April 3, 2024

Mr. Russell Townsend

Preservation Specialist

Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians (EPCI) THPO

2877 Governor’s Island Road

Bryson City, NC 28713

Dear Mr. Townsend,

The North Carolina Department of Transportation is starting the project development, environmental, and engineering studies for [insert project description (e.g. replacement of Bridge No. ## over Y stream on (Road Common Name and S.R.) in Z County)] as project X-1234.The [Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) or US Army Corps of Engineers (USACE)] is the lead federal agency for compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA) and a Permit is anticipated under the Section 404 Process with the USACE. The project vicinity map is attached.

We would appreciate any information you might have that would be helpful in evaluating potential environmental impacts of the project including recommendation of alternates to be studied. Your comments may be used in the preparation of a NEPA/ State Environmental Policy Act (SEPA) Environmental Document.

In accordance with Section 106 of the NHPA, we also request that you inform us of any historic properties of traditional religious or cultural importance that you are aware of that may be affected by the proposed project. Be assured that, in accordance with confidentiality and disclosure stipulations in Section 304 of the NHPA, we will maintain strict confidentiality about certain types of information regarding historic properties.

Please respond by November 30th so that your comments can be used in the scoping of this project. If you have any questions concerning this project, or would like any additional information, please contact me at dstutts@ncdot.gov or (919) 707-6442.

Thank you,

David Stutts, P.E.

NCDOT Project Engineer – PEF/Program Management

cc: Matt Wilkerson, NCDOT Archaeology Group Leader

USACE Project Manager (if state funded OR if Federally Funded AND Impacts Tribal Land or known tribal resources are at or nearby the project)

Revise Footer Contact Information as appropriate: