

CHAPTER III

Affected Environment

Chapter III of the Draft EIS provided descriptions of the existing socioeconomic and environmental characteristics of the study corridor that may be impacted by the Preferred Alternative. The descriptions provided in Chapter III established a baseline condition for the social and environmental settings of the study corridor and provide a basis of comparison for the determination of the impacts and environmental consequences of the Preferred Alternative.

Review comments called attention to discrepancies in the manner in which some of the wetlands data were reported.

A. Summary of the Affected Environment

Chapter III of the Draft EIS presents a description of the socioeconomic characteristics of the study corridor and a description of the corridor's environmental conditions. There are no changes to the description of the Affected Environment presented in the Draft EIS, other than as listed below.

B. Clarification of Draft EIS

The following issues or questions were raised during the review of the Draft EIS that warrant correction, clarification or further elaboration:

- **Section 303(d) Waters.** Elkhorn Creek is impacted by volatile suspended-solids and biological oxygen demand from the Montgomery City wastewater treatment plant. Peruque Creek is impacted by non-volatile suspended solids from urban/rural non-point source pollution. The study area does not cross impacted portions of the Peruque Creek and MoDOT stormwater best management practices will be in place during construction to reduce or prevent water-quality impacts during construction.
- **Geology.** While very few economically important mineral resources are found within the study corridor, several limestone quarries within or near the study corridor may prove to have considerable economic value during construction of an improved I-70.
- **Bedrock and Structural Geology.** While there are no records of any coal or other surface mining in the area of study, it is possible that undocumented mines may be discovered during design and construction. Therefore, there is a possibility of subsurface subsidence from undocumented mine collapse.
- **Phase I Archaeology Survey.** Of the 3,520 acres (1,424 ha) included in the SIU 7 corridor, 3,220 ac (1,303 ha) were accounted for in the survey process. This included surveyed areas, areas beneath existing roadway, obviously disturbed areas and steep areas. The remaining 299 ac (121 ha) appear undisturbed, but could not be accessed for survey, either because the property owner refused permission or because they could

not be contacted despite numerous attempts including telephone calls at different times of the day and evening, mailings, and even knock-on-the-door visits by the field crew. These parcels will ultimately need to be surveyed once the land has been obtained for the highway.

A total of 41 archaeological sites were identified in and near the Preferred Alternative project area. A total of 33 sites identified in the Preferred Alternative project area are considered to be ineligible for listing on the NRHP due to lack of integrity or other issues, and therefore no further archeological work is recommended at these locations. An additional five sites were documented near, but outside, the area affected by the Preferred Alternative; these sites were reported by local informants and will need to be evaluated if the design changes and they become included in the project. One site, a possible cemetery, could not be accessed, and should be surveyed prior to construction.

Two other sites are located within the project area and are recommended for either avoidance by construction or Phase II archaeological test excavation to establish NRHP eligibility. These include Site 7-MT-A135, which had a very large amount of prehistoric material on the surface, and site 7-MT-151, which contained surface and subsurface prehistoric material in an environment well-suited for preservation.