

Type I or II Categorical Exclusion Action Classification Form

STIP Project No.	BR-0067
WBS Element	67067.1.1
Federal Project No.	N/A

A. Project Description:

The North Carolina Department of Transportation (NCDOT) proposes to replace Bridge 100086 on NC 151 over Stony Fork Creek in Buncombe County. Please see the attached vicinity map (*Fig. 1*) and environmental features map (*Fig.2*).

Existing Bridge Number 100086 is 52 feet long with a deck width of 22 feet (20 feet and 6 inches clear roadway width). The existing structure is a 2-span with steel I-Beams, timber floor, concrete end walls and guardrails. The project site is in southwestern Buncombe County, about 14 miles southwest of Asheville. In the vicinity of bridge 100086, NC 151, also known as Pisgah Highway, is two lanes, has no control of access, and does not have paved shoulders or sidewalks. It connects the project site with the Blue Ridge Parkway to the south and Candler to the north. The existing structure is a 2 lane-divided bridge with 11 -foot lanes. The existing roadway is about 12 feet above the stream channel. The existing bridge is in a short horizontal tangent in between two curves and is relatively flat. There is no posted weight limit on the bridge.

The new bridge is proposed to have an approximate structure length of 68 feet with two 11-foot lanes and 4-foot shoulders. The proposed bridge would generally follow existing conditions with a design speed of 40 mph. The preferred alternative is to replace the bridge in place with an offsite detour. During construction, traffic will be detoured onto SR 3452 (Upper Glady Fork Road) and SR 3464 (Black Oak Cove Road), approximately 6 miles. The proposed roadway is approximately 12 feet above the stream channel. The new structure proposes a 1-span bridge using 24 inches of prestressed concrete cored slabs.

B. Description of Need and Purpose:

The purpose of the proposed project is to replace a structurally deficient bridge. Structure #86 was built in 1959 and reconstructed in 1980. This structure has a sufficiency rating of 34.78, with a status of structurally deficient that warrants replacement. As bridges age, cost of repairs and maintenance increases.

C. Categorical Exclusion Action Classification:

Type I(A) - Ground Disturbing Action

D. Proposed Improvements:

28. Bridge rehabilitation, reconstruction, or replacement or the construction of grade separation to replace existing at-grade railroad crossings, if the actions meet the constraints in 23 CFR 771.117(e)(1-6).

E. Special Project Information:

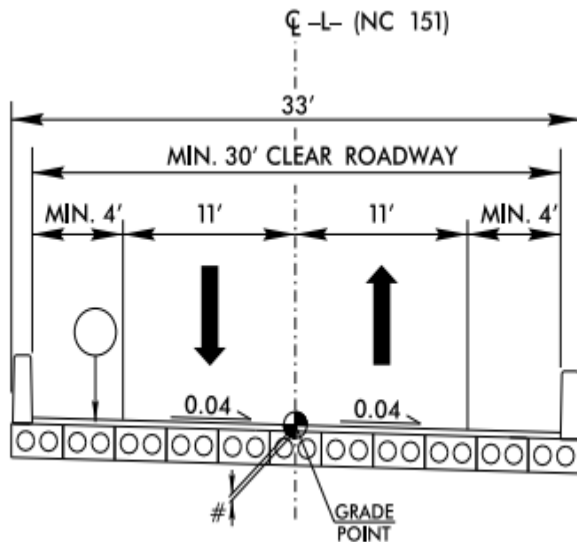
Alternatives:

Two alternatives were initially investigated for this project;

- Alt. 1, Replace in place with offsite detour
- Alt. 2, Staged construction to the east of bridge

An alignment to the east was considered as alternative 2. However, the new bridge would be very close to the existing bridge over Chestnut Creek and properties would be greatly impacted. Alternative 1 was considered to have the least impact to water elevation rise on the adjacent residential structures and could be built faster. Due to the anticipated impacts caused by staged construction, and having a viable offsite detour, replace in place was chosen as the preferred alternate.

Proposed Typical Section:



TYPICAL SECTION ON STRUCTURE

Environmental Coordination

Cultural Resources

On behalf of NCDOT, Stantec Consulting Services Inc. (Stantec) conducted an intensive archaeological survey and evaluation for the proposed project area April 18-24, 2019 and identified no archaeological resources. NCDOT’s review of the Office of State Archaeology’s (OSA’s) site files indicated that no previous archaeological investigations have occurred within the project limits, and no known sites were recorded. However, archaeologists with the US Forest Services (USFS) carried out limited testing for a land exchange in October 1998 and identified two archaeological sites either adjacent to or slightly within the original area of potential effects. Neither site was reported to OSA, and NCDOT was only made aware of the sites during a USFS review of the draft PA form. As a result, a field reconnaissance was conducted by archaeologists with NCDOT on July 17, 2019, and the APE was subsequently reduced to avoid these resources. There are no National Register listed or eligible archaeological sites present within the project’s area of potential effects based on a November 2022 review of the current design plans by NCDOT cultural resources staff.

Natural Resources

Field work was conducted on June 21 and July 11, 2019. At that time, no verification meetings had been held regarding jurisdictional features identified in the study area.

- **Protected Species**

As of November 2022, the United States Fish and Wildlife Services (USFWS) lists seven federally protected species, under the Endangered Species Act (ESA) within the project study area: bog turtle, gray bat, northern long-eared bat, Appalachian elktoe, mountain sweet pitcherplant, virginia spiraea and rock gnome lichen. The tricolored bat is proposed for listing but is not currently listed.

Based on a lack of suitable habitat, NCDOT rendered a No Effect biological conclusion for the bog turtle, mountain sweet pitcher plant, Virginia spiraea, and rock gnome lichen.

On July 28, 2022, biologists assessed all structures located in the project study area for the bat species. Bridge Number 100086 was also surveyed by NCDOT biologist earlier in 2019. No evidence of bats (bats, staining, guano) was observed. On September 28, 2021, biologists completed a mussel survey. No live individual freshwater mussel, shells, or shell fragments were observed. The biological conclusion is May Affect, Not Likely to Adversely Affect (MANLAA) for the NLEB, gray bat and Appalachian elktoe.

- Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act

A desktop-GIS assessment of the project study area, as well as the area within a 1.13- mile radius (1.0 mile plus 660 feet) of the project limits, was performed on May 9, 2019 using 2018 color aerial orthoimagery. No bodies of water large enough or sufficiently open to be considered potential feeding sources were identified within the search radius. Since there was no foraging habitat within the review area, a survey of the project study area and the area within 660 feet of the project limits was not conducted. Additionally, a review of the NHP database updated October 2021 revealed no known occurrences of the species within 1.0 mile of the project study area. Due to the lack of habitat, known occurrences, and minimal impact anticipated for the project, it has been determined that this project will not affect this species.

- Water Resources

Water resources in the study area are part of the French Broad River basin [U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) Hydrologic Unit 06010105]. Six streams were identified in the study area; Stony Fork, Chestnut Creek, 3 unnamed tributaries to McKinney Creek and 1 unnamed tributaries to Stony Fork. All streams within the study area have a Best Usage Classification (BUC) of Class C; Trout Water (C;Tr). Sedimentation and erosion control measures shall adhere to the Design Standards in Sensitive Watersheds.

- Clean Water Act

Six jurisdictional streams were identified in the study area. All jurisdictional streams in the study area have been designated as cool water streams for the purposes of stream mitigation.

Three jurisdictional wetlands were identified within the study area. All wetlands in the study area are located within the French Broad River basin.

- Construction Moratoria

The project area is located within a trout watershed. Per a memo dated December 17, 2021, the NC Wildlife Resources Commission is not requesting a trout moratorium for this project. Based on the MANLAA biological conclusion for the bat species, USFWS may request a tree-clearing moratorium. Final determination will be made during concurrence with the USFWS.

Estimated Cost:

Roadway Construction Cost	\$850,000
Right of Way and Utility relocation Cost	\$440,172
Total Estimated Cost	\$1,290,172

Data is based on updated Cost Verification Memo dated November 21, 2022.

Estimated Traffic:

ADT (2024) 1200
ADT (2044) 1490

Public Involvement:

Notifications were mailed out on May 16, 2019 to nearby residents. The mailing list included 35 properties within a 500-foot buffer surrounding the project study area. NCDOT anticipates sending a follow-up newsletter in the near future to advise of the detour and the project schedule.

Agency Coordination

NCDOT sent out start of study letters to state and local agencies and native tribes on January 12, 2022. Agency coordination letters and responses are included in NCDOT's project files.

F. Project Impact Criteria Checklists:

F2. Ground Disturbing Actions – Type I (Appendix A) & Type II (Appendix B)			
<u>PROJECT IMPACT THRESHOLDS</u> (FHWA signature required if any of the questions 1-7 are marked “Yes”.)		Yes	No
1	Does the project require formal consultation with U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) or National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS)?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
2	Does the project result in impacts subject to the conditions of the Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act (BGEPA)?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
3	Does the project generate substantial controversy or public opposition, for any reason, following appropriate public involvement?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
4	Does the project cause disproportionately high and adverse impacts relative to low-income and/or minority populations?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
5	Does the project involve a residential or commercial displacement, or a substantial amount of right of way acquisition?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
6	Does the project require an Individual Section 4(f) approval?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
7	Does the project include adverse effects that cannot be resolved with a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) under Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA) or have an adverse effect on a National Historic Landmark (NHL)?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
If any question 8-31 is checked “Yes” then additional information will be required for those questions in Section G.			
<u>Other Considerations</u>		Yes	No
8	Is an Endangered Species Act (ESA) determination unresolved or is the project covered by a Programmatic Agreement under Section 7?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
9	Is the project located in anadromous fish spawning waters?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
10	Does the project impact waters classified as Outstanding Resource Water (ORW), High Quality Water (HQW), Water Supply Watershed Critical Areas, 303(d) listed impaired water bodies, buffer rules, or Submerged Aquatic Vegetation (SAV)?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
11	Does the project impact Waters of the United States in any of the designated mountain trout streams?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
12	Does the project require a U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) Individual Section 404 Permit?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
13	Will the project require an easement from a Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) licensed facility?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

Other Considerations for Type I and II Ground Disturbing Actions (continued)		Yes	No
14	Does the project include a Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA) effects determination other than a No Effect, including archaeological remains?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
15	Does the project involve GeoEnvironmental Sites of Concerns such as gas stations, dry cleaners, landfills, etc.?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
16	Does the project require work encroaching and adversely affecting a regulatory floodway or work affecting the base floodplain (100-year flood) elevations of a water course or lake, pursuant to Executive Order 11988 and 23 CFR 650 subpart A?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
17	Is the project in a Coastal Area Management Act (CAMA) county and substantially affects the coastal zone and/or any Area of Environmental Concern (AEC)?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
18	Does the project require a U.S. Coast Guard (USCG) permit?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
19	Does the project involve construction activities in, across, or adjacent to a designated Wild and Scenic River present within the project area?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
20	Does the project involve Coastal Barrier Resources Act (CBRA) resources?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
21	Does the project impact federal lands (e.g. U.S. Forest Service (USFS), USFWS, etc.) or Tribal Lands?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
22	Does the project involve any changes in access control or the modification or construction of an interchange on an interstate?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
23	Does the project have a permanent adverse effect on local traffic patterns or community cohesiveness?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
24	Will maintenance of traffic cause substantial disruption?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
25	Is the project inconsistent with the STIP, and where applicable, the Metropolitan Planning Organization's (MPO's) Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
26	Does the project require the acquisition of lands under the protection of Section 6(f) of the Land and Water Conservation Act, the Federal Aid in Fish Restoration Act, the Federal Aid in Wildlife Restoration Act, Tennessee Valley Authority (TVA), Tribal Lands, or other unique areas or special lands that were acquired in fee or easement with public-use money and have deed restrictions or covenants on the property?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
27	Does the project involve Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) buyout properties under the Hazard Mitigation Grant Program (HMGP)?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
28	Does the project include a <i>de minimis</i> or programmatic Section 4(f)?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
29	Is the project considered a Type I under the NCDOT Noise Policy?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
30	Is there prime or important farmland soil impacted by this project as defined by the Farmland Protection Policy Act (FPPA)?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
31	Are there other issues that arose during the project development process that affected the project decision?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

G. Additional Documentation as Required from Section F (ONLY for questions marked 'Yes'):

8. The biological conclusion for the bat species and for the Appalachian Elktoe is MANLAA. NCDOT will obtain concurrence prior to permitting.

11. The stream is located within a trout watershed; however, NC Wildlife Resources Commission is not requesting a trout moratorium.

16. Project is in FEMA regulated flood zone, NCDOT Hydraulics Unit will coordinate with North Carolina Flood Mapping Program for all necessary permits.

21. There is a potential for NCDOT to affect access to Pisgah National Forest properties, including the Stony Fork Park picnic area, due to the detour being proposed under the current design. Further coordination with the US Forest Service liaison is necessary to clarify whether the Service has any concerns with the proposed detour.

24. For certain users of this road, some disruption may be felt due to the detour. NCDOT does plan to reach back out to the community and stakeholders due to the anticipated detour. Any further feedback that affects project decision-making will be detailed through the NEPA Consultation process.

H. Project Commitments:

NCDOT PROJECT COMMITMENTS

STIP Project No. **BR-0067**
Replace Bridge 100086 on NC 151 over Stony Fork Creek
Buncombe County
WBS Element 67067.1.1

Buncombe County Schools – Prior to construction, NCDOT Division staff (likely the Resident Engineer's Office) will coordinate with school officials regarding road closure and detour routes.

Emergency Responders / Local Official - NCDOT Division staff (likely the Resident Engineer's office) will coordinate with Buncombe County EMS response officials and other neighboring counties regarding detour routes and road closure to provide adequate advance notice prior to construction.

Roadside Environmental Unit / Division 13 Construction - All streams within the study area have a Best Usage Classification (BUC) of Class C; Trout Water (C;Tr). Sedimentation and erosion control measures shall adhere to the Design Standards in Sensitive Watersheds.

United States Forest Service – NCDOT will Coordinate with USFS during final design to confirm that there are no impacts to Forest Service lands and to provide advance notice prior to construction activities and the closure/detour.

Public Involvement - While the original landowner notifications did not produce any substantial feedback, NCDOT plans to reach back out to the community and stakeholders due to the anticipated detour. Any further feedback that affects project decision-making will be detailed through the NEPA Consultation process.

Biological Survey Group / ECAP – In order to receive concurrence for the bat species, a commitment to NOT clear trees during the time when bats are active (March 15th to November 15th) may be required. Final determination will be made during concurrence with the US Fish & Wildlife Service.

I. Categorical Exclusion Approval:

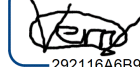
STIP Project No. BR-0067
WBS Element 67067.1.1
Federal Project No. N/A

Prepared By:

12/12/2022

Date

DocuSigned by:



292116A6B9BDAEC

Verrol Mcleary, Project Manager
NCDOT/Project Management Unit

Prepared For:

NCDOT Structures Management Unit

Reviewed By:

12/13/2022

Date

DocuSigned by:

Hannah Headrick

821C76C4D61C42A

Hannah Headrick, Environmental Program Consultant
NCDOT Environmental Policy Unit



Approved

- If NO grey boxes are checked in Section F (pages 2 and 3), NCDOT approves the Type I or Type II Categorical Exclusion.



Certified

- If ANY grey boxes are checked in Section F (pages 2 and 3), NCDOT certifies the Type I or Type II Categorical Exclusion for FHWA approval.
- If classified as Type III Categorical Exclusion.

12/13/2022

Date

DocuSigned by:



CA084B4A6412432...

John Jamison, Environmental Policy Manager
North Carolina Department of Transportation

FHWA Approved: For Projects Certified by NCDOT (above), FHWA signature required.

Date

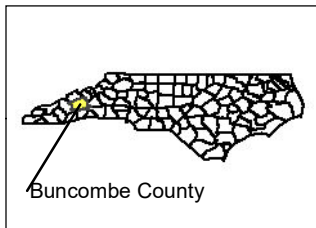
N/A
for John F. Sullivan, III, PE, Division Administrator
Federal Highway Administration


Note: Prior to ROW or Construction authorization, a consultation may be required (please see Section VII of the NCDOT-FHWA CE Programmatic Agreement for more details).

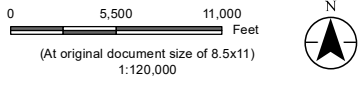
ATTACHMENTS




Project Study Area



Legend
 Project Study Area



 NC DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
DIVISION OF HIGHWAYS
ENVIRONMENTAL COORDINATION AND PERMITTING

Project Location Prepared by JPA on 2020-06-03
Chandler Technical Review by MMR on 2021-11-05
Buncombe County, NC Independent Review by EL on 2021-11-08

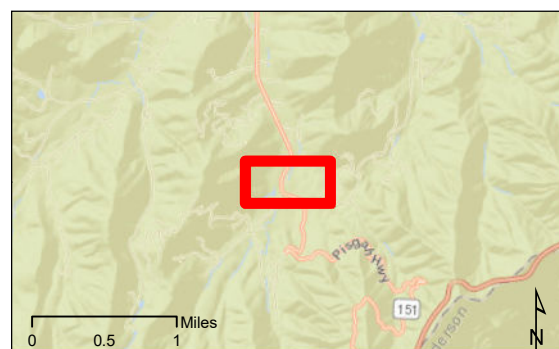
Client/Project 172610024

NCDOT - Environmental Coordination and Permitting
NC 151 Bridge Replacement Over Stony Fork
TIP BR-0067

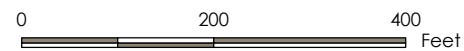
Figure No.
1

Title
Vicinity Map

Notes
1. Coordinate System: NAD 1983 StatePlane North Carolina FIPS 3200 Feet
2. Data Sources: ESRI
3. Background: ESRI



NC DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
DIVISION OF HIGHWAYS
ENVIRONMENTAL COORDINATION AND PERMITTING



1:2,400 (At original document size of 11x17)

Notes

1. Coordinate System: NAD 1983 StatePlane North Carolina FIPS 3200 Feet
2. Jurisdictional Delineation completed by Stantec on June 21 and July 11, 2019.
3. Orthoimagery © NCOneMap, 2019.

Legend

- Potential Jurisdictional Perennial Streams
- Potential Jurisdictional Intermittent Stream
- Select Culverts
- Potential Jurisdictional Perennial Streams
- Potential Jurisdictional Wetlands
- Select Culverts/Bridges
- Project Study Area

Project Location
Candler
Buncombe County, NC

172610024
Prepared by JPA on 2020-06-03
Technical Review by MMR on 2021-11-05
Independent Review by EL on 2021-11-08

Client/Project
NCDOT - Environmental Coordination and Permitting
NC 151 Bridge Replacement Over Stony Fork
TIP BR-0067

Figure No.
2

Title
Potential Jurisdictional Features Map