

I-81 CORRIDOR IMPROVEMENT STUDY, VIRGINIA
FROM THE TENNESSEE BORDER TO THE WEST VIRGINIA BORDER

Tier 1 Draft Environmental Impact Statement

Submitted Pursuant to 42 U.S.C. 4332 (2)(c)

by the

U.S. Department of Transportation

Federal Highway Administration

and the

Virginia Department of Transportation

Cooperating Agencies

U.S. Army Corps of Engineers

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

U.S. Department of the Interior National Park Service

U.S. Department of Agriculture Forest Service

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency

U.S. Coast Guard

Tennessee Valley Authority

November 28, 2005

Date of Approval

Signed by Malcolm T. Kerley

Virginia Department of Transportation

November 28, 2005

Date of Approval

Signed by John Simkins

Federal Highway Administration

Abstract: This Tier 1 Draft Environmental Impact Statement identifies the current and future need for increased capacity and improved safety along the entire 325-mile corridor of I-81 in Virginia and evaluates the effectiveness of conceptual-level improvements in addressing those needs. The concepts evaluated include the No-Build and a range of "Build" concepts consisting of roadway improvements and improvements to Norfolk Southern's Shenandoah and Piedmont rail lines in Virginia. For the "Build" concepts, No Toll, Low Toll, and High Toll scenarios were evaluated. Potential impacts of the concepts on the natural and human environment were also assessed. Upon completion of the Tier 1 study, decisions will be made on the improvement concepts for the roadway and rail facilities; on advancing I-81 as a toll pilot under Section 1216(b) of the Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century; on the projects with independent utility and logical termini to be studied in Tier 2; on the levels of Tier 2 National Environmental Policy Act document(s) for those projects; and on the location of the corridor for studying alignments in Tier 2.

The following persons may be contacted for additional information concerning this document:

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Comments on this Tier 1 Draft Environmental Impact Statement are due by February 17, 2006 or 10 days after the date of the last public hearing, whichever is later. Comments should be sent to Chris Collins at the address above or submitted by using the online comment form at www.i-81.org.