

North Carolina Department of Transportation

NEPA/SEPA Consultation Form

STIP Project No.	<u>U-5813</u>
WBS Element	<u>44385.1.3</u>
Federal Aid Project No.	<u>NHP-0064(206)</u>

A. Project Description, Location, and Purpose:

The North Carolina Department of Transportation (NCDOT), in coordination with the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), proposes to make improvements to US 64 from the Asheboro Bypass to East of I-73/I-74/US 220 in Asheboro, Randolph County (see attached vicinity map). US 64 is classified as a principal arterial in the North Carolina Functional Classification System, with this section of roadway being on the National Highway System. The proposed project will widen US 64 from the Asheboro Bypass to East of I-73/I-74/US 220, replace the Albemarle Road Bridge No. 171, convert I-73/I-74/U.S. 220 interchanges with Albemarle Road, reconfigure the US 64/NC 49 to a split diamond interchange, and realign SR 1446 (Lewallen Road) to the West. The proposed project will widen US 64 from a three-lane section to a four-lane, median divided section East of the SR 1713 (Albemarle Road) bridge overpass. The improved roadway will include two 12-foot lanes in each direction with a variable raised median. Ten-Foot shoulders, of which 4 feet will be paved, are proposed between the Asheboro Bypass and SR 1323 (Oak Leaf Dr.). Curb and gutter is proposed, East of Oak Leaf Dr., to tie into the existing four-lane median divided section East of Albemarle Rd. The proposed project will increase capacity and improve mobility and connectivity within the project study area. As a secondary benefit, the project will improve traffic safety by limiting conflict points along the US 64 corridor within the project limits.

B. Consultation Phase:

Construction

C. NEPA/SEPA Class of Action Initially Approved as: (Check one)

FHWA Class II(CE) 4/5/2019

Additional Notes: **Type III**

D. Changes in Proposed Action & Environmental Consequences:

The project has had no significant design changes in the final design since the completion of the Categorical Exclusion.

Water resources

The water resource classifications for the streams identified in the Categorical Exclusion remain accurate.

Protected Species

The list of protected species has changed since the Right-of-Way Consultation was completed. The Atlantic pigtoe received its federal designation as Threatened in December 2021 and is listed to potentially occur within the project area. Surveys for the species were conducted in October 2020 and a biological conclusion of “May Affect, Not Likely to Adversely Affect” was rendered. The Programmatic Biological Opinion (PBO) for freshwater mussels developed between NCDOT and USFWS will be utilized to satisfy Section 7 for the species. Division 8 staff have agreed to adhere to construction measures entailed in the PBO.

Surveys for Schweinitz’s sunflower were updated on October 20, 2021. No specimens were observed. The biological conclusion remains “No Effect”.

Northern long-eared bat (*Myotis septentrionalis*)

The US Fish and Wildlife Service has revised the previous programmatic biological opinion (PBO) in conjunction with the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), the US Army Corps of Engineers (USACE), and NCDOT for the northern long-eared bat (NLEB) (*Myotis septentrionalis*) in eastern North Carolina. The PBO covers the entire NCDOT program in Divisions 1-8, including all NCDOT projects and activities. Although this programmatic covers Divisions 1-8, NLEBs are currently only known in 22 counties, but may potentially occur in 8 additional counties within Divisions 1-8. NCDOT, FHWA, and USACE have agreed to two conservation measures which will avoid/minimize mortality of NLEBs. These conservation measures only apply to the 30 current known/potential counties shown on Figure 2 of the PBO at this time. The programmatic determination for NLEB for the NCDOT program is **May Affect, Likely to Adversely Affect**. The PBO will ensure compliance with Section 7 of the Endangered Species Act for ten years (effective through December 31, 2030) for all NCDOT projects with a federal nexus in Divisions 1-8, which includes Randolph County, where U-5813 is located.

Cultural Resources

NCDOT has reviewed the Section 106 effects findings for historic properties within the project’s area of potential effects (APE), that were made as part of the NEPA analysis. NCDOT has confirmed there is no new information that would alter the original Section 106 findings and, therefore, they remain valid.

E. Conclusion:

The above NEPA/SEPA documentation has been reevaluated (as required by either 23 CFR 771 or by NC General Statute Chapter 113A Article 1). It has been determined that the current proposed action is essentially the same as the original proposed action. Proposed changes, if any, are noted in Section D. It has been determined that anticipated social, economic, and environmental impacts were accurately described in the above referenced document(s) unless noted otherwise herein. Therefore, the original Administration Action remains valid.

F. Coordination

NCDOT personnel have discussed the current project parameters with qualified NCDOT representatives and FHWA (where applicable). The NCDOT Project Manager, Sean Brennan, PE, hereby verifies the involvement of the following staff and the incorporation of their technical input:

Design Engineer:	J. Matthew Pickens, PE (HNTB)	8-29-2022
Environmental Specialist:	Jason Dilday (NCDOT)	9-23-2022
FHWA (if applicable):	Felix Davila	11/14/2022
GeoEnvironmental:	Ethan Caldwell, PE, LG (NCDOT)	8-31-2022
Traffic Noise and Air Quality:	Tracy Roberts, AICP (NCDOT)	8-29-2022
Archaeology:	Brian Overton (NCDOT)	10-24-2022
Historic Architecture:	Kate Husband (NCDOT)	10-24-2022

G. Consultation Approval for NCDOT Project U-5813

Prepared By:

11/21/2022

Date

DocuSigned by:

Sean Brennan

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Sean Brennan, Project Manager
NCDOT, Project Management Unit

Reviewed By:

11/21/2022

Date

DocuSigned by:

Terry Farr

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Terry Farr, PE, Senior Project Manager
NCDOT, Project Management Unit

Approved

In adherence with 23 CFR 771 (NEPA) or NC General Statute Chapter 113A Article 1 (SEPA), NCDOT approves this Consultation.

or

Certified

NCDOT staff certifies if FHWA signature was previously required or where changes have resulted in FHWA signature being required.

11/21/2022

Date

DocuSigned by:

Colin Mellor

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Colin Mellor, Team Lead
NCDOT, Environmental Policy Unit

FHWA Approved:

11/21/2022

Date

DocuSigned by:

Felix Davila

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Felix Davila For John F. Sullivan, III, PE, Division Administrator
Federal Highway Administration

H. Project Commitments (as of October 27, 2022)

**Randolph County
US 64 Widening
Federal Project No. NHPP-0064(206)
WBS No. 44385.1.3
STIP No. U-5813**

COMMITMENTS FROM PROJECT DEVELOPMENT AND DESIGN

Division 8 Construction - High Quality Water

An Unnamed Tributary to Cedar Fork Creek SIN [13-2-3-3-2-2-(1)] and its tributaries are designated as High Quality Waters. The NCDOT will implement Design Standards in Sensitive Watersheds as appropriate.

This commitment is still valid.

Division 8 Construction, Roadside Environmental Unit – Protected Species

For compliance in regard to satisfying Section 7 of the Endangered Species Act for the Atlantic pigtoe, Conservation Measures (Section 2.5), RPM 2 of the Reasonable and Prudent Measures (Section 9.2), as well as T&C 2 of the Terms and Conditions (Section 9.3) of the Revised Mussel Programmatic Biological Opinion will be adhered to during construction.

This project commitment was added 10/27/2022.

Project Management Unit - Municipal Agreement – Sidewalks

NCDOT will continue to coordinate with the City of Asheboro for the inclusion of sidewalks in the proposed project's design. Should sidewalks be pursued, NCDOT will develop a Municipal Agreement (MA) to cost-share with the local municipality.

The City of Asheboro and NCDOT are in the process of working on the municipal agreement to cost share sidewalks.

Roadway Design Unit

NCDOT will provide a depressed island at the western intersection of Westside Drive and U.S. 64 for emergency vehicle access originating from Westside Fire Department (225 Westside Drive). The depressed island will allow left turns for emergency vehicles only from the western intersection of Westside Drive with U.S. 64.

This emergency access has been incorporated into plans.

Environmental Analysis Unit

NCDOT will complete a survey for the federally endangered Schweinitz's sunflower one year prior to construction let.

The survey for the Schweinitz's sunflower was conducted in October 2021 and will be valid for two years. If the project LET date gets delayed, the survey will be conducted accordingly.

Traffic Noise Analysis

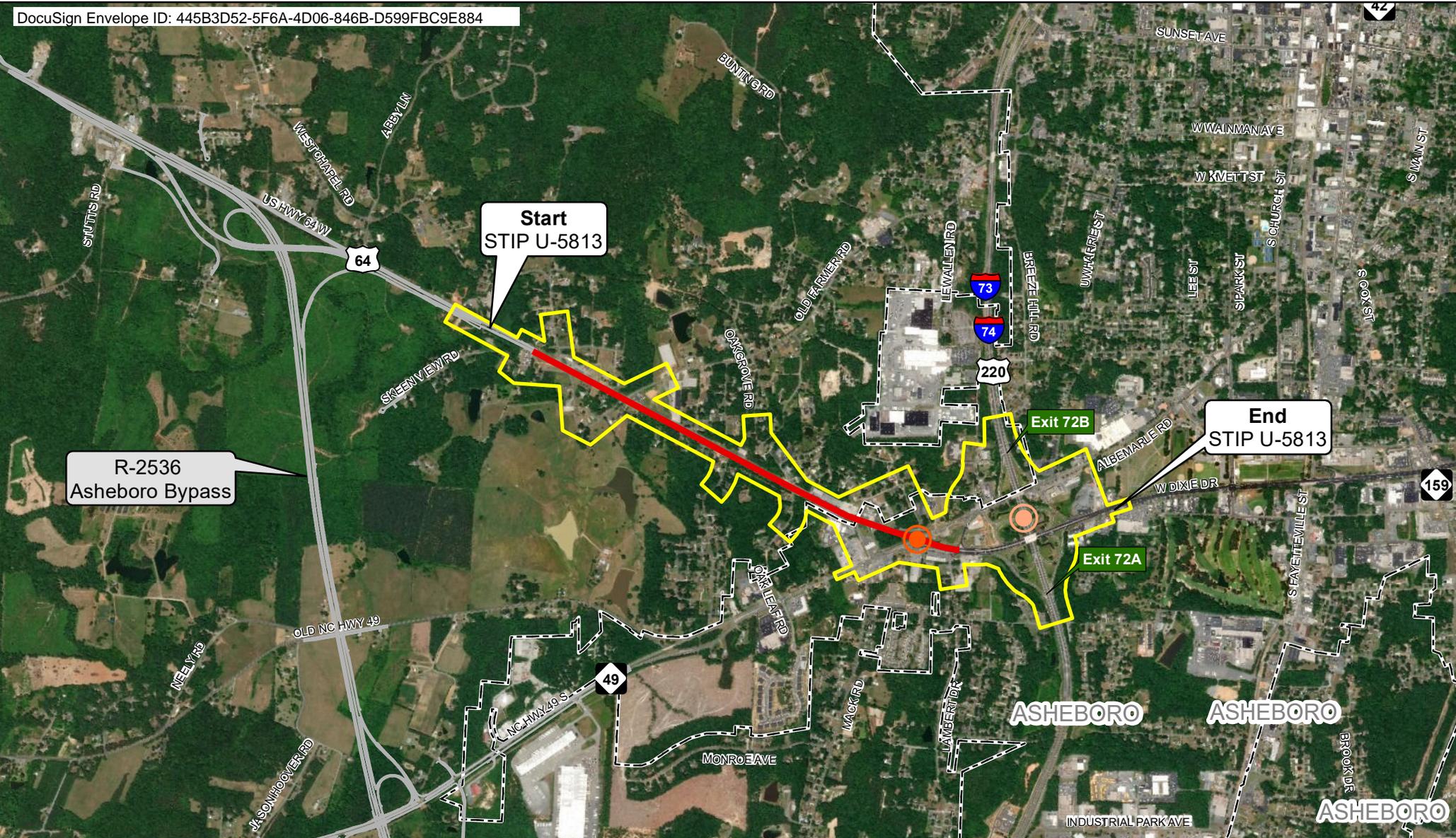
A comprehensive traffic noise abatement design review, in the form of a Design Noise Report, will be conducted as part of the project's final design.

Design Noise Report was completed in January 2021. One traffic noise abatement measure in the vicinity of the project was found to be feasible and reasonable and was included in the project's final design.

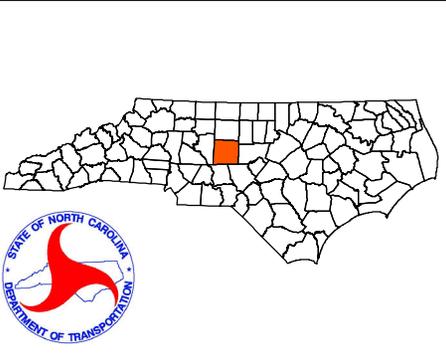
GeoEnvironmental Section

Soil and groundwater assessments will be conducted at each of the impacted geoenvironmental sites of concern prior to right of way acquisition.

Identified USTs will be removed by the department prior to construction. The department will provide a special provision for management of petroleum contaminated soil.



Source: NCDOT, Esri, NC OneMap, Randolph County GIS, HNTB. Credit: HNTB North Carolina, PC | 2018.



- U-5813 Study Area
- US 64 Widening
- US 64/NC 49 Interchange
- I-73/I-74/US 220 Interchange
- Future Asheboro Bypass (R-2536)
- Municipal Boundary

PROJECT LOCATION MAP
STIP U-5813
WIDEN US 64, ASHEBORO BYPASS
TO NC 49 & RECONSTRUCT THE
US 64/NC 49 INTERCHANGE
RANDOLPH COUNTY

0 1,000 2,000 Feet

NORTH