



September 29, 2009

Thank you for attending the public hearing open house for BHF00-0151-01(006), P.I. No. 631570; the project is being proposed to improve safety. In this handout package, you will find a need and purpose statement, project description, location map, environmental statement, right-of-way statement and comment card.

As you enter the room, you will notice displays of the proposed project. Department of Transportation (DOT) representatives, who can be identified by the nametags they are wearing, are available to discuss the project and answer your questions. Please take this opportunity to discuss the project with a DOT representative. There will be no formal presentation.

A court reporter will be available for those persons who would like to make a verbal statement about the project. You may also complete a comment card and deposit it into the box provided here or send in written comments about the project until October 13, 2009. Written comments should be sent to Mr. Glenn Bowman, P.E., State Environmental/Location Engineer, Georgia Department of Transportation, One Georgia Center, 16th Floor, 600 West Peachtree Street, NW, Atlanta, GA 30308. Comments can also be made via the web at www.dot.ga.gov. Click on **Public Outreach** from the **Information Center** dropdown menu at the top right side of the page. Using the "Select by County" dropdown box, scroll to select **Gordon County** and then click "Go". Scroll down and click on **9-29-2009 PHOH SR 225 Bridge Replacements**. All comments will be made a part of the project record. We hope you will take advantage of one of these opportunities to let the Department know your view of the proposal.

The displays and plans will be available for review for ten days after the public hearing open house at the Georgia Department of Transportation District 6 located at 500 Joe Frank Harris Parkway, Cartersville, Georgia, 30120. A copy of all comments received will be available for public review at this same location and at the Office of Environment/Location, One Georgia Center, 16th Floor, 600 West Peachtree Street, NW, Atlanta, GA 30308, as soon as compilation is completed.

Again, thank you for attending this public hearing open house and for giving us your comments. If you should have any questions or need additional information, feel free to contact the project manager Ted Cashin at (404) 631-1910 or Sam Pugh at (404)631-1167 of the Office of Environment/Location.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Paul V. Liles, Jr." in a cursive script.

Paul V. Liles, Jr., P.E.
State Bridge and Structural Design Engineer

PVL:EJC:er

Attachments

PROJECT PURPOSE AND NEED
SR 225 BRIDGE REPLACEMENTS AND REALIGNMENT, GORDON COUNTY
BHF00-0151-01(006), P.I. 631570

Why do we need the SR 225 project and what is the purpose?

The SR 225 project is needed to make the roadway safer for drivers and to upgrade the bridges to ensure their structural integrity. Anyone who has traveled on this portion of SR 225 is aware of the sharp curves, steep slopes, lack of shoulders, and poor sight distances.

The bridge over the Coosawattee River has a sufficiency rating of 20.36. The bridge over New Town Creek has a sufficiency rating of 52.68. The age of a bridge is another factor that is used to determine if a bridge needs to be upgraded. Typically a bridge that is 50 years old or older should be improved or replaced. The bridge over the Coosawattee River was built in 1955 and the bridge over New Town Creek was built in 1952. Both bridges are old enough to be replaced. While the bridge over New Town Creek has a sufficiency rating over 50, replacement is still necessary because of the close proximity of the two bridges to each other. Replacing the bridge over the Coosawattee River in a new location requires the relocation and replacement of the bridge over New Town Creek. While bridge width is not a standard for replacement, the current bridges over the Coosawattee River and New Town Creek are not wide enough to allow a stopped vehicle to pull off the travel way. The proposed bridges will be built with shoulders wide enough to allow disabled vehicles to park outside of the travel way.

The existing roadway has substandard curvature and superelevation, meaning that the curves are too sharp and are not banked adequately. This increases the likelihood that a vehicle will leave their travel lane either off the roadway or into oncoming traffic. This is a major concern for this roadway because it is on steep fill (elevated above the surrounding area), without adequate shoulders or guardrail. This, combined with the sharp curves and deficient banking, increases the likelihood of injuries or fatalities during crashes along this portion of roadway. A total of 12 accidents occurred on this portion of SR 225 between 2004 and 2006 (GDOT 2008.) Six of the twelve total accidents occurring from 2004 to 2006 were the result of a vehicle leaving the road and not accidents involving another vehicle. Two of the accidents were the result of a sideswipe from traffic coming from the opposite direction.

A crash analysis was completed for this portion of roadway to determine the severity of crashes and the number of crashes that have occurred from 2004 to 2006. Crash data is compared against the statewide averages for similar roadways to verify if the number of incidents is above average. SR 225 is classified as a rural minor arterial roadway that is not part of the National Highway System (NHS) and was compared to all the other roadways with the same classification in Georgia. This short segment of roadway has had, on average, four accidents per year between 2004 and 2006 with more than half resulting in an injury. High accident locations are locations that are less than one mile long and experience more accidents than average between 2004 and 2006. The average number of accidents per mile in 2006 for similar roadways is 2.84; therefore this portion of SR 225 is considered a high accident location.

The need for the proposed project is due to the structural deficiencies of the existing bridges and the above average number of accidents. The purpose of the project is to improve safety and traffic operations by replacing the two structurally deficient bridges and realigning this portion of SR 225 to meet current design standards.

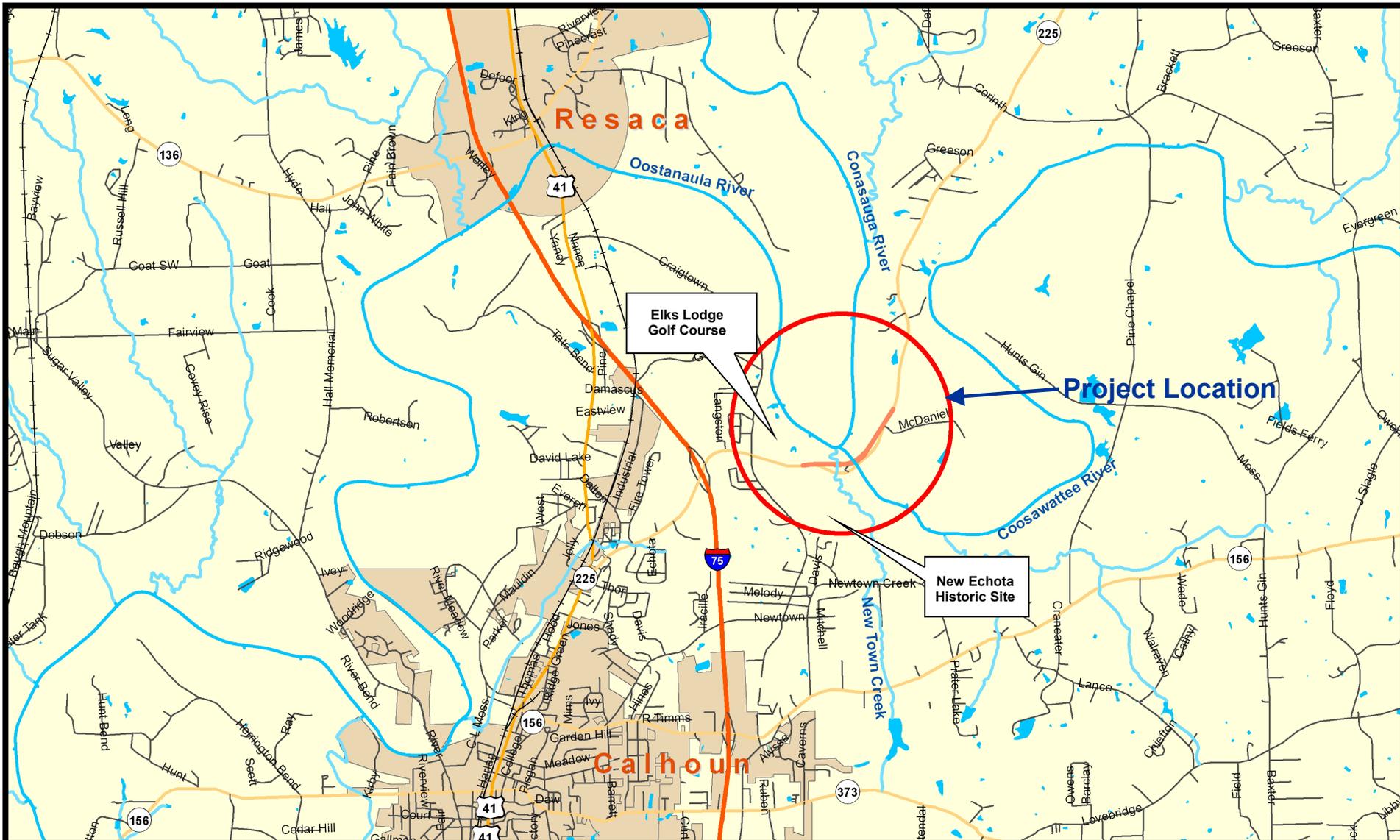
PROJECT DESCRIPTION
SR 225 BRIDGE REPLACEMENTS AND REALIGNMENT, GORDON COUNTY
BHF00-0151-01(006), P.I. 631570

What is the SR 225 project?

There are three basic elements to the SR 225 project:

1. Realignment of the existing roadway from the entrance to the New Echota Historic Site to McDaniel Road
2. Replacement and relocation of the New Town Creek bridge
3. Replacement and relocation of the Coosawattee River bridge

Other improvements will be made as part of this project including improved slope and drainage, wider shoulders, installation of guardrails, new directional signs to the park, landscaping and design treatments that reflect the historic character of the area. Per the State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP), right-of-way and construction are scheduled for long range. However, due to the low sufficiency rating of the Coosawattee Bridge, GDOT management is trying to authorize right-of-way in fiscal year 2010 with construction to follow in fiscal year 2011.



SR 225 Bridge Replacements
 Environmental Assessment
 Gordon County, Georgia
 BHF-151-1(6), P.I. 631570

Location Map

Legend

- Interstate
- US Highway
- State Route
- County Road
- City Limits
- Railroad
- Stream/River
- Build Alternative



SUMMARY OF ENVIRONMENTAL STUDY
SR 225 BRIDGE REPLACEMENTS AND REALIGNMENT, GORDON COUNTY
BHF00-0151-01(006); P.I. No. 631570

In compliance with the 1969 National Environmental Policy Act, the Georgia Department of Transportation has conducted an assessment of the social, economic and environmental effects for the proposed realignment of SR 225 for 0.95 mile and the replacement of the bridges over New Town Creek and the Coosawattee River. The following information gives a summary of the environmental document.

Would the project result in any residential or business relocations?

The project would not relocate any residences or businesses. The project will require right-of-way that will affect the Elks Lodge Golf Course and agricultural property in the study area. The project alignment will impact two holes of the golf course. Owners of the property will be compensated for property needed to accommodate right-of-way.

How will the project affect wetlands and streams?

In accordance with Executive Order 11990, the proposed project was surveyed for wetland and stream involvement. Four jurisdictional wetlands and Five jurisdictional streams were identified within the project's area of potential effect (APE). All of the delineated wetlands in the project area are outside the limits of construction and would not be impacted by the project. A complete span bridge will be constructed across New Town Creek with no elements constructed within the stream channel, resulting in no impacts to New Town Creek. The proposed bridge construction across the Coosawattee River will result in approximately 0.004 acres of impact to the river.

How will the project affect the floodplain?

In accordance with Executive Order 11988, the proposed project was surveyed for floodplain involvement. The proposed project would not significantly encroach upon the floodplain associated with Coosawattee River and New Town Creek. The project would not have an adverse effect on water quality within the project corridor. A U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Section 404 permit would be required for this project.

How will the project affect air quality and noise levels?

The proposed project would not exceed state and federal air quality standards, and it is consistent with the State Implementation Plan for the attainment of clean air quality in the state. There will be some temporary construction noise but there are no substantial noise impacts as a result of the project because no additional capacity is being added.

How will the project affect the cultural environment?

In compliance with Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, the project has been surveyed for existing and eligible National Register properties. The project does impact the New Echota Historic Site, the New Echota Traditional Cultural Property (TCP) and archaeological sites within the TCP. The effects of the project will be mitigated and the State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) has approved a Conditional Finding of No Adverse Effect. The conditional finding is based on a memorandum of agreement between GDOT, FHWA and SHPO that will stipulate the use of design features that acknowledge the historic significance of the area.

How will the project affect threatened and endangered species?

The proposed project would not affect any threatened or endangered plant or wildlife species, as none are located in or frequent the project area. Suitable habitat for state and/or federally listed species was not found within the project study area.

SUMMARY OF ENVIRONMENTAL STUDY
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How will the project affect farmland?

The project area farmland was surveyed in accordance with the Farmland Protection Policy Act and would not result in substantial impacts to farmland.

How will the project affect hazardous materials sites?

The proposed project has been surveyed for potential sites where contaminated soil and/or water from leaking underground storage tanks may exist. There are no potential sites that were identified. If contaminants are found, avoidance alternates may be considered, or applicable laws and regulations concerning the removal of toxic or hazardous material will be coordinated with the Environmental Protection Division.

Copies of the environmental document are available at this hearing for your review or by sending your request to:

Mr. Glenn Bowman, P.E.
State Environmental/Location Engineer
Georgia Department of Transportation
One Georgia Center, 16th Floor
600 West Peachtree Street, NW
Atlanta, Georgia 30308
(404) 631-1100

Right-Of-Way Acquisition Project BHF00-0151-01(006); P.I. No. 631570, Gordon County

The Georgia Department of Transportation has the responsibility once a project is approved, of appraising, purchasing property and, if required, assisting individuals, families or businesses in relocating. When purchasing property, we desire to pay full market value for the necessary property. This value will be established by using qualified real estate appraisers who will prepare, for the Department's use, written appraisals using actual sales data in the surrounding community.

In making an appraisal, the appraiser will contact each property owner and arrange a convenient time to make an on-site inspection of the property with him or her. After completion of the appraisal, our right-of-way appraisal staff will review and field check the findings for accuracy to ensure that all things relating to value have been considered in establishing the amount to be offered. When only a part of the property is needed, we will purchase that part plus pay for loss of value, if any, to the remaining property. In all cases, when the Department purchases property, we will make additional payments to property owners for the cost of transferring ownership to the Georgia Department of Transportation. These costs generally include transfer taxes, deed-recording fees, mortgage pre-payment penalties and the pro-rata share of city or county taxes.

The Department is aware of the problems experienced by individuals, families, businesses, and nonprofit organizations when they are required to move. It is our commitment that no family or individual will be required to relocate until comparable decent, safe and sanitary housing is available or is provided for those occupants.

Additionally, the Department will provide assistance to businesses and nonprofit organizations in relocating to other sites and will encourage them to remain in the community.

The information pamphlet "What Happens When Your Property is Needed for a Transportation Facility" is available at the entrance, and this booklet outlines the services offered and any payments for which you may be eligible, such as moving expenses and replacement housing benefits for owners and tenants. The brochure also outlines the eligibility requirements for receiving these payments.

Results of the field inspection by Department of Transportation Personnel have revealed that there will be no residential or business relocations.

It is important to remember that the Department is committed to the principle that no one will be required to relocate until housing is available, or, if there is no housing available, until provisions have been made by the Department to provide housing. It is also important to remember that all displacees will be given sufficient advance notice of the Department's intention to purchase any property in order to allow sufficient time in which to relocate.

The Department of Transportation District 6 office, located in Cartersville, Georgia, telephone (770) 387-3619 will be in charge of acquiring the necessary right-of-way for this project.

Georgia Department of Transportation

Public Hearing Open House Comment Card

Project BHF00-0151-01(006), Gordon County, P.I. No. 631570

September 29, 2009

Please print responses.

Name _____

Address _____

Do you support the project? *For* *Against* *Conditional* *Uncommitted*

Comments _____

How did you hear about this meeting? *Radio* *Newspaper* *Signs* *Word of Mouth*
 Other _____

Was the location of the meeting convenient for you to attend? *Yes* *No*

If no, please suggest a general location that is more convenient to your community.

Was the time of the meeting convenient for you to attend? *Yes* *No*

If no, please suggest a time frame that is more convenient for you. _____

Were your questions answered by the DOT personnel? *Yes* *No*

Do you understand the project after attending this meeting? *Yes* *No*

Please share your suggestions on improving the way Georgia DOT conducts public meetings.

Mail To:

*Mr. Glenn Bowman, P.E., State Environmental/Location Engineer
Georgia Department of Transportation
One Georgia Center, 16th Floor
600 West Peachtree Street, NW
Atlanta, Georgia 30308*