

WELCOME

Welcome! Thank you for attending tonight's Location Public Hearing for U.S. Route 121 (Coalfields Expressway) Section IIIB. The Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT), in cooperation with the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), has evaluated changes to Section IIIB, which extends from Route 614 to Route 643 in Buchanan County.

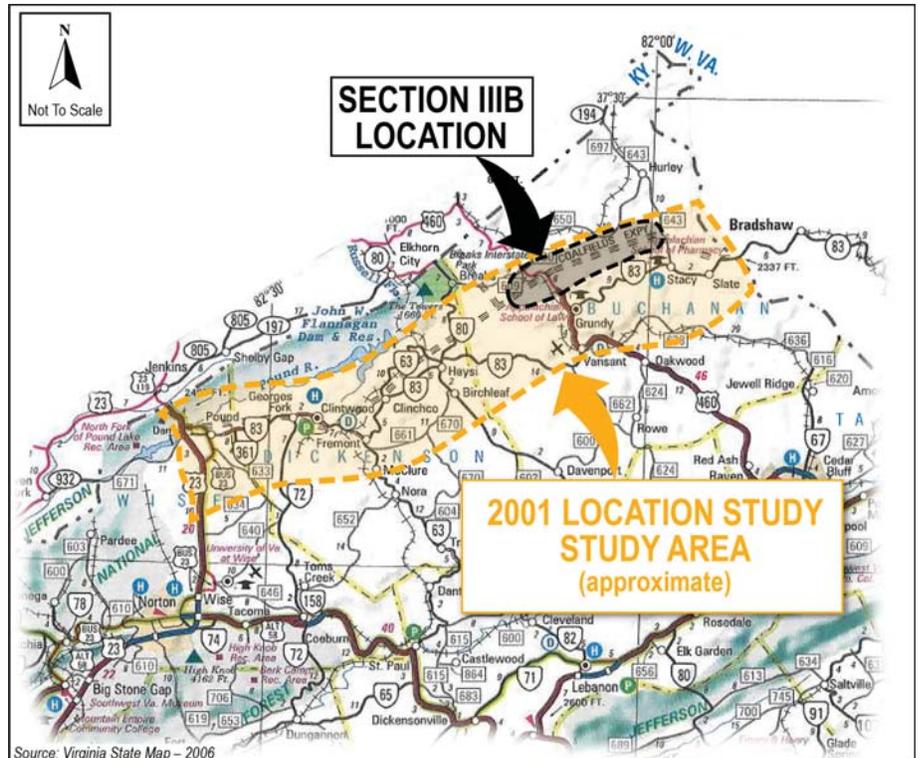
The purpose of tonight's meeting is:

- To receive citizen comments on the alternatives and the Environmental Studies document.
- To share information on the study process and its current status.

Please take the time to examine the information provided, ask as many questions as you wish, and give us your comments and suggestions. Your input is needed as part of the environmental review process and it is important.

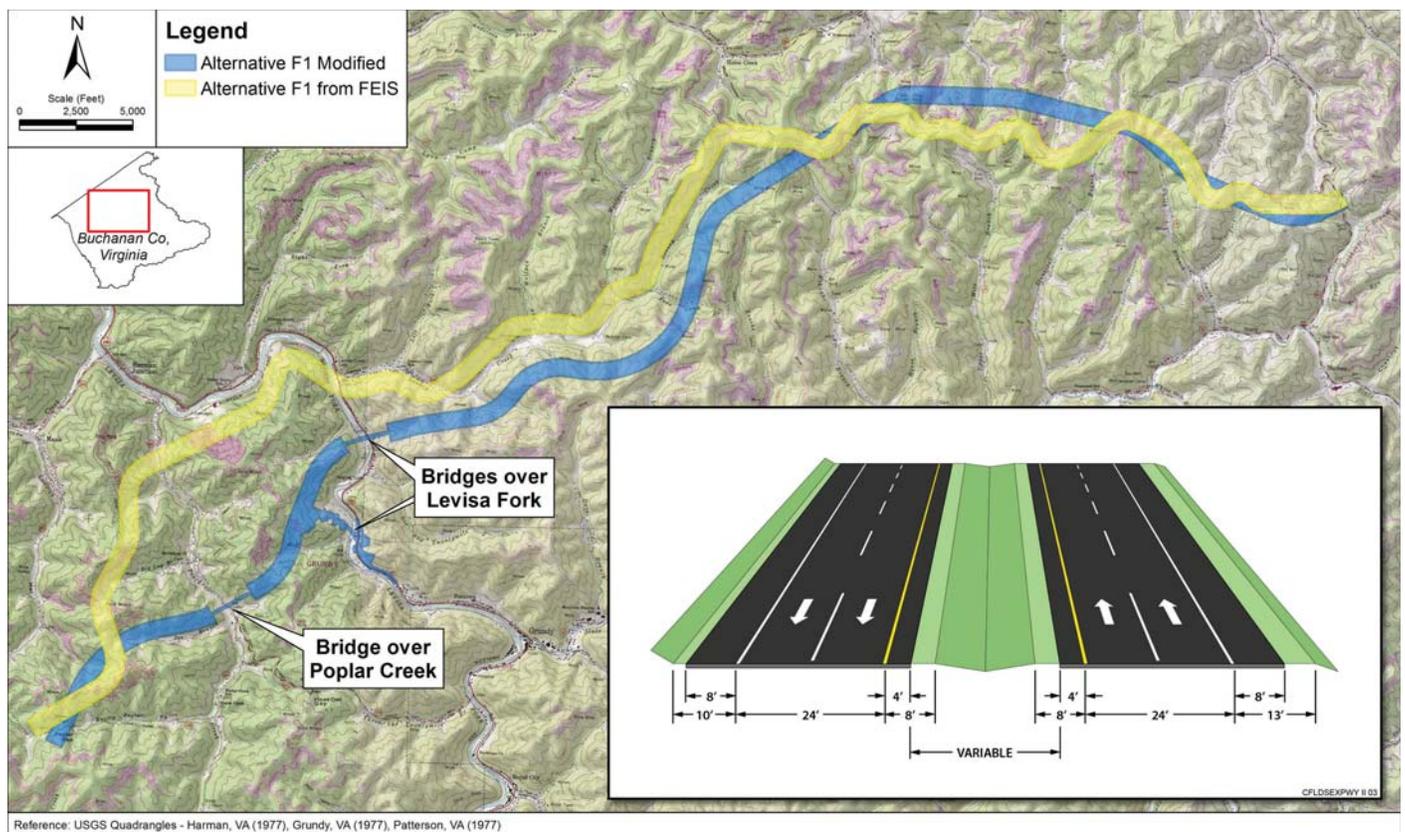
Comment sheets are available for written comments and may be submitted tonight or by postal or electronic mail after the meeting until **October 6, 2014**. A verbatim reporter is also available to record your comments orally. All comments received will be considered prior to a final decision by the Commonwealth Transportation Board (CTB) and FHWA.

Thank you for attending.



PROJECT HISTORY

- The National Highway System Designation Act of 1995 designated U.S. Route 121 (Coalfields Expressway) as a congressional High Priority Corridor and included it in the National Highway System.
- The Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS) and Record of Decision (ROD) for U.S. Route 121 were completed in 2001. The ROD identified Alternative F1 as the selected alternative and noted that the project would be designed and constructed in numerous phases.
- In January 2006, VDOT entered into a Comprehensive Agreement with private contractors for design and construction of the project. They were tasked by VDOT to develop modifications to the selected Alternative F1 to take advantage of areas where use of their large-scale earthmoving equipment and techniques as well as incidental coal recovery could be used to substantially reduce the estimated cost of the project.
- The proposed changes to the selected Alternative F1 in Section IIIB are referred to as "Alternative F1 Modified," and environmental studies have been completed to assess the proposed changes.



PURPOSE AND NEED

As described in detail in the 2001 Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS), the purpose of constructing U.S. Route 121 is to address the following needs:

- Satisfy Congressional initiatives
- Improve mobility and safety
- Support economic development, including tourism

COAL SYNERGY

- Coal synergy is an innovative concept that uses large-scale earthmoving equipment and techniques common to the mining industry and revenue from incidental coal recovery to offset roadway construction costs, thereby reducing the expenditure of public funds.
- The coal synergy approach to constructing U.S. Route 121 does not allow VDOT's private sector partners to engage in surface mining operations. Currently, there are no active or permitted surface mines within the study corridor and there are no current or pending surface mining applications. Any future surface mining permits will be permitted independent of the roadway.
- All coal extracted from the corridor will be incidental to the roadway construction, which means only that which is necessary to enable the construction of the roadway.
- Incidental coal recovery is a tightly regulated process and the federal Office of Surface Mining (OSM) and Virginia Department of Mines, Minerals, and Energy's Division of Mined Land Reclamation (DMLR) oversee, review, and approve applications to conduct incidental coal recovery operations and inspect such operations to ensure that they are limited to engineering necessity for roadway construction and that the quantity of coal extracted does not exceed the approved qualifying threshold.

SUMMARY OF POTENTIAL ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS

The corridors for Alternative F1 and proposed Alternative F1 Modified, as well as the typical cross section for the new roadway, are shown on the Project History board and aerial maps. Alternative F1 Modified shifts the Alternative F1 corridor by at most approximately 1.5 miles and overlaps at several points, while also providing a somewhat straighter alignment. It is still within the broader study area considered in the Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS), crosses similar terrain, and it involves substantially similar environmental and social conditions as the selected Alternative F1. The table below quantifies and compares impacts reported in the 2001 FEIS for Alternative F1 with updated values for Alternative F1 and Alternative F1 Modified.

CATEGORY	Alternative F1 2001 FEIS Values	Alternative F1 Updated Values	Alternative F1 Modified ⁹
Total Area within Alternative (acres within 750-foot corridor)	1,369	1,369	1,220
Homes ¹	41	40	28
Businesses ¹	1	1	0
Schools ¹	0	0	0
Churches ¹	1*	0	0
Cemeteries ¹	0	0	0
Other Community Facilities (rescue squads, fire stations, etc.) ¹	0	0	0
Prime and Unique Farmland (acres) ²	0	0	0
Forest (acres) ³	444.8**	1,264	1,091
Section 4(f) Property Use (acres) ^{1, 4}	0	0	0
Parks and Recreational Resources ¹	0	0	0
Historic Properties Affected ⁴	0	0	0
Length of Streams (miles) ⁵	1.6	1.8	2.6
Wetlands (acres) ⁶	0.36	0	0
Floodplains Filled (acres) ⁷	0***	0***	0***
Noise Impacts (Number of Receptors Impacted)	0	0	0
Hazardous Material Sites Impacted (number of sites) ⁸	4	1	0

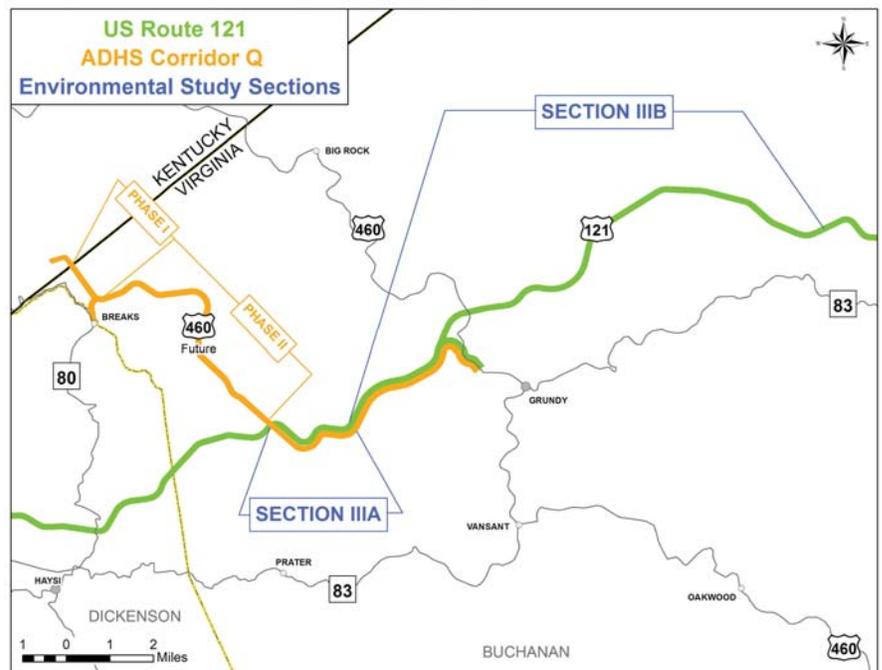
Please refer to Location Public Hearing brochure or Environmental Studies document for explanations of table notations.

APPALACHIAN DEVELOPMENT HIGHWAY SYSTEM

- The Appalachian Development Highway System (ADHS) is a 3,090-mile system of modern highways that connects with the Interstate Highway System.
- Corridor Q of the ADHS traverses portions of Kentucky, Virginia, and West Virginia, generally following the existing U.S. Route 460 corridor.
- In 2010, the realignment of 13.1 miles of Corridor Q following U.S. Route 460 in Buchanan County between the Kentucky-Virginia State Line and the Town of Grundy was approved based on the development of coal synergy partnerships.

- Phase I of the U.S. Route 460 Connector is currently under construction.

- A Finding of No Significant Impact was issued in 2010 for Phase II, and a Design-Build contract for this portion of the U.S. Route 460 Connector was executed on July 31, 2013. A design public hearing for Phase II was held in April 2014.



- A portion of Section IIIB of proposed U.S. Route 121 is part of Corridor Q; this portion is operationally independent and it may be advanced independently of the rest of Section IIIB. Where the two routes overlap, the roadway would be dually designated as U.S. Route 121 and U.S. Route 460.

SCHEDULE & NEXT STEPS

SCHEDULE	
Date	Event
August 2014	Environmental Studies document approved by FHWA for public availability
September 23, 2014	Location Public Hearing
October 6, 2014	Final day to submit comments
December 2014	Environmental Studies document revised, as appropriate, based on hearing comments and comments on the document
February 2015	Final decision on location by CTB
February 2015	Final decision on the Environmental Studies document by FHWA

Next Steps

VDOT will review and evaluate the comments you provide to us tonight and during the comment period. Comments will be considered, addressed, and changes made to the Environmental Studies document as appropriate. A summary of the comments received during the comment period will be submitted to the Commonwealth Transportation Board (CTB) and the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), along with a copy of the public hearing transcript, the recommendation for the project, and a request that a final decision be made by the CTB and FHWA.

Thank You!

Please review the maps and displays and share your thoughts by using the comment sheet provided with this brochure. You may leave your comments in the box provided at tonight's hearing. You may also record your comments orally at the designated recording station.

If you are not ready to provide your comments tonight, you may submit them by **October 6, 2014** in one of the following ways:

Complete comment sheet online at:
<http://www.surveymonkey.com/s/IIIBCommentSheet>

Email: Route121CFX@vdot.virginia.gov
Please reference "U.S. Route 121 – Section IIIB Public Hearing Comment" in the subject line.

Mail to the following address, which is also preprinted on the back of the comment sheet:

Mandy Cox
Program Manager
Virginia Department of Transportation
870 Bonham Road
Bristol, VA 24201