact 11.38 acres of wetlands and DU-Shift Modified would impact approximately 11.25 acres of wetlands. Alternative E Modified would impact 10.15 acres of wetlands and E-Shift Modified would impact approximately 10.02 acres of wetlands. Alternative*

DU Modified would impact 24,997 linear feet of streams and Alternative DU-Shift Modified would impact 25,012 linear feet of streams. Alternative E Modified would impact 23,148 linear feet of stream and E-Shift Modified would have 23,141 linear feet of stream impacts.

Construction of the four build alternatives could result in runoff of vehicle pollutants into streams located in and downstream of the direct impacts area, impacting water quality and aquatic habits. Roadway runoff can lead to the degradation of nearby terrestrial and aquatic habitat through deposition of sediments or contamination from chemical pollutants. This can change the *macro-benthic* community structure and composition, which in turn may affect the fish and amphibian populations that rely on them as a food source, as well as the birds and aquatic mammals that prey on the fish and amphibians. Water quality and wetland impacts also have the potential to negatively impact bat species and other species which rely on water resources. Runoff could also pick up more sediment from disturbed soils during construction that could be deposited downstream, temporarily reducing water quality. Installation of stormwater management facilities would limit potential impacts.

Potential *reasonably foreseeable effects* that may occur to wetlands in the Natural Resources *RFE* study area include influx of surface water and sediments, fragmentation of a wetland from a

contiguous wetland complex, loss of recharge area, or changes in local drainage patterns. These *reasonably foreseeable* effects can alter wetland functions such as habitat, plant community, and carbon cycling. Direct impacts from filling, grading, removal of vegetation roadway construction, and changes in water levels and drainage patterns could result in loss of all wetland functions within the immediate footprint of the impact and contribute to habitat fragmentation effects described below. *Reasonably foreseeable impacts* are not anticipated to be substantial and wetland impacts are subject to federal and state mitigation requirements.

Culvert extensions would be designed to connect the waters located within the Natural Resources *RFE* Study Area to those running parallel to the outside of the roadway. All four build alternatives could alter upstream and downstream hydrologic flow, which sometimes subsequently may cause erosion and ecosystem-level disruptions. Reduced flow, clogged streams, and weakened habitat could affect aquatic life movement, breeding and nursery, and feeding. *Reasonably foreseeable impacts* are not anticipated to be substantial *as* restoration efforts and proper-designed crossings *will be* implemented.

Less shade from trees due to a reduction in riparian canopy cover could raise water temperature, oxygen levels, and plant growth, affecting nutrients and aquatic life near the improvements potentially

impacting sensitive species and habitat.

Construction activities could potentially lead to erosion, sedimentation, and accidental spills of hazardous materials from equipment likely impacting streams and wetlands outside the right-of-way limits and result in encroachment alteration effects. However, adhering to established spill prevention and erosion and sediment control protocols would mitigate these risks and minimize potential impacts on natural resources.

Floodplains - Each build alternative would potentially directly affect FEMA designated 1% annual chance floodplains for Meadow Run and Piney Run. Alternatives DU Modified and DU-Shift Modified would impact approximately 12.3 acres of 1% annual chance floodplains and Alternatives E Modified and E-Shift Modified would impact approximately 4.7 acres of 1% annual chance floodplains. Construction of the U.S. 219 project could result in an encroachment alteration effect if it alters existing drainage and flood flows. *However, in guidance with the Floodplain Management Executive Order 11988, the project team will take actions to reduce the risk of flood loss and minimize the impacts of floods on human safety and preserving the natural and beneficial values of the floodplains.*

Terrestrial Habitat - Forested land makes up the majority of the land use within the Natural

Resources *RFE* Study Area. Each build alternative would directly impact forested habitat which could lead to some forest fragmentation. Fragmentation creates more edge habitat and has the potential to create barriers to wildlife movement which could result in disruption of foraging, breeding/nesting, and migration, increased mortality due to roadway construction and operation, changes in wildlife behavior and reduced biological diversity. Inadvertent introduction of invasive species via construction machinery could lead to permanent vegetation, habitat, or wildlife composition changes. Project encroachment impacts to terrestrial habitat are not anticipated to be substantial.

Threatened and Endangered Species - Threatened and Endangered species face similar potential impacts as described for terrestrial habitat, but their unique life history traits make them less resilient to habitat changes and invasive competition. According to the *U.S. 6219 Section 050 Project Rare, Threatened and Endangered Species Technical Memorandum* (PennDOT, 2023) there are two federally endangered bat species, one state-endangered (PA) bat species, and two species and one hibernaculum of special state (PA) concern. The USFWS indicated that federally listed, and proposed-listed bat species are known to occur in the project area, and based on review of the proposed project, these bat species are likely to be adversely affected. Habitat loss could inadvertently

impact these protected species.

Also, according to the *U.S. 6219 Section 050 Project Rare, Threatened and Endangered Species Technical Memorandum* (PennDOT, 2023), there are one Maryland-endangered species, two Maryland rare species, and one Maryland watchlist species likely present in the Meadow Mountain area. In Pennsylvania, there are two state listed threatened and endangered species in the vicinity of the project area. The PFBC indicated there are no direct adverse impacts anticipated from the project. The water quality effects resulting from construction of impervious surface in the potential LOD of the four build alternatives could negatively affect the aquatic habitat present in the Natural Resources *RFE* Study Area. Increased runoff, carrying pollutants and sediment, can harm aquatic habitat through increased sedimentation and reduced water quality. Project encroachment impacts could result from habitat disturbances and losses that occur in wetlands, uplands, or waterways, but are not anticipated to be substantial.

Productive Agricultural Land

According to the *U.S. 6219 Section 050 Project Agricultural Resources Existing Conditions Memorandum* (PennDOT, 2023c) there are thirteen active farmland and farm operations within or abutting the LOD of all four build alternatives. These active farmlands include lamb farming, maple trees used for maple syrup production, dairy farming, beef

cattle, and crop production. Each build alternative would potentially directly affect productive agricultural land (any land used for production, for commercial purposes of livestock, and livestock products) by converting the farmland to transportation right-of-way. This conversion would involve the potential split of several active farmlands.

Alternatives DU Modified and DU-Shift Modified would each impact approximately 76 acres of active farmland. Alternative E Modified would impact 37.4 acres and Alternative E-Shift Modified would impact 37.6 acres of *active farmland*. For maple sugar production, Alternatives DU Modified and DU-Shift Modified would each impact 23.1 acres and Alternatives E Modified, and E-Shift Modified would each impact 0.1 acre. Alternatives DU Modified and DU-Shift Modified would each impact nine (9) of the thirteen (13) productive farms while Alternatives E Modified, and E-Shift Modified would impact six (6) of the thirteen (13) productive farms.

Although the conversion of productive agricultural land to transportation right-of-way is a one-time occurrence, encroachment impacts to productive agricultural land could include the way farmers need to farm the land later in time. For example, fragmentation from U.S. 219 project could result in remnant sections outside the construction footprint that are no longer suitable for some agricultural uses. Typically, these remnant fields are difficult for

farm equipment to access resulting in additional expenses.

Prime and Statewide Important Farmland Soils - Prime and statewide important farmland soils face similar impacts as described for productive agricultural land, but the FPPA does not require farmland soils to be in active agricultural use. The NCRS enacted this rule to minimize the extent to which federal programs can contribute to the conversion of agricultural land to *non-agricultural* uses. According to the *U.S. 6219 Section 050 Project Agricultural Resources Existing Conditions Memorandum* (PennDOT, 2023c) there are a total of 237.9 acres of FPPA soils in the LOD for all four build alternatives.

In the project area, there are 54.3 acres of prime farmland soils in Pennsylvania and 0 acres in Maryland. Alternatives DU Modified and DU-Shift Modified would impact 34.2 acres of prime farmland soils and Alternatives E Modified, and E-Shift Modified would impact 21.2 acres.

Within the project area, 101.8 acres of soils of statewide importance are in Pennsylvania and 75.5 acres in Maryland. Alternatives DU Modified and DU-Shift Modified would impact 104 acres of soils of statewide importance, Alternatives E Modified, and E-Shift Modified would each impact approximately 83 acres of soils of statewide importance.

Similar to productive agricultural lands, the

conversion of prime and statewide important farmland soils to transportation right-of-way is a one-time occurrence, encroachment impacts to productive agricultural land could include the way farmers need to farm the land later in time. Short-term *fugitive dust* from construction could temporarily diminish soil quality.

Cultural Resources

The No Build Alternative would have no direct physical impact on archaeological resources or historic sites and districts as no construction would occur for the U.S. 219 project.

Historic Sites and Districts – *The impacts of* each build alternative to historic sites and districts are considered under Section 106 of the NHPA. *Reasonably foreseeable effects* considered in the Section 106 consultation include visual, audible, and atmospheric elements that could diminish the integrity of historic properties. There are *eight (8)* above ground historic resources identified for the U.S. 219 project.

Archaeological Resources – *The impacts of* each build alternative to archaeological resources, are considered under Section 106 of the NHPA. *Reasonably foreseeable effects* considered in the Section 106 consultation include visual, audible, and atmospheric elements that could diminish the integrity of historic properties. A Phase IA Archaeological Reconnaissance and Predictive

Modeling has been conducted for the U.S. 219 project APE. The total preliminary archaeological APE for both Pennsylvania and Maryland totals 1,147.73 acres and these areas were then *split* into pre-*contact* and historic probability. Alternatives DU Modified and DU-Shift Modified have the greatest potential impact to archaeology and Alternatives E Modified and E-Shift Modified have the lowest.

A Section 106 Programmatic Agreement has been *executed* for the project. *Detailed field investigations to identify intact archaeological properties will be conducted within the archaeological APE during final design, prior to construction. If NRHP eligible archaeological properties are identified, and it is determined the project would have an Adverse Effect to the properties, then PennDOT will identify mitigation measures in consultation with both Pennsylvania and Maryland State Historic Preservation Offices, Federally Recognized Tribal Nations, and other consulting parties. The Programmatic Agreement will ensure that if the project needs any archaeological mitigation measures, they will be appropriately completed.*

3.24.4 Mitigation

The No Build Alternative would not result in *any reasonably foreseeable effects* to any resource. Therefore, the assessment to determine significance and mitigation is not required for the No Build Alternative.

The following sections assess the significance of the *reasonably foreseeable effects* from the four build alternatives. It also identifies potential solutions or mitigation measures PennDOT, SHA, and other agencies could consider to minimize the direct impacts.

A. Impacts Related to Project Related Growth

Each build alternative would complete ADHS Corridor N. This would potentially facilitate or induce development in the U.S. 219 project area by improving travel times for potential new employees working within the U.S. 219 Corridor. The construction of any of the alternatives between I-68 and the Meyersdale Interchange would provide both improved access and increased capacity to the CRDC. Potential for new development in this area could impact environmental resources located within currently undeveloped parcels that could potentially be developed in the future. It should be noted that development within these parcels is not imminent.

Communities within the *RFE* study areas have staff, departments, and *local* comprehensive planning documents in place to direct the amount, type, and density of development. Similarly, regulatory agencies would enforce any mitigation requirements caused by project related growth. *No mitigation is recommended.*

B. Impacts Related to Potential Encroachment Alternative Effects

Socioeconomic Resources

Community Facilities and Services - The four build alternatives would likely increase accessibility to community facilities and services and *therefore reasonably* provide *an* opportunity for additional services to be established. Businesses along existing US 219 primarily provide services to local residents. The majority of traffic on existing US 219 is pass-through. Similarly, future traffic on any build alternative is also anticipated to be pass-through. Reduced through-traffic volume of trucks and vehicles may provide easier local access to the existing businesses. Therefore, there would be little economic impact on existing businesses with any of the limited-access build alternatives.

Parks and Recreational Facilities - The build alternatives would likely not have any direct impacts to parks and recreational facilities, however *reasonably foreseeable effects* to Pennsylvania SGL 231 will occur *as* the new highway is located just to the west of the game lands, access from the west by hunters and wildlife will be limited. *Section 4(f) of the Department of Transportation Act dictates that there must be no feasible and prudent alternative that avoids public parks and recreational facilities and that the project includes all possible planning to minimize harm to these properties.*

Land Use, Property, and Right-of-Way - Each build alternative would convert land currently in residential, commercial, and agricultural use to transportation right-of-way. Other than these direct impacts, *proposed temporary and permanent right-of-way acquisition would not change overall land use in the area; therefore, significant reasonably foreseeable effects to land use would be limited.*

Population and Housing - Each build alternative would result in residential relocations. The *significant reasonably foreseeable effect on residences would likely be short-term as fair market value would be offered to all property owners, and a great deal of vacant land is available for the use of potential relocation.*

Noise - The build alternatives may impact noise levels for sensitive receptors depending on location. Future traffic noise levels predicted by traffic modeling incorporate anticipated *reasonably foreseeable* traffic noise impacts which are analyzed and mitigated as direct impact. *Noise is also regulated by local jurisdictions and local law enforcement agencies.*

Air Quality – *Significant reasonably foreseeable effects* to air quality are not anticipated from the build alternatives. Any *impact* to air quality would be regulated by Pennsylvania and Maryland State Implementation Plans, inventories, and other reports which document how the states would attain

and maintain the National Ambient Air Quality Standards.

Economic Resources – *Reasonably foreseeable effects from each build alternative could result from short-term/temporary construction detours which may cause some customer losses and make deliveries more difficult. Temporary economic impacts associated with road closures and detours during construction will be minimized through advance notice to affected communities and businesses, flexible schedules, and alternative access routes. These measures aim to minimize economic inconveniences and ensure a smooth transition throughout the construction period, therefore, to not cause significant economic impacts.*

Visual and Aesthetic - Each build alternative would likely result in visual and aesthetic impacts. Potential changes in vegetation patterns over time in areas cleared for road construction and areas of cut and fill slopes could result in impacts to the visual landscape. To omit, minimize or balance the effect of the build alternatives, mitigation efforts could include adding *contextual* sensitive design elements that make disturbances to the landscape less impactful.

Natural Environmental Resources

Water Resources – Direct impacts to water resources are shown in **Table 3-31**. The build

alternatives may potentially result in minor adverse degradation of water resources due to roadway runoff of pollutants flowing into water bodies in the Natural Resources *RFE* Study Area. *Water resources in the project area are regulated by the PA DEP, MDE, and the USACE; which will include mitigation measures.* Mitigation consists of three components: avoidance, minimization, and compensation. *Mitigation to water resources will be discussed in greater detail in both the Section 404 and Section 401 Water Quality Certification permits.* Additionally, as applicable, stormwater management facilities would be required to treat runoff before it enters waterways, thus minimizing any degradation of water resources.

Floodplains - Each build alternative would potentially directly affect 1% annual chance floodplains and could result in encroachment alteration effect if drainage patterns and flood flows are altered. Development near floodplains is subject to local floodplain management policies, such as subdivision and land development regulations.

Terrestrial Habitat - Each build alternative would potentially induce forest fragmentation, *which reasonably could result* in disruption of foraging, breeding/nesting, and migration, increased mortality due to roadway construction and operation, changes in wildlife behavior, and reduced biological diversity. Proper location and minimization of construction staging areas and access roads in

sensitive habitats would reduce temporary impacts. To prevent the spread of invasive species during construction, contractors *will* adhere to PennDOT and SHA specifications and any applicable regulations.

Threatened and Endangered Species - Direct loss of threatened or endangered species is not expected as a result of the project. However, threatened, and endangered species are less resilient to habitat changes and invasive competition. Appropriate resources and permitting agencies will regulate any potential effects to habitat resulting from the build alternatives. For example, habitat for the Indiana Bat, Tricolored Bat, and Northern Long-eared Bat is *regulated by the USFWS and specific conservation and avoidance measures will be taken, such as adhering to seasonal tree cutting restrictions.*

Productive Agricultural Land - Although conversion of productive agricultural land, including forests used for maple syrup operations, to transportation use is a one-time occurrence, encroachment impacts to productive agricultural land could change farming and syrup harvesting methods. As *an* incentive to preserve agricultural land both states have parcels enrolled in preferential tax assessment programs, allowing tax based on use rather than prevailing market value. Subsequently, financial compensation and replacement land used in mitigation would be evaluated as such.

Prime and Statewide Important Farmland Soils - Prime farmland soils and soils of statewide importance face similar impacts as described for productive agricultural land, but the Federal Farmland Protection Policy Act does not require farmland soils to be in active agricultural use. Although the conversion of these soils to transportation right-of-way is a one-time occurrence, encroachment impacts could include the way farmers need to farm the land. Any mitigation would be a private transaction agreement of the current and future landowners. *Mitigation for all agricultural impacts would include compliance with the Federal Uniform Relocation Assistance and Real Property Acquisition Act Policies, and state requirements based on this act, as appropriate, for agricultural land impacted by the project.*

Cultural Resources

Through ground disturbance, the four build alternatives have the potential to directly impact archaeological resources. Section 106 of the NHPA describes that the *lead* federal agency (FHWA) determines how historic properties might be affected by the project and whether any effects would be considered adverse. *These effects include direct and reasonably foreseeable effects to historic properties, which would be regulated by state historic preservation offices, local planning agencies, and local historic preservation agencies.*

C. Present and Reasonably Foreseeable Future Actions

Reasonably foreseeable future actions (RFFA) are probable, not merely possible. Currently there are no transportation or development actions occurring or approved development plans that would likely contribute to reasonably foreseeable future effects on resources directly affected by the project. A concept plan for the Casselman Farm development has been submitted to the Town of Grantsville. If officially approved, this development would have reasonably foreseeable effects on resources affected by the project. Additionally, per the Garrett County Water and Sewer Master Plan (amended 2023), the CRDC and surrounding areas are designated for water service in the next ten years.

D. Conclusion

The four build alternatives would have different levels of direct and *reasonably foreseeable* impacts on land use, socioeconomic, natural, and cultural resources within the *RFE* Study Area.

Currently there are planned developments are dependent on the completion of improved U.S. 219. However, the improvements to system linkage and reduced travel times would support potential future development in the project area. The proposed improvements are not anticipated to immediately induce new unplanned development that would affect changes in the current or planned land use, or

population growth rate. However, the four build alternatives could cause *reasonably foreseeable effects* including new elements affecting visual quality of the natural and cultural environments, right-of-way acquisitions of community or agricultural resources, commercial and residential displacements, increased runoff and sedimentation, altered hydrology, and introduction of non-native plant species.

In summary, the No Build Alternative has the least direct and reasonably foreseeable effects to both the human and natural environment. Adherence to current regulatory requirements and planning practices will help minimize, mitigate, or avoid both direct and reasonably foreseeable effects from any of the four build alternatives.

3.25

Since the issuance of the DEIS on November 15, 2024, and in compliance with regulatory changes, this chapter was merged into Chapter 3.24.

3.26 Construction Impacts

3.26.1 No Build Alternative

The No Build Alternative would not have any associated construction impacts.

3.26.2 Build Alternatives

Construction activities associated with any of the

four proposed build alternatives could result in disruptions to local residents and the traveling public. These disruptions would be temporary and localized occurring during the construction period. Construction would be performed to comply with applicable federal, state and local laws regarding safety, health and sanitation.

3.26.3 Conclusion/Mitigation

A. Traffic and Access

Construction of the *Preferred Alternative* will require temporary road closures and reduced speed work zones. The temporary road closures and short-term traffic delays anticipated to result from any of the build alternatives will likely cause minor inconveniences to local residents and the traveling public. These delays would result in decreased access and potential increased response time for emergency service providers during construction work hours.

Maintenance and protection of traffic plans will be developed during final design to mitigate access impacts and to minimize delays throughout the project area. These plans will include appropriate signs and pavement markings. Access to all businesses and residences will be maintained through construction. Advanced coordination with emergency service providers, municipalities, school districts, Plain Sect populations, and the general public will occur to give notice of traffic and detour

information.

Other potential highway construction impacts to transportation system operations include construction of bridges over or under existing facilities such as the proposed structure removal of the Hunsrick Road Bridge over U.S. 219 and the upgrade and additional local access network at the northern end of the project.

The project's maintenance and protection of traffic plans and supporting specifications will require the contractor to provide two weeks advanced notice to the public prior to a construction activity that would require an intermittent, short-term or long-term roadway closure. These notifications will be communicated through signing (static or changeable message).

B. Water Quality and Waste Handling

Clearing and grubbing of existing vegetation and earthwork will be required for any of the build alternatives. Exposed soils will result in the potential to increase erosion and sedimentation to nearby streams and/or wetlands. An increase in soils erosion and sedimentation in the streams or wetlands could lead to a temporary impact on aquatic biota. The implementation of proper soil erosion and sedimentation control measures will control soil erosion and sedimentation. An E&SPC plan will be prepared for review in accordance with NPDES requirements. Some of the soil erosion and

sedimentation control measures could include:

- Use of silt barrier fence
- Use of temporary stormwater sedimentation ponds
- Use of proper material for temporary stream crossings
- Diverting stormwater originating off-site away from construction areas
- Designate equipment fueling and service areas away from aquatic habitats to minimize the damage potential from accidental petrochemical spills
- Approval of stormwater management plans.

Additional geotechnical testing and analysis, testing of potentially contaminated areas based on historical land use and investigation of historically mined areas will be required as the Project Team progresses design. The extent of these efforts and types of soil erosion and sedimentation mitigation practices are unknown until further investigation/testing is conducted. Specialized mitigation measures will be implemented as needed based on results of further investigation into historical land use and potential areas of hazardous materials. These measures will be coordinated with the Somerset County Conservation District, PA DEP, and MDE through the permitting process.

If soil contamination is present in Maryland, a permit for soil remediation is required from MDE's Air and Radiation Management Administration. Any above

ground or underground petroleum storage tanks that may be within the construction area must have contents and tanks along with any contamination removed. The MDE Oil Control Program or PA DEP Division of Storage Tanks should be contacted for additional guidance.

Any solid waste including construction, demolition and land clearing debris, generated from the project, must be properly disposed of at a permitted solid waste acceptance facility, or recycled if possible. The MDE Solid Waste Program or PA DEP Residual Waste Program should be contacted for additional information regarding solid waste activities. The MDE Resource Management Program or a PA DEP Recycling Coordinator should be contacted for additional information regarding recycling activities. The MDE Solid Waste Program or PA DEP Hazardous Waste Program should be contacted directly if construction is anticipated to generate or require handling of hazardous wastes to ensure these activities are being conducted in compliance with applicable State and federal laws and regulations. These Programs should also be contacted prior to construction activities to ensure that the treatment, storage or disposal of hazardous wastes and low-level radioactive wastes will be conducted in compliance with applicable state and federal laws and regulations.

Borrow areas used to provide clean earth back fill material may require a surface mine permit. Disposal of excess cut material at a surface mine may require site approval. The MDE Mining

Program or PA DEP District Mining Office should be contacted for further guidance. A wetland and waterway delineation must be conducted for any proposed borrow or placement site prior to use. Borrow or placement sites must be located in uplands; no waters or wetlands will be used for excess material disposal unless permitted. All borrow or placement sites must receive the appropriate Endangered Species Act and Cultural Resources clearance prior to use. PennDOT and SHA may also choose to have field views with the resource agencies prior to use of proposed waste areas.

C. Air and Noise Impacts

Air quality impacts can be due to windblown fugitive dust generated by earthmoving activities like land clearing, boring and blasting, ground excavation, hauling dirt, and road construction, as well as emissions from heavy-duty diesel-powered equipment used during construction. These activities are relatively short in duration with a definable beginning and end, vary significantly over different phases of the construction project, and will be small in comparison to motor vehicle impacts.

Methods for reducing impacts to existing air quality from windblown fugitive dust include:

- *Use of approved dust palliatives such as calcium chloride or water*
- *Covering of stockpiles during storage or transport*

- Restoration of vegetation as quickly as possible to prevent windblown.

Methods for reducing impacts to existing air quality from diesel emissions include:

- *Replacing outdated engine components*
- *Installing certified and verified emission reduction technologies*
- *Regularly maintaining all engines*
- *Replacing older engines with newer equipment*
- *Using higher quality cleaner fuel*
- *Reducing engine idle times*

Furthermore, if contractors suspect that asbestos is present in any portion of a structure that will be renovated/demolished, then the contractor shall contact the MDE Community Environmental Services Program, Air and Radiation Management Administration, or the PA DEP Bureau of Air Quality to learn about the State's requirements for asbestos handling and complete any required asbestos notifications.

Construction, renovation and/or demolition of buildings and roadways must be performed in conformance with state regulations. This includes regulations relating to "Particulate Matter from Materials Handling and Construction" (COMAR 26.11.06.03D) in Maryland and "Prohibition of Certain Fugitive Emissions" (PA Code Title 25, Chapter 123) in Pennsylvania. These regulations

require that during any construction and/or demolition work, reasonable precautions be taken to prevent particulate matter, such as fugitive dust, from becoming airborne.

Land uses that are sensitive to vehicular noise would also be sensitive to construction noise. Although highway construction is a short-term phenomenon, it can cause significant noise impacts. The extent and severity of the noise impact will depend upon the phase of construction (blasting activities) and the noise characteristics of the construction equipment in use (e.g. heavy construction equipment, equipment used to break rock and concrete pavement). Construction will have a direct impact on the receptors located close to the construction site and will have a *reasonably foreseeable effect* on receptors located near roadways where traffic flow characteristics are altered due to re-routing of vehicles from the construction area. Generally, sensitive land uses situated within a 100 to 200 foot radius of construction operations may encounter varying durations and intensities of noise impact, with potential noise levels ranging from 75 to 85 decibels, contingent upon the specific nature of the construction activity, the type of equipment employed, and the relative proximity.

To minimize the impact associated with construction noise, several mitigation measures can be implemented.

- Contractors shall exercise proper maintenance of construction equipment to minimize noise emissions due to inefficiently tuned engines, poorly lubricated moving parts, poor to ineffective muffling/exhaust systems, etc.;
- Provision of temporary noise barriers;
- Varying the construction activity areas to redistribute noise events;
- Restricting activity (e.g. blasting activities) to times during the day that are considered to be less noise-sensitive; and
- Public involvement and financial incentives to contractors.

Noise impacts from blasting activities is a short phenomenon but can cause significant noise impacts on sensitive receptors. To reduce the potential impacts from blasting activities it is necessary to implement appropriate measures before, during, and after the operation. This includes selecting explosives, blasting patterns, and initiation systems that optimize blast efficiency and minimize noise. Blasting Mats which are commonly used as blankets for blasting activities to control and confine debris can provide a degree of noise attenuation from the blast. These mats are typically made with layers of used tires cabled together. However, blasting mats do not mitigate vibration, which is usually more of a concern than noise. It's also important to provide advance notice and warning

signs to affected communities.

D. Utilities

Pennsylvania Act 38 and Maryland's MISS Utility requires notification of excavators, designers, or any person preparing to disturb the earth's surface to coordinate and locate all utilities within the limits of work. Therefore, coordination will be undertaken for any relocation or grade adjustments (manholes, inlets, etc.) that may be required. Preliminary identification of utilities include:

- Columbia Gas of PA, Inc.
- Columbia Gas Transmission Corporation
- Garrett County Roads Department
- Garrett County Sanitary Commission
- Salisbury Commission of Water Works
- First Energy Corporation
- Somerset Rural Electric Cooperative, Inc.
- Verizon North
- Adelphia Communications
- Garrett Borough/Garrett Water Authority
- MCI
- Meyersdale Municipal Authority
- Allegheny Power/Utiliquist
- Level 3 Communications
- Somerfield Cable TV
- Texas Eastern Transmission
- Frontiervision L.P.

E. Construction Details

Meeting(s) will be held during final design to present more detailed engineering plans including details on items such as fencing, landscaping and lighting.

3.27

Since the issuance of the DEIS on November 15, 2024, and in compliance with new EOs and policies, this section is no longer required for federal actions.

3.28 Irreversible & Irretrievable Commitment of Resources

The construction of any build alternative would involve a commitment of a range of natural, physical, human, and fiscal resources. Considerable amounts of fuels, labor, and highway construction materials would be irretrievably expended for the construction of any build alternative. In addition to the necessary construction materials, fuels and labor required to manufacture these construction materials would be irretrievably lost. These construction materials are not in short supply and their use would not have an adverse effect upon the continued availability of these resources.

The build alternatives would require the commitment of land to new highway construction, which is considered an irreversible commitment during the time period that the land is used for a highway facility.

Any of the build alternatives would also require an irretrievable commitment of state and federal funds for right-of-way acquisition, materials, construction, and mitigation activities. Funds for annual maintenance would also be required. The loss of tax revenue from private land taken for highway use would be an irretrievable loss for Somerset and Garrett County.

The commitment of these resources is based on the concept that residents in the immediate area, state, and region would benefit by the improved quality of the transportation system. These benefits would consist of improved traffic flow, increased safety, accident reduction, travel time reduction, and increased potential for economic development through improved system linkage.

3.29 Short-Term Uses versus Long-Term Productivity

All four build alternatives would improve the existing geometric deficiencies that exist particularly north of Salisbury, PA and allow for consistency in system continuity with the adjoining four-lane limited access roadways to the north (Meyersdale Bypass) and the southern 1.4-mile section in Garrett County Maryland, that intersects with I-68. The improvement in the geometric deficiencies and the consistency in system continuity would enhance the long-term area productivity.

These long-term benefits would occur at the expense of short-term construction impacts in the immediate vicinity of the project. These short-term effects would include dust, erosion, increased siltation and turbidity in affected streams, localized noise and air pollution, residential and business displacements, and minor traffic delays. With proper controls, they would not have a lasting effect on the environment.

The long-term productivity goals are consistent with the area's comprehensive plans. Southern Alleghenies adopted their Comprehensive Plan in 2018 and the plan supports the completion of U.S. 219 between Meyersdale and Maryland. Garrett County adopted the Garrett County Comprehensive Plan in November 2022. Their plan cites U.S. 219 N Extension to the Pennsylvania State Line as its top priority. The plan has included the following, "Garrett County and the Town of Grantsville requests continued funding for preliminary engineering and right-of-way acquisition for the for the last mile of U.S. 219 North connecting Chestnut Ridge Road to the Pennsylvania Line. This project will improve access, reduce travel time, and for freight and passenger vehicles, and promote economic development in Western Maryland."

3.30 Permits, Approvals, & Authorizations Required

FHWA is the project's lead Federal agency and is

working closely with PennDOT, (the lead state agency) and SHA, who are working in tandem to develop and complete the EIS studies. These agencies have worked together to engage the appropriate federal, state, and local agencies to streamline both NEPA and permit approvals.

Additionally, USACE must take federal action to approve the Clean Water Act Section 404 Permit necessary for project implementation. Therefore, prior to approval of the Section 404 Permit, USACE must adopt the EIS and Record of Decision to comply with NEPA.

PennDOT, in line with FHWA, requested certain agencies to become cooperating or participating study agencies based on their technical expertise, NEPA review and permitting roles. The following describes these roles.

The project's Cooperating Agencies were invited based on their key role in federal authorization decisions in addition to having specialized technical expertise to share and help guide the project team. These agencies include the:

- U.S. EPA
- USACE (Pittsburgh Division leading, with Baltimore Division partnering)
- USFWS
- PA DEP
- MDE

These agencies' roles include:

- NEPA process participation throughout the study
- Participation in the DEIS scoping process
- On lead agency request, assume responsibility for developing information and preparing environmental analyses, including EIS portions for which the cooperating agency has specialized expertise
- On lead agency request, making staff available to enhance the lead agency's interdisciplinary capabilities
- Requesting lead agencies to fund authorization and permit requirements in their budget requests
- Consulting with the lead agency in developing and meeting the study schedule, and elevating as soon as practicable, to the senior agency official of the lead agency any issues relating to purpose and need, alternatives, or other issues that may affect any agencies' ability to meet the schedule
- Meeting the lead agency's schedule for providing comments and limiting comments to those matters for which it has jurisdiction by law or special expertise concerning any environmental issue
- Jointly issuing environmental document with the lead agency, to the maximum extent practicable.

Other key agencies with project area regulatory or management jurisdiction over sensitive resources were invited as the project's Participating Agencies. These agencies include the:

- PFBC
- PA DCNR
- PGC
- PA SHPO
- Maryland Department of Planning
- MHT
- MD DNR

These agencies' roles include:

- Identifying, as early as practicable, any issues of concern regarding potential natural, cultural, or human environment impacts
- Providing meaningful and early input on relevant issues such as the study purpose and needs, the range of alternatives to be considered, and the methodologies and level of detail required in the alternatives' analysis
- Participating in coordination meetings and field reviews with other environmental resource agencies, as appropriate
- Adhering to timeframes for reviewing and commenting on administrative copies of environmental documentation and final EIS.

The project team has coordinated with both the Pennsylvania and Maryland Cooperating and

Participating agencies through PennDOT's Standing Monthly Agency Coordination Meetings (ACM) and has met with agencies at key study points, including:

- Purpose & Need
- Review of Planning and Environmental Linkages (PEL) Alternatives Studied and Dismissed
- DEIS Virtual Field Scoping Meeting
- Development of Preliminary Alternatives and Impacts
- Draft Public Open House Materials and Results
- Detailed Alternatives and Impacts
- Alternative Section 4(f) Avoidance and Minimization Modifications
- Other resource-specific coordination

The following is a summary of key EIS permits and authorizations.

Clean Water Act Section 404 Permit and Section 401 Water Quality Certification – FHWA, PennDOT, and SHA are working closely with the Pittsburgh District of USACE (in coordination with the Baltimore District), PA DEP, and MDE in issuing a provisional notification for a Section 404 Permit for the USACE's identified Least Environmentally Damaging Practicable Alternative (LEDPA). This notification is to be issued 90-Days from FHWA

FEIS and Record of Decision approval. The provisional notification indicates that PA DEP and MDE must provide a Section 401 Conditional Water Quality Certification prior to USACE issuing its Proffered Section 404 Permit. The Water Quality Certification would address avoidance and minimization to Waters of the US, along with the plan to mitigate unavoidable impacts.

To help inform the Section 404 permit, consideration was given to a list of 20 public interest factors. This analysis considered the foreseeable impacts the Preferred Alternative, E-Shift Modified, would have. The benefits and detriments to these public interest factors were evaluated and documented. This analysis is contained in **Appendix AC**.

Additionally, Pennsylvania and Maryland have state regulations governing waterway and wetland encroachments and alterations, including Title 25 Chapter 105 in Pennsylvania and Title 5 in Maryland, that require project review by state environmental agencies. Permits under these regulations would be issued jointly, alongside the Section 404 Permit.

Clean Water Act National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System – The NPDES permit program, created under the Clean Water Act, addresses water pollution by regulating point source pollution, including from construction sites. NPDES permit authorization will be required for construction earth

disturbance in both Pennsylvania and Maryland. The project team will acquire a NPDES/Chapter 102 permit authorization from PA DEP and NPDES/COMAR 26.08.04 permit authorization from MDE prior to construction.

This NPDES Construction Activity permit coverage will address both construction and post-construction stormwater management as described in Sections 3.17 and 3.18. No municipal stormwater regulation applies to this state-owned project. The project would not require coverage under the NPDES Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System (MS4) programs which only apply in federally designated Urbanized Areas in Pennsylvania and Phase I/II jurisdictions in Maryland, none of which are present.

Section 4(f) – Section 4(f) of the USDOT Act of 1966 requires that it be demonstrated that no feasible and prudent alternatives exist to avoid using land from publicly owned parks, recreation areas, wildlife and waterfowl refuges and properties either listed or potentially eligible for listing on the NRHP. In Pennsylvania, Section 2002 of the Administrative Code of 1929 also applies to activities conducted by PennDOT and includes requirements that serve as a state counterpart to Section 4(f). Alternatives E Modified and E-Shift Modified effectively are Section 4(f) Avoidance Alternatives to Alternatives DU Modified and DU-Shift Modified except a *de minimis* use of the historic Miller Farm / Earnest and Carrie V. Miller Residence (Section 106 No Adverse Effect)

located in the northern portion of the project area.

Section 7 of the Endangered Species Act – A Biological Assessment was prepared in accordance with Section 7 of the Endangered Species Act for the project's "may affect, likely to adversely affect" determination. Federal agencies are required to consult with the USFWS to ensure that actions they fund, authorize, permit or carry out will not jeopardize the continued existence of any listed species. In response, the USFWS prepared a biological opinion to analyze the effect of the proposed action to the listed species, and the conclusion of the biological opinion states whether FHWA has ensured the project is not likely to jeopardize the continued existence of the Indiana bat, northern long-eared bat or tricolored bat and/or result in the destruction or adverse modification of critical habitat. *A Biological Opinion was issued by USFWS on March 26, 2025, and concurred with the Biological Assessment's determination.*

Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act – Construction of Alternative E Modified and E-Shift Modified are anticipated to result in No Adverse Effect to one historic property at the northern end of the project. Construction of Alternative DU Modified or DU-Shift Modified is anticipated to result in an Adverse Effect to two historic properties. Additionally, areas of medium-to-high potential for archaeological resources would be evaluated prior to construction of a build alternative. A Section 106

Programmatic Agreement has been *executed* between PennDOT, SHA, Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission, and MHT regarding archaeological resources that are identified prior to construction, or archaeological resources discovered during construction. *This executed Programmatic Agreement is included as Appendix M.*

FHWA Act of 1970, 23 USC 109(h) – Requires that federal projects be developed in the best overall public interest, considering the need for safe/efficient transportation, public services, and costs of eliminating or minimizing human environmental effects. The Selected Alternative would be the least environmentally impactful Alternative and complies with 23 USC 109(h).

Pennsylvania Acts 100 and 43 – The Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture oversees farmland protection for productive farmlands and farmlands located in ASAs impacted by state funded projects. The Selected Alternative would be designed to minimize farmland impacts in accordance with state regulations and guidance. PennDOT would continue coordination with the Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture throughout the project and into final design and construction and determine whether construction of the Selected Alternative would require presentation before the ALCAB.

1997 Smart Growth and Neighborhood Conservation Act – *This 1997 Maryland Planning Legislation capitalizes on the state’s influence on economic growth and development. This law directs State funding for growth-related infrastructure including major transportation capital projects to PFAs, providing a geographical focus for state investment in growth. Since a large portion of the US 219 project in Maryland is outside a PFA, SHA and MDP are coordinating to address the exception requirement per the 1997 PFA Law in accordance with the established PFA law evaluation process in Maryland.*

Floodplains – PA Code Title 12, Chapter 113 and MD COMAR 26.17.04.03 specify that construction in nontidal waters and floodplains requires PA DEP or MDE permits respectively, prior to changing in any manner the course, current, or cross section of a stream or body of water including any changes to the 1% annual chance floodplain of free-flowing streams.

Maryland Reforestation Law 5-103 – The MD DNR administers the Maryland Reforestation Law and requires an acre for acre replacement for any forest removed during road construction. Potential forest impacts have been identified and the final design of the FHWA’s Selected Alternative would address mitigation, should a build alternative be selected.

Maryland Environmental Policy Act (MEPA) – The Environmental Assessment Form (EAF) is a requirement of the Maryland Environmental Policy Act and Maryland Department of Transportation Order 11.01.06.02. The EAF is included as **Appendix AD**.

4 PROJECT OUTREACH

Given the extensive history of this project, significant agency and public outreach has occurred across various stages during the life of this project (see **Figure 4-1**). This chapter presents the history of coordination efforts that have occurred during those different stages:

- Stage 1 of the project extends from the development of the project purpose and need in 1999 (U.S. 219 from Somerset, PA to I-68 in Maryland) to when Section 19 (currently Section 050) of the overall corridor became its own project in 2002.
- Stage 2 covers outreach from 2002 through the initial U.S. 219, Section 19 Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) stage, prior to the Pennsylvania Department of Transportation/Maryland State Highway Administration (PennDOT/SHA) rescinding the NOI due to funding constraints in 2007.

- Stage 3 begins when the project was re-started as an EIS project in 2014, prior to the project becoming a Planning and Environmental Linkages (PEL) Study in 2015.
- Stage 4 is the PEL stage from 2015 to 2016.
- Stage 5 includes the design and construction of the 1.4-mile portion of U.S. 219 in Maryland that was broken out from the PEL phase (2016 to 2017).
- The last and current stage, Stage 6, extends from November 9, 2020, when the PA Transportation Secretary announced the commitment of funds for the project, to the present, including this EIS.

4.1 Agency Coordination

Stage 1 (1999-2002 – Purpose and Need Stage)
Coordination with Pennsylvania resource agencies began in the early stages of the U.S. 219 project, specifically during the development of the purpose and need, starting in 1998.

- January 26, 1999 – Presentation to the Pennsylvania resource agencies on the needs study

Stage 2 (2002-2007 – Initial EIS Stage)

Once this specific project (U.S. 219 Section 019 [now Section 050]) was advanced, coordination with both Pennsylvania and Maryland resource agencies was initiated. An introductory meeting was held with both PA and MD agencies and a field view was conducted. In addition, eleven agency meetings and field views were held between 2002 and 2007.

Stage 3 (2014-2015 – Restart of Initial EIS Stage):

Six agency meetings were held during the 2014 update to the former NEPA effort and before the PEL study between 2014 to 2015.

Stage 4 (2015-2016 – PEL Stage):

Eight agency meetings were held between Agency meetings held during the PEL study from 2015 to 2016.

Stage 5 (2016-2017 – 1.4-mile U.S. 219 section in MD from I-68 to Old Salisbury Road):

Five agency meetings were held in Maryland after the PEL study and during the development of the Maryland section of U.S. 219 from I-68 to Old Salisbury Road.

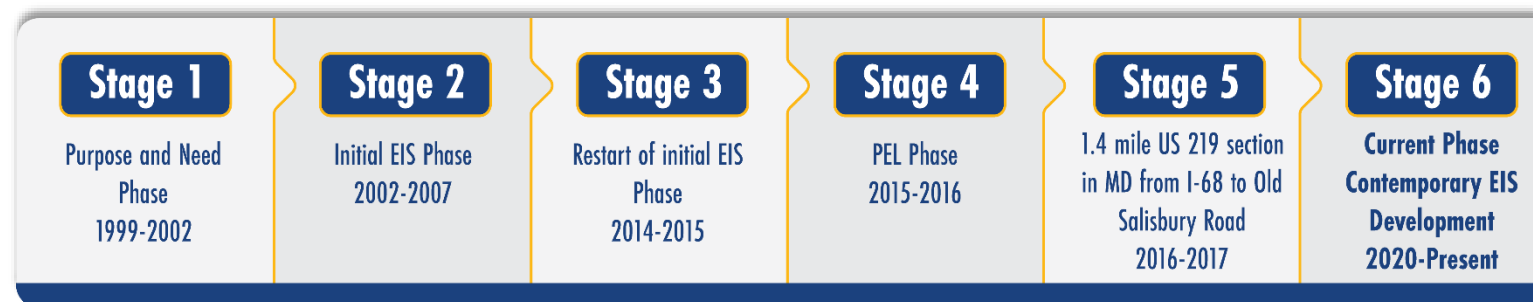


Figure 4-1: Agency and Public Outreach Stages

Stage 6 (2020 to Present – PA Transportation Secretary announced commitment of funds – current stage):

Ten agency coordination/interagency review meetings have been held since the project was re-initiated in 2020. The meeting dates and purpose are documented in **Table 4-1**.

Additionally, the project team had individual agency meetings to discuss issues specific to the agency's purview in more detail, including meetings with:

- U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) and Pennsylvania Game Commission (PGC) regarding potentially affected bat species,
- United States Army Corp of Engineers (USACE), PADEP, MDE regarding waterway permitting, and
- Pennsylvania Fish and Boat Commission (PFBC) regarding the presence of trout species and protected aquatic species in certain streams within the study area.

4.2 Coordination Plan

The *SR 6219, Section 050 Coordination Plan for Agency Involvement* and *SR 6219, Section 050 Coordination Plan for Public Involvement* (PennDOT 2022) were developed for the U.S. 219, Section 050 project as part of the NOI to prepare an EIS, which is included in **Appendix A**. These plans define the process to comply with the public involvement and agency coordination requirements in the

environmental review process, including those outlined in NEPA and related laws and regulations.

The purpose of the coordination plans is to facilitate and document interaction with the public, stakeholders, and federal and state resource agencies. The plans also inform the public and resource agencies of how coordination will be accomplished, and feedback will be received.

The 2021 Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA) requires that the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) establish a plan for coordinating public and agency participation in and comment on the environmental review process within 90 days of publishing the NOI. Per the PennDOT Publication No. 10B, *Design Manual Part 1B: Post-TIP NEPA Procedures* (PennDOT, 2019), the coordination plan must be shared with the public and with participating agencies so that they know what to expect and so that any disputes surface as early as possible. SHA's Transportation Environmental Regulatory Process (TERP) also requires a coordination plan that identifies opportunities for both agency and public involvement.

These plans were prepared in October 2022, and the NOI was published in the Federal Register on June 2, 2023. The description of the previous public involvement and agency coordination that has occurred on the project was broken out by several

different stages, similar to this chapter of the Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS).

4.3 Public Outreach

Stage 2 (2002-2007 – Initial EIS Stage):

A very robust public outreach program paralleled agency outreach, beginning with Stage 2 initial EIS activities. Outreach activities included:

- 2002 – Project Website Active
- March and April 2002 - Meyersdale Maple Festival
- August 2002 - Somerset County Fair
- March and April 2003 – Meyersdale Maple Festival
- August 2003 – Somerset County Fair

A Community Advisory Committee (CAC) consisting of a cross-section of interests in the project area was formed early in 2003 and consisted of approximately 25 members. The purpose of the CAC was to provide an additional method of communication between PennDOT, SHA, FHWA, and the local communities, and to provide input into project development. The CAC served as an advisory group to the project team ensuring local interests and concerns are considered in a timely manner. Since 2003, multiple members of the CAC have indicated that they could no longer serve. Replacement members were recommended by both PennDOT and SHA, as necessary.

Table 4-1: Summary of Agency Meetings since November 9, 2020 (Stage 6)

Date	Purpose of the Meeting
April 28, 2021	PennDOT District 9-0 updated the ACM about the Route 219, Section 050 project, including the alignment corridors vetted during the PEL process and anticipated schedule for the project.
June 16, 2021	SHA updated the Interagency Review Meeting (IRM) about the Route 219, Section 050 project, including the alignment corridors vetted during the PEL process and anticipated schedule for the project.
September 22, 2021	Project team presented the following information at the Joint ACM/IRM: process to move from PEL to NEPA, role of the ACM/IRM, anticipated Cooperating and Participating Agencies, review of the project Purpose and Need and logical termini, review of the PEL alternatives studies and how agency comments during PEL would be addressed in NEPA.
November 16, 2021	Agency Scoping meeting with representatives from Pennsylvania and Maryland.
May 25, 2022 June 15, 2022	Project team presented the following information at an ACM, and later at an IRM: review of the project Purpose and Need and logical termini, proposed NEPA study alternatives, review of Public and Agency Coordination Plan, and review of information to be presented at the June public meetings.
August 24, 2022	Project team reviewed the results of the June 2022 Public Meetings with the Joint ACM/IRM participants, reviewed the alternatives to be evaluated in NEPA and the associated impacts using the secondary source impact data, dismissal of Alternative DA from further study.
April 26, 2023	Project team provided the Joint ACM/IRM participants with an update on the status of the project, including the expanded Limit of Disturbance areas for various reasons and updated impact information.
October 17, 2023	Project team presented the following information at the Joint ACM/IRM: information from the June 2022 public meeting on the dismissal of Alternative DA and DA-Shift, detailed field mapping and impacts, local access designs under consideration and a potential for a direct connection with an interchange to existing U.S. 219 in Maryland.
January 24, 2024	Project team presented the following information at the Joint ACM/IRM: results from the November 2023 round of public meetings, modifications to Alternative DU, DU-Shift, E, E-Shift to avoid certain resources and the associated environmental impacts, and the Federal Dashboard Milestone schedule.
May 22, 2024	Project team presented at the Joint ACM/IRM the schedule for the Notice of Availability of the DEIS and the Recommended Preferred Alternative, E-Shift Modified.
March 26, 2025	<i>Project team provided updates on the Preferred Alternative and project schedule at the Joint ACM/IRM, and presented the results of the public hearings and the status of permitting activities.</i>
Note: This table lists all the agency meetings held since the project was reinitiated in 2020.	

Meetings occurred on the following dates throughout the initial EIS Stage:

- January 16, 2003
- June 19, 2003
- October 30, 2003
- June 2, 2004
- May 15, 2005

Public meetings and public officials meetings were also held frequently throughout the initial EIS stage. The public was presented up to date project information and the opportunity to provide comments. Approximately 200 people attended each public meeting. Meeting dates included:

- June 17, 2002 – Both public meeting and public officials meeting
- February 25, 2003 – Both public meeting and public officials meeting
- November 6, 2003 – Both public meeting and public officials meeting
- November 9, 2004 – Both public meeting and public officials meeting

During the initial EIS stage, four newsletters providing project updates were mailed out to a 900-member mailing database. The newsletters were distributed during the following times:

- Summer 2002
- Spring 2003

- Winter (January) 2004
- Fall 2004

Seven special stakeholder meetings were also held during the initial EIS stage. This included discussions with and presentations to residents, community interest groups, municipalities, and county officials.

Stage 3 (2014-2015 – Restart of initial EIS Stage):
Public outreach held during the 2014 update to the former NEPA effort and before the PEL:

- September 23, 2014 - Public informational meeting

Stage 4 (2015-2016 – PEL Stage):

Public outreach held during the 2015 PEL study:

- July 15, 2015 - Findley Spring meeting with Salisbury Borough, PA, and PA DEP
- August 19, 2015 - CAC Meeting
- December 10, 2015 - CAC Meeting
- January 6, 2016 - Public Informational Workshop

Stage 5 (2016-2017 – 1.4-mile U.S. 219 section in MD from I-68 to Old Salisbury Road):

Public outreach held after the PEL and during the development of the Maryland Section of U.S. 219 from I-68 to Old Salisbury Road:

- Summer 2016 – Newsletter
- September 8, 2016 – Public workshop

- September 9, 2016 – Open house
- February 6, 2017 – Joint location/design public hearing

Specific stakeholder meetings were held with private property owners within the Tomlinson Inn and Little Meadows historic property.

Stage 6 (2020 to Present – PA Transportation Secretary announced commitment of funds – current stage):

Seven public outreach meetings have been held since the project was reinitiated in 2020. These meetings are detailed in **Table 4-2** and **Table 4-3** and include the date and purpose of each meeting.

Previous CAC members were contacted in 2021 to gauge their interest in continuing to serve on the CAC. Due to various reasons, some members could no longer serve, so replacement members representing the same interest groups were recommended by both PennDOT and SHA. Four CAC meetings have been held since the project was re-initiated in 2021. The meeting dates and purpose are documented in **Table 4-2**

Current members of the CAC represent the following:

- Somerset Trust Company,
- Beitzel Corporation,
- Meyersdale Area Historical Society,
- Oester Trucking,

- Salisbury-Elk Lick School District,
- Savage River Lodge,
- Garrett County Development Corporation,
- Heritage Coal and Natural Resources,
- Salisbury Volunteer Fire Department,
- Somerset County Chamber of Commerce, Greater Cumberland Committee,
- Salisbury Borough,
- Garrett County,
- Somerset County,
- Maryland General Assembly,
- U.S. Senate,
- Salisbury Volunteer Fire Department,
- Somerset County Chamber of Commerce, Greater Cumberland Committee,
- Salisbury Borough, and
- Garrett County

PennDOT and SHA held three rounds of in-person public officials meetings and public plans displays accompanied by a virtual option. Prior to each public plans display meeting, a public officials meeting was held to preview the same information to be presented to the public later. The meeting dates and purposes are documented in **Table 4-3**.

The Public Plans Display No. 1 (considered the scoping meeting), held on June 23, 2022 (followed by a virtual public meeting on June 27, 2022),

presented the refinement of the alignments since the PEL study. Public Plans Display No. 2, held on November 16, 2023 (followed by a virtual public meeting on November 21, 2023), presented the refinement of the alternatives and the environmental impacts. Public meeting summaries for the June 2022 and November 2023 public meetings are contained within **Appendix AE**. The formal public hearing presented the preferred alternative and is discussed further in **Chapter 4.4**.

4.4 Public Hearings

Two public hearings, one in Pennsylvania and one in Maryland, were held to present the preliminary engineering results, environmental analysis studies, and preferred alternative as documented in the DEIS at least 30 days after the DEIS was available

for public and agency review. *The public hearings were held on December 11 and December 12, 2024, and the DEIS was made available for review on November 8, 2024.* The 30-day public and agency review period reflected the policy of the USACE; FHWA requires a 15-day public and agency review period. The public hearings were held jointly by FHWA and USACE. The public hearing dates were noted in the notice of availability for the DEIS, *which was published on November 8, 2024.* The public hearings followed PennDOT Publication No. 295, *Project Level Public Involvement Handbook* (PennDOT, 2021) and were advertised in the newspaper at least two weeks before the hearings. There were opportunities for both written and oral comments and attendees were able to provide oral comments either publicly or privately.

Table 4-2: Summary of CAC Meetings since November 9, 2020 (Stage 6)

Date	Purpose of the Meeting
November 3, 2021	The project team reviewed the role of the CAC, the process to move from PEL to NEPA, Purpose and Need and Logical Termini and the PEL Alternatives that were studied and those alternatives that are advancing.
June 2, 2022	Presented what the project team has been working on since the last CAC meeting and the information that will be taken to the June 2022 public meetings.
November 2, 2023	Presented the dismissal of Alternatives DA and DA-Shift, detailed field mapping and associated environmental impacts, local access designs under consideration and a potential for a direct connection with an interchange to existing U.S. 219 in Maryland.
April 11, 2024	Presented alternatives being studied in the DEIS and the Recommended Preferred Alternative – E-Shift Modified.
Note: This table lists all the CAC meetings held since the Pennsylvania Transportation Secretary announced the commitment of funds for the EIS on November 9, 2020.	

Stenographers recorded the oral testimony provided. The public hearings were also held virtually for those that could not attend in person. The team made accommodations to ensure all materials could be viewed by those who choose to attend virtually. Instructions on how to provide written comments were made available.

*A summary of the public hearings is included within **Appendix AF**. This appendix also includes transcripts for oral testimony provided at the public hearings. Furthermore, all comments received during the comment period in response to the DEIS are documented in **Appendix AF**, including a response to each comment. **Appendix AF** includes a copy of the letters received from local, state, and federal agencies as well.*

4.5 Other Outreach Tools

In addition to public meetings and hearings, the following outreach tools and strategies were utilized to accomplish the coordination plan's objectives.

Project Website

A study-specific sub-site hosted on PennDOT District 9-0's website is available as a central information hub. The website is updated throughout U.S. 219 project milestones. A link to the website (penndot.pa.gov/us219meyersdalesouth) is also available on SHA's project portal site. Website content included:

- Study fact sheets, updates, and public information materials, including public meeting dates;
- Study photos or videos;
- Meeting announcements;
- Media releases;
- Renderings of projects or concepts (e.g. drawings, maps, photos, videos);
- Study reports, as appropriate;
- Study milestones and schedule;
- Contact information (email address, Pennsylvania Department of Transportation (PennDOT) Engineering District 9-0 office address);
- Online form(s) to gather contact information and feedback;

Table 4-3: Summary of Public Outreach Meetings since November 9, 2020 (Stage 6)

Date / Type	Location	Purpose
June 23, 2022 / Public Officials Meeting No. 1	Salisbury Volunteer Fire Department: 385 Ord Street, Salisbury, PA.	Scoping Meeting, Process to move from PEL to NEPA, Purpose and Need and Logical Termini, PEL Alternatives studied and dismissed, Alternatives to be studied in detail, potential areas for access and project schedule
June 23, 2022 / Public Plans Display No. 1	Salisbury Volunteer Fire Department: 385 Ord Street, Salisbury, PA.	
June 27, 2022 / Virtual Public Meeting No. 1	Zoom Platform (Online)	
November 16, 2023 / Public Officials Meeting No. 2	Salisbury Volunteer Fire Department: 385 Ord Street, Salisbury, PA.	Refinement to the alternatives presented at the June 2022 meetings, findings from detailed environmental information for key resources, maps of Alternatives DU, DU-Shift, E and E-Shift, environmental impact table, status of potential direct connection in Maryland and project schedule.
November 16, 2023 / Public Plans Display No. 2	Salisbury Volunteer Fire Department: 385 Ord Street, Salisbury, PA.	
November 21, 2023 / Virtual Public Meeting No. 2	Zoom Platform (Online)	
December 11, 2024 / Public Officials Meeting No. 3	Salisbury Volunteer Fire Department: 385 Ord Street, Salisbury, PA.	Formally present the DEIS and FHWA Preferred Alternative and provide an opportunity for public comment on the DEIS, Section 404 permit, and MDE waterway permit application and water quality certification
December 11, 2024 / PA Public Hearing	Salisbury Volunteer Fire Department: 385 Ord Street, Salisbury, PA	
December 12, 2024 / MD Public Hearing	Grantsville Volunteer Fire Department 178 Springs Road, Grantsville, MD	

Note: This table list all the public outreach meetings held since the Pennsylvania Transportation Secretary announced the commitment of funds for the EIS on November 9, 2020.

- Important website links;
- *DEIS and Appendices.*

As appropriate, all comments and responses will be recorded and included in the stakeholder tracking log, technical reports, and project files.

Public Meeting Notifications

Notifications for all planned meetings and hearings included:

- Newspaper advertisements
- Direct mail invitations
- Electronic and social media
- Targeted media relations

Per the USACE requirements, public hearing notifications must be sent to all federal agencies affected by the proposed action, state and local agencies, and other parties having an interest in the subject of the hearing.

Newsletters

The U.S. 219 project team has a database of stakeholders interested in receiving updates about the U.S. 219 project. The database includes residents, businesses, neighborhood groups, elected officials, professional membership organizations, and other interested parties. A newsletter update in summer of 2024 was sent out explaining the modifications made to Alternatives DU, DU-Shift, E and E-Shift. The newsletter also included information about environmental resource

impacts and the notice of availability for the DEIS. This newsletter is included as **Appendix AG**. A similar newsletter is planned for Summer 2025.

Media

PennDOT and SHA promote the widespread dissemination of information by engaging reporters, soliciting media coverage, distributing news releases, and coordinating special events.

Social Media

The U.S. 219 project team coordinated with both PennDOT and SHA to use their existing Facebook and Twitter (now X) accounts to provide up-to-date project information.

Demographic Data

PennDOT and SHA asked meeting participants and survey-takers to voluntarily provide demographic data, including age, race/ethnicity, zip code, etc. This information allowed the project team to assess public involvement compared with overall demographics for the municipalities and counties within the project area to ensure a broad cross-section of people are participating.

4.6 Section 404 Permit

This project utilizes a merged NEPA/Section 404 process in which the final environmental document serves as the NEPA decision-making document and the Section 404 permit application. Therefore, the public hearing requirements for both NEPA and

Section 404 were covered with one joint public hearing at which the public had the opportunity to comment to USACE on the Section 404 permit application and to FHWA on the NEPA documentation. Additionally, Maryland Department of the Environment (MDE) utilized the hearing for its determination on the project's Water Quality Certification request.

5 PREFERRED ALTERNATIVE

5.1 Preferred Alternative (E-Shift Modified)

Based on the evaluation and comparison of the alternatives, potential impacts, and public and agency input, **Alternative E-Shift Modified** has been identified as the **Preferred Alternative** (see **Figure 5-1**). **Alternative E-Shift Modified** is the **most publicly desirable alternative**. Alternative E-Shift Modified offers several advantages over the other build alternatives that resulted in its selection for this project.

Alternative E-Shift Modified meets the project purpose and need, as identified in **Chapter 1.6** and **Chapter 1.7**, by providing a consistent link in the regional transportation system, primarily between I-68 and I-76. This link would complete the development of Corridor N of the Appalachian Development Highway System and support increased economic opportunities in the region.

Below is a list of advantages that make Alternative E-Shift Modified the Preferred Alternative:

- **Fewest number of property impacts**
- **Fewest impacted noise receptors**
- **Least wetland impacts**
- **Least forestland impacts**

Equivalent to Alternative E Modified, Alternative E-Shift Modified has the least impact to:

- Prime farmland soils
- Productive farms
- Historic structures
- Maple sugar production forests
- 1% annual chance floodplains
- Bat hibernacula
- Streams
- *Reasonably foreseeable* effects

Alternative E-Shift Modified was developed in response to input received at public meetings from residences along Old Salisbury Road to move the alignment as far away as possible from homes in that area. Consequently, unlike Alternatives DU Modified and E Modified, Alternative E-Shift Modified is sufficiently far enough away from the residences on Old Salisbury Road that it is anticipated to have less potential for noise impacts.

However, the project team was constrained by the historic boundary of Tomlinson Inn and Little Meadows. Alternative E-Shift Modified was designed to situate the alignment as far away from Old Salisbury Road as possible, while also avoiding the Tomlinson Inn and Little Meadows historic boundary. Alternative E-Shift Modified is also aligned so that it does not preclude future

consideration of potential access to existing U.S. 219 south of Old Salisbury Road in Maryland.

Alternatives E Modified and **E-Shift Modified would result in the least overall harm to Section 4(f) resources**, with a *de minimis* use of the historic Miller Farm. Alternatives DU Modified and DU-Shift Modified would result in two additional Section 4(f) impacts to the historic Lowry Farm and Deal Farm.

The preliminary cost estimate for Alternative E-Shift Modified is \$310.4 million.

Preferred Alternative: E-Shift Modified

1. **Least environmentally damaging**
2. **Most publicly desirable alternative**
3. **Fewest property impacts**
4. **Fewest impacted noise receptors**
5. **Least wetland, waterway, and forestland impacts**
6. **Lowest impact to above ground historic resources**

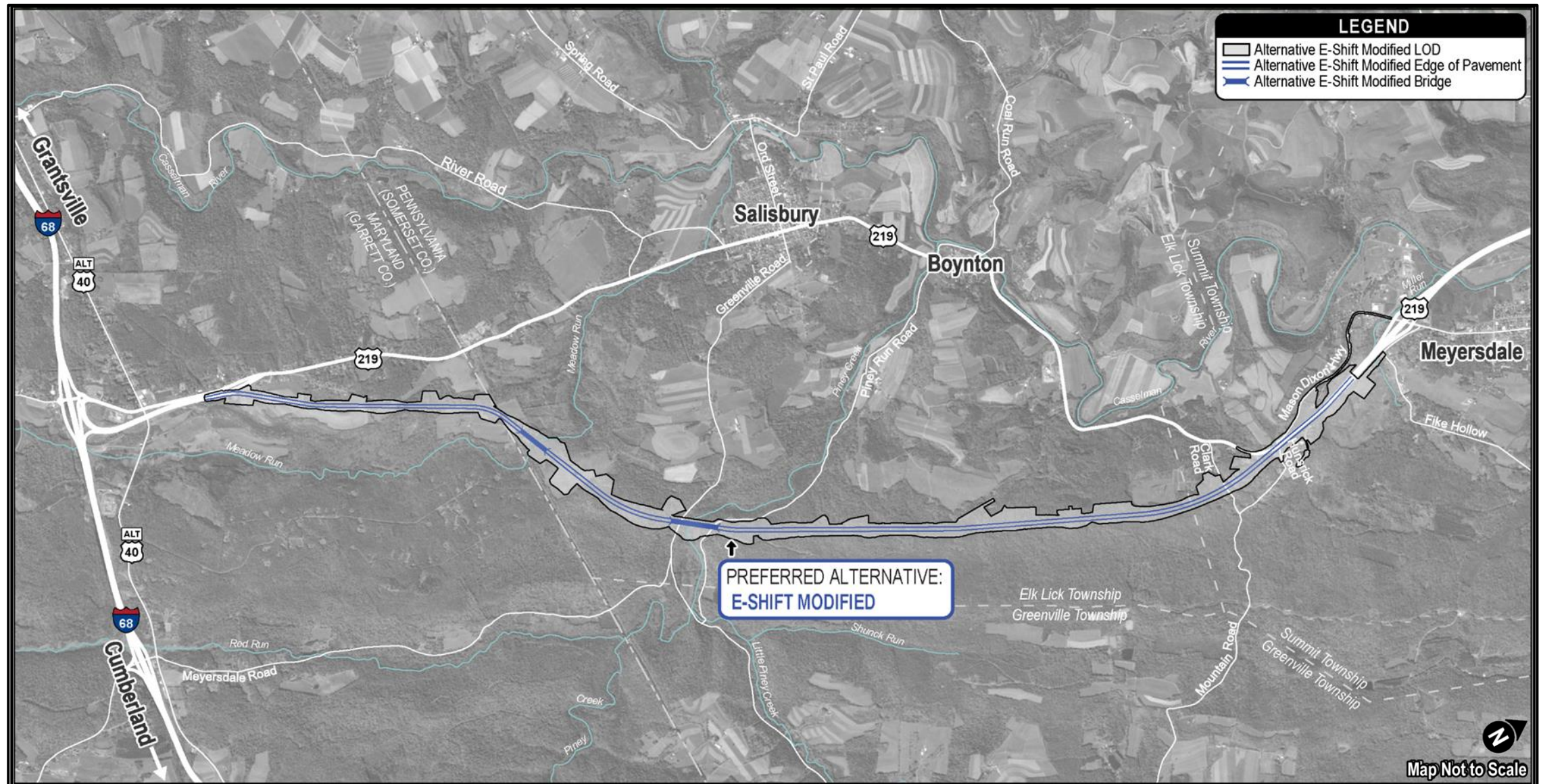


Figure 5-1: Preferred Alternative – E-Shift Modified*

5.2 Alternatives Not Recommended

In accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), comparison of a full range of engineering, operational, environmental, and cost factors was considered in the identification of a Preferred Alternative. This section describes why each of the following alternatives was not identified as the Preferred Alternative.

5.2.1 No Build Alternative

The No Build Alternative is included in the environmental impact analysis as the baseline condition for comparison. The No Build Alternative is not identified as the Preferred Alternative because it would not meet the purpose and need of the project. It would not improve regional system linkage and would not improve safe and efficient access for trucks and other motorists on U.S. 219. Moreover, the No Build Alternative would not provide the transportation infrastructure to support economic opportunities in existing and planned communities, employment centers, and industries within the Appalachian Region.

5.2.2 Build Alternatives

While each of the four build alternatives meets the purpose and need of the project, the build alternatives differ in impacts (see **Table 5-1**) and benefits. Moreover, each build alternative provides a consistent link in the regional system, primarily

between I-68 and I-76. This link would complete the development of Corridor N of the Appalachian Development Highway System and support increased economic opportunities by enhancing freight mobility, commercial access, and employee access between population centers. However, the build alternatives differ in impacts (see **Table 5-1**) and benefits. The DU alternatives have significantly greater physical impact to both surface and deep mining areas than the E alternatives. Greater impact to mining areas may result in the loss of economic opportunities. Preliminary cost estimates show that Alternatives DU Modified and DU-Shift Modified are generally \$170 million greater than Alternatives E Modified and E-Shift Modified.

Additionally, all build alternatives could cause minor *reasonably foreseeable effects*, including new elements affecting visual quality of the natural and cultural environments, right-of-way acquisitions of community or agricultural resources, commercial and residential displacements, increased runoff and sedimentation, altered hydrology, and introduction of non-native plant species. The minor direct and *reasonably foreseeable effects* impacts of the U.S. 219 project, in combination with impacts from past, present, and reasonably foreseeable future projects, would result in minor effects.

A. Alternative DU Modified

Alternative DU Modified is not the Preferred Alternative, as Alternative DU Modified would result

in greater impacts to:

- Number of properties, fourteen more properties than the Preferred Alternative and the largest number among the build alternatives.
- Forestland, impacting approximately 42.6 more acres than the Preferred Alternative and the most acres among the build alternatives.
- Wetlands, impacting approximately 1.36 more acres than the Preferred Alternative, and the most acres among the build alternatives.
- Approximately 1,856 more linear feet of stream impacts than the Preferred Alternative, the second highest impact to streams among the build alternatives.
- Noise receptors along Old Salisbury Road, impacting four more receptors than the Preferred Alternative and tied for the most impacted receptors among the build alternatives.

Equal (or roughly equal) to Alternative DU-Shift Modified, Alternative DU Modified has the greatest impact to:

- Residential displacements, with *eleven* displacements versus *ten* displacements for the Preferred Alternative.
- Productive farms, with impacts to three additional farms compared to the Preferred Alternative.

- Prime farmland soils, with impacts to 13 additional acres compared to the Preferred Alternative.
- 1% annual chance floodplains, with impacts to 7.6 additional acres compared to the Preferred Alternative.
- Bat hibernacula, with potential impacts to three hibernacula, while the Preferred Alternative does not directly impact any known hibernacula.
- Areas of high probability for pre-*contact* archaeology, impacting approximately 1.4 more acres than the Preferred Alternative.
- Areas of high probability for historic archaeology, impacting approximately 2.7 more acres than the Preferred Alternative.

Alternative DU Modified would have an adverse effect to above ground historic properties and requires greater than *de minimis* use of Section 4(f) resources, including the historic Lowry Farm and Deal Farm.

The preliminary cost estimate for Alternative DU Modified is \$483 million.

B. Alternative DU-Shift Modified

Alternative DU-Shift Modified is not the Preferred Alternative, as Alternative DU-Shift Modified would result in greater impacts to:

- Number of properties, eleven more properties than the Preferred Alternative and the second largest number among the build alternatives.
- Forestland, impacting approximately 41.2 more acres than the Preferred Alternative and the second most acres among the build alternatives.
- Wetlands, impacting approximately 1.23 more acres than the Preferred Alternative, and the second most acres among the build alternatives.
- Approximately *1,871* more linear feet of stream impacts than the Preferred Alternative, the highest impact to streams among the build alternatives.

Equal (or roughly equal) to Alternative DU Modified, Alternative DU-Shift Modified has the greatest impact to:

- Residential displacements, with *eleven* displacements versus *ten* displacements for the Preferred Alternative.
- Productive farms, with impacts to three additional farms compared to the Preferred Alternative.
- Prime farmland soils, with impacts to 13 additional acres compared to the Preferred Alternative.
- 1% annual chance floodplains, with impacts to 7.6 additional acres compared to the Preferred Alternative.

- Bat hibernacula, with potential impacts to three hibernacula, while the Preferred Alternative does not directly impact any known hibernacula.
- Areas of high probability for pre-*contact* archaeology, impacting approximately 1.4 more acres than the Preferred Alternative.
- Areas of high probability for historic archaeology, impacting approximately 2.7 more acres than the Preferred Alternative.

Alternative DU-Shift Modified would have an adverse effect to above ground historic properties and requires greater than *de minimis* use of Section 4(f) resources, including the historic Lowry Farm and Deal Farm.

The preliminary cost estimate for Alternative DU-Shift Modified is \$486.3 million.

C. Alternative E Modified

Alternative E Modified is not the Preferred Alternative for the reasons provided below.

While Alternative E-Shift Modified and Alternative E Modified have the same length and only a difference of 2.2 acres for Limit of Disturbance (LOD), Alternative E Modified is closer to the homes along Old Salisbury Road than Alternative E-Shift Modified. Therefore, **Alternative E Modified is anticipated to result in greater residential noise impacts to the Old Salisbury Road community, including impacts to four additional noise**

receptors, compared to the Preferred Alternative. Noise abatement was investigated in this area and noise barriers were found to be feasible but not reasonable due to the cost per benefitted noise receptor. Alternative E Modified and Alternative E-Shift Modified have similar impacts to natural and cultural resources. The preliminary cost estimate for Alternative E Modified is \$307 million.

Table 5-1: Summary of Direct Impacts Per Modified Alternative

Resource	No Build	DU Mod.	DU-Shift Mod.	E Mod.	*E-Shift Mod.
Socioeconomic Resource Impacts					*Preferred
Parcels Intersected by LOD (#)	0	124	121	113	110
Residential Displacements (#)	0	11	11	10	10
Commercial Displacements (#)	0	2	2	2	2
Impacted Noise Receptors (#)	4	13	9	13	9
Cultural Resource Impacts					
Above Ground Historic Resources (# / Effect)	0 / No Effect	3 / Adverse Effect	3 / Adverse Effect	1 / No Adverse Effect	1 / No Adverse Effect
Areas of High Pre- <i>contact</i> Archaeology	0	50.2	50.2	48.8	48.8
Probability for (acres) Historic Archaeology	0	17.1	17.1	14.4	14.4
Section 4(f) Resources (# / Type of Use)	0	3 / > De Minimis	3 / > De Minimis	1 / De Minimis	1 / De Minimis
Natural Resource Impacts					
Forestland (acres)	0	431.4	430.0	389.8	388.8
Active Farmland (acres)	0	76.1	76.3	37.4	37.6
Productive Farms (#)	0	9	9	6	6
Prime Farmland Soils (acres)	0	34.2	34.2	21.2	21.2
Soils of Statewide Importance (acres)	0	104.3	104.3	83.4	83.3
Preferential Tax Assessment (acres)	0	74.6	74.9	35.8	36.1
FEMA 1% Annual Chance Floodplains (acres)	0	12.3	12.3	4.7	4.7
Potential Bat Hibernacula (#)	0	3	3	0	0
Wetland (acres)	0	11.38	11.25	10.15	10.02
Streams (linear feet)	0	24,997	25,012	23,148	23,141
Mining & Potential Hazardous Residual Waste					
Surface Mining Boundaries (acres)	0	321.0	320.9	214.0	214.0
Deep Mine Boundaries (acres)	0	24.1	24.1	24.2	24.2
Area of Concern Sites (#)	0	3	3	3	3
Engineering					
Length of Alternative (miles)	0	8.3	8.3	7.9	7.9
LOD (acres)	0	633.8	631.3	566.0	563.8
Preliminary Cost Estimate (Year 2030 Dollars)	\$0	\$483.0 M	\$486.3 M	\$307.0 M	\$310.4 M

Notes: 1) Green shading represents the lowest impact per category by alternative (excluding the No Build, which does not carry any direct impacts other than noise receptors). 2) Four impacted noise receptors are associated with the No Build Alternative because of design year traffic projections. 3) Archaeology impacts include impacts to areas of low, medium, and high archaeological probability. 4) Preliminary construction cost estimates do not include Right of Way Acquisition, Utility Relocation, Mineral Rights, Wildlife Crossings, Intelligent Transportation Systems and Maintenance Facility Final Amenities.