



STIP A-0009C Graham County

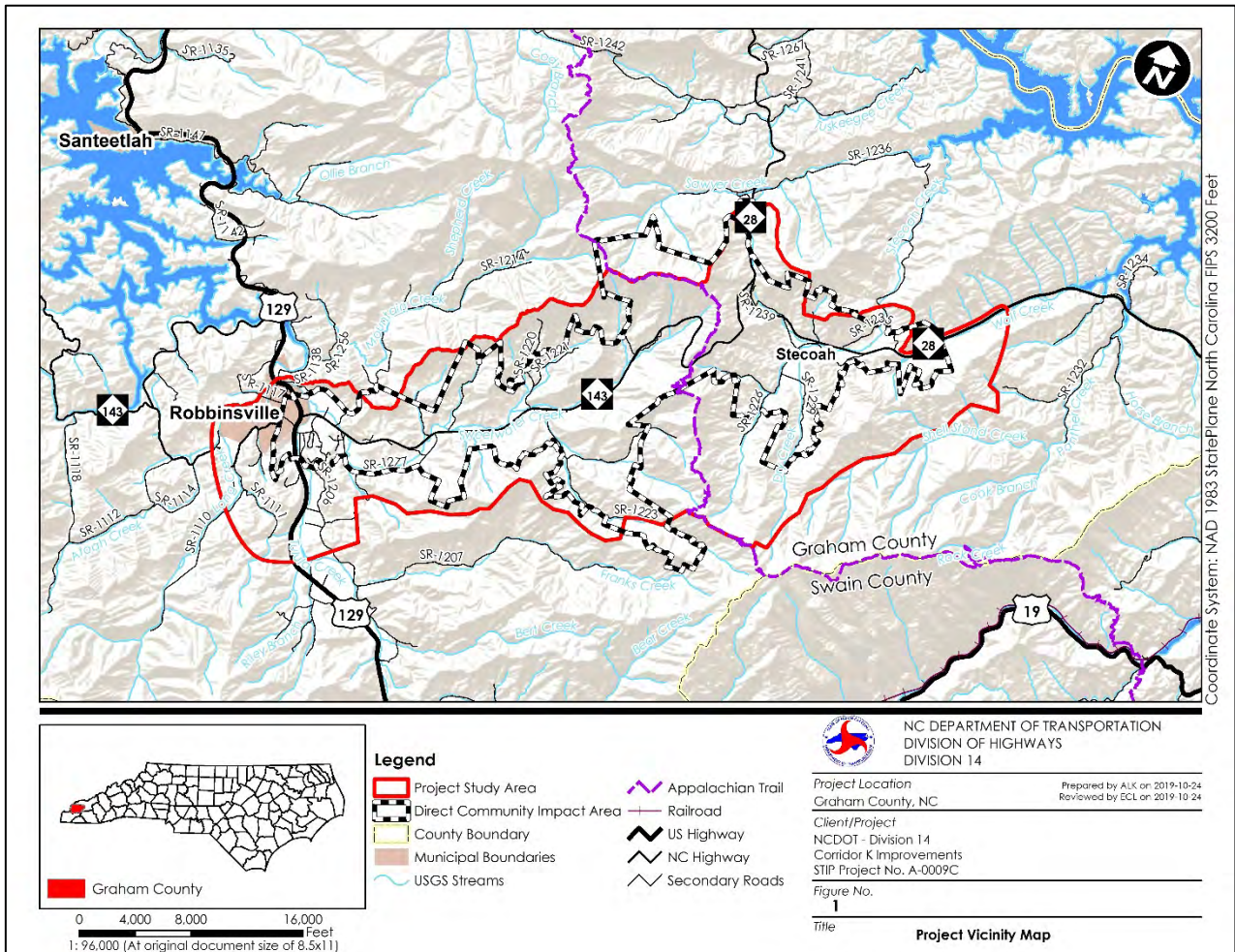
COMMUNITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

PLANNER, FIRM:	Amy Sackaroff, AICP Stantec	DIVISION: 14	Existing No. of Lanes: 2	Existing Median: No
NCDOT/LOCAL PROJECT MANAGER:	Wanda Austin, PE, CPM	WBS: 32572.1.FS10 FA: APD-0074(178)	Proposed No. of Lanes: 3	Addition of Median(s): No
DOCUMENT TYPE:	PROJECT TYPE:	Existing control of access:	Proposed control of access:	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> NEPA <input type="checkbox"/> SEPA	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> DIVISION <input type="checkbox"/> CENTRAL <input type="checkbox"/> LOCALLY-ADMIN. PROGRAM PROJECT (LAPP)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No Control <input type="checkbox"/> Partial Control <input type="checkbox"/> Limited Control <input type="checkbox"/> Full Control	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No Control <input type="checkbox"/> Partial Control <input type="checkbox"/> Limited Control <input type="checkbox"/> Full Control	
CS PROJECT REVIEWER:				

PROJECT DESCRIPTION FROM STIP: Upgrade roadway to include existing US 129, NC 143, and NC 28 and new location from US 129 in Robbinsville to NC 28 at Stecoah.

Community Context



STIP Project A-0009C is in Graham County, a rural, mountainous area in western North Carolina. US 129, NC 143, and NC 28 serve as the main routes in the county. The proposed improvements to Corridor K along US 129, NC 143, and NC 28 extend from Robbinsville to Stecoah in Graham County, which include both new location and improved existing options. A federal Environmental Assessment (EA) and Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) will be prepared for the project.

Three detailed study options are being evaluated in the Robbinsville area which extends from US 129 south of Five Point Road (SR 1275) to NC 143 at Five Point Road (SR 1275):

- Improve Existing US 129/NC 143 – This design option would maintain the existing alignment along US 129 and NC 143 between each road’s intersection with Five Point Road (SR 1275). Improvements include minimal resurfacing, grading, and the addition of a dedicated eastbound right-turn lane from US 129 to NC 143.
- R-1E Intersection – This design option would realign Five Point Road (SR 1275) between its intersections with US 129 and NC 143. The realignment would provide a new option for through-traffic traveling between US 129 south of Robbinsville and NC 143 east of Robbinsville, reducing traffic at the current US 129/NC 143 signalized intersection. Stop-sign controlled t-intersections are proposed at the intersections of the realigned Five Point Road (SR 1275) and US 129 and NC 143. This alternative would make Five Point Road the new major through-movement.
- R-1E Roundabout – This design option would realign Five Point Road (SR 1275) between its intersections with US 129 and NC 143. The realignment would provide a new option for through-traffic traveling between US 129 south of Robbinsville and NC 143 east of Robbinsville, reducing traffic at the current US 129/NC 143 signalized intersection. Roundabouts are proposed at the intersections of the realigned Five Point Road (SR 1275) and US 129 and NC 143. This alternative would make Five Point Road the new major through-movement.

Three detailed study options are being evaluated in the Stecoah area which extends from NC 143 at Five Point Road (SR 1275) to the existing four-lane section of NC 28 in Stecoah. These include:

- Improve Existing NC 143/NC 28 – This design option begins at the intersection of NC 143 and Five Point Road (SR 1275) and continues along existing NC 143, widening the facility to three lanes with alternating climbing and passing lanes to the intersection of NC 28. The design option then follows NC 28, widening the roadway to a three-lane facility with alternating climbing and passing lanes. Additional improvements include providing adequate shoulders and modifying superelevations (cross-slopes) to improve traffic flow along existing NC 143 and NC 28.
- S-2 – This design option begins at the intersection of NC 143 and Five Point Road (SR 1275) and continues along existing NC 143 as an improve existing segment, widening the facility to three lanes with alternating climbing lanes and passing lanes, for 4.9 miles to just east of Orr Branch Road (SR 1222). East of Orr Branch Road (SR 1222), the design option then begins along a new alignment, which includes a two-lane 4,445-foot long tunnel under existing NC 143 and the Appalachian Trail. The new alignment then crosses over NC 28 on a new 1,053-foot long bridge north of NC 28, and then crosses over Bill Crisp Road (SR 1238) and Edwards Branch on a new 1,120-foot long bridge before terminating at the existing four-lane section of NC 28.
- SW-1A – The design option begins at the intersection of NC 143 and Five Point Road (SR 1275) and continues along existing NC 143 as an improve existing segment, widening the facility to three lanes with climbing and passing lanes, for 4.9 miles to just east of Orr Branch Road (SR 1222). East of Orr Branch Road (SR 1222), the design option then begins along a new alignment, which includes a two-lane, 5,416-foot long tunnel under existing NC 143 and the Appalachian Trail. East of the proposed tunnel, the design option rejoins NC 28, intersecting NC 143 and widening NC 28 to a three-lane facility, with alternating climbing and passing lanes, before terminating at the existing four-lane section of NC 28.

Each Robbinsville design option can be combined with the Stecoah design options to create nine different alternatives, extending from the project’s western terminus at the intersection of US 129 and Five Point Road in Robbinsville travelling eastward to the four-lane section of NC 28 in Stecoah, as listed below. While this method is helpful in comparing overall impacts, it can potentially obscure notable impacts. In order to clearly compare options for each portion of the project, environmental evaluation factors are assessed separately for the Robbinsville and Stecoah areas.

- Alternative 1 - Improve Existing US 129/Improve Existing NC 143/Improve Existing NC 28
- Alternative 2 - Improve Existing US 129/Improve Existing NC 143/S-2
- Alternative 3 - Improve Existing US 129/Improve Existing NC 143/SW-1A/Improve Existing NC 28
- Alternative 4 - R-1E Intersection/Improve Existing NC 143/Improve Existing NC 28

- Alternative 5 - R-1E Intersection/Improve Existing NC 143/S-2
- Alternative 6 - R-1E Intersection/Improve Existing NC 143/SW-1A/Improve Existing NC 28
- Alternative 7 - R-1E Roundabout/Improve Existing NC 143/Improve Existing NC 28
- Alternative 8 - R-1E Roundabout/Improve Existing NC 143/S-2
- Alternative 9 - R-1E Roundabout/Improve Existing NC 143/SW-1A/Improve Existing NC 28

Notable Characteristics

- Recreational resources include the Appalachian Trail (a Section 4(f) resource), Nantahala National Forest, Brown Fork Shelter, and multiple gaps and coves.
- Farmland soils eligible for protection under FPPA are present within the DCIA.
- Tracts spanning 143 parcels containing active agricultural land being utilized for crop-related farming were noted during GIS investigations within the DCIA.
- The DCIA includes a multi-use path around Robbinsville Middle and High Schools, a bicycle road path along NC 143, and a sidewalk on the north side of NC 143 from Five Point Road (SR 1275) to US 129.
- The 2013 Robbinsville Pedestrian Connectivity Plan & Health Impact Assessment recommends a greenway connecting Robbinsville Middle and High Schools to planned recreational facilities, upgrades to pedestrian facilities along US 129, Main Street, and Circle Street, a new greenway along Ford Street, and several new sidewalks throughout the DCIA. A multi-use path along NC 28 from Hyde Town Road to Stecoah Road was requested by a walking group in Stecoah.
- Graham County Transit operates an appointment-based transit shuttle for residents of the county and has scheduled trips to the Town of Andrews, Town of Cherokee and Town of Murphy.
- A majority of the DCIA lacks bicycle lanes or pedestrian facilities. There is one partially removed driveway just east of the Dollar General on NC 143 that may serve as a worn pedestrian path in Robbinsville.
- The 2015 Graham County CTP proposes three new park and ride lots within the DCIA and includes the A-0009 project within its recommendations. The Graham County Strategic Tourism Plan Destination 2025 identified goals of maximizing tourism and recreational opportunities, while protecting cultural and natural resources.
- The DCIA is primarily rural and as such, driveways are scattered throughout. Major intersections include NC 143 crossing US 129 in Robbinsville and NC 28 near Stecoah. Additional intersections, including Five Point Road (SR 1275) and Pin Hook Road (SR 1220), are also found within the DCIA. Most of the side roads lead to rural residential or agricultural destinations.
- Trucks utilize National Highway System routes US 129, NC 143, and NC 28 for freight and delivery services into and out of the county. These corridors have impaired mobility and constrained freight movement for heavy vehicles due to the combination of steep grades and tight curves. There are also businesses along Robbinsville's Main Street and US 129.
- EMS services located within the DCIA include the Graham County Fire Department, Graham County Sheriff, and Stecoah Fire Department. The Graham County Emergency Services Director noted that US 129 and NC 143 are the primary routes used when transporting individuals to surrounding hospitals. Input provided by local officials historically has indicated concerns over the lack of mobility and reliability of the transportation network, and the effect this has on transportation to surrounding hospitals.
- Graham County Schools operate three buses with 12 trips daily in the DCIA.
- There are eight churches, two schools, seven cemeteries, the Graham County Courthouse, the Graham County Travel and Tourism Office, Robbinsville Townhall, and Stecoah Valley Center located within the DCIA.
- Community cohesion exists throughout the DCIA, as largely manifested during ongoing public involvement. Most notably, the Stecoah Heights community requested a meeting with NCDOT staff August 2019 to voice opposition to the S-2 design option.
- The Robbinsville Pedestrian Connectivity Plan & Health Impact Assessment identified heart disease as the leading cause of death in Graham County. Heart disease rates within Graham County are higher than the North Carolina average.
- Community concerns include impacts to environmental resources, travel times for those who commute, reliability of additional routes when main roads are blocked, and impacts to prominent historical or environmental features such as the Trail of Tears or Appalachian Trail.



- Census data indicates a notable presence of populations within the Demographic Study Area (DSA) that meet the low-income criteria for Environmental Justice.
- Census data does not indicate LEP populations meeting the US Department of Justice LEP Safe Harbor threshold or a notable presence within the DSA.
- Historically, the DSA has contained a higher percentage of seniors and a lower percentage of working-age individuals than statewide averages. Many working-age adults move out of the county to be closer to employment centers.
- STIP Project U-5866, located in the DCIA, proposes the construction of a new route from US 129 to Robbinsville Middle and High Schools, including the construction of a bridge over Cheoah River. STIP Project R-2822B, located west of the DCIA, proposes improvements to NC 143 from West Buffalo Creek to NC 143 Business. STIP Project R-5839BA, located northwest of the DCIA, proposes upgrading NC 28 from the Swain/Graham County line at Little Tennessee River to Woods Road at Fontana Dam Village. STIP Project BR-0076, located northwest of the DCIA, proposes replacing Bridge 370090 on NC 28 over the Little Tennessee River as part of STIP Project R-5839BA. STIP Project R-5839E, which is currently unfunded, falls within the DCIA and proposes upgrading NC 28 from SR 1242 (Lower Tuskegee Road) to NC 143.

Project Impacts

- Direct impacts to the Appalachian Trail are anticipated with the Improve Existing design option. Visual impacts are anticipated with all design options, and a Visual Impact Assessment has been prepared for the project.
- Based on a 35-foot buffer of the construction limits, the Improve Existing design option is anticipated to impact approximately 8.3 acres of the Nantahala National Forest, while SW-1A is anticipated to impact approximately 0.04 acres of the Nantahala National Forest.
- Impacts to farmland soils eligible for protection under Farmland Protection Policy Act (FPPA) is anticipated. However, none of the alternatives have a total site assessment score which exceeds the FPPA threshold.
- The proposed project construction limits would impact active agricultural resources in the DCIA.
- Improve Existing and R-1E Intersection/Roundabout have the potential for low impacts to bicycle/pedestrian facilities. All impacted facilities would be restored after improvements are complete.
- No permanent impacts to transit routes, facilities, or activities are anticipated with the proposed project. Construction activities will temporarily alter traffic patterns and cause delays for shuttles utilizing R-1E due to the proposed detour required while replacing the bridge on Five Point Road (SR 1275). Impacts associated with all other design options are anticipated to be minor as most of the construction would occur along the existing road or at a new location, so traffic flow would be maintained.
- The proposed improvements would provide wider lane widths and paved shoulders in certain locations, which would increase bike/pedestrian safety.
- The proposed project is consistent with local, regional, and state plans on transportation, land use, and economic development.
- Impacts to driveways have been analyzed from a high-level perspective at this time. Detailed investigations into driveway tie-ins will be conducted during final design. R-1E is anticipated to impact one residential driveway, Improve Existing (Stecoah) is anticipated to impact one residential driveway, S-2 is anticipated to impact two residential driveways, and SW-1A is anticipated to impact driveways to two residences and one barn.
- Construction has the potential to alter traffic patterns and increase travel time to businesses along R-1E due to the detour required while replacing the bridge on Five Point Road (SR 1275). Improve Existing (Robbinsville) anticipates one business relocation, R-1E Intersection/Roundabout anticipates seven business relocations, Improve Existing (Stecoah) anticipates four business relocations, S-2 anticipates three business relocations, and SW-1A anticipates four business relocations.
- Although construction activities have the potential to create temporary delays that could increase emergency response times, the proposed project would ultimately have a beneficial effect by allowing emergency response services the ability to pass slower moving vehicles; tractors or other farm equipment on the roadway; accidents; and other obstructions such as fallen rock/landslides.
- While an input form received from the Graham County Director of Transportation noted the project would have a high impact, no details were provided and minimal impacts to school bus routes are anticipated from the proposed project. Because there are homes on Five Point Road (SR 1275), the closing of this road during construction would affect bus routes. Although construction activities have the potential to temporarily cause



delays, the proposed improvements would increase overall mobility in the project area and therefore improve travel time for school buses.

- R-1E Roundabout and Intersection design options are anticipated to impact a building at First Baptist Church and a storage shed at Liberty Missionary Baptist Church.
- Design option S-2 would bisect the Stecoah Heights community, placing a physical barrier in the community and thereby disrupting community cohesion. No impacts to community cohesion are associated with the other design options.
- The proposed project improvements would increase reliability and mobility within the DCIA with new location segments and the addition of passing and climbing lanes, therefore providing a positive impact on the above community concerns regarding mobility and reliability. Improve Existing Robbinsville, R-1E Intersection and Roundabout design options will impact the Trail of Tears. S-2 and SW-1A include tunnel portals on an EBCI Tribal land parcel.
- Adverse community impacts, primarily in the form of relocations, are anticipated with this project but affect all populations equivalently. Benefits and burdens resulting from the project are anticipated to be equitably distributed throughout the Demographic Study Area (DSA). Impacts to low-income populations would not be disproportionately high and adverse. No disparate impacts are anticipated under Title VI and related statutes.

Recommendations

- As the AT has previously been determined to be eligible for National Register of Historic Properties (NRHP) listing, a formal Section 4(f) Evaluation is being prepared for the project to fully determine impacts to the AT. Continued coordination with US Forest Service (USFS), National Park Service (NPS), North Carolina State Historic Preservation Office (NCSHPO), and Appalachian Trail Conservancy (ATC) is recommended to ensure compliance with regulations and policies. The NCDOT Project Manager should continue coordination to minimize project impacts to National Forest Service lands during final design where possible.
- The NCDOT Project Manager should continue coordination with Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS) and consider measures to minimize these impacts if possible.
- The NCDOT Project Manager should ensure that access is maintained for agricultural equipment and employees and impacts to farmlands (Right-of-Way (ROW), detour routes, accessibility) are either avoided or minimized.
- The project team will continue coordination with the Town of Robbinsville and NCDOT Division of Bicycle and Pedestrian Transportation to evaluate the necessary level of bicycle/pedestrian access accommodation during construction and to ensure designs incorporate features that best meet the needs of bicyclists and pedestrians. Input forms have been, sent and any information received following the finalization of this document will be incorporated in the environmental document.
- The NCDOT Project Manager should coordinate with Graham County Transit regarding the program's routes prior to construction to ensure the program can maintain mobility within the DCIA during construction. Any additional information received after the finalization of this document will be incorporated in the environmental document.
- The project team will continue to reach out to the Graham County Economic Development Director to ensure continued compliance with local plans, regulations, and policies. Any additional information received after the finalization of this document will be incorporated in the environmental document.
- The NCDOT Project Manager should coordinate with affected residents and businesses to ensure access is maintained during and following construction.
- Due to the potential business relocations for all design options, public involvement should include outreach to business owners in the DCIA.
- Coordination with Graham County EMS is recommended during construction to ensure EMS access and acceptable response times throughout the DCIA. Measures to minimize this effect should be evaluated, primarily in the form of an offsite detour that utilizes US 129 and NC 143.
- Coordination with Graham County Schools is recommended during project development and construction to ensure access to bus stops and bus routes in the DCIA. Any additional information received after the finalization of this document will be incorporated in the environmental document.



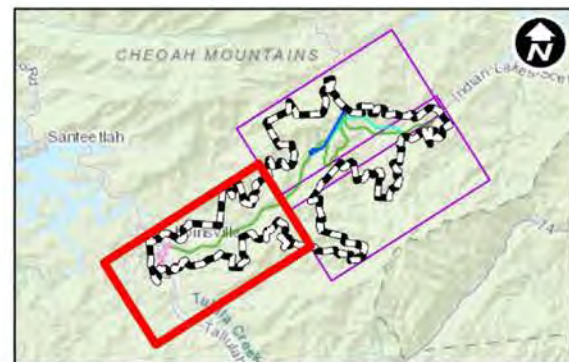
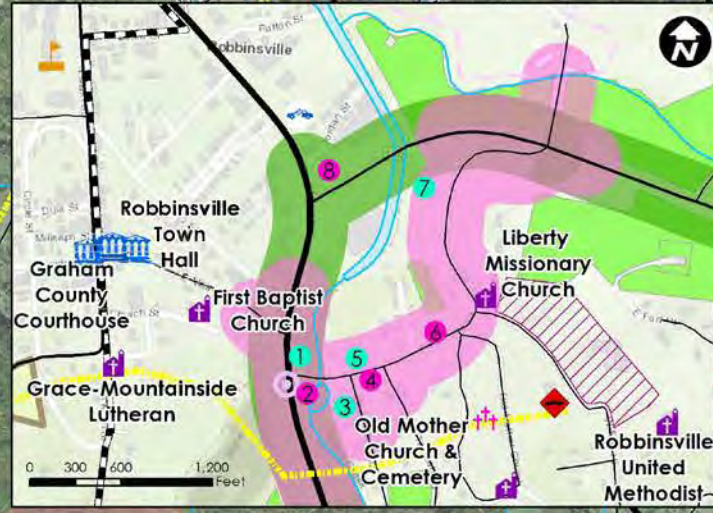
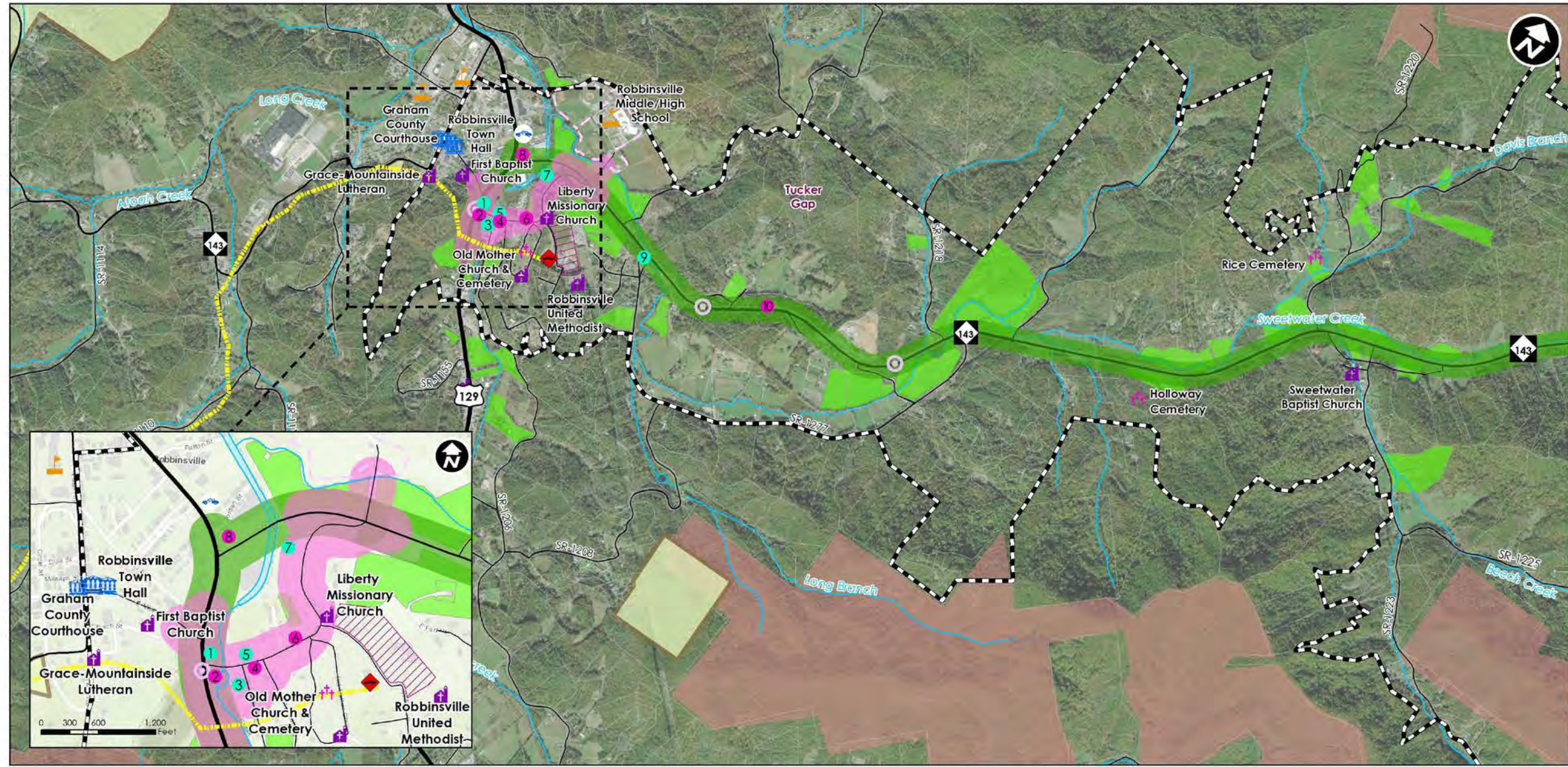
- The NCDOT Project Manager should coordinate with Graham County, the Town of Robbinsville, local churches and other community resources within the DCIA prior to construction to ensure that access is maintained during construction.
- The NCDOT Project Manager should continue coordination with the Stecoah Heights community throughout the project development process to evaluate opportunities to maintain community cohesion should S-2 be selected as part of the Preferred Alternative.
- Due to community concerns related to prior project public involvement, it is recommended that the NCDOT Project Manager continue public outreach that incorporates the necessary local stakeholders and is in accordance with all necessary FHWA and NCDOT guidelines.
- Public involvement and outreach activities must ensure full and fair participation of all potentially affected communities in the transportation decision-making process. NCDOT should ensure in the final design process that the preferred alternative does not create disproportionately high and adverse impacts to low-income populations.
- R-1E Intersection/Roundabout will require an offsite detour during the construction of the existing bridge replacement on Five Point Road (SR 1275); however, the site is too constrained to construct a temporary onsite detour without creating permanent impacts to adjacent land uses. US 129 and NC 143 will function as an offsite detour during bridge replacement.
- Because a majority of the project would be constructed along existing facilities, an alternate work schedule for construction activities would provide better traffic maintenance during peak hours.

Indirect and Cumulative Effects Statement

There is potential for some of the design options being studied (notably S-2) to alter travel patterns, affect access to previously undeveloped land and open areas for development. Due to the potential for these transportation impact-causing activities, this project may influence land use changes in the DCIA. To determine the extent of these potential impacts, an indirect and cumulative effects screening was prepared.



COMMUNITY CONTEXT MAP



Legend

- | | | |
|------------------------------|---------------------------|------------------------------|
| Direct Community Impact Area | Active Agriculture | Cemetery |
| Improve Existing | USFS Lands | Religious Facility |
| R-1E Intersection/Roundabout | Trail of Tears | School |
| Parcels | EBCI Tribal Land Holdings | Gov Building |
| USGS Streams | Multi-use Path | Graham County Sheriff |
| US Highway | Proposed Courthouse | Graham County Fire Dept |
| NC Highway | | Locally Identified Hot Spots |
| Secondary Roads | | |

- Business Impacts**
- | | |
|-------------------------|-----------------------|
| Five Point Motel | Robbinsville Pharmacy |
| Five Point Storage | Smith Carpet |
| NCDOT Maintenance | Adams Contracting Co. |
| Mountain Energy | |
| Mini Storage | |
| Lovin Apartment Rentals | |
| Dollar General | |

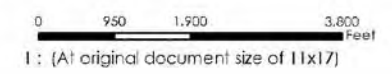
NC DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
DIVISION OF HIGHWAYS
DIVISION 14

Project Location: Graham County, NC
Prepared by ALK on 2019-10-25
Reviewed by ECL on 2019-10-25

Client/Project: NCDOT - Division 14
Corridor K Improvements
STIP Project No. A-0009C

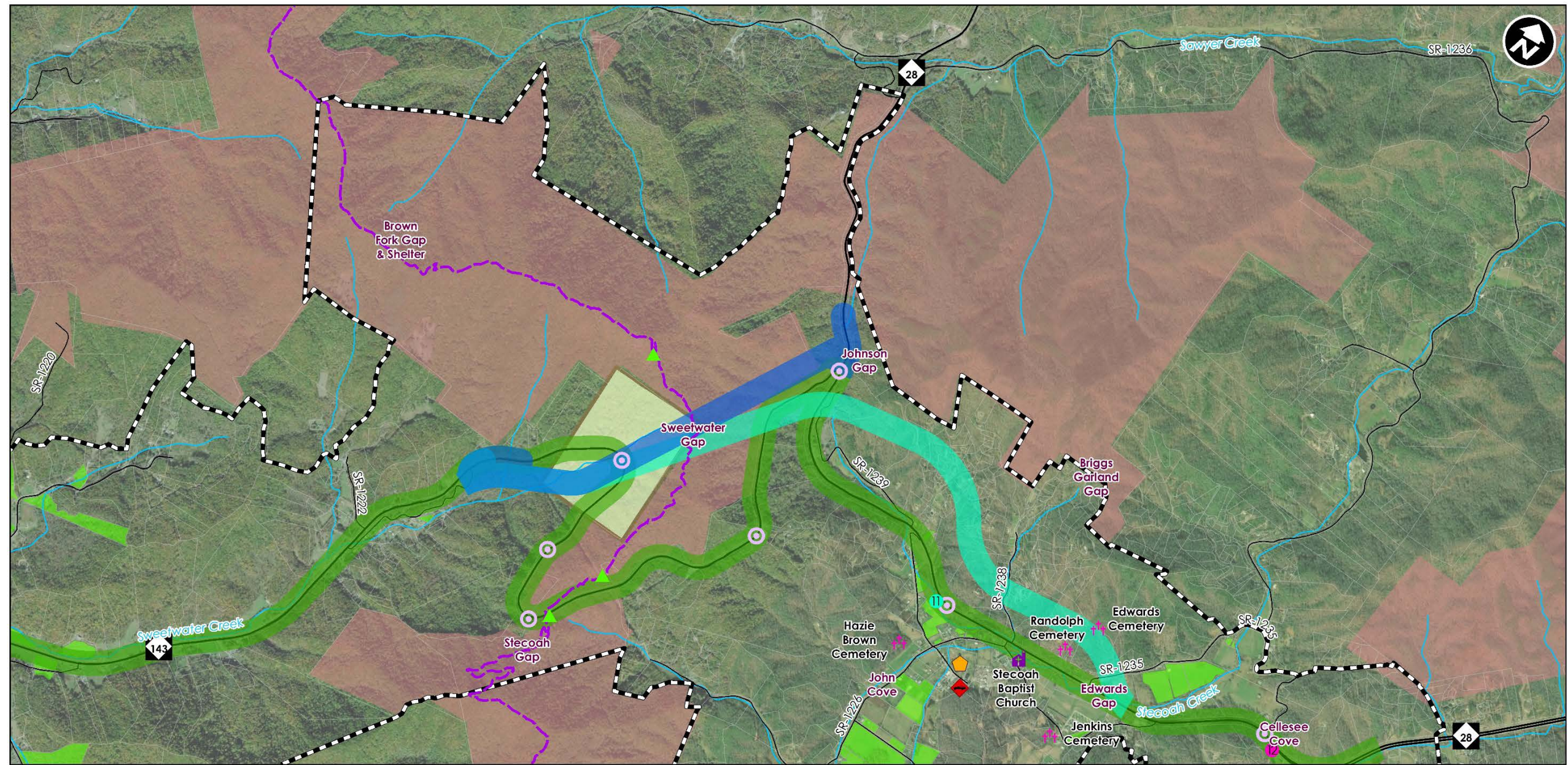
Figure No. **2A**

Title: **Community Context Map**

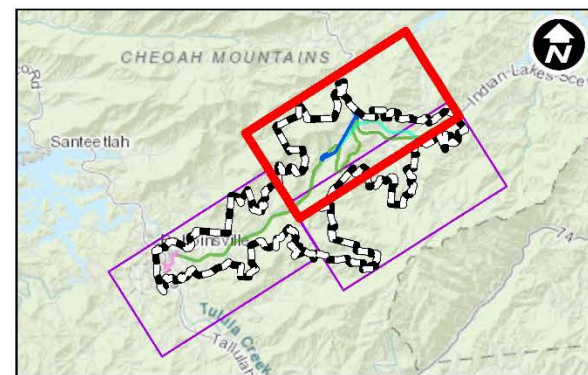


Coordinate System: WGS 1984 Web Mercator Auxiliary Sphere

COMMUNITY CONTEXT MAP



Coordinate System: WGS 1984 Web Mercator Auxiliary Sphere



Legend

- Direct Community Impact Area
- Improve Existing
- S-2
- SW-1A
- Parcels
- USGS Streams
- NC Highway
- Secondary Roads
- Active Agriculture
- AT Viewpoints
- Appalachian Trail
- USFS Lands
- EBCI Tribal Land Holdings
- Cemetery
- Religious Facility
- Stecoah Fire Dept
- Stecoah Valley Center
- Locally Identified Hot Spots
- Crisp Used Cars
- Service Garage

0 950 1,900 3,800 Feet
1 : 22800 (At original document size of 11x17)



NC DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
DIVISION OF HIGHWAYS
DIVISION 14

Project Location
Graham County, NC

Prepared by ALK on 2019-10-25
Reviewed by ECL on 2019-10-25

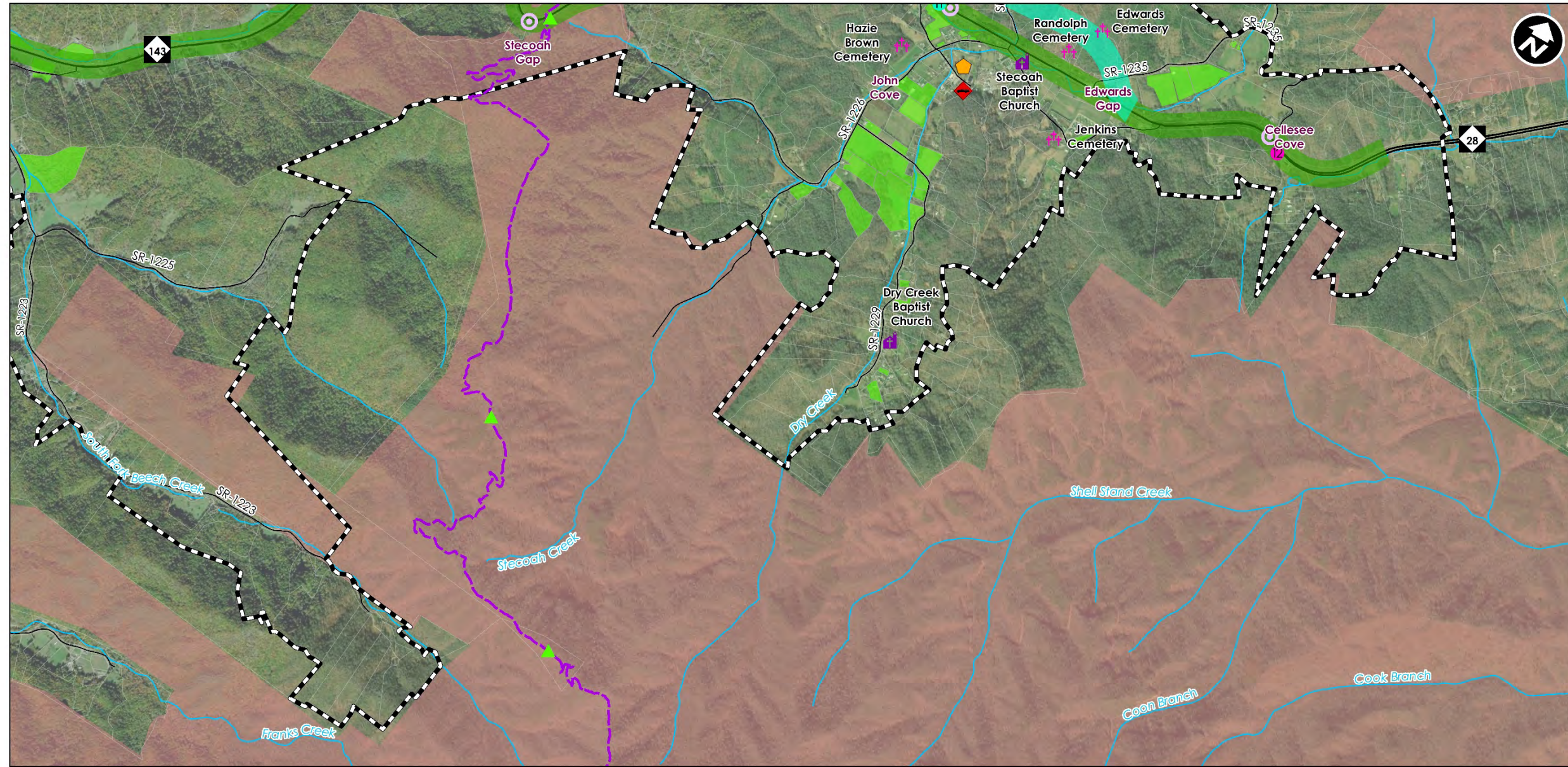
Client/Project
NCDOT - Division 14
Corridor K Improvements
STIP Project No. A-0009C

Figure No.
2B

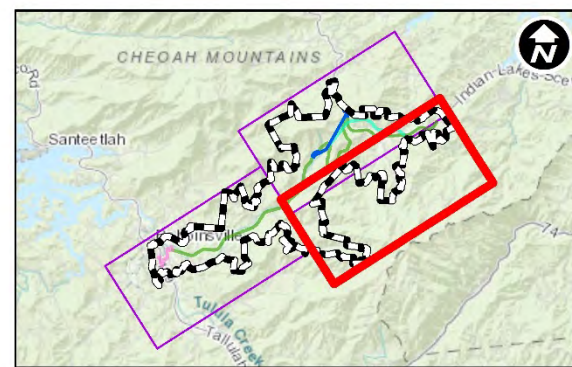
Title
Community Context Map



COMMUNITY CONTEXT MAP



Coordinate System: WGS 1984 Web Mercator Auxiliary Sphere



Legend

- | | | |
|------------------------------|-----------------------|------------------------------|
| Direct Community Impact Area | AT Viewpoints | Locally Identified Hot Spots |
| Improve Existing | Appalachian Trail | Business Impacts |
| S-2 | USFS Lands | Service Garage |
| Parcels | Cemetery | Crisp Used Cars |
| USGS Streams | Religious Facility | |
| NC Highway | Stecoah Fire Dept | |
| Secondary Roads | Stecoah Valley Center | |
| Active Agriculture | | |

0 950 1,900 3,800 Feet
1 : 22800 (At original document size of 11x17)



NC DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
DIVISION OF HIGHWAYS
DIVISION 14

Project Location: Graham County, NC
Prepared by ALK on 2019-10-25
Reviewed by ECL on 2019-10-25

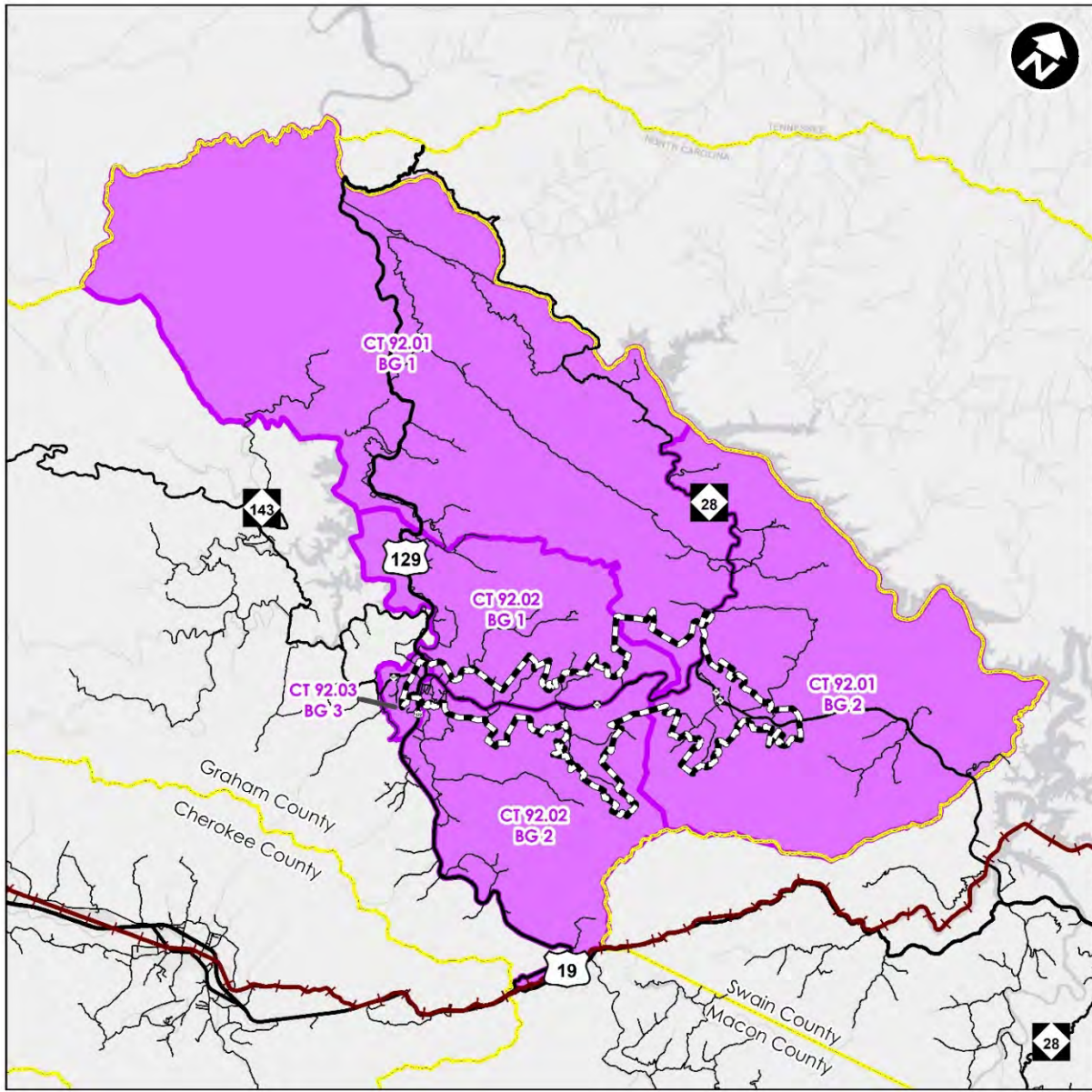
Client/Project:
NCDOT - Division 14
Corridor K Improvements
STIP Project No. A-0009C

Figure No.
2C

Title
Community Context Map



DEMOGRAPHIC STUDY AREA



Coordinate System: NAD 1983 StatePlane North Carolina FIPS 3200 Feet

Legend

- Direct Community Impact Area
- Block Group
- County Boundary
- Railroad
- US Highway
- NC Highway
- Secondary Roads



NC DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
DIVISION OF HIGHWAYS
DIVISION 14

Project Location
Graham County

Prepared by ALK on 2019-10-24
Reviewed by ECL on 2019-10-24

Client/Project
NCDOT - Division 14
Corridor K Improvements
STIP Project No. A-0009C
Figure No.

3

Title

Demographic Study Area

0 16,500 33,000 Feet
1:198,000 (At original document size of 8.5x11)

COMMUNITY CHARACTERISTICS, IMPACTS & RECOMMENDATIONS	
Community Resource	Presence
<p>RECREATIONAL RESOURCE(S) OR ACTIVITY</p> <p><u>Presence</u></p> <p><i>Are there any recreational resources, areas, or observed activities in the Direct Community Impact Area? If Federally-funded, are these potential 4(f) resources?</i></p> <p>The Appalachian Trail traverses the DCIA in a north-south direction crossing NC 143 west of Stecoah. The Appalachian Trail is a 2,192-mile trail that spans fourteen states from Maine to Georgia with an average of 3 million visitors annually.¹ The trail is a Section 4(f) resource as it has been determined eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Place (NRHP).</p> <p>Brown Fork Shelter is located along the Appalachian Trail, approximately 0.8 miles north of existing NC 143 at its closest point. Thru-hikers use it to stay dry in wet weather and to sleep at night as they make their way up or down the trail. A total of 250 shelters like this one are located along the Appalachian Trail.</p> <p>A “gap” is a term for a low spot along a ridge line. Gaps are popular spots for day-hikers on the Appalachian Trail. The following gaps are located within the DCIA: Sweetwater Gap, Stecoah Gap, Briggs Garland Gap, Johnson Gap, Edwards Gap, Brown Fork Gap, and Tucker Gap. The Appalachian Trail trailhead and parking lot at Stecoah Gap is used by short-term hikers to access the Bartrum Trail and Cheoah Bald Summit (both of which are south of the DCIA) from NC 143.</p> <p>A “cove” is a term meaning a “high, flat valley surrounded by mountains.” Both Cellesee Cove and Johns Cove are located within the DCIA. NC 28 bisects Cellesee Cove near Stecoah and John Cove sits near Stecoah Creek on Cody Branch Road.</p> <p>Parts of the Nantahala National Forest are located within the DCIA, east of Beech Creek. As the largest of the North Carolina National Forests, it stretches 531,148 acres and gives visitors the opportunity for hiking, mountain biking, whitewater rafting, bird watching and camping, among other outdoor activities.²</p> <p>Recreational resources can be viewed in Figures 2B-2C.</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> YES, SEPA Parks & Recreation</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES, NEPA potential 4(f); adjacent to/accessible from the project corridor</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> YES, NEPA potential 4(f); present in DCIA but not adjacent to or accessed from the project corridor</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> NO</p>
<p><u>Impacts</u></p> <p>Direct impacts to the Appalachian Trail are anticipated with the Improve Existing design option. Visual impacts are anticipated with all design options, and a Visual Impact Assessment has been prepared for the project.</p> <p>Based on a 35-foot buffer of the construction limits, the Improve Existing design option is anticipated to impact approximately 20.9 acres of the Nantahala National Forest, while SW-1A is anticipated to impact approximately 0.04 acres of the Nantahala National Forest.</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> YES, SEPA Impact</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES, potential NEPA impact</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> NO</p>
<p><u>Recommendation</u></p> <p>As the AT has previously been determined to be eligible for NRHP listing, a formal Section 4(f) Evaluation is being prepared for the project to fully determine impacts to the AT.</p>	<p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> NO</p>

¹ Appalachian Trail Conservancy, The Trail is Waiting, 2019. <https://www.appalachiantrail.org/home/explore-the-trail>. Web accessed: 8/15/2019.

² U.S. Department of Agriculture Forest Service. Nantahala National Forest. 2019. <https://www.fs.usda.gov/recarea/nfsnc/recarea/?recid=48634>. Web accessed: 8/15/2019.



<p>Continued coordination with the US Forest Service (USFS), National Park Service (NPS), North Carolina State Historic Preservation Office (NCSHPO), and Appalachian Trail Conservancy (ATC) is recommended to ensure compliance with regulations and policies.</p> <p>The NCDOT Project Manager should continue coordination to minimize project impacts to National Forest Service lands during final design where possible.</p>		
<p>SECTION 6(F) LAND & WATER CONSERVATION FUND RESOURCES</p> <p><u>Presence</u></p>		<input type="checkbox"/> YES <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> NO
<p><u>Impacts</u></p>	<input type="checkbox"/> YES <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> NO	
<p><u>Recommendation</u></p>		<input type="checkbox"/> YES <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> NO
<p>FARMLAND SOILS</p> <p><u>Presence</u></p> <p><i>Are there any farmland soils within the project footprint?</i></p> <p>Farmland soils eligible for protection under the Farmland Protection Policy Act (FPPA) are present within the project footprint. If a new location alternative is considered that is outside of the project footprint, then NCDOT must reassess the impacts to farmlands.</p>		<input type="checkbox"/> YES, SEPA <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES, NEPA (FPPA) <input type="checkbox"/> NO, not present <input type="checkbox"/> Not applicable - urbanized area
<p><u>Impacts</u></p> <p><i>Is the project likely to have a notable impact on identified farmland soils?</i></p> <p>A preliminary screening of farmland conversion impacts in the project area has been completed (see Appendix D). None of the alternatives have a total site assessment score which exceeds the FPPA threshold. As such, these farmland conversion impacts are not considered notable. CPA-106 forms were submitted to NRCS in February 2020 for confirmation.</p> <p>Alternative 1 (Improve Existing Robbinsville + Improve Existing Stecoah): A total score of 39 out of 160 points was calculated. 25.5 acres of direct impacts to farmlands are anticipated.</p> <p>Alternative 2 (Improve Existing Robbinsville + S-2): A total score of 40 out of 160 points was calculated. 26.6 acres of direct impacts to farmlands are anticipated.</p> <p>Alternative 3 (Improve Existing Robbinsville + SW-1A + Improve Existing NC 28): A total score of 39 out of 160 points was calculated. 24.8 acres of direct impacts to farmlands are anticipated.</p> <p>Alternative 4 (R-1E Intersection + Improve Existing Stecoah): A total score of 46 out of 160 points was calculated. 29.2 acres of direct impacts to farmlands are anticipated.</p> <p>Alternative 5 (R-1E Intersection + S-2): A total score of 46 out of 160 points was calculated. 30.3 acres of direct impacts to farmlands are anticipated.</p> <p>Alternative 6 (R-1E Intersection + SW-1A + Improve Existing NC 28): A total score of 46 out of 160 points was calculated. 28.5 acres of direct impacts to farmlands are anticipated.</p> <p>Alternative 7 (R-1E Roundabout + Improve Existing Stecoah): A total score of 46 out of 160 points was calculated. 29.2 acres of direct impacts to farmlands are anticipated.</p> <p>Alternative 8 (R-1E Roundabout + S-2): A total score of 46 out of 160 points was calculated. 30.3 acres of direct impacts to farmlands are anticipated.</p> <p>Alternative 9 (R-1E Roundabout + SW-1A + Improve Existing NC 28): A total score of 46 out of 160 points was calculated. 28.5 acres of direct impacts to farmlands are anticipated.</p>		<input type="checkbox"/> YES, SEPA conversion <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES, NEPA does not exceed FPPA threshold <input type="checkbox"/> YES, NEPA exceeds FPPA threshold <input type="checkbox"/> NO



<p><u>Recommendation</u> The NCDOT Project Manager should continue coordination with NRCS and consider measures to minimize these impacts if possible.</p>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO																																
<p>VOLUNTARY & ENHANCED VOLUNTARY AGRICULTURAL DISTRICTS [VAD/EVAD] <u>Presence</u></p>	<input type="checkbox"/> YES <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> NO																																
<p><u>Impacts</u></p>	<input type="checkbox"/> YES <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> NO																																
<p><u>Recommendation</u></p>	<input type="checkbox"/> YES <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> NO																																
<p>AGRICULTURAL RESOURCES AND ACTIVITY</p>																																	
<p><u>Presence</u> <i>Are there any active agricultural operations located in the Direct Community Impact Area? Is there any documented activity related to goods movement in the Direct Community Impact Area (e.g. farm or logging trucks, tractors, or other agricultural equipment)?</i></p> <p>Tracts spanning 143 parcels containing active agricultural land being utilized for crop-related farming were noted during GIS investigations within the DCIA (see Figures 2A-2C). Many of the crop-related agricultural farms are located on smaller parcels and can be found throughout the DCIA. In addition to crop-related farming, Graham County contains farms that raise livestock such as chickens and silviculture (tree harvesting).</p>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO																																
<p><u>Impacts</u> <i>Is the project likely to impact identified agricultural operations?</i></p> <p>Both the Improve Existing (Stecoah) and SW-1A design options are anticipated to impact a barn.</p> <p>In addition to the above, the proposed project would impact agricultural resources in the DCIA. See Tables 1.1 – 1.6 for a list of the individual parcels and the total number of acres of active agriculture associated with each design option being studied.</p> <p><i>Table 1.1: Active Agriculture Parcels and Impacted Acreage for Improve Existing (Robbinsville)</i></p> <table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse; margin-bottom: 10px;"> <thead> <tr> <th style="width: 25%;">Parcel Number</th> <th style="width: 15%;">Acres within Proposed ROW</th> <th style="width: 25%;">Parcel Number</th> <th style="width: 35%;">Acres within Proposed ROW</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>5660.08-88-9233</td> <td style="text-align: center;">0.67</td> <td>5670.09-07-1331</td> <td style="text-align: center;">0.28</td> </tr> <tr> <td>5660.12-75-6784</td> <td style="text-align: center;">0.02</td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td colspan="4" style="text-align: center;">TOTAL: 0.97 acres</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p><i>Table 1.2: Active Agriculture Parcels and Impacted Acreage for R-1E Intersection</i></p> <table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <thead> <tr> <th style="width: 25%;">Parcel Number</th> <th style="width: 15%;">Acres within Proposed ROW</th> <th style="width: 25%;">Parcel Number</th> <th style="width: 35%;">Acres within Proposed ROW</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>5660.08-88-9233</td> <td style="text-align: center;">0.81</td> <td>5660.12-86-9866</td> <td style="text-align: center;">0.01</td> </tr> <tr> <td>5660.12-75-6784</td> <td style="text-align: center;">0.01</td> <td>5670.09-07-1331</td> <td style="text-align: center;">0.21</td> </tr> <tr> <td colspan="4" style="text-align: center;">TOTAL: 1.04 acres</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Parcel Number	Acres within Proposed ROW	Parcel Number	Acres within Proposed ROW	5660.08-88-9233	0.67	5670.09-07-1331	0.28	5660.12-75-6784	0.02			TOTAL: 0.97 acres				Parcel Number	Acres within Proposed ROW	Parcel Number	Acres within Proposed ROW	5660.08-88-9233	0.81	5660.12-86-9866	0.01	5660.12-75-6784	0.01	5670.09-07-1331	0.21	TOTAL: 1.04 acres				<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO
Parcel Number	Acres within Proposed ROW	Parcel Number	Acres within Proposed ROW																														
5660.08-88-9233	0.67	5670.09-07-1331	0.28																														
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5660.12-75-6784	0.01	5670.09-07-1331	0.21																														
TOTAL: 1.04 acres																																	



Table 1.3: Active Agriculture Parcels and Impacted Acreage for R-1E Roundabout

Parcel Number	Acres within Proposed ROW	Parcel Number	Acres within Proposed ROW
5660.08-88-9233	0.88	5660.12-86-9866	0.02
5660.12-75-6784	0.02	5670.09-07-1331	0.41
TOTAL: 1.32 acres			

Table 1.4: Active Agriculture Parcels and Impacted Acreage for Improve Existing (Stecoah)

Parcel Number	Acres within Proposed ROW	Parcel Number	Acres within Proposed ROW
5670.00-68-6157	0.21	5681.00-32-1678	0.05
5670.00-98-3909	0.01	5681.00-43-2139	0.39
5670.09-07-1331	0.44	5681.00-43-9507	0.29
5671.00-70-8046	1.13	5681.00-61-2786	0.12
5680.00-28-6800	1.16	6602.00-02-5585	0.02
5681.00-11-4204	0.32	6602.00-12-4713	0.06
5681.00-11-5446	0.06	6602.00-12-7551	0.01
5681.00-22-0660	0.55		
TOTAL: 4.82 acres			

Table 1.5: Active Agriculture Parcels and Impacted Acreage for S-2

Parcel Number	Acres within Proposed ROW	Parcel Number	Acres within Proposed ROW
5670.00-68-6157	0.21	5681.00-11-5446	0.06
5670.00-98-3909	0.01	5681.00-22-0660	0.55
5670.09-07-1331	0.44	5681.00-32-1678	0.05
5671.00-70-8046	1.13	5681.00-43-2139	0.39
5680.00-28-6800	1.16	5681.00-43-9507	0.29
5681.00-11-4204	0.32	5681.00-61-2786	0.12
TOTAL: 4.73 acres			

Table 1.6: Active Agriculture Parcels and Impacted Acreage for SW-1A

Parcel Number	Acres within Proposed ROW	Parcel Number	Acres within Proposed ROW
5670.00-68-6157	0.21	5681.00-32-1678	0.05
5670.00-98-3909	0.01	5681.00-43-2139	0.39
5670.09-07-1331	0.44	5681.00-43-9507	0.29
5671.00-70-8046	1.13	5681.00-61-2786	0.12
5680.00-28-6800	1.16	6602.00-02-5585	0.02
5681.00-11-4204	0.32	6602.00-12-4713	0.06
5681.00-11-5446	0.06	6602.00-12-7551	0.01
5681.00-22-0660	0.55		
TOTAL: 4.82 acres			

Recommendation

The NCDOT Project Manager should ensure that access is maintained for agricultural equipment and employees and impacts to farmlands (Right-of-Way (ROW), detour routes, accessibility) are either avoided or minimized.

- YES
- NO



<p>BICYCLE, PEDESTRIAN, AND/OR GREENWAY FACILITIES AND ACTIVE TRANSPORTATION</p> <p><u>Presence</u></p> <p>There is one multi-use path, an existing on-road bicycle path, and multiple sidewalks within the DCIA.</p> <p>There is an existing multi-use path around Robbinsville Middle School and Robbinsville High School (Figure 2A). There is an existing on-road bicycle path along NC 143 running eastward into Robbinsville that needs improvement according to the 2015 Graham County Comprehensive Transportation Plan (CTP). Sidewalks are located along the north side of NC 143 from Five Point Road (SR 1275) to US 129 and along both sides of US 129 for about 900 feet to the south of NC 143 and 3,000 feet to the north of NC 143.</p> <p>The CTP recommends the following bicycle and pedestrian improvements: paved shoulders to serve as an on-road bicycle facility on portions of NC 143 and NC 143 Business (Snowbird Road); a pedestrian path along Five Point Road (SR 1275) from US 129 to Robbinsville High School Access Road; a pedestrian path along West Fort Hill Road from Five Point Road (SR 1275) to Graham County Services; and a multi-use path, which would include an on-road bicycle facility, on US 129 from Ford Street to Tallulah Bog Recreation area.</p> <p>The Robbinsville Pedestrian Connectivity Plan & Health Impact Assessment was adopted in July 2013 to address walkability in Robbinsville. A greenway connecting Robbinsville Middle School and Robbinsville High School to planned recreational facilities at a now defunct furniture manufacturing plant was identified as the highest priority in the plan. Other recommendations included: upgrading pedestrian routes along US 129, Main Street, and Circle Street; constructing a greenway along Ford Street; constructing sidewalks along Junaluska Road, Moose Branch, and Atoah Street/Snider Hill Road; and pedestrian shared lane markings on Ward Street. Further recommendations include installing sidewalks along US 129 in Robbinsville and extending the recommended greenway along Tallulah Creek and Ford Street.</p> <p>Reimagine Robbinsville was completed in 2012 to introduce revitalization measures to downtown and recommended a greenway network around Robbinsville Middle and High Schools, which would follow Sweetwater Creek and Cheoah River to Lake Santeetlah.</p> <p>In addition, an e-mail received on March 9, 2020 from a Graham County Commissioner notes a walking group which utilizes NC 28 in Stecoah, from Hyde Town Road to Stecoah Road, and have requested a multi-use path or bike lane. The project team is currently studying the feasibility of this option.</p>	<p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO</p>
<p><u>Impacts</u></p> <p>Improve Existing (Robbinsville): Minimal impacts to bicycle/pedestrian facilities are anticipated. All impacted facilities would be restored after improvements are complete.</p> <p>R-1E Intersection/Roundabout: Minimal impacts to bicycle/pedestrian facilities are anticipated. Construction may temporarily affect bicyclists/pedestrians utilizing sidewalks on the north side of NC 143. All impacted facilities would be restored after improvements are complete.</p> <p>Improve Existing (Stecoah): No impacts to bicycle/pedestrian facilities are anticipated.</p> <p>S-2: No impacts to bicycle/pedestrian facilities are anticipated.</p> <p>SW-1A: No impacts to bicycle/pedestrian facilities are anticipated.</p>	<p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO</p>
<p><u>Recommendation</u></p> <p>The project team will continue coordination with the Town of Robbinsville and NCDOT Division of Bicycle and Pedestrian Transportation to evaluate the necessary level of bicycle/pedestrian access accommodation during construction and to ensure designs incorporate features that best meet the needs of bicyclists and pedestrians. An input form has been sent and any information received following the finalization of this document will be incorporated in the environmental document.</p>	<p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO</p>

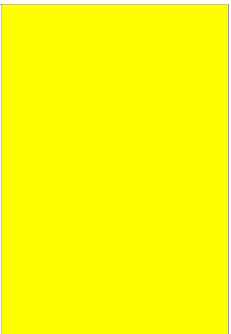
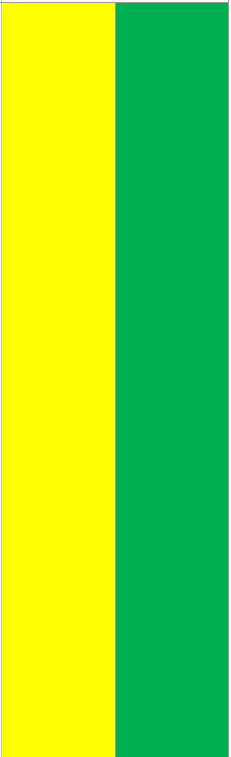


<p>BICYCLE/PEDESTRIAN ACTIVITY</p> <p><u>Presence</u> A planning input form was not received from the Graham County Planning & Economic Development Department. There is one partially removed driveway just east of the Dollar General on NC 143 that may serve as a worn pedestrian path within the DCIA. Bicyclists and pedestrian were not observed within the DCIA during field visits or through preliminary research using Google Earth.</p>		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO
<p><u>Impacts</u></p>	<input type="checkbox"/> YES <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> NO	
<p><u>Recommendation</u> The NCDOT Project Manager should coordinate with the Town of Robbinsville and NCDOT Division of Bicycle and Pedestrian Transportation to ensure designs incorporate features that best meet the needs of bicyclists and pedestrians. Input forms have been, sent and any information received following the finalization of this document will be incorporated in the environmental document.</p>		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO
<p>TRANSIT ROUTES, FACILITIES, AND/OR ACTIVITY</p> <p><u>Presence</u> <i>Are transit routes present in the Direct Community Impact Area? Were buses, transit stops or route signs observed on the site visit? Were any riders observed using or known to use these facilities? Were any of these riders special users?</i> Graham County Transit operates an appointment-based transit shuttle for residents of the county. The shuttle transports residents from their homes to medical centers, shopping centers, and other requested destinations. Typical operating hours are Monday to Friday 5:30am-5:00pm. In addition, the shuttle makes scheduled trips to the Town of Andrews daily during the week and to the Towns of Cherokee and Murphy three days a week.</p>		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO
<p><u>Impacts</u> No permanent impacts to transit routes, facilities, or activities are anticipated with the proposed project. Construction activities will temporarily alter traffic patterns and cause delays for shuttles utilizing R-1E due to the proposed detour required while replacing the bridge on Five Point Road (SR 1275). Impacts associated with all other design options are anticipated to be minor as most of the construction would occur along the existing road or at a new location, so traffic flow would be maintained.</p>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO	
<p><u>Recommendation</u> The NCDOT Project Manager should coordinate with Graham County Transit regarding the program's routes prior to construction to ensure the program can maintain mobility within the DCIA during construction. Any additional information received after the finalization of this document will be incorporated in the environmental document.</p>		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO
<p>COMMUNITY SAFETY FOR BICYCLISTS, PEDESTRIANS, AND TRANSIT USERS</p> <p><u>Presence</u> <i>Are there any existing or perceived security or safety issues in the Direct Community Impact Area, including unsafe bicycle or pedestrian facilities, inadequate lighting, and/or isolated or poorly connected areas?</i> A majority of the DCIA lacks bicycle lanes or pedestrian sidewalks. According to the NCDOT bike and pedestrian crash spatial dataset from 2007 to 2015, the average pedestrian crash rate in Robbinsville is 16.61 crashes per 10,000 residents, compared to North Carolina's rate of 2.95 crashes per 10,000 residents, indicating unsafe pedestrian conditions in Town. The average bicyclist crash rate in Robbinsville is 3.32 per 10,000 residents, compared to North Carolina's rate of 0.92 crashes per 10,000 residents, indicating unsafe bicycle facilities in Town.</p>		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO
<p><u>Impacts</u> <i>Is the project likely to change any existing or perceived security or safety issues?</i> The proposed improvements would provide wider lane widths and paved shoulders in certain locations, which would increase bike/pedestrian safety.</p>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO	



<p><u>Recommendation</u></p> <p>The NCDOT Project Manager should coordinate with the Town of Robbinsville and NCDOT Roadway Design Unit and Bike and Pedestrian Group to ensure designs incorporate features that best meet the needs of bicyclists and pedestrians. Input forms have been, sent and any information received following the finalization of this document will be incorporated in the environmental document.</p>	<p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO</p>
<p>LOCAL AREA PLANS, GOALS, AND DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITY</p> <p><u>Presence</u></p> <p><i>Are there any local area plans, goals, or zoning initiatives specifically affecting the Direct Community Impact Area (e.g. comprehensive plan; corridor or thoroughfare plan; small area plan; long-range growth plan; health impact assessment; etc.)? Has recent development activity occurred in the Direct Community Impact Area and/or are there known plans for public or private development activity in the Direct Community Impact Area?</i></p> <p>The 2015 Graham County Comprehensive Transportation Plan (CTP) was completed to address Graham County’s transportation needs. The plan proposes highway improvements, public transit improvements, and bicycle and pedestrian improvements. Within the DCIA, these improvements include three new park and ride lots, two in Robbinsville and one near the NC 143/NC 28 intersection. The CTP notes STIP A-0009 and recommends improvements between US 129 in Andrews to NC 28 in Stecoah.</p> <p>The Graham County Strategic Tourism Plan Destination 2025 identified goals of maximizing tourism and recreation opportunities, while protecting cultural and natural resources. Strategies for achieving this include extending the length of tourist visits by providing visitors with more opportunities for recreational activities, increasing connectivity throughout the county, and supporting the preservation of natural, historic, and cultural assets.</p>	<p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO</p>
<p><u>Impacts</u></p> <p>The proposed project is consistent with local, regional, and state plans on transportation, land use, and economic development. The project is included in the Graham County CTP and would foster the implementation of local planning efforts related to tourism, walking, and biking.</p>	<p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> CONSISTENT <input type="checkbox"/> PARTLY CONSISTENT, PARTLY INCONSISTENT <input type="checkbox"/> NOT CONSISTENT</p>
<p><u>Recommendation</u></p> <p>An Input Form was not returned from the Graham County Economic Development Director, but coordination is recommended to ensure continued compliance with local plans, regulations, and policies. Any additional information received after the finalization of this document will be incorporated in the environmental document.</p>	<p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO</p>
<p>DRIVEWAYS AND CROSS STREETS</p> <p><u>Presence</u></p> <p>The DCIA is in a primarily rural residential area with local roads traversing the area. Three major routes traverse the DCIA: US 129, NC 143, and NC 28. These roads serve as the major through roads for Graham County. Due to the rural nature of the DCIA, driveways are scattered throughout. The southwest portion of the DCIA contains downtown Robbinsville, and therefore more frequent driveways. Whereas the northeast portion of the DCIA contains rural communities north of NC 28 near Stecoah.</p> <p>Major intersections include NC 143 crossing US 129 in Robbinsville and NC 28 near Stecoah. NC 28 links Stecoah with the Fontana Lake area and provides connectivity to Tennessee. US 129 links Robbinsville with the Lake Santeetlah area and provides connectivity to Tennessee. Additional intersections along NC 143, including Five Point Road (SR 1275) and Pin Hook Road (SR 1220), are found in the DCIA. Most of the side roads lead to rural residential or agricultural destinations.</p>	<p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO</p>



<p><u>Impacts</u> <i>Is the project likely to result in access or accessibility impacts to driveways and cross streets?</i></p> <p>Impacts to driveways have been analyzed from a high-level perspective. Detailed investigations into driveway tie-ins will be conducted during final design.</p> <p>R-1E: Driveway access to one residence will be impacted. Improve Existing (Stecoah): Driveway access to one residence will be impacted. S-2: Driveway access to two residences will be impacted. SW-1A: Driveway access to two residences and a barn will be impacted.</p>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO	
<p><u>Recommendation</u></p> <p>The NCDOT Project Manager should coordinate with affected residents and businesses to ensure access is maintained during and following construction.</p>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO	
<p>BUSINESS AND ECONOMIC RESOURCES AND TRANSPORTATION ACTIVITY</p> <p><u>Presence</u></p> <p>Trucks utilize National Highway System routes US 129, NC 143, and NC 28 for freight and delivery services into and out of Graham County. Because these roads are the only arterials in the county, industrial traffic must utilize these roads to travel through Graham County. According to the NCDOT North Carolina Truck Network, NC 143 is a designated route for approved Surface Transportation Assistance Act (STAA) Vehicles. The NCDOT Guidelines and Procedures for STAA vehicles govern the movement of trucks and trailers with specific combinations, lengths, or widths.</p> <p>Businesses along Robbinsville’s Main Street and US 129 include local restaurants, fast food restaurants, auto part stores, gas stations, markets, hotels, and several government-owned facilities, including Graham County Sheriff, Graham County Travel and Tourism information center, Graham County Courthouse and Graham County Department of Public Health.</p> <p>US 129, NC 143, and NC 28 have impaired mobility and constrained freight movement for heavy vehicles due to combination of steep grades and tight curves.</p>		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO
<p><u>Impacts</u></p> <p>Access to area businesses would be maintained during construction. Improve Existing (Robbinsville): One business relocation anticipated: Robbinsville Pharmacy. R-1E Intersection/Roundabout: Seven business relocations anticipated: Five Point Motel, Five Point Storage, Mini Storage, NCDOT Maintenance Yard, Mountain Energy, Lovin Apartment Rentals, and Dollar General. Construction has the potential to alter traffic patterns and increase travel time to businesses along this design option due to the detour required during replacement of the bridge on Five Point Road (SR 1275). Improve Existing (Stecoah): Four business relocations anticipated: Smith Carpet, Adams Contracting Co., Crisp Used Cars, and a service garage. S-2: Three business relocations anticipated: Smith Carpet, Adams Contracting Co., and Crisp Used Cars. SW-1A: Four business relocations anticipated: Smith Carpet, Adams Contracting Co., Crisp Used Cars, and a service garage.</p> <p>The improve existing designs would include improvements to steep grades, narrow lane widths, and sharp curves on US 129, NC 143, and NC 28 to meet current AASHTO guidelines. New location sections on S-2, SW-1A, R-1E Intersection, and R-1E Roundabout would include the improvements listed above according to AASHTO guidelines. All design options include passing/climbing lanes where needed. These improvements would have a positive impact on freight movement for heavy vehicles in the DCIA.</p>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO	



<p><u>Recommendation</u></p> <p>Due to the potential business relocations for all design options, public involvement should include outreach to business owners in the DCIA.</p>	<p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO</p>
<p>EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT SERVICES (EMS) OPERATIONS</p> <p><u>Presence</u></p> <p><i>Did the EMS local official note any emergency services operations within the Direct Community Impact Area that may be affected by the project, such as stations or corridors that are primary response routes?</i></p> <p>EMS services located within the DCIA include the Graham County Fire Department, Graham County Sheriff, and Stecoah Fire Department. The Graham County Fire Department is located at 70 West Fort Hill Road. This station serves the six-mile district around Robbinsville including the Towns of Robbinsville and Lake Santeetlah and can be viewed in Figure 2A. The Stecoah Fire Department is located at 30 Lloyd and Lydia Drive in Robbinsville (Figures 2B-2C). This department provides rescue in all levels including EMS transport and EMS training. Graham County Sheriff is located at 300 Rodney Orr Bypass in Robbinsville (Figure 2A).</p> <p>Graham County Emergency Services Director stated US 129, NC 143, and NC 28 are the primary routes used when transporting individuals to surrounding hospitals, including Swain Community Hospital, Harris Regional Hospital, Asheville Memorial Hospital, and Cherokee Indian Hospital. These hospitals are all located outside of Graham County, east of the DCIA.</p> <p>Previous communication with local officials has indicated emergency medical service response times are frequently affected by the lack of mobility and reliability of the transportation network within the DCIA. Rockslides and winter weather cause road closures within the DCIA, and without an additional road network this has resulted in the loss of life.</p> <p>There are two helipads in Graham County which transport patients to the University of Tennessee-Knoxville Medical Center or Mission Hospital in Asheville, the two closest trauma centers. Erlanger Life Force has a helicopter in Andrews 10 air minutes away. UT-Knoxville has several helicopters based 15 minutes away. Mission Hospital's helicopter in Franklin has a 12-minute flight time. Heart attack and stroke patients are high priority for airlifts when a helicopter is available. If not, an ambulance could be out of service a half day or longer transporting patients to hospitals (Daily Reflector, 2019).</p>	<p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/> NO RESPONSE</p>
<p><u>Impacts</u></p> <p>Although construction activities have the potential to create temporary delays that could increase emergency response times, the proposed project would ultimately have a beneficial effect by allowing emergency response services the ability to pass slower moving vehicles; tractors or other farm equipment on the roadway; accidents; and other obstructions such as fallen rock/landslides.</p> <p>S-2 and SW-1A tunnels would be monitored 24-hours/day via close-circuit television and equipped with emergency response features, which include non-vehicular access every 1,000 feet, an emergency response plan, a gate system to close tunnels during emergencies, a fixed water system, and various other features, therefore improving upon safety in the DCIA.</p> <p>R-1E Intersection and R-1E Roundabout could create response time delays associated with closing Five Point Road (SR 1275) during construction. The Graham County Fire Department is located off Five Point Road (SR 1275) and would be required to travel 0.75 miles to access US 129 when Five Point Road (SR 1275) is closed.</p> <p>The improve existing design options include improvements to steep grades, narrow lane widths, and sharp curves on US 129, NC 143, and NC 28 to meet current AASHTO guidelines. New location/access sections on S-2, SW-1A, R-1E Intersection, and R-1E Roundabout would include the improvements listed above according to AASHTO guidelines. All design options in Stecoah also include passing and climbing lanes throughout. These improvements would facilitate</p>	<p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/> NO RESPONSE</p> <div style="background-color: yellow; width: 100%; height: 100%;"></div> <div style="background-color: green; width: 100%; height: 100%;"></div>



<p>safer travel and improved mobility throughout the DCIA, allowing for quicker EMS response times and improved health conditions as a result. Hotspots identified by locals as having steep grades, narrow widths and sharp curves can be seen on Figures 2A-2C.</p>			
<p><u>Recommendation</u> Coordination with Graham County EMS is recommended during construction to ensure EMS access and acceptable response times throughout the DCIA. Measures to minimize this effect should be evaluated, primarily in the form of an offsite detour that utilizes US 129 and NC 143.</p>		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO	
<p>SCHOOL BUS ROUTES <u>Presence</u> Graham County Schools operate three buses with 12 trips daily in the DCIA.</p>		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/> NO RESPONSE	
<p><u>Impacts</u> While an input form received from the Graham County Director of Transportation noted the project would have a high impact, no details were provided and minimal impacts to school bus routes are anticipated from the proposed project. Because there are homes on Five Point Road (SR 1275), closing of this road during construction would affect bus routes. Although construction activities have the potential to temporarily cause delays, the proposed improvements would increase overall mobility in the project area and therefore improve travel time for school buses.</p>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/> NO RESPONSE		
<p><u>Recommendation</u> Coordination with Graham County Schools is recommended during project development and construction to ensure access to bus stops and bus routes in the DCIA. Any additional information received after the finalization of this document will be incorporated in the environmental document.</p>		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO	
<p>COMMUNITY RESOURCES <u>Presence</u> There are eight churches located in the DCIA:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Liberty Missionary Church, located at 300 Five Point Road (SR 1275) in Robbinsville, hosts a Sunday morning service. In addition to this, they provide free meals to the community on Wednesday evenings (Figure 2A). • Old Mother Church, located on Old Mother Church Road in Robbinsville, was founded in 1872 and is Graham County’s oldest church (Figure 2A). • Robbinsville United Methodist, located at 249 West Fort Hill Road in Robbinsville, hosts Sunday morning service and Sunday School in addition to Wednesday morning bible study (Figure 2A). • Grace-Mountainside Lutheran, located at 129 South Main Street in Robbinsville, hosts Sunday morning service (Figure 2A). • First Baptist Church, located at 101 Church Street in Robbinsville, hosts Sunday morning service, in addition to Sunday School (Figure 2A). • Sweetwater Baptist is located at 98 Beech Creek Road (Figure 2A). • Stecoah Baptist Church, located at 89 Hyde Town Road in Stecoah, hosts Sunday morning and Wednesday evening service, in addition to bible study groups (Figures 2B-2C). • Dry Creek Baptist Church is located on Dry Creek Road (Figure 2C) hosts Sunday morning services.. <p>There are two schools in the DCIA: Robbinsville Middle School with an enrollment of approximately 200 students and Robbinsville High School with an enrollment of approximately 350 students. The schools share a campus at 301 Sweetwater Road and can be viewed in Figure 2A.</p>		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO	



<p>There are seven cemeteries located within the DCIA:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Old Mother Church Road on Old Mother Church Road in Robbinsville (Figure 2A) • Holloway Cemetery on Denton Farm Road (Figure 2A) • Rice Cemetery on Rice Ridge Road (Figure 2A) • Hazie Brown Cemetery in Stecoah (Figures 2B-2C) • Jenkins Cemetery on Hyde Town Road (Figures 2B-2C) • Randolph Cemetery on Lower Stecoah Road (Figures 2B-2C) • Edwards Cemetery on Lower Stecoah Road (Figures 2B-2C) <p>Graham County Courthouse, located at 12 North Main Street, is listed on the National Register of Historic Places and serves as a memorial to veterans. The courthouse hosts community events, such as “Music on the Square” and houses the governmental departments for Graham County (recreation, economic development, Board of Commissioners, etc.). A new courthouse is planned along West Fort Hill Road. Both of these resources can be viewed in Figure 2A.</p> <p>The Graham County Travel and Tourism Office is located at 474 Rodney Orr Bypass in Robbinsville and can be viewed in Figure 2A. It serves as a tourist information center for visitors looking for recreation and other outdoor activities.</p> <p>Robbinsville Town Hall is located at 4 Court Street in Robbinsville and can be viewed in Figure 2A. It provides residents with a place to access the Town Council, ask administrative questions or report a water problem to the Water District Department.</p> <p>Stecoah Valley Center is located at 121 School House Road and functions as a multi-use cultural center that promotes the preservation of Southern Appalachian mountain culture. They host community service campaigns, after-school programs, concerts, craft classes, Cherokee Language classes, a large art gallery and traditional music programs. The art gallery serves as a visitors center to guide tourists to lodging, dining and recreational options in the area. This resource can be viewed in Figures 2B-2C.</p>		
<p>Impacts <i>Is the project likely to impact identified community resources, either directly or by affecting user access?</i></p> <p>R-1E Intersection/Roundabout: Will impact a building at First Baptist Church and a storage shed at Liberty Missionary Baptist Church.</p>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO	
<p>Recommendation</p> <p>The NCDOT Project Manager should coordinate with Graham County, the Town of Robbinsville, local churches and other community resources within the DCIA prior to construction to ensure that access is maintained during construction.</p>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO	
<p>COMMUNITY COHESION</p> <p>Presence</p> <p>Community cohesion exists throughout the DCIA, as largely manifested during ongoing public involvement. Most notably, the Stecoah Heights community, located along Stecoah Heights Road, requested a meeting with NCDOT staff August 2019 to voice opposition to the S-2 design option. There is a common value placed upon natural resources and the mountain environment by the community. Local officials and the public have placed an emphasis on maintaining the area’s natural environment and minimizing environmental impacts. The Stecoah Heights community has also voiced concerns over impacts to the environment and community connectivity.</p> <p>In addition, as noted in the Bicycle, Pedestrian, and/or Greenway Facilities and Active Transportation section above, an e-mail received on March 9, 2020 from a Graham County Commissioner notes a walking group which utilizes NC 28 in Stecoah, from Hyde Town Road to Stecoah Road, and have requested a multi-use path or bike lane. The project team is currently studying the feasibility of this option.</p>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO	



<p>Impacts</p> <p><i>Is the project likely to alter the overall functioning of an identifiable district (e.g. interactions between, or isolation of, persons and groups; or change in the physical makeup of the community)? Is the project likely to disrupt connections between neighborhoods and commercial, recreational, institutional and employment facilities and/or areas?</i></p> <p>Design option S-2 would bisect the Stecoah Heights community, placing a physical barrier in the community and thereby disrupting community cohesion. No impacts to community cohesion are associated with the other design options.</p> <p>Because the majority of Graham County consists of US Forest Service property, there are limited housing options available for residential relocations. Relocating residents outside of the area could potentially impact individual livelihood and community cohesion.</p>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO	
<p>Recommendation</p> <p>The NCDOT Project Manager should continue coordination with the Stecoah Heights community throughout the project development process to evaluate opportunities to maintain community cohesion should S-2 be selected as part of the Preferred Alternative.</p>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO	
<p>COMMUNITY HEALTH</p> <p>Presence</p> <p>As noted previously, notable community health characteristics in Graham County include a lower average pedestrian and bicyclist crash rate when compared to North Carolina according to the NCDOT Pedestrian and Bicycle Crash Tool.</p> <p>The Robbinsville Pedestrian Connectivity Plan & Health Impact Assessment identified heart disease as the leading cause of death in Graham County. Heart disease rates in Graham County were above the North Carolina average. Diabetes and obesity are prevalent problems in Graham County. According to the Plan, these rates could be significantly reduced if individuals take part in regular physical activity, which can be encouraged using sidewalk or greenway connectivity in residential and commercial areas. However, according to County Health Rankings & Roadmaps, 100% of the population in Graham County has adequate access to physical opportunities.</p> <p>Additional details on community health can be found in the Health Indicators Table in Appendix E.</p>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO	
<p>Impacts</p> <p>The proposed project will replace sidewalks being impacted by the Improve Existing option in Robbinsville in their current location.</p>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO	
<p>Recommendation</p> <p>It is recommended during final design, the NCDOT Project Manager coordinate with local officials to evaluate bike and pedestrian improvements for the preferred alternative.</p>	<input type="checkbox"/> YES <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> NO	
<p>AREA/COMMUNITY CONCERNS</p> <p>Presence</p> <p><i>Are there any known community concerns or controversy relative to the project? If concerns were voiced during Public Involvement activities, please attach the relevant comment sheets or meeting comment summary in the Appendix.</i></p> <p>This project (A-0009 A, B, C) was first studied in the 1960s; however, due to opposition from environmental groups and the public, the project has paused off and on over the years. The project was reinitiated in September 2015 with a new approach. The public meetings, held in February 2019, raised concerns over new location sections and the impacts it would cause to environmental resources and residences. As a result of feedback from the public meetings, two new location scenarios through Tipton, T-1 and T-4, were dropped from further study. These new location scenarios from Robbinsville to Andrews will be studied as part of a separate NCDOT STIP Project, A-0009A. The comment summary from these public meetings can be found in Appendix F.</p>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO	



<p>67% of Graham County residents that are employed commute to jobs outside of the county. Approximately 1,000 jobs in Graham County employ residents from other counties, with most commuting from Cherokee County. Residents have expressed concerns over the lack of job opportunities within the county.</p> <p>The majority of roads in Graham County are two lanes with an inability to pass slower vehicles over substantial distances (up to 19 miles). Reliability of two-lane roadways within the DCIA is frequently impaired by blockage or disruption due to winter weather, heavy fog, washouts, landslides, fallen trees, traffic incidents, vehicle breakdowns, or slow moving vehicles. Such situations adversely affect travel time as vehicles are not able to pass during these conditions. Roadway blockage is a severe safety hazard for EMS vehicles during emergencies.</p> <p>The DCIA includes a section of the Trail of Tears, which crosses existing US 129 just south of downtown Robbinsville (see Figure 2A). The Trail of Tears marks the 800-mile trail utilized during the Cherokee removal process in 1838 to “forcibly evict more than 16,000 homelands in Tennessee, Alabama, North Carolina, and Georgia.”³ Archaeological surveys are being completed to confirm the exact location and extent of the Trail of Tears and to identify additional resources. In addition, the following tribes have been invited to be consulting parties and provide input on tribal resources: Cherokee Nation, Muscogee Creek Nation, United Keetoowah Band of Cherokee Indians, Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians, and Catawba Indian Nation.</p>	
<p>Impacts <i>Is the project likely to be incompatible with or not address community concerns?</i></p> <p>The proposed project improvements would increase reliability and mobility within the DCIA with new location segments and the addition of passing and climbing lanes, therefore providing a positive impact on the above community concerns regarding mobility and reliability. S-2, SW-1A, R-1E Intersection, and R-1E Roundabout contain new location/access segments which would provide redundancy in the road network that could serve as an alternate route should the existing road network experience a closure.</p> <p>Improve Existing Robbinsville, R-1E Intersection, and R-1E Roundabout will impact the Trail of Tears at its existing crossing with US 129, which is approximately 650 feet south of the Five Point Road (SR 1275)/US 129 intersection. As noted previously, archaeology surveys are currently being completed to determine the location and extent of the Trail of Tears.</p> <p>The S-2 and SW-1A western tunnel portals exit on an EBCI Tribal land parcel on NC 143 just west of Stecoah Gap. Coordination with Tribal representatives is ongoing to determine the extent of impacts to Tribal land.</p>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO <div style="background-color: green; width: 50px; height: 100px; display: inline-block; vertical-align: middle;"></div> <div style="background-color: yellow; width: 50px; height: 100px; display: inline-block; vertical-align: middle; margin-left: 10px;"></div>
<p>Recommendation</p> <p>Due to community concerns, it is recommended that the NCDOT Project Manager continue public outreach that incorporates the necessary local stakeholders and is in accordance with all necessary FHWA and NCDOT guidelines.</p>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO
<p>OTHER IMPACTS <i>Are there any other potential impacts associated with the project?</i></p>	<input type="checkbox"/> YES <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> NO
<p>Recommendation</p>	<input type="checkbox"/> YES <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> NO

³ National Park Service. Trail of Tears. “History & Culture”. 2019. <https://www.nps.gov/trte/learn/historyculture/index.htm>. Web accessed: 12/06/2019.



<p>RECURRING EFFECTS</p> <p><u>Impacts</u> <i>Is the project likely to result in recurring effects on any populations and communities within the Direct Community Impact Area?</i></p>	<input type="checkbox"/> YES <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> NO	
<p><u>Recommendation</u></p>		<input type="checkbox"/> YES <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> NO
<p>ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE (EJ) AND TITLE VI POPULATIONS</p> <p><u>Presence</u> <i>Are there any populations living in the Demographic Study Area that meet the criteria for Environmental Justice and/or Title VI? If so, note which groups are present (check all that apply):</i> <input type="checkbox"/> Minority <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Low-Income <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Title VI (non-EJ)</p> <p>Census data indicates a notable presence of low-income populations meeting the criteria for Environmental Justice within the Demographic Study Area (DSA), and low-income communities were observed within the DCIA during the field visit.</p> <p>21.3% of the population in Census Tract 92.01 Block Group 1 and 29.5% of the population in Census Tract 92.03 Block Group 3 is considered low income, compared to Graham County's overall rate of 15.8%.</p> <p>A notable presence of elderly communities were observed in the DCIA during the field visit.</p>	<input type="checkbox"/> Not present according to Census data and observation/local input <input type="checkbox"/> Present: Census data indicates presence but there is no observation/local input to confirm <input type="checkbox"/> Present: Census data does not indicate presence but communities were observed <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Present according to Census and communities were observed	
<p><u>Impacts</u> Adverse community impacts, primarily in the form of relocations, are anticipated with this project but affect all populations equivalently. Benefits and burdens resulting from the project are anticipated to be equitably distributed throughout the Demographic Study Area (DSA). Impacts to low-income populations would not be disproportionately high and adverse. No disparate impacts are anticipated under Title VI and related statutes.</p> <p>Improve Existing (Robbinsville): No anticipated residential relocations. R-1E Intersection/Roundabout: One anticipated residential relocation. Improve Existing (Stecoah): 14 anticipated residential relocations. S-2: 22 anticipated residential relocations. SW-1A: 13 anticipated residential relocations.</p>	<input type="checkbox"/> No impacts; no EJ or Title VI population present <input type="checkbox"/> No impacts; EJ and/or Title VI population present <input type="checkbox"/> Community Impacts; no EJ or Title VI population present <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Impacts; EJ and/or Title VI population present; "No" finding <input type="checkbox"/> Impacts; EJ and/or Title VI population present; "Yes" finding	
<p><u>Recommendation</u> Public involvement and outreach activities must ensure full and fair participation of all potentially affected communities in the transportation decision-making process.</p> <p>NCDOT should ensure in the final design process that Preferred Alternative does not create disproportionately high and adverse impacts to low-income populations.</p>		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO
<p>LIMITED ENGLISH PROFICIENCY [LEP] OR LANGUAGE ASSISTANCE [LA] POPULATIONS</p> <p><u>Presence</u></p>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No LEP or LA <input type="checkbox"/> No LEP, but LA population is present <input type="checkbox"/> LEP population present <input type="checkbox"/> [and LA population present]	
<p><u>Recommendation</u></p>		<input type="checkbox"/> YES <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> NO
ADDITIONAL COMMUNITY CHARACTERISTICS		
<p>NOTABLE POPULATION GROWTH OR DECLINE</p> <p><u>Presence</u> <i>Has the DSA experienced notable population growth or decline in recent years? If the average annualized DSA population growth is higher than 1.5%, note the growth in the county and how it compares.</i> <input type="checkbox"/> Decline <input type="checkbox"/> Greater than 1.5% annual growth (in DSA)</p>		<input type="checkbox"/> YES <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> NO



<p>STIP PROJECTS</p> <p><u>Presence</u></p> <p>In addition to the current project, there are four funded STIP projects nearby or within the DCIA, and include STIP Projects R-2822B, U-5866, R-5839BA, and BR-0076, and one unfunded STIP Project within the DCIA, R-5839E.</p> <p><i>STIP Project U-5866</i>, located in the DCIA, proposes the construction of a new route from US 129 to Robbinsville Middle and High Schools, including the construction of a bridge over Cheoah River. Right-of-way acquisition has occurred and construction is currently underway.</p> <p><i>STIP Project R-2822B</i>, located approximately two miles west of the DCIA, proposes improvements to NC 143 from West Buffalo Creek to NC 143 Business (Snowbird Road). Right-of-way acquisition is planned for 2021 and construction is planned for 2024. The project is estimated to cost \$26,835,000.</p> <p><i>STIP Project R-5839BA</i>, located approximately six miles northwest of the DCIA, proposes upgrading NC 28 from the Swain/Graham County line at Little Tennessee River to Woods Road at Fontana Dam Village. Right-of-way acquisition is planned for 2022 and construction is planned for 2025. The project is estimated to cost \$89,882,000. <i>STIP Project BR-0076</i>, located approximately seven miles northwest of the DCIA, proposes replacing Bridge 370090 on NC 28 over the Little Tennessee River as a part of STIP Project R-5839.</p> <p><i>STIP Project, R-5839E</i>, which is currently unfunded, falls within the DCIA and proposes upgrading NC 28 from SR 1242 (Lower Tuskegee Road) to NC 143.</p>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO
<p>TRAFFIC GENERATING FACILITY OR NODE</p> <p><u>Presence</u></p> <p>The road network within the DCIA serves residential and commercial traffic that utilizes US 129, NC 143, and NC 28 to navigate the DCIA and travel west into Cherokee County and Tennessee and east to Asheville. These routes serve as the only connection to major hospitals in the region.</p> <p>Robbinsville Middle and High Schools, as well as downtown restaurants, generate substantial traffic in the area . Local officials noted that students often use the walking trails and sidewalks near the high school to access nearby restaurants.</p>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO
<p>ADDITIONAL RECOMMENDATIONS</p>	
<p>EVALUATE ALTERNATIVE(S) THAT UTILIZE A TEMPORARY ON-SITE DETOUR</p> <p>R-1E Intersection/Roundabout may require a detour while replacing the existing bridge on Five Point Road (SR 1275); however, the site is too constrained to construct a temporary onsite detour without creating permanent impacts to adjacent land uses. US 129 and NC 143 can function as an offsite detour during bridge replacement.</p>	<input type="checkbox"/> YES <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> NO
<p>EVALUATE ALTERNATIVE CONSTRUCTION WORK SCHEDULES</p> <p>Since a majority of the project will be constructed along existing facilities, an alternate work schedule for construction activities would provide better traffic maintenance during peak hours.</p>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO
<p>OTHER RECOMMENDATIONS</p>	<input type="checkbox"/> YES <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> NO



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APPENDIX ITEMS

- A. Summary of Demographics Used in Tabular Form
- B. Site Photographs
- C. Local Official Input Forms
- D. Preliminary Screening of Farmland Conversion Impacts
- E. Health Indicators Table
- F. Other Information



APPENDIX A: SUMMARY OF DEMOGRAPHICS USED IN TABULAR FORM**Minority**

Geography	Total Population	White, Non-Hispanic		Minority Population*		Meets Thresholds	
		#	%	#	%	50%	10% over County
CT 9201, BG 1	1,009	959	95.0%	50	5.0%	No	No
CT 9201, BG 2	1,540	1,511	98.1%	29	1.9%	No	No
CT 9202, BG 1	1,568	1,416	90.3%	152	9.7%	No	No
CT 9202, BG 2	1,194	1,194	100.0%	-	0.0%	No	No
CT 9203, BG 3	619	508	82.1%	111	17.9%	No	No
DSA	5,930	5,588	94.2%	342	5.8%	No	N/A
Robbinsville town	514	403	78.4%	111	21.6%		
Graham County	8,607	7,519	87.4%	1,088	12.6%		
North Carolina	10,052,564	6,397,460	63.6%	3,655,104	36.4%		

* Minority population includes all races that are Non-White and Hispanic populations that are also White.

Source: US Census Bureau, American Community Survey 5-year Estimates (2013-2017), Table B03002, "Hispanic or Latino Origin by Race."



Race

Geography	Total Population	White		Black or African American		American Indian and Alaska Native Alone		Asian		Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander		Some Other Race		Two or More Races		Total Non-White	
		#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
CT 9201, BG 1	1,009	959	95.0%	-	0.0%	50	5.0%	-	0.0%	-	0.0%	-	0.0%	-	0.0%	50	5.0%
CT 9201, BG 2	1,540	1,517	98.5%	-	0.0%	-	0.0%	-	0.0%	-	0.0%	-	0.0%	23	1.5%	23	1.5%
CT 9202, BG 1	1,568	1,416	90.3%	-	0.0%	152	9.7%	-	0.0%	-	0.0%	-	0.0%	-	0.0%	152	9.7%
CT 9202, BG 2	1,194	1,194	100.0%	-	0.0%	-	0.0%	-	0.0%	-	0.0%	-	0.0%	-	0.0%	-	0.0%
CT 9203, BG 3	619	554	89.5%	5	0.8%	26	4.2%	-	0.0%	2	0.3%	32	5.2%	-	0.0%	65	10.5%
DSA	5,930	5,640	95.1%	5	0.1%	228	3.8%	-	0.0%	2	0.0%	32	0.5%	23	0.4%	290	4.9%
Robbinsville town	514	449	87.4%	5	1.0%	26	5.1%	-	0.0%	2	0.4%	32	6.2%	-	0.0%	65	12.6%
Graham County	8,607	7,585	88.1%	14	0.2%	916	10.6%	-	0.0%	2	0.0%	32	0.4%	58	0.7%	1,022	11.9%
North Carolina	10,052,564	6,937,466	69.0%	2,159,427	21.5%	117,998	1.2%	269,164	2.7%	6,393	0.1%	310,920	3.1%	251,196	2.5%	3,115,098	31.0%

Source: US Census Bureau, American Community Survey 5-year Estimates (2013-2017), Table B02001, "Race."



Hispanic or Latino Population

Geography	Total Population	Hispanic		Not Hispanic	
		#	%	#	%
CT 9201, BG 1	1,009	-	0.0%	1,009	100.0%
CT 9201, BG 2	1,540	6	0.4%	1,534	99.6%
CT 9202, BG 1	1,568	-	0.0%	1,568	100.0%
CT 9202, BG 2	1,194	-	0.0%	1,194	100.0%
CT 9203, BG 3	619	78	12.6%	541	87.4%
DSA	5,930	84	1.4%	5,846	98.6%
Robbinsville town	514	78	15.2%	436	84.8%
Graham County	8,607	98	1.1%	8,509	98.9%
North Carolina	10,052,564	914,792	9.1%	9,137,772	90.9%

Source: US Census Bureau, American Community Survey 5-year Estimates (2013-2017), Table B03002, "Hispanic or Latino Origin by Race."



Poverty

Geography	Population for whom Poverty Status is Determined	Below Poverty Level		Under 50% of Poverty Level		Between 100% and 149% of Poverty Level		Meets Thresholds	
		#	%	#	%	#	%	25%	5% over County
CT 9201, BG 1	1,009	246	24.4%	99	9.8%	215	21.3%	No	Yes
CT 9201, BG 2	1,540	56	3.6%	21	1.4%	170	11.0%	No	No
CT 9202, BG 1	1,534	261	17.0%	38	2.5%	210	13.7%	No	No
CT 9202, BG 2	1,194	205	17.2%	18	1.5%	162	13.6%	No	No
CT 9203, BG 3	606	154	25.4%	57	9.4%	179	29.5%	Yes	Yes
DSA	5,883	922	15.7%	233	4.0%	936	15.9%	No	N/A
Robbinsville town	501	133	26.5%	57	11.4%	179	35.7%		
Graham County	8,459	1,606	19.0%	626	7.4%	1,333	15.8%		
North Carolina	9,783,738	1,579,871	16.1%	688,118	7.0%	1,016,581	10.4%		

Source: US Census Bureau, American Community Survey 5-year Estimates (2013-2017), Table C17002, "Ratio of Income to Poverty Level in the Past 12 Months."



Zero-Car Households

Geography	Occupied Housing Units	No Vehicle Available		One Vehicle Available		Two or More Vehicles Available	
		#	%	#	%	#	%
CT 9201, BG 1	448	31	6.9%	118	26.3%	299	66.7%
CT 9201, BG 2	598	16	2.7%	184	30.8%	398	66.6%
CT 9202, BG 1	474	9	1.9%	80	16.9%	385	81.2%
CT 9202, BG 2	583	21	3.6%	257	44.1%	305	52.3%
CT 9203, BG 3	279	86	30.8%	84	30.1%	109	39.1%
DSA	2,382	163	6.8%	723	30.4%	1,496	62.8%
Robbinsville town	233	65	27.9%	73	31.3%	95	40.8%
Graham County	3,303	205	6.2%	1,003	30.4%	2,095	63.4%
North Carolina	3,874,346	235,559	6.1%	1,245,407	32.1%	2,393,380	61.8%

Source: US Census Bureau, American Community Survey 5-year Estimates (2013-2017), Table B25044, "Tenure by Vehicles Available."



Limited English Proficiency

Geography	Total Adult Population, 18 years and older	Primary Language Group of Persons Who Speak English Less than Very Well								Meets Thresholds	
		Spanish		Other Indo-Euro		Asian/Pacific		Other		LEP	LA
		#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%		
CT 9201, BG 1	792	-	0.0%	-	0.0%	-	0.0%	-	0.0%	N/A	No
CT 9201, BG 2	1,320	-	0.0%	-	0.0%	-	0.0%	-	0.0%	N/A	No
CT 9202, BG 1	1,107	-	0.0%	-	0.0%	-	0.0%	-	0.0%	N/A	No
CT 9202, BG 2	1,004	-	0.0%	-	0.0%	-	0.0%	-	0.0%	N/A	No
CT 9203, BG 3	514	40	7.8%	-	0.0%	2	0.4%	-	0.0%	N/A	No
DSA	4,737	40	0.8%	-	0.0%	2	0.0%	-	0.0%	No	N/A
Robbinsville town	418	40	9.6%	-	0.0%	2	0.5%	-	0.0%		
Graham County	6,789	54	0.8%	-	0.0%	11	0.2%	10	0.1%		
North Carolina	7,762,882	274,705	3.5%	39,930	0.5%	58,782	0.8%	14,471	0.2%		

Source: US Census Bureau, American Community Survey 5-year Estimates (2013-2017), Table B16004, "Age by Language Spoken at Home by Ability to Speak English for the Population 5 Years and Over."



Population Change, 2000 to 2010

Geography 2010	Census 2000 Population	Census 2010 Population	Difference	Percent Change	Annualized Growth Rate
CT 9201, BG 1	972	971	(1)	-0.1%	0.0%
CT 9201, BG 2	1,000	1,226	226	22.6%	2.1%
CT 9202, BG 2	1,387	1,637	250	18.0%	1.7%
CT 9203, BG 3	984	875	(109)	-11.1%	-1.2%
CT 9202, BG 1	1,012	1,232	220	21.7%	2.0%
DSA	5,355	5,941	586	10.9%	1.0%
Robbinsville town	747	620	(127)	-17.0%	-1.8%
Graham County	7,993	8,861	868	10.9%	1.0%
North Carolina	8,049,313	9,535,483	1,486,170	18.5%	1.7%

Steven Manson, Jonathan Schroeder, David Van Riper, and Steven Ruggles. IPUMS National Historical Geographic Information System: Version 13.0 [Database]. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota. 2018. <http://doi.org/10.18128/D050.V13.0> Census 2000/Census 2010 Time Series Tables Geographically Standardized



APPENDIX B: SITE PHOTOGRAPHS



Figure 1: Old Mother Cemetery



Figure 2: Old Mother Church



Figure 3: Robbinsville High and Middle School building



Figure 4: Robbinsville Town Hall



Figure 5: Graham County Courthouse



Figure 6: Viewpoint at Stecoah Gap



Figure 7: Five Point and NC 143 intersection, looking west



Figure 8: Stecoah Valley Cultural Arts Center

APPENDIX C: LOCAL OFFICIAL INPUT FORMS**LOCAL EMS**

Name:	Larry Hembree	
Title:	Director	
Agency:	Graham County Emergency Services	
Phone:	828-479-7967	
Email:	larry.hembree@grahamcounty.org	
FIRST CONTACT DATE	METHOD(S)	RESULT
06/18/2019	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Email <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Phone <input type="checkbox"/> In-person	<input type="checkbox"/> Form returned on (date) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Interview on 07/22/2019 <input type="checkbox"/> No response Comments:

LOCAL PLANNER

Name:	Sophia Paulos	
Title:	Economic Development Director	
Agency:	Graham County	
Phone:	828-479-7984	
Email:	sophia.paulos@grahamcounty.org	
FIRST CONTACT DATE	METHOD(S)	RESULT
06/18/2019	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Email <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Phone <input type="checkbox"/> In-person	<input type="checkbox"/> Form returned on (date) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview on (date) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No response Comments: Continued contact attempts on 07/22/2019, 08/06/2019, 10/17/2019 Last contact attempt: 12/16/2019

LOCAL SCHOOLS

Name:	Chris McClung	
Title:	Director of Transportation	
Agency:	Graham County Schools Transportation	
Phone:	828-479-9856	
Email:	bus@graham.k12.nc.us	
FIRST CONTACT DATE	METHOD(S)	RESULT
06/18/2019	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Email <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Phone <input type="checkbox"/> In-person	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Form returned on 03/25/20 <input type="checkbox"/> Interview on (date) <input type="checkbox"/> No response Comments:



Local EMS Input Form

**NC Department of Transportation Community Studies Group, Human Environment Section
Local EMS Input Form for
STIP Project A-0009 COMMUNITY CHARACTERISTICS REPORT**

Contact Information

Interviewee Name: Larry Hembree

Date:

Title/Position: Director

Phone Number: 828-479-7967

Organization/Agency: Graham County Emergency Services

Email: larry.hembree@grahamcounty.org

Completed Via: Email Phone

Interview Information/Instructions

Using the project information and map below, please respond to the following questions by typing your answers in the space provided. Then save (using the **Save As** command) this file with a new file name for your records and e-mail the **new** file back to the original sender. If you would prefer to complete a hard copy of this form, please send all sheets to the address or email address below:

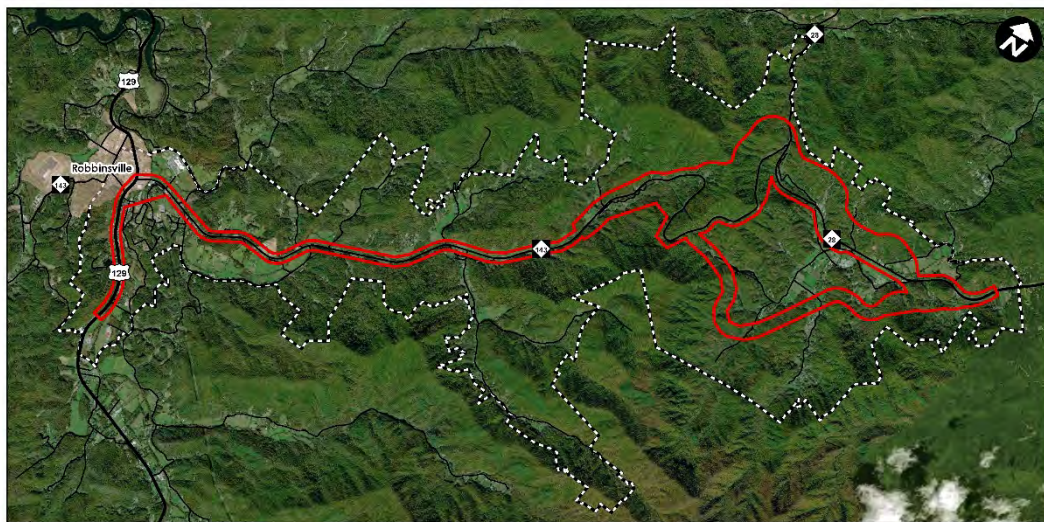
Alexa Kennedy
Environmental Planner
801 Jones Franklin Road Suite 300, Raleigh NC 27603
alexa.kennedy@stantec.com

Project Information

Project Type: Bridge Corridor

The North Carolina Department of Transportation (NCDOT) is studying a combination of new location and improve existing options from Robbinsville to Stecoah in Graham County as part of a proposed project to provide the transportation infrastructure necessary for the well-being of residents and regional traffic. This project is part of Corridor K of the Appalachian Development Highway System.

The length of the project is approximately 13 miles long. ROW acquisition is anticipated to start in 2024 and construction in 2026.



<p>Graham County</p> <p>0 1,650 3,300 Feet</p>	<p>Legend</p> <p> Project Study Area</p> <p> Direct Community Impact Area</p> <p> Municipal Boundaries</p>		<p> US Route</p> <p> NC Route</p> <p> Secondary Routes</p>	<p>NC DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION DIVISION OF HIGHWAYS DIVISION 14</p> <p>PROJECT LOCATION: Graham County</p> <p>PROJECT: STIP Project A-0009</p> <p>DATE: 04/14/2020</p> <p>PROJECT LOCATION MAP</p>
	<p>REVISIONS: 1.0 - Initial Draft</p>			



For all applicable questions, please provide a detailed explanation of your response in the field provided.	Check if item is applicable
<p>1. Are there any concerns related to EMS services for this project? Please be as specific as possible (e.g. location in a high call volume area, closure could affect response to schools, weight restrictions, expected new development in the area, coordination with partner agency required to facilitate service).</p> <p>Yes, concerns with delays due to detours and road construction. This is the only route to get to hospitals (Swain County hospital, Harris regional hospital, Asheville Memorial hospital, Cherokee Indian hospital).</p>	☒
<p>2. Based on your knowledge of the project area, do you have any concerns with the condition/capacity of potential detour routes, or the location of resources along these routes?</p> <p>Yes, there are concerns with traffic and getting to hospitals</p>	☒
<p>3. Are there any future time periods or events that you know of where bridge or road closure or reduction in number of lanes for construction would be of particular concern?</p> <p>No</p>	☒
<p>4. Rate the overall impact on emergency services if the bridge or roadway were closed or at reduced capacity for up to a year:</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> No Impact <input type="checkbox"/> Low Impact <input type="checkbox"/> Moderate Impact <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> High Impact</p>	
<p>5. Are road names referenced by the names locals would use?</p> <p>It varies</p>	☒
<p>6. Is there anyone else you feel should be contacted regarding this project (i.e. local officials or stakeholders)?</p> <p>No</p>	☒
<p>7. Do you have any other concerns regarding the potential impact of this project on EMS services, or any additional comments? Please be as specific as possible.</p> <p>Road closures and detours could be detrimental to the treatment of patients</p>	☒



Local Planner Input Form

No response received



Local Schools Input Form

**NC Department of Transportation Community Studies Group, Human Environment Section
Local Schools Input Form for
STIP Project A-0009 COMMUNITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT**

Contact Information

Interviewee Name: Chris McClung Date: 03/25/20
 Title/Position: Director of Transportation Phone Number: 828-479-9856
 Organization/Agency: Graham County Schools Transportation Completed Via: Email Phone
 Email: bus@graham.k12.nc.us

Interview Information/Instructions

Using the project information and map below, please respond to the following questions by typing your answers in the space provided. Then save (using the **Save As** command) this file with a new file name for your records and e-mail the **new** file back to the original sender. If you would prefer to complete a hard copy of this form, please send all sheets to the following address or email address:

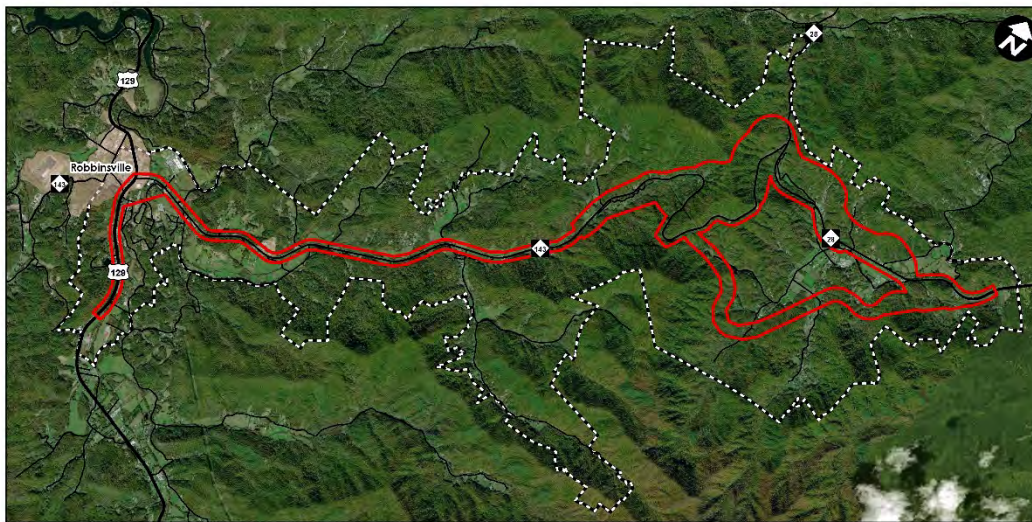
Alexa Kennedy
Environmental Planner
801 Jones Franklin Road Suite 300, Raleigh NC 27603
alexa.kennedy@stantec.com

Project Information

Project Type: Bridge Corridor

The North Carolina Department of Transportation (NCDOT) is studying a combination of new location and improve existing options from Robbinsville to Stecoah in Graham County as part of a proposed project to provide the transportation infrastructure necessary for the well-being of local residents and regional traffic. This project is part of Corridor K of the Appalachian Development Highway System.

The length of the project is approximately 13 miles long. ROW acquisition is anticipated to start in 2024 and construction in 2026.



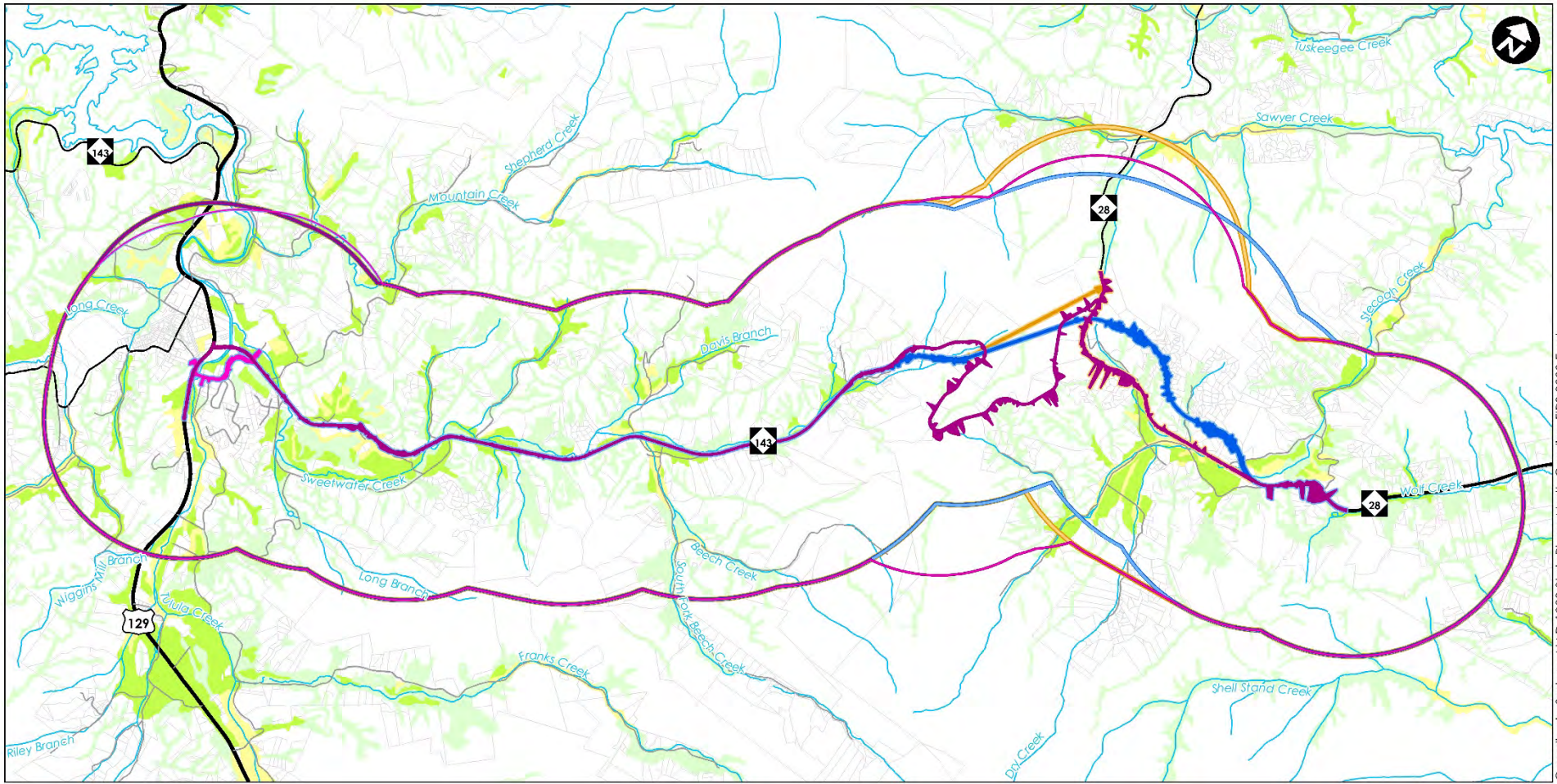
 Graham County 0 1,650 3,300 Feet	Legend Project Study Area Direct Community Impact Area Municipal Boundaries US Route NC Route Secondary Routes	 NC DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION DIVISION OF HIGHWAYS DIVISION 14 PROJECT LOCATION Graham County PROJECT NO. 2019-01 DATE: 03/25/20 DRAWN BY: [Name] CHECKED BY: [Name] STIP Project No. A-0009
----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------



Check all questions that apply and provide a detailed explanation of your response in the field provided.	Check if item is applicable
1. How many school buses <i>[cross the bridge/pass through the corridor]</i> per day (total # of daily buses, total # daily of trips)? 3 BUSES, 12 TRIPS DAILY	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. Is the corridor used by carpool traffic or pedestrians to access local schools? If yes, please describe the location and time(s) of day.	<input type="checkbox"/>
3. <i>[Applicable if schools are located in or near the project area]</i> Are there any Safe Routes to School plans in place at schools in the vicinity of the project?	<input type="checkbox"/>
4. Based on your knowledge of the project area, do you have any concerns with the condition/capacity of potential detour routes or the location of resources along these routes with respect to school traffic?	<input type="checkbox"/>
5. Are there any future time periods or events that you know of where bridge or road closure or reduction in number of lanes for construction would be of particular concern?	<input type="checkbox"/>
6. Rate the overall impact on school transportation if the bridge or roadway were closed or at reduced capacity for up to a year: <input type="checkbox"/> No Impact <input type="checkbox"/> Low Impact <input type="checkbox"/> Moderate Impact <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> High Impact	
7. Are road names referenced by the names locals would use?	<input type="checkbox"/>
8. Is there anyone else you feel should be contacted regarding this project (i.e. local officials or stakeholders)?	<input type="checkbox"/>
9. Are there any other concerns you have regarding the potential impact of this project on school transportation services or any additional comments? Please be as specific as possible.	<input type="checkbox"/>



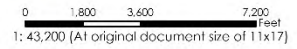
APPENDIX D: PRELIMINARY SCREENING OF FARMLAND CONVERSION IMPACTS



Coordinate System: NAD 1983 StatePlane North Carolina FIPS 3200 Feet

Legend

- | | | | | |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------|-----------------|----------------------------------|
| Improve Existing Robbinsville + Improve Existing Stecoach Footprint | Improve Existing Robbinsville + S-2 Footprint | Improve Existing Robbinsville + SW-1A Footprint | Parcels | All areas are prime farmland |
| Improve Existing Robbinsville + Improve Existing Stecoach 1-mile Buffer | Improve Existing Robbinsville + S-2 1-mile Buffer | Improve Existing Robbinsville + SW-1A 1-mile Buffer | US Highway | Farmland of local importance |
| R-1E + Improve Existing Stecoach Footprint | R-1E + S-2 Footprint | R-1E + SW-1A Footprint | NC Highway | Farmland of statewide importance |
| R-1E + Improve Existing Stecoach 1-mile Buffer | R-1E + S-2 1-mile Buffer | R-1E + SW-1A 1-mile Buffer | Secondary Roads | USGS Streams |



NC DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
DIVISION OF HIGHWAYS
DIVISION 14

Project Location: Graham County
Prepared by ALK on 2019-10-25
Reviewed by ECL on 2019-10-25

Client/Project: NCDOT - Division 14
Corridor K Improvements
STIP Project No. A-0009C

Figure No. 4
Title: NRCS Farmlands



PRELIMINARY SCREENING OF FARMLAND CONVERSION IMPACTS – CORRIDOR PROJECT

ALTERNATIVE 1 (IMPROVE EXISTING ROBBINSVILLE + IMPROVE EXISTING STECOAH)

1. **Area in non-urban use. Points awarded = 15 out of 15**
97% in non-urban use
2. **Perimeter in non-urban use. Points awarded = 10 out of 10**
93% of perimeter in non-urban use
3. **Percent of site being farmed. Points awarded = 0 out of 20**
2% of site being actively farmed
4. **Protection provided by state and local government. Points awarded = 5 out of 20**
Local tax relief programs
5. **Size of present farm unit compared to average. Points awarded = 0 out of 10**
Present farm units 23% as large as the county average (89 acres)
6. **Creation of non-farmable farmland. Points awarded = 0 out of 25**
None created
7. **Availability of farm support services. Points awarded = 5 out of 5**
Farmer's market, hardware stores, farm and equipment stores available
8. **On-farm investments. Points awarded = 3 out of 20**
Most farms have no to little investment; few farms have moderate investment
9. **Effects of conversion on farm support services. Points awarded = 0 out of 25**
No effect on support services.
10. **Compatibility with existing agricultural use. Points awarded = 1 out of 10**
Project is tolerable of existing agricultural use

Conclusion: Total Points = 39 out of 160

NCDOT has completed a screening of farmland in the project area and calculated the total number of points for the site per Part VI of the NRCS CPA-106 Farmland Conversion Impact Rating Form.



PRELIMINARY SCREENING OF FARMLAND CONVERSION IMPACTS – CORRIDOR PROJECT**ALTERNATIVE 2 (IMPROVE EXISTING ROBBINSVILLE + S-2)**

1. **Area in non-urban use. Points awarded = 15 out of 15**
97% in non-urban use
2. **Perimeter in non-urban use. Points awarded = 10 out of 10**
91% of perimeter in non-urban use
3. **Percent of site being farmed. Points awarded = 0 out of 20**
3% of site being actively farmed
4. **Protection provided by state and local government. Points awarded = 5 out of 20**
Local tax relief programs
5. **Size of present farm unit compared to average. Points awarded = 0 out of 10**
Present farm units 27% as large as the county average (89 acres)
6. **Creation of non-farmable farmland. Points awarded = 0 out of 25**
None created
7. **Availability of farm support services. Points awarded = 5 out of 5**
Farmer's market, hardware stores, farm and equipment stores available
8. **On-farm investments. Points awarded = 4 out of 20**
Most farms have no to little investment; few farms have moderate investment
9. **Effects of conversion on farm support services. Points awarded = 0 out of 25**
No effect on support services.
10. **Compatibility with existing agricultural use. Points awarded = 1 out of 10**
Project is tolerable of existing agricultural use

Conclusion: Total Points = 40 out of 160

NCDOT has completed a screening of farmland in the project area and calculated the total number of points for the site per Part VI of the NRCS CPA-106 Farmland Conversion Impact Rating Form.



PRELIMINARY SCREENING OF FARMLAND CONVERSION IMPACTS – CORRIDOR PROJECT**ALTERNATIVE 3 (IMPROVE EXISTING ROBBINSVILLE + SW-1A + IMPROVE EXISTING NC 28)**

1. **Area in non-urban use. Points awarded = 15 out of 15**
97% in non-urban use
2. **Perimeter in non-urban use. Points awarded = 10 out of 10**
91% of perimeter in non-urban use
3. **Percent of site being farmed. Points awarded = 0 out of 20**
3% of site being actively farmed
4. **Protection provided by state and local government. Points awarded = 5 out of 20**
Local tax relief programs
5. **Size of present farm unit compared to average. Points awarded = 0 out of 10**
Present farm units 23% as large as the county average (89 acres)
6. **Creation of non-farmable farmland. Points awarded = 0 out of 25**
None created
7. **Availability of farm support services. Points awarded = 5 out of 5**
Farmer's market, hardware stores, farm and equipment stores available
8. **On-farm investments. Points awarded = 3 out of 20**
Most farms have no to little investment; few farms have moderate investment
9. **Effects of conversion on farm support services. Points awarded = 0 out of 25**
No effect on support services.
10. **Compatibility with existing agricultural use. Points awarded = 1 out of 10**
Project is tolerable of existing agricultural use

Conclusion: Total Points = 39 out of 160

NCDOT has completed a screening of farmland in the project area and calculated the total number of points for the site per Part VI of the NRCS CPA-106 Farmland Conversion Impact Rating Form.



PRELIMINARY SCREENING OF FARMLAND CONVERSION IMPACTS – CORRIDOR PROJECT**ALTERNATIVE 4 (R-1E INTERSECTION + IMPROVE EXISTING STECOAH)**

1. **Area in non-urban use. Points awarded = 15 out of 15**
97% in non-urban use
2. **Perimeter in non-urban use. Points awarded = 10 out of 10**
93% of perimeter in non-urban use
3. **Percent of site being farmed. Points awarded = 0 out of 20**
2% of site being actively farmed
4. **Protection provided by state and local government. Points awarded = 5 out of 20**
Local tax relief programs
5. **Size of present farm unit compared to average. Points awarded = 0 out of 10**
Present farm units 22% as large as the county average (89 acres)
6. **Creation of non-farmable farmland. Points awarded = 0 out of 25**
None created
7. **Availability of farm support services. Points awarded = 5 out of 5**
Farmer's market, hardware stores, farm and equipment stores available
8. **On-farm investments. Points awarded = 4 out of 20**
Most farms have no to little investment; few farms have moderate investment
9. **Effects of conversion on farm support services. Points awarded = 6 out of 25**
Impacts a large barn, which may affect ability to supply farmer's market
10. **Compatibility with existing agricultural use. Points awarded = 1 out of 10**
Project is tolerable of existing agricultural use

Conclusion: Total Points = 46 out of 160

NCDOT has completed a screening of farmland in the project area and calculated the total number of points for the site per Part VI of the NRCS CPA-106 Farmland Conversion Impact Rating Form.



PRELIMINARY SCREENING OF FARMLAND CONVERSION IMPACTS – CORRIDOR PROJECT**ALTERNATIVE 5 (R-1E INTERSECTION + S-2)**

1. **Area in non-urban use. Points awarded = 15 out of 15**
97% in non-urban use
2. **Perimeter in non-urban use. Points awarded = 10 out of 10**
91% of perimeter in non-urban use
3. **Percent of site being farmed. Points awarded = 0 out of 20**
3% of site being actively farmed
4. **Protection provided by state and local government. Points awarded = 5 out of 20**
Local tax relief programs
5. **Size of present farm unit compared to average. Points awarded = 0 out of 10**
Present farm units 25% as large as the county average (89 acres)
6. **Creation of non-farmable farmland. Points awarded = 0 out of 25**
None created
7. **Availability of farm support services. Points awarded = 5 out of 5**
Farmer's market, hardware stores, farm and equipment stores available
8. **On-farm investments. Points awarded = 4 out of 20**
Most farms have no to little investment; few farms have moderate investment
9. **Effects of conversion on farm support services. Points awarded = 6 out of 25**
Impacts a large barn, which may affect ability to supply farmer's market
10. **Compatibility with existing agricultural use. Points awarded = 1 out of 10**
Project is tolerable of existing agricultural use

Conclusion: Total Points = 46 out of 160

NCDOT has completed a screening of farmland in the project area and calculated the total number of points for the site per Part VI of the NRCS CPA-106 Farmland Conversion Impact Rating Form.



PRELIMINARY SCREENING OF FARMLAND CONVERSION IMPACTS – CORRIDOR PROJECT**ALTERNATIVE 6 (R-1E INTERSECTION + SW-1A +IMPROVE EXISTING NC 28)**

1. **Area in non-urban use. Points awarded = 15 out of 15**
97% in non-urban use
2. **Perimeter in non-urban use. Points awarded = 10 out of 10**
92% of perimeter in non-urban use
3. **Percent of site being farmed. Points awarded = 0 out of 20**
3% of site being actively farmed
4. **Protection provided by state and local government. Points awarded = 5 out of 20**
Local tax relief programs
5. **Size of present farm unit compared to average. Points awarded = 0 out of 10**
Present farm units 22% as large as the county average (89 acres)
6. **Creation of non-farmable farmland. Points awarded = 0 out of 25**
None created
7. **Availability of farm support services. Points awarded = 5 out of 5**
Farmer's market, hardware stores, farm and equipment stores available
8. **On-farm investments. Points awarded = 4 out of 20**
Most farms have no to little investment; few farms have moderate investment
9. **Effects of conversion on farm support services. Points awarded = 6 out of 25**
Impacts a large barn, which may affect ability to supply farmer's market
10. **Compatibility with existing agricultural use. Points awarded = 1 out of 10**
Project is tolerable of existing agricultural use

Conclusion: Total Points = 46 out of 160

NCDOT has completed a screening of farmland in the project area and calculated the total number of points for the site per Part VI of the NRCS CPA-106 Farmland Conversion Impact Rating Form.



PRELIMINARY SCREENING OF FARMLAND CONVERSION IMPACTS – CORRIDOR PROJECT**ALTERNATIVE 7 (R-1E ROUNDABOUT + IMPROVE EXISTING STECOAH)**

1. **Area in non-urban use. Points awarded = 15 out of 15**
97% in non-urban use
2. **Perimeter in non-urban use. Points awarded = 10 out of 10**
93% of perimeter in non-urban use
3. **Percent of site being farmed. Points awarded = 0 out of 20**
2% of site being actively farmed
4. **Protection provided by state and local government. Points awarded = 5 out of 20**
Local tax relief programs
5. **Size of present farm unit compared to average. Points awarded = 0 out of 10**
Present farm units 22% as large as the county average (89 acres)
6. **Creation of non-farmable farmland. Points awarded = 0 out of 25**
None created
7. **Availability of farm support services. Points awarded = 5 out of 5**
Farmer's market, hardware stores, farm and equipment stores available
8. **On-farm investments. Points awarded = 4 out of 20**
Most farms have no to little investment; few farms have moderate investment
9. **Effects of conversion on farm support services. Points awarded = 6 out of 25**
Impacts a large barn, which may affect ability to supply farmer's market
10. **Compatibility with existing agricultural use. Points awarded = 1 out of 10**
Project is tolerable of existing agricultural use

Conclusion: Total Points = 46 out of 160

NCDOT has completed a screening of farmland in the project area and calculated the total number of points for the site per Part VI of the NRCS CPA-106 Farmland Conversion Impact Rating Form.



PRELIMINARY SCREENING OF FARMLAND CONVERSION IMPACTS – CORRIDOR PROJECT**ALTERNATIVE 8 (R-1E ROUNDABOUT + S-2)**

1. **Area in non-urban use. Points awarded = 15 out of 15**
97% in non-urban use
2. **Perimeter in non-urban use. Points awarded = 10 out of 10**
91% of perimeter in non-urban use
3. **Percent of site being farmed. Points awarded = 0 out of 20**
3% of site being actively farmed
4. **Protection provided by state and local government. Points awarded = 5 out of 20**
Local tax relief programs
5. **Size of present farm unit compared to average. Points awarded = 0 out of 10**
Present farm units 25% as large as the county average (89 acres)
6. **Creation of non-farmable farmland. Points awarded = 0 out of 25**
None created
7. **Availability of farm support services. Points awarded = 5 out of 5**
Farmer's market, hardware stores, farm and equipment stores available
8. **On-farm investments. Points awarded = 4 out of 20**
Most farms have no to little investment; few farms have moderate investment
9. **Effects of conversion on farm support services. Points awarded = 6 out of 25**
Impacts a large barn, which may affect ability to supply farmer's market
10. **Compatibility with existing agricultural use. Points awarded = 1 out of 10**
Project is tolerable of existing agricultural use

Conclusion: Total Points = 46 out of 160

NCDOT has completed a screening of farmland in the project area and calculated the total number of points for the site per Part VI of the NRCS CPA-106 Farmland Conversion Impact Rating Form.



PRELIMINARY SCREENING OF FARMLAND CONVERSION IMPACTS – CORRIDOR PROJECT**ALTERNATIVE 9 (R-1E ROUNDABOUT + SW-1A + IMPROVE EXISTING NC 28)**

1. **Area in non-urban use. Points awarded = 15 out of 15**
97% in non-urban use
2. **Perimeter in non-urban use. Points awarded = 10 out of 10**
92% of perimeter in non-urban use
3. **Percent of site being farmed. Points awarded = 0 out of 20**
3% of site being actively farmed
4. **Protection provided by state and local government. Points awarded = 5 out of 20**
Local tax relief programs
5. **Size of present farm unit compared to average. Points awarded = 0 out of 10**
Present farm units 22% as large as the county average (89 acres)
6. **Creation of non-farmable farmland. Points awarded = 0 out of 25**
None created
7. **Availability of farm support services. Points awarded = 5 out of 5**
Farmer's market, hardware stores, farm and equipment stores available
8. **On-farm investments. Points awarded = 4 out of 20**
Most farms have no to little investment; few farms have moderate investment
9. **Effects of conversion on farm support services. Points awarded = 6 out of 25**
Impacts a large barn, which may affect ability to supply farmer's market
10. **Compatibility with existing agricultural use. Points awarded = 1 out of 10**
Project is tolerable of existing agricultural use

Conclusion: Total Points = 46 out of 160

NCDOT has completed a screening of farmland in the project area and calculated the total number of points for the site per Part VI of the NRCS CPA-106 Farmland Conversion Impact Rating Form.



APPENDIX E: HEALTH INDICATORS TABLE

CHARACTERISTIC	SMALLEST DATA LEVEL	A-0009 DSA	GRAHAM COUNTY	NORTH CAROLINA	DATA SOURCE	NOTES
Number of Pedestrian or Bicyclist Crashes in DCIA (Ped/Bike)	<i>DCIA</i>	(11/2)			http://ncdot.maps.arcgis.com/home/index.html	Count the number of crashes within the DCIA from 2007-2016 using NCDOT's Bicyclist and Pedestrian Crash Map.
Average Pedestrian Crash Rate	<i>City</i>		1.81	2.77	http://www.pedbikeinfo.org/pbcat_nc/	Crashes per 10,000 residents, avg. of 2012-2016 crash totals, 2014 pop
Average Bicyclist Crash Rate	<i>City</i>		0.45	1.03	http://www.pedbikeinfo.org/pbcat_nc/	Crashes per 10,000 residents, avg. of 2012-2016 crash totals, 2014 pop
Physical Inactivity	<i>County</i>		27%	25.0%	http://www.countyhealthrankings.org/app/north-carolina/2019/overview	Percent of adults aged 20+ reporting no leisure-time physical activity, 2015
Access to exercise opportunities	<i>County</i>		100%	65.0%	http://www.countyhealthrankings.org/app/north-carolina/2019/overview	Percentage of individuals who reside in a census block within a half mile of a park or (urban) one mile of a rec. facility or (rural) three miles of a rec. facility, 2010 & 2019



APPENDIX F: OTHER INFORMATION

Public Meeting Summary: 494 subject-specific positions were contained in 144 comment sheets, emails, and online forms and two petitions that were submitted during the 30-day comment period ending March 15, 2019. Asterisks denote subjects discussed in comments provided by environmental stakeholder organization, WaysSouth. It is also noted that seven public comments state opposition to a four-lane facility.

Subject	# Comments on Subject	Percent of Total	Description/Representative Comments
Oppose T1*	144	29.1%	Includes 47 Charge.org petition signatures (18 local, 29 outside area) and 77 signatures on Shook petition (all local); cite impacts to property, forest land, and water quality
Support Improving Existing Option*	115	23.3%	Less impacts, new road isn't needed, widen existing where needed
Property Impacts*	72	14.6%	Note concerns along specific alignments: farm operations, generational landownership; general concern about number of total relocations
Miscellaneous*	28	5.7%	Information requests; concerns over noise, tourism, and tax debt
Ecological Impacts*	27	5.5%	Environmental and archaeological concerns not taken into account; endangered species; acid rock; trout streams
Oppose Project	20	4.0%	Oppose new road construction; use money for schools; environmental impacts, relocations
Socio-economic Impacts*	13	2.6%	Loss of history; cultural impacts; poor losing everything; loss of property value
Support Other Concepts*	12	2.4%	Alignment suggestions; viaduct; improve existing US 74 in Gorge
Oppose T4*	12	2.4%	Impacts to forest land and the Trail of Tears
Water Supply Concerns	11	2.2%	Groundwater effects; water quality
Support T4	10	2.0%	Fewer property impacts; more direct connection to Andrews
Support Project	6	1.2%	Would like to see project complete; project would help with tourism; want safe roads
Oppose S2	6	1.2%	citing difficult navigability
Oppose S6*	6	1.2%	Visual impacts; overkill; irreparable damage
Support T1	4	0.8%	Less disturbance of forest land; avoids Trail of Tears
Support S6	4	0.8%	Shorter distance; less hilly
Support S2*	3	0.6%	Prefer if relocations can be minimized; modify alignment to use [more] existing roadway
Support T2	1	0.2%	Less disturbance to the environment
Total	494	100%	



Local Plan Map

