

2003 Amended Scoping Document
and
2003 Amended Draft
Scoping Decision Document



St. Croix River Crossing

Trunk Highway 36, Washington County, Minnesota
State Trunk Highway 64, St. Croix County, Wisconsin

November 2003

Minnesota Department of Transportation
Wisconsin Department of Transportation
Federal Highway Administration

**2003 AMENDED SCOPING DOCUMENT
AND
2003 AMENDED DRAFT SCOPING DECISION
DOCUMENT**

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CERTIFICATION BY RESPONSIBLE GOVERNMENTAL UNIT

Approved: Mn/DOT
Richard Elasky, Environmental Services Director

Approved: Wis/DOT
Eugene S. Johnson, Director Bureau of Equity and Environmental Services

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**2003 AMENDED SCOPING DOCUMENT
ST. CROIX RIVER CROSSING**

I. INTRODUCTION

A. PURPOSE OF THE SCOPING DOCUMENT

The National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) of 1969 requires that social, economic, and environmental considerations be included in the planning of projects that receive federal funding and involve other federal actions. Similarly, the Wisconsin Environmental Policy Act (WEPA) and the Minnesota Environmental Policy Act (MEPA) requires review of potential environmental impacts for proposed projects that exceed state regulatory thresholds. This 2003 Amended Scoping Document and 2003 Amended Draft Scoping Decision Document (2003 ASD and 2003 ADSDD) have been prepared as part of the federal NEPA process and state environmental review processes to fulfill requirements of 42 USC 4321 et. seq., s 1.11 Stats., Chapter Trans 400, and Minnesota Rules Chapter 4410.2000. This 2003 ASD and ADSDD are supplemental to documents previously completed under the NEPA process for this project (including a 1985 Scoping Document, a 1987 Scoping Decision Document, a 1995 Final Environmental Impact Statement (EIS), a 1995 Record of Decision, a 1999 Amended Scoping Decision Document, and preliminary work on a draft 2001 Supplemental EIS (which was never approved for release), as discussed in detail in Section I.B. (Project History). This 2003 ASD (and ADSDD) have been prepared as part of the Stakeholder Resolution Process approach taken to reassess and understand the environmental, cultural and transportation issues surrounding the project, and will result in a Supplemental EIS (SEIS).

The 2003 ASD and 2003 ADSDD are distributed to federal, state and local agencies and the public to provide an opportunity for review and comment prior to the preparation of a Final Amended Scoping Decision Document. A 30-day comment period will begin when the availability notice for the 2003 ASD/ADSDD is published in the Minnesota Environmental Quality Board (EQB) *Monitor*. A Scoping Meeting will be held during the comment period (as required by the Minnesota EQB), which will provide an opportunity for oral and written comments to be submitted.

A final scoping decision will be made by the Minnesota Department of Transportation (Mn/DOT) in consultation with the Wisconsin Department of Transportation (Wis/DOT) and the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) after the Scoping Meeting and the end of the comment period. Following completion of the scoping process, a SEIS (Draft followed by Final) will be prepared in accordance with the findings of the 2003 ASD.

The 2003 ASD provides a discussion of:

- The purpose of and need for the proposed project;
- Alternatives considered;
- Potential social, economic and environmental impacts;

- Permits/approvals; and
- Agencies and persons consulted during project review.

The 2003 ASD identifies the significant issues associated with each alternative currently considered for the proposed project. The 2003 ADSDD provides a summary of the 2003 ASD and sufficient documentation to determine the scope and focus of this SEIS, and identifies potential alternatives to be carried forward into the SEIS. The scoping meeting will gather comments on the adequacy of the potential alternatives.

The SEIS will be prepared to satisfy the requirements of NEPA, MEPA and WEPA as well as provide documentation necessary to complete the federal and state approvals listed in Section VI.

B. PROJECT HISTORY

A new crossing of the St. Croix River in the Stillwater area (see Figure 1) has been studied for more than two decades. The impetus for a new crossing includes traffic congestion in downtown Stillwater, delays caused by the raising, lowering and associated closing of the existing Trunk Highway 36/State Trunk Highway 64 Stillwater Lift Bridge (the Lift Bridge), safety and geometric concerns on the approach roadways, and the deteriorated structural condition and maintenance cost of the Lift Bridge. These concerns have raised questions regarding the Lift Bridge's ability to serve as a critical link in the National Highway System, although continued vehicular use of the Lift Bridge as a lesser transportation facility may be feasible.

PREVIOUS DOCUMENTATION

Over the past two decades, numerous documents have been prepared in compliance with the NEPA, MEPA, and WEPA processes. The major documents prepared pertinent to this project, and the approximately 20 special study reports or supplemental studies prepared in support of this documentation are presented in Appendix A. The development of alternatives and evolution of the documents related to this project have a lengthy history, which must be understood as a framework for moving the project forward and making decisions regarding the project. The following section describes the project development, beginning with the first Scoping Document for a new St. Croix River Crossing released in 1985.

NARRATIVE HISTORY

In 1985, Mn/DOT and Wis/DOT released a Draft Study Outline and Scoping Document for a new St. Croix River Crossing. This was followed by release in 1987 of a Scoping Decision Document/Final Study Outline in April of 1987. Over the next three years, a Draft EIS and Section 4(f) Study were prepared, and released in March of 1990. In April 1995, the FHWA, Mn/DOT and Wis/DOT approved a Final EIS and Section 4(f) Evaluation for a St. Croix River Crossing south of the Lift Bridge.

Figure 1 –Project Location

Following approval of the 1995 Final EIS and issuance of a Record of Decision by FHWA in July 1995, work began on final design of the river crossing and the approach roadways; right-of-way was acquired and site preparation work was initiated. In 1996, the National Park Service (NPS) evaluated the project under Section 7(a) of the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act. The Section 7(a) Evaluation, completed in December 1996, found that the project as proposed would have a direct and adverse effect on the scenic and recreational values for which the Lower St. Croix River was included in the National Wild and Scenic River System. As a result, no federal permits could be issued and the project could not proceed. In April 1998, a U.S. District Court Judge upheld the NPS determination.

In June 1998, after discussions with legislators and other interested parties, and after obtaining the concurrence of Wis/DOT and the NPS, the Mn/DOT Commissioner determined that revisiting the issue of a river crossing in the vicinity of Stillwater would be prudent. Richard P. Braun, a former Mn/DOT Commissioner, was asked to facilitate this process (the Braun Facilitation Process). For a full discussion, see the report “St. Croix River Crossing: A Graceful Solution for a Magnificent River,” Richard P. Braun, September 28, 1998.

Braun's charge was to determine if present and future traffic could be accommodated on the existing Stillwater Lift Bridge, determine if a replacement crossing was needed, and investigate potential bridge alignment alternatives between the Lift Bridge on the north and the 1995 Final EIS Preferred Alternative on the south. Braun was asked to recommend the solution that would have the best chance of being implemented. Over a period of four months, Braun performed an independent review of the proposed project, conducted extensive discussions and meetings with the key individuals and organizations involved, and facilitated public meetings with the St. Croix River Crossing Advisory Group. The 21-member group included representatives from regulatory agencies, local units of government, environmental groups, historic preservation groups and Chambers of Commerce.

The Braun Facilitation Process concluded that a new four-lane bridge would be required to satisfy the project need and recommended a new alignment located 3,600 feet south of the existing Lift Bridge. A large majority of the St. Croix River Crossing Advisory Group supported the Braun Facilitation Process recommendations. Following the Braun Facilitation Process, NPS, FHWA, Wis/DOT and Mn/DOT executed a Memorandum of Understanding specifying their intention to use the Braun Facilitation Process recommendations as a basis for a supplemental environmental review process, including the NPS Section 7(a) Evaluation.

In February 1999, an Amended Scoping Decision Document was completed. Work began on the Supplemental Draft EIS in 1999, which collectively referred to the Braun Facilitation Process recommendations as the “Consensus Alternative”, which will be referred to as the “1999 Consensus Alternative” henceforth.

The preliminary work on the 2001 Supplemental Draft EIS included three options for the future of the Stillwater Lift Bridge: removal, conversion to a pier, or retention as a lift bridge. These three options were discussed in the context of three proposed mitigation packages, which included funding for conservation easements to compensate for the adverse visual effect to the Riverway not mitigated by the removal of the Lift Bridge in some options, as well as over

\$8 million in additional mitigation measures. Disagreement concerning the disposition of the existing Lift Bridge was brought to a federal level. Mitigation funding therefore relied on whether the Lift Bridge was to be removed, converted into a pier, or retained.

Work on the project was suspended by the DOTs in January 2001 due to the inability of federal, state and local agencies to reach a consensus on the future of the Lift Bridge, insufficient federal funding for the mitigation alternatives, and failure to obtain municipal consent on the project.

In the fall of 2001, while work on the project was suspended, FHWA hired the US Institute of Environmental Conflict Resolution (IECR) to review the project. The IECR met with the adjacent communities, potential permitting agencies and other interested parties, and prepared a report that recommended the separation of the outstanding issues related to the Lift Bridge from those related to a new river crossing (the New Bridge). In January 2002, the Mn/DOT Commissioner requested the regulatory agencies to indicate support for the IECR's recommendation, and in June 2002, the FHWA Administrator stated that federal partners were willing to proceed as recommended by the IECR, and gave support to the IECR recommendation. Non-federal partners demonstrated willingness to consider other options but there was not a consensus to separate the New Bridge and Lift Bridge processes. On June 21, 2002, Mn/DOT and Wis/DOT held a press conference re-initiating the project as two separate processes: the New Bridge and Lift Bridge Processes.

In September 2002, President Bush issued Executive Order 13274 to enhance environmental stewardship and streamline review of transportation infrastructure projects, focusing on seven nationwide projects, including the St. Croix River Crossing project. This elevated the St. Croix project's visibility both locally and nationally.

In September 2002, the facilitation firm RESOLVE was selected by a multi-agency and stakeholder panel to proceed with the project through mediation. RESOLVE developed a dispute resolution process that centered on a "Stakeholders Group", composed of representatives of the diverse interests in the project area. This process, the "Stakeholder Resolution Process," responded to the need for a new start to the project, and a new approach to address the environmental, historical and transportation concerns surrounding the project. Formal facilitated Stakeholder meetings began in June 2003.

The Stakeholders Group includes: National Park Service, FHWA, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, U.S. Coast Guard, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Advisory Council on Historic Preservation, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Mn/DOT, Wis/DOT, Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (WisDNR), Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (MnDNR), Minnesota State Historic Preservation Office (MnSHPO), Wisconsin State Historic Preservation Office (WisSHPO), City of Stillwater, City of Oak Park Heights, Town of St. Joseph, Preservation Alliance of Minnesota, Stillwater Heritage Preservation Commission, Friends of the St. Croix, New St. Croix Bridge Coalition, Stillwater Area Chamber of Commerce, Sierra Club, St. Croix Alliance for an Interstate Bridge, St. Croix County Highway Commission, St. Croix River Association, Stillwater Lift Bridge Association, Western Wisconsin Realtors Association, Minnesota Center for Environmental Advocacy, and the National Trust for Historic Preservation.

In a meeting early in the Stakeholder Resolution Process, the Stakeholders Group agreed that the two issues (the future of the Lift Bridge and the new St. Croix River Crossing) need to be discussed together, rather than separately. An Operating Agreement for the St. Croix River Crossing Stakeholder Resolution Process was developed by RESOLVE, and presented and accepted by the Stakeholders Group. This Operating Agreement, included as Appendix B, guides the manner in which meetings are to be conducted, establishes procedures, and sets milestones for deciding on a preferred alternative and project mitigation.

In fall of 2002, the 106th United States Congress provided \$4,989,000 in funding from the Labor, Health, and Human Services bill for the repair of the Stillwater Lift Bridge (referred to herein as the "\$5 Million Lift Bridge Project"), to be completed as a separate but related project. An extensive list of repair needs were identified through inspection and evaluation of the Lift Bridge, including steel repairs, deck replacement, lift span motors, drive gears, cables, tender's house repair, pier caps, abutments, along with the pedestrian walk and railing. The list was then prioritized, identifying repairs that could be completed with available funds. These repairs are scheduled for to occur in spring 2005 through spring 2006.

Several other major projects have proceeded forward during the periods when work was suspended on this project. In Wisconsin, the major highway at the terminus of the project, State Trunk Highway (STH) 35/64, is currently being expanded to a four-lane facility from a two-lane facility, from near 150th Avenue at the Town of St. Joseph/Town of Somerset line to 145th Street, east of New Richmond. In Minnesota, a detailed study of the Oak Parks Heights segment of Trunk Highway (TH) 36 between TH 5 and TH 95 was performed, resulting in concept recommendations published in the December 2002 "TH 36 Partnership Study." The concept recommendations included conversion of this segment of TH 36 to a grade-separated facility incorporating two buttonhook interchanges as well as improvements to the adjacent frontage roads. These concept recommendations will be incorporated into four of the river crossing alternatives considered for this project (Alternatives B, C, D and E, as described in Section III.B).

C. PROJECT LOCATION

The project is located in Oak Park Heights and Stillwater in Washington County, Minnesota, and in St. Joseph Township in St. Croix County, Wisconsin, and includes a bridge crossing over the St. Croix River. The project extends from TH 5 in Oak Park Heights to approximately 150 Avenue on STH 35/64 in Wisconsin. The Lift Bridge over the St. Croix River between Stillwater, Minnesota, and St. Joseph Township, Wisconsin, is part of a larger transportation system connecting the Minneapolis-St. Paul metropolitan area and west central Wisconsin. The Lift Bridge and its approach highways, TH 36 and TH 95 in Minnesota and STH 64 in Wisconsin, are on the National Highway System, and serve the interregional movements of people and goods over long distances between the two states as well as short- to medium-distance trips between local communities.

D. PROJECT SCHEDULE

The following is the anticipated schedule for completion of project activities:

2003 Amended Scoping Document/2003 Amended Draft Scoping Decision Document	Fall 2003
Public Scoping Meetings in Minnesota and Wisconsin	Fall 2003
2003 Amended Scoping Decision Document	Fall 2003
Supplemental Draft EIS	Winter 2003 - Spring 2004
SEIS Public Hearings in Minnesota and Wisconsin	Summer 2004
Supplemental Final EIS	Winter 2003 - 2004
Record of Decision/Adequacy Determination	Spring 2005
Final Design	2005-2006
Right-of-Way Acquisition	2006-2007
Construction	2007-2009
Project Completion	2010

E. RESPONSIBLE GOVERNMENTAL UNIT AND PROJECT MANAGERS

Mn/DOT is the designated Responsible Governmental Unit (RGU) under Minnesota Rules Chapter 4410.0500 for the purposes of this 2003 ASD/ADSDD, and for the SEIS. The FHWA is the responsible federal agency under NEPA in cooperation with Mn/DOT and Wis/DOT. The contact persons for each agency follow.

The contact person for Mn/DOT (the RGU) is:

Contact Person: Todd Clarkowski
Title: Area Engineer
Agency: Minnesota Department of Transportation
Address: 1500 West County Road B2, MS 050
Roseville, MN 55113
Phone: (651) 582-1169
Fax: (651) 582-1308
Email: todd.clarkowski@dot.state.mn.us

The project manager for Wis/DOT is:

Contact Person: Terry Pederson
Title: District Planning Projects Engineer
Agency: Wisconsin Department of Transportation
Address: 718 West Clairemont Avenue
Eau Claire, WI 54701
Phone: (800) 991-5285 or (715) 836-2857
Fax: (715) 836-2807
Email: terry.pederson@dot.state.wi.us

The contact person for FHWA (the federal responsible agency under NEPA in cooperation with Mn/DOT and Wis/DOT) is:

Contact Person: Cheryl Martin
Title: Environmental Engineer
Agency: Federal Highway Administration
Galtier Plaza
Address: 380 Jackson Street, Suite 150
St. Paul, MN 55101
Phone: (651) 291-6120
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II. PURPOSE AND NEED

A. INTRODUCTION

Departments of Transportation are responsible for providing mobility in a safe, reliable and cost-efficient manner and for integrating environmental, cultural, economic, and social considerations into transportation solutions. While this integration is always a necessary part of the DOTs' work, it is of particular importance and sensitivity as the DOTs in Wisconsin and Minnesota contemplate improving mobility and safety between the two states in the area of the existing crossing between Washington County, Minnesota and St. Croix County, Wisconsin.

The goal is to manage congestion and improve mobility in a reliable, safe and cost-efficient manner as part of a broader program of regional transportation improvements while avoiding (and when unavoidable, minimizing and mitigating for) impacts to the area's social, economic, cultural and environmental needs and objectives. A detailed discussion of the purpose of and need for the project is presented in Appendix C.

Underlying Transportation Problem: Impaired mobility and safety concerns in the TH 36/STH 64 corridor between TH 5 in Minnesota and 150th Avenue in St. Croix County, Wisconsin.

B. TRANSPORTATION

MOBILITY

- The estimated (congestion-free) vehicle capacity for the current river crossing and arterial approaches is 11,200 vehicles a day. The 2002 Average Annual Daily Traffic (AADT) volumes on the river crossing are 16,300 vehicles per day and can exceed 19,000 on a summer weekday. This constraint leads to periodic daily vehicular congestion in downtown Stillwater and on the Wisconsin approach to the bridge.

- The current Metropolitan Council/Mn/DOT travel demand model¹ forecasts average daily vehicle traffic on the river crossing of 23,100 at an average vehicle occupancy of 1.30 persons per vehicle by the year 2030 if no new St. Croix River crossing is built, no cross-river modal alternatives are established, and Minnesota and Wisconsin projected development and programmed roadway improvements occur as planned. This predicted increase in vehicular traffic volume, if realized, will degrade traffic operations and safety in downtown Stillwater, on the river crossing and arterial approaches, and will increase average delay, queue lengths and daily hours of congestion by 50 percent by the year 2030.
- Analysis of existing signalized intersections in downtown Stillwater indicates approximately 120-130 seconds of average delay per vehicle during peak hour and levels of service² (LOS) D-F in 1999. These delays are affected by close intersection spacing, restricted geometrics and delays due to the bridge raising. For a regular peak hour commuter, this delay results in 16 hours in total delay over the course of a year.
- Geometric and physical restrictions in downtown Stillwater limit the opportunities to improve transportation operations and management.
- The river crossing is susceptible to closures due to flooding, maintenance activities and vehicle incidents that disrupt system connections several times per year.

SAFETY

Crash rates on two segments (one in Minnesota and one in Wisconsin) exceed the statewide averages. The severity rate³ for one segment in Minnesota is nearly double the statewide average. The non-fatal injury crash rate for the Wisconsin segment is 60 percent greater than the statewide average.

C. ENVIRONMENTAL, CULTURAL, ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL CONSIDERATIONS

- The area where transportation mobility and safety improvements are contemplated includes the Lower St. Croix National Scenic Riverway (the Riverway); therefore, it is necessary to protect the Riverway's Outstandingly Remarkable Values – scenic, recreational, and geologic – as guided by the Cooperative Management Plan for the lower St. Croix National Scenic Riverway.

¹ Current Metropolitan Council/Mn/DOT model as modified to include the project study area.

² Level of service (LOS) is an indicator of intersection operations as measured in average delay per vehicle. Six LOSs are defined by facility type with the letters A-F designating each level, with LOS A representing the best operating conditions, and LOS F the worst. Each LOS represents a range of operating conditions and the drivers' perception of those conditions.

³ Severity rate is a weighted average taking into account fatal crashes, personal injury crashes, and property damage crashes.

- It is necessary to avoid and, if unavoidable, to minimize impacts to the Riverway's channel, shoreline, bluffs, air quality and water quality.
- It is important to respect the cultural value and historic significance of the Stillwater Lift Bridge, a structure that is listed on the National Register of Historic Places.
- It is important to respect the integrity of the Stillwater Commercial Historic District and the Stillwater Cultural Landscape District: The visual/aesthetic quality, economic viability and physical integrity of these districts are critical to the preservation of these resources and to the protection of the cultural landscape and the community character.
- It is necessary to avoid, and if unavoidable, to minimize impacts to area parklands, cultural resources, threatened and endangered species and wetlands, and if impacted, provide mitigation/compensation for the adverse impacts.
- It is necessary to examine the interaction of land use and transportation, and consider the secondary and cumulative impacts of alternative methods of addressing the transportation needs (and the full impact of failing to address the transportation needs) expressed above.
- It is necessary to avoid and, if unavoidable, minimize impacts to business and property owners, residents and visitors throughout the project area.

III. DEVELOPMENT OF SCOPING ALTERNATIVES

A. IDENTIFICATION OF SCOPING ALIGNMENTS

Scoping for the St. Croix River Crossing was first initiated for the original Scoping Decision Document/Final Study Outline completed in January 1987. This document considered four broad corridors: the North Corridor, the Central Corridor, the Central Corridor Alternate, and the South Corridor. No Build alternatives, including Replacement-On Site, also were part of the study proposal. The North Corridor, Central Corridor and South Corridor alternatives and several No Build alternatives were retained for study in the 1990 Draft EIS.

The 1990 Draft EIS analyzed river crossing alternatives in these four broad corridors in addition to No Build alternatives. The Build alternatives included North Corridor bridge and tunnel alignments; a Central Corridor bridge alignment; and three bridge alignments and a tunnel alternative in the South Corridor. No Build alternatives included No Action and various options to maximize use of the existing transportation network collectively designated as the Transportation System Management (TSM) alternative. A detailed discussion of the alternatives considered was provided in the 1990 Draft EIS.

The north alignment of the South Corridor was identified as the Preferred Alternative in the Final EIS (April 1995). The Preferred Alternative consisted of a four-lane bridge extending between the City of Oak Park Heights in Minnesota and St. Joseph Township in Wisconsin, approach roadway work in Minnesota and Wisconsin, and related improvements. The 1995 Final EIS provided a detailed discussion of the factors used in selecting the Preferred Alternative. A

Record of Decision was issued for this alternative. However, the construction of the 1995 Preferred Alternative was not allowed to proceed following a federal court ruling that the project was subject to review under Section 7(a) of the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act and a subsequent negative determination under that Act by the National Park Service.

Additional alternatives were studied under the Braun Process and led to the identification of the Braun C alignment (a new alignment north of the 1995 FEIS alignment just south of downtown Stillwater), which was documented in the 1999 Amended Scoping Decision Document. Environmental analyses were conducted but not released to the public due to the project's suspension in 2001.

In 2003, discussion regarding scoping alternatives was reinitiated as part of the Stakeholder Resolution Process. At the Stakeholder Group meetings, all alternatives previously studied (Figure 2), as well as new alternatives, were to be reconsidered. The alternatives that were considered in the 1985 Scoping Document and evaluated in the 1995 Draft EIS were considered by the Stakeholders. Through the Stakeholder Resolution Process, and with guidance from the adopted Operating Agreement, five alternatives were selected by the Stakeholder Group. Section I.B. provides further discussion of the Stakeholder Resolution Process, and Project Objectives (Criteria).

B. DESCRIPTION OF SCOPING ALTERNATIVES

In addition to the No Build alternative, five alternatives were identified through the Stakeholder Resolution Process as having the best potential for meeting the project's transportation needs and environmental and historical concerns. The project area, anticipating the potential limits of a transportation improvement project⁴, extends from the TH 36/TH 5 interchange in Stillwater, Minnesota on the west to 150th Avenue on STH 35/64 southwest of Somerset, Wisconsin, on the east, and may also include a section of STH 65 in central St. Croix County (as shown on Figure 3). The No Build Alternative and Alternative A do not include construction of a new river crossing. The remaining alternatives (Alternatives B, C, D and E) do include construction of a new river crossing. Figure 4A shows the general locations for the transportation actions and land uses for Alternative A and Figure 4B shows the corridors for Alternatives B and through E.

NO BUILD

The No Build Alternative is a "no action" alternative and does not include a new river crossing or improvements to the existing transportation system. The existing congestion and safety problems would continue. The Lift Bridge would remain in place for vehicular travel and continue to be maintained on the Minnesota and Wisconsin trunk highway systems. Navigation would not be impacted any different than by the existing Lift Bridge schedule.

⁴ "Project area" here is not intended to define the geographic study area addressed in specific EIS analyses, but rather, the maximum extent of currently anticipated transportation improvements. Geographic areas for analysis purposes will be defined in the SEIS.

Figure 2 – St. Croix River Crossing: Alternatives Studied 1985-2003

Figure 3 – General Project Area

Figure 4a – Scoping Alternatives: Alternative A - Major Transportation Elements

Figure 4b – Scoping Alternatives B, C, D and E

ALTERNATIVE A

Alternative A entails the permanent rehabilitation and continued vehicle use of the Lift Bridge. Needed mobility will be provided through a combination of transit and emergency vehicle advantages, new transit travel options, use of advanced technologies to enhance mobility, and regional policy changes.

Mn/DOT AND Wis/DOT STATUTORY AUTHORITY: A number of the measures listed in the following bullets and shown on Figure 4A are beyond the statutory authority of the Minnesota and Wisconsin Departments of Transportation and would require enabling legislation and, when necessary, appropriations from the legislature. The transit and emergency vehicle advantages and advanced technology options (listed first) are within the statutory authority of the Minnesota and Wisconsin Departments of Transportation.

TRANSIT AND EMERGENCY VEHICLE ADVANTAGES: The following transit and emergency vehicle advantages are proposed as part of Alternative A to address safety and mobility issues, and to encourage transit use in this travel corridor.

- Exclusive transit and emergency vehicle lanes will be provided on the Minnesota and Wisconsin approaches to the Lift Bridge to bypass traffic queues. To provide a greater transit advantage, these lanes will be available to carpools and vanpools.
- Additional and expanded park-and-ride facilities will be provided in the Wisconsin cities of Houlton and Hudson.

ADVANCED TECHNOLOGY OPTIONS: The use of intelligent transportation systems (ITS) to provide enhanced mobility in this corridor for transit and emergency vehicles is proposed as a critical component of Alternative A.

- Opticon emitters (devices that communicate between vehicles and receivers at other fixed points) will be used by emergency vehicles to ensure immediate access onto the Lift Bridge, thereby avoiding any queued traffic. Providing a transit and emergency vehicle preferential access lane (as discussed under the “Transit and Emergency Vehicle Advantages” heading presented previously) is required for this element to be practicable.
- This same device may communicate with gate arm devices (limiting Lift Bridge entry) as well as to the Lift Bridge operator. In this way, the Lift Bridge operator may judge the ability of lowering the Lift Bridge to provide access to an emergency vehicle, should such access be necessary.

NEW TRANSIT TRAVEL OPTIONS: The options described below are assumed as part of Alternative A, in addition to transit service options currently available and/or planned for in the region.

- Water transit service will be provided on the St. Croix River using passenger-only water shuttles. This service will primarily serve a major employer in Bayport (Anderson Windows). Water transit stops will be provided at Houlton (with connections to a park-and-ride facility), Stillwater and Bayport.
- Express bus service will be extended into St. Croix County, Wisconsin.
 - One route will operate between New Richmond, Wisconsin through Somerset, Houlton and Stillwater along STH 64 to I-694, where service can connect to busways to St. Paul and Minneapolis or be through-routed. This express bus will use the transit-advantage lane at the Lift Bridge as discussed above.
 - A second route will operate along I-94 between Hudson and St. Paul providing connections to other services.
 - Park-and-ride lots to support these services are suggested at New Richmond, Somerset, and Roberts, Wisconsin.
- North-south bus transit will be added on TH 95 between Taylors Falls and Hastings, and along STH 35 between St. Croix Falls and Prescott. Stops at cities along the way including Stillwater, Bayport, Afton, Hastings, Prescott, River Falls, Hudson and Houlton.
- A circulator shuttle will run between Stillwater and Bayport, Minnesota.
- Two commuter rail lines will serve St. Croix County and the Twin Cities.
 - One line will operate from Hammond, Wisconsin to downtown St. Paul with stops at Roberts, Hudson and the suburbs of St. Paul. Park-and-ride lots to support this service will be provided at Hammond, Roberts (shared with the St. Croix Express Bus), and Hudson. The lot at Hudson will be a separate lot from the one described under the heading “Transit and Emergency Vehicle Advantages”, as that lot would likely be located too far away from the commuter line to be serviceable.
 - A second line will operate between Houlton, New Richmond and downtown St. Paul with stops at Somerset and the suburbs of St. Paul. Park-and-ride lots to support this service will be located at New Richmond and Somerset (shared with the St. Croix Express Bus).

WIDENING STH 65 FROM TWO LANES TO FOUR LANES: This action would involve widening from two lanes to four lanes, an eleven-mile stretch of road from I-94 to New Richmond in central St. Croix County, as shown on Figures 3 and 4A. This would require the expansion of the scope of the SEIS to include this area and similar expansion of the Project Area. Little information is currently known about the impacts that this action would have, although all impacts resulting from this action would be addressed in the SEIS to the same level of detail as other actions if this action were to be included as part of Alternative A. Traffic studies are underway at this time to determine the benefits/impacts of including this action in Alternative A, and to measure the ability of this action to meet the objectives defined for this project, outlined in Section III.D

REGIONAL POLICY CHANGES: Regional policy changes to support Alternative A would be necessary. These policy changes are summarized here and include:

- Designation of STH 65 as a “Corridor Commercial Growth Zone” between Houlton and I-94. This would include expanding STH 65 to a four-lane facility.
- Restrictive highway zoning of STH 35 between Houlton and North Hudson, including possible Scenic Byway designation.
- Full partner status for St. Croix County in the planning and research processes of the Metropolitan Council.
- Revised St. Croix County Comprehensive Plan ensuring adequate protection of the St. Croix National Scenic Riverway and its watershed.
- Implementation of a comprehensive bicycle system in St. Croix County.

TH 36 PARTNERSHIP STUDY AREA

In Minnesota, TH 36 from TH 5 to the new bridge would be converted to a grade-separated facility. The following list describes the modifications to TH 36, local roads, and the frontage roads parallel to TH 36 that would be included with Alternatives B, C, D and E. The TH 36 Partnership Study was conducted in 2001 to explore design concepts for TH 36 between TH 5 and Osgood Avenue. This study was conducted by Mn/DOT, in partnership with the cities of Oak Park Heights and Stillwater and Washington County. A grade-separated concept with two buttonhook-type interchanges has been supported by the local communities. Refinement of the location of the buttonhooks, frontage road connections and overpass is currently being considered by the partnership study group with the addition of the Chamber of Commerce. Figure 5 includes an illustration of the concept of frontage road alignments and interchange locations currently being explored.

- The at-grade crossings of TH 36 with Washington/Norell Avenues, and Osgood Avenue (County Road 24) would be removed and replaced with overpasses and buttonhook interchanges.
- The at-grade crossing of TH 36 at Oakgreen/Greeley Avenues will be replaced with an overpass.
- The north and south frontage roads would be realigned and buttonhook-type interchanges would provide full access to TH 36 just east of Washington/Norell Avenue and west of Osgood Avenue;
- Local roads would be accessible from the realigned frontage roads;

Figure 5 – Alternative B

- The Beach Road overpass would be realigned to the west, intersecting with the south frontage road at a T-intersection; and
- Lookout Trail would be reconstructed as a cul-de-sac north of the St. Croix Overlook.

The reconstruction of TH 36 between TH 5 and the Beach Road overpass would be the same for each alternative bridge crossing (Alternatives B, C, D, and E).

ALTERNATIVE B

Alternative B (Figure 5) consists of a new four-lane bridge (two through-traffic lanes in each direction) with a bicycle/pedestrian trail on the north side of the bridge. The 5,500-foot long bridge (3,000 feet over water) would be located 6,500 feet south of the Lift Bridge.

On the Minnesota side, TH 36 would cross over TH 95 along the approach to the St. Croix River. Ramps would provide access to TH 36 in both directions from TH 95. TH 95 would be realigned as it crosses under TH 36 to allow for additional lanes and traffic signals associated with the ramps to TH 36. Access to the Sunnyside Marina would be from a realigned entrance along TH 95.

The river crossing would stretch from the Minnesota side, near the location of where TH 36 and TH 95 meet and extend diagonally over the river. Two locations for the Wisconsin bridge approach will be investigated. One site is located within a ravine based on the alignment from the 1995 Final EIS. The second site is located to the south of the 1995 Final EIS alignment (South Ravine Option). In Wisconsin, the approach roadway would travel under STH 35, north to a diamond-type interchange with the relocated CTH E. A bicycle/pedestrian trail would provide access to the bridge for pedestrians and bicyclists at the STH 35 crossing.

Access to and from STH 35 with the new STH 35/64 roadway would be possible from the interchange with the realigned CTH E. The new STH 35/64 roadway would continue north then east on the north side of the existing STH 35/64 alignment and join the recently reconstructed portion of STH 64 north of 20th Street. A portion of the existing STH 35/64 roadway would be removed and converted into two local roads where the new roadway crosses.

Several design elements are currently under study for Alternative B. If carried forward into the SEIS, discussions would be made at the start of the SEIS regarding inclusion of these potential design elements. These design elements include:

- the “South Ravine Option” alternative alignment (see Figure 5);
- the construction of a tunnel at the bridge abutment into the Wisconsin bluff. This tunnel would use a “cut and cover” method because of the soil conditions of bluff (i.e., the bluff would be excavated, a tunnel structure would be constructed, and fill would be placed over the tunnel and revegetated);

- the retention of the Lift Bridge as a limited vehicular facility for local traffic (i.e., no semi or large truck traffic);
- the conversion of the Lift Bridge to a pedestrian and bicycle facility; and
- the construction of park and ride facilities in Minnesota near the TH 36/95 interchange.

ALTERNATIVE C

Alternative C (shown on Figure 6) would include construction of a new four-lane bridge over the St. Croix River between TH 36 in Stillwater and Oak Park Heights, Minnesota and STH 64 in St. Joseph Township, Wisconsin. The alternative also consists of reconstruction of the Minnesota and Wisconsin approach roadways to the bridge, including a new interchange at Minnesota TH 36 and TH 95 and an interchange in Wisconsin at STH 35, or at relocated CTH E.

The new 3,300-foot long bridge (2,000 feet over water) would be located approximately 3,900 feet south of the Lift Bridge. The bridge would include two through-traffic lanes in each direction and a bicycle/pedestrian trail on the north side of the bridge.

Approach roadways to the bridge that would be reconstructed as part of the project include TH 36 and TH 95 in Minnesota, and STH 64, STH 35, and CTH E in Wisconsin. A modified folded-diamond-type interchange would be provided at TH 95 allowing full access to TH 36. The Minnesota approach would cross over TH 95 just north of the Sunnyside Marina. The bridge would continue northeast, crossing perpendicular to the river to the Wisconsin bluff. Access to the Sunnyside Marina and the Aiple Property would be possible through a local road intersecting with TH 95.

In Wisconsin, several alternatives for the alignment of the new STH 35/64 roadway, the roadway connections to STH 35 and CTH E, and the realignment of CTH E will be considered. The new STH 35/64 alignment would either curve north after crossing STH 35 then turn east to parallel the existing STH 35/64 roadway, or continue northeast after crossing STH 35 and join the recently reconstructed portion of STH 64 near 20th Street. Either a folded diamond-type interchange at STH 35 or a diamond-type interchange at the realigned CTH E would provide access to local roads. CTH E would either be realigned to the south, or remain at its current alignment. The options for the alignment of the new roadway, the roadway connections, and realignment of CTH E would result in five potential options for the new STH 35/64 roadway in Wisconsin.

Depending on the alignment selection of the new STH 35/64 roadway crossing the existing STH 35/64 roadway, several different scenarios are possible for other local roads. Cul-de-sacs would be constructed where the new roadway crosses the existing alignment. Short segments of new local roads would also be constructed to connect the existing roadway to other existing local roads. The alignment of Alternative C in Wisconsin and the proposed interchanges are shown in Figure 6.

Figure 6 – Alternative C

Several design elements are currently under study for Alternative C. If carried forward into the SEIS, discussions would be made at the start of the SEIS regarding inclusion of these potential design elements. These design elements include:

- the construction of a tunnel at the bridge abutment into the Wisconsin bluff. This tunnel would use a “cut and cover” method because of the soil conditions of bluff (i.e., the bluff would be excavated, a tunnel structure would be constructed, and fill would be placed over the tunnel and revegetated);
- the retention of the Lift Bridge as a limited vehicular facility for local traffic (i.e., no semi or large truck traffic);
- the conversion of the Lift Bridge to a pedestrian and bicycle facility; and
- the construction of park and ride facilities in Minnesota near the TH 36/95 interchange.

ALTERNATIVE D

Alternative D (shown on Figure 7) consists of a new four-lane bridge south of the existing Lift Bridge, accommodating both eastbound and westbound traffic with two through traffic lanes in each direction. The approximately 2,925-foot long new bridge (approximately 2,530 feet over water) would cross northeasterly to Wisconsin from a point in Minnesota approximately 2,000 feet south of the Lift Bridge. The new bridge would meet the Wisconsin bluff approximately 200 feet south of the point where the Lift Bridge meets the Wisconsin bluff. The Lift Bridge would remain intact and would be used for limited vehicular traffic.

South of Stillwater, a full interchange would provide access in all directions to and from TH 36 and TH 95 with a “modified single-point” interchange at the southern junction of the roadways. Some driveway access would be altered and a north access to the Sunnyside Condominiums would be available. Access to the Sunnyside Marina would be available from a local road parallel to TH 95, which would continue north to access the Aiple Property. At the north junction, ramps would provide access from eastbound TH 36/95 to northbound TH 95 into Stillwater, and from southbound TH 95 to westbound TH 36/95 from Stillwater. Direct access from southbound TH 95 from Stillwater to eastbound TH 36 (new bridge crossing) would not be possible. To do this, traffic would have one of two options: take the Lift Bridge from Stillwater to Wisconsin, or take TH 95 southbound from Stillwater, making a U-turn at the intersection with the ramp providing access to eastbound TH 36/95 and the new bridge to Wisconsin. Access from westbound STH 64 to northbound TH 95 would also be provided by the Lift Bridge.

In Wisconsin, the new STH 64 roadway would climb the Wisconsin bluff along the existing corridor. A ramp would connect eastbound traffic from Stillwater using the Lift Bridge to eastbound traffic on STH 64. At the top of the Wisconsin bluff, the new STH 64 roadway would cross under existing STH 35, connecting to a relocated STH 35 with a diamond-type interchange.

Figure 7 – Alternative D

This diamond-type interchange, located just outside of Houlton, would provide full access in all directions between STH 64 and a new north-south road for STH 35. This north-south road would be constructed between the existing STH 35/64 roadway north of Houlton and STH 35 to the south, providing a bypass for STH 35 around Houlton. This roadway would also join CTY E at an at-grade intersection and join existing STH 35 south of Houlton at a new T-intersection. The new STH 35/64 roadway would continue to the northeast, crossing the existing STH 35/64 roadway and paralleling it to the east to the recently reconstructed portion of STH 64. The alignment of Alternative D and the proposed interchanges are shown on Figure 7.

Several design elements are currently under study for Alternative D. If carried forward into the SEIS, discussions would be made at the start of the SEIS regarding inclusion of these potential design elements. These design elements include:

- the inclusion of an at-grade intersection between STH 64 and STH 35 in Houlton or an STH 64 overpass with no access to STH 35 in Houlton;
- the addition of bicycle and pedestrian facilities on the new river crossing and access facilities in both Minnesota and Wisconsin; and
- the construction of park and ride facilities in Minnesota near the TH 36/95 interchange.

ALTERNATIVE E

Alternative E (Figure 8) consists of utilizing the existing Lift Bridge as a two-lane one-way roadway for westbound traffic, and constructing a new one-way bridge south of the Lift Bridge for two lanes of eastbound traffic. The approximately 3,000-foot long new bridge (2,530 feet over water) would cross northeasterly to Wisconsin from a point in Minnesota approximately 2,000 feet south of the Lift Bridge. The new bridge crossing would meet the Wisconsin bluff approximately 200 feet south of the point where the Lift Bridge meets the Wisconsin bluff.

South of Stillwater, a full interchange would provide access in all directions to and from TH 36 and TH 95 with a “modified single-point” interchange at the southern junction of the roadways. Some driveway access would be altered and the north access to Sunnyside Condominiums would be closed. Access to the Sunnyside Condominiums would be available from a local road parallel to TH 95, which would continue north to access the Aiple Property.

The new eastbound bridge would cross the St. Croix River diagonally, heading northeast from the Minnesota side. Northbound TH 95 would be able to continue north into Stillwater via a left turn from TH 36/95, while eastbound traffic would continue east crossing the river. Southbound traffic on TH 95 from Stillwater would either continue south on TH 36/95 or turn left, crossing the river with eastbound traffic from TH 36/95.

On the Wisconsin side, the new bridge would approach the bluff immediately south of the existing Lift Bridge, and meet westbound traffic on STH 64 at the westernmost end of County Road E. County Road E will be terminated in cul-de-sac. The new STH 64 approach roadway would be a four-lane, divided highway providing access to STH 35 with either an at-grade intersection or an interchange.

Figure 8 – Alternative E

The alignment of the new STH 35/64 roadway from STH 35 to the recently reconstructed portion of STH 64 to the east, the alignment of a new local road between the existing STH 35/64 roadway and CTH E, and the interchange between the local road and the new STH 35/64 would be the same as Alternative D. The alignment of Alternative E and the proposed interchanges are shown on Figure 8.

Several design elements are currently under study for Alternative E. If carried forward into the SEIS, discussions would be made at the start of the SEIS regarding inclusion of these potential design elements. These design elements include:

- the reconstruction of the TH 36/96 interchange in Oak Park Heights, Minnesota and the relocation of the Beach Road bridge over TH 36;
- the inclusion of an at-grade intersection between STH 64 and STH 35 in Houlton or an STH 64 overpass with no access to STH 35 in Houlton;
- the profile of the bridge and clearance over the St. Croix River;
- the addition of bicycle and pedestrian facilities on the new river crossing and access facilities in both Minnesota and Wisconsin; and
- the construction of park and ride facilities in Minnesota near the TH 36/95 interchange.

C. SUMMARY OF DESIGN ELEMENTS OF ALTERNATIVES

Table 1 (presented on the following page) summarizes specific design elements relevant to the project. The incorporation of the elements into the design of each alternative is listed as Y=yes, N=no, and P=possibly/yet to be determined.

D. EVALUATION OF ALTERNATIVES BASED ON PROJECT OBJECTIVES

Each of the alternatives is discussed in the following section with respect to the alternative's ability to meet the transportation or other objectives identified in the Stakeholder Process for which information is currently available. This discussion is followed by a comparison of the potential direct impacts the alternatives may have on the identified social, economic and environmental resources for which information is available, and that are pertinent to the objectives. Additional studies and/or analysis regarding these objectives would be completed for the selected alternatives in the SEIS.

The No-Build alternative is not discussed in this section, because it must be included in the SEIS under NEPA procedures. The following information regarding Alternatives A through E is provided to assist in the determination of the alternatives to be brought forward into the SEIS.

**TABLE 1
SUMMARY OF DESIGN ELEMENTS OF ALTERNATIVES**

	Alternative A	Alternative B	Alternative C	Alternative D	Alternative E
River Crossing					
Construction of a new river crossing	N	Y	Y	Y	Y
Minnesota Approach					
Reconstruction of TH 36 between TH 5 and TH 95 as a grade-separated facility	N	Y	Y	Y	Y
Reconstruction of the TH 36/95 interchange	N	Y	Y	Y	P
Relocation of the Beach Road bridge	N	Y	Y	Y	P
Expansion of TH 36/95 approach to the river crossing	N	Y	Y	Y	Y
Wisconsin Approach					
Construction of a new STH 35/64 (County Road E) interchange	N	Y	Y	P	P
Relocation of STH 35	N	N	P	P	P
Relocation of CTH E	N	Y	P	N	N
Lift Bridge					
Retention of the Lift Bridge as a vehicular facility	Y	P	P	Y	Y
Conversion of the Lift Bridge to a bicycle / pedestrian facility	N	P	P	N	N
Other Issues					
Provision of an enhanced bicycle / pedestrian facility on river crossing	N	Y	Y	Y	Y
Provision of new dedicated transit facilities	Y	N	N	N	N
Provision of park and ride facilities	Y	Y	Y	P	P

The amount of existing data available on each of these alternatives varies greatly. For example, little or no information is known about the impacts of widening STH 65 potentially included with Alternative A, and the impacts of several design elements that are currently being studied (as described in Section III.B). Therefore the impacts of these elements are not discussed in this section.

Table 2 (shown in Section III.D after this description of the directives and impacts) depicts this information in a graphic form, for ease in assessing the differences between and among the alternatives. Figure 3 (discussed previously in Section III.B) shows the project area studied for the alternatives. Figure 9 shows the locations of the known historic properties⁵ discussed in this section. Figure 10 shows the known parklands in the project area discussed in this section. Figure 11 shows the known natural resources in the project area discussed in this section.

⁵ The term “historic properties” in this document includes architectural structures as well as archaeological sites that have been identified in previous cultural resource studies and determined eligible for the National Register of Historic Places.

Figure 9 – Known Historic Properties

Figure 10 – Known Parks and Recreation Areas

Figure 11 – Known Natural Resources

TRANSPORTATION OBJECTIVES

Regional/Local Mobility with Limited Congestion

Objective 1 - Efficient access to other regional roadways. TH 36/ STH 64 connects with regional roadways TH 95 in Minnesota and STH 35 in Wisconsin.

Alternative A: Alternative A preserves the existing access, which does not include direct access from eastbound TH 36 to southbound TH 95, nor from northbound TH 95 to westbound TH 36. Access to STH 35 is provided at an at-grade intersection.

Alternative B: Alternative B provides full access to both Minnesota TH 95 and STH 35 at grade-separated interchanges.

Alternative C: Same as Alternative B.

Alternative D: Alternative D could provide full access at STH 35 with construction of a new interchange. Full access between TH 36 and TH 95 would require construction of new interchanges at the south junction points and use of the Lift Bridge to provide full access at the north junction.

Alternative E: Alternative E could provide full access at STH 35 with an interchange as well as full access at TH 36/TH 95 if this interchange is reconstructed.

Objective 2 Access to local arterials and collectors. Local access includes connections to county roads, local streets and private driveways accessing individual property.

Alternative A: Current local access is maintained.

Alternative B: Minor access changes would occur between TH 5 and TH 95 due to relocation of north and south frontage roads in this segment. Direct access to Beach Road from TH 36 would be eliminated. Maintaining access to Lookout Trail from TH 95 could be difficult because of the close spacing of the TH 36/ TH 95 interchange and the intersection with this road. Access to properties in the east of TH 95 in the area of the TH 36/ TH 95 interchange including the Dahl Tech property and Sunnyside Marina, would be reconfigured. Access to several properties, including Kolliner Park, would be eliminated due to the removal of existing STH 64 west of TH 35. Reconfiguration of some property access in St. Joseph Township would result from the realignment of STH 64.

Alternative C: Similar to Alternative B.

Alternative D: Minor access changes would occur between TH 5 and TH 95 due to relocation of north and south frontage roads in this segment. Direct access to Beach Road from TH 36 would be eliminated. Maintaining access to Lookout Trail from TH 95 could be difficult if the interchange is reconstructed because of the close spacing

of the TH 36/ TH 95 interchange and the intersection with this road. Access to properties in the east of TH 95 in the area of the TH 36/ TH 95 interchange including the Dahl Tech property and Sunnyside Marina, would be reconfigured. Access to Kolliner Park could possibly be retained. Access between STH 64 and County Road E would be terminated on the Wisconsin bluff. Construction of a new interchange in the Wisconsin segment would require conversion of the existing at-grade intersection of STH 64 and STH 35 to an overpass. Reconfiguration of access to some properties in St. Joseph Township would result from realignment of STH 64 and/or access restrictions near the STH 35 intersection/interchange.

Alternative E: Similar to Alternative D.

Objective 3 - Sufficient Capacity for 2030 AADT. Although none of the alternatives in their current configurations have been subject to a full traffic study, the results of previous studies on similar alternatives can be extrapolated to give a general idea of the alternatives' abilities to meet traffic capacity as annual average daily traffic (AADT) demands in 2030. Previous studies indicate an estimated 2030 traffic demand of 43,600 vehicles per day at the river crossing with an unconstrained (capacity greater than demand) facility. Detailed traffic operations analysis would be completed for all alternatives selected for study in the SEIS.

Alternative A: Alternative A does not add capacity to the roadway, so therefore would have to reduce the 2030 demand on the system from 23,100 vehicles per day (for no-build conditions) by more than 7,000 vehicles per day to reduce traffic volumes below current levels to improve existing congested traffic conditions.

Alternative B: Alternative B has the potential to provide capacity for over 60,000 vehicles per day, easily accommodating the 2030 traffic demand (unconstrained capacity).

Alternative C: Similar to Alternative B.

Alternative D: Similar to Alternative B when interchanges with full directional movement and sufficient capacity are provided at the north and south junctions of TH 36 and TH 95 as well as STH 35.

Alternative E: A previous travel-demand study examined a two-lane Minnesota approach version of Alternative E, and estimated a travel demand of 36,000 vehicles per day, representing a constrained capacity as it is less than the unconstrained 2030 demand. No travel demand studies have been completed for the current version of Alternative E, which has a four-lane Minnesota approach. However, one would estimate that the capacity is greater than the two-lane approach version, yet the capacity would be constrained somewhat by the westbound river crossing segment, which is subject to signalization through downtown Stillwater.

Objective 4 - Sufficient intersection capacity and geometrics for 2030 average weekday afternoon peak traffic. (The goal of the project is to attain LOS B; a LOS C is the minimum that would be accepted.)

Detailed traffic operations analysis is available only for Alternative C at this time. Detailed traffic operations analysis would be completed for all alternatives selected for study in the SEIS.

Alternative A: No studies available.

Alternative B: No studies available.

Alternative C: Previous studies show that in 2020 Alternative C would operate at LOS C or better at all intersections except the north frontage road and Washington Avenue where close intersection spacing prevents efficient traffic flow.

Alternative D: No studies available.

Alternative E: Critical lane (planning level) analysis indicates that the Chestnut Street and Main Street intersection and the STH 64 and STH 35 at-grade intersection would operate at a LOS of E or worse during the average weekday morning peak hour. No other operations analyses have been completed.

Objective 5 - Provision of alternative travel mode facilities.

Alternative A: Alternative A includes provisions for water-based transit, in addition to dedicated bus and commuter rail facilities as well as pedestrian/bicycle facilities.

Alternative B: Alternative B provides for pedestrian/bicycle trails on the new river crossing. Transit vehicles (buses, van pools, etc.) can also be accommodated in the mixed traffic on the travel lanes of the bridge and approaches. The Lift Bridge may be used as a pedestrian/bicycle facility.

Alternative C: Similar to Alternative B.

Alternative D: Alternative D may include a pedestrian/bicycle trail on the new river crossing bridge. The sidewalk on the Lift Bridge would continue to provide a pedestrian/bicycle facility. Transit vehicles could be accommodated in mixed traffic on the Lift Bridge, but oversized vehicles would be prohibited from the Lift Bridge. Use of rail transit or dedicated busways has not been examined for Alternative D in its present configuration.

Alternative E: Similar to Alternative D.

Objective 6 - Protect public rights to free navigation.

Alternative A: Continued vehicular use of the Lift Bridge as a trunk highway facility would require that bridge opening continue on a restricted schedule during peak vehicular traffic hours.

Alternative B: The new bridge would not restrict navigation. With conversion to a bicycle and pedestrian facility or limited vehicular facility (non-state trunk highway use), the Lift Bridge would be raised and lowered on an on-demand basis, allowing for free navigation of the river.

Alternative C: Similar to Alternative B.

Alternative D: The new bridge would not restrict navigation if minimum Coast Guard clearances are met, and the continued vehicular use of the Lift Bridge would have the same impacts as Alternative A.

Alternative E: The new east-bound bridge would not impede navigation if minimum Coast Guard clearances are met, and the continued vehicular use of the Lift Bridge would have the same impacts as Alternative A.

Facility That is Reliable, Safe, and Cost-Efficient

Objective 1 - Minimal facility closures due to weather conditions or maintenance/repairs.

Alternative A: The Lift Bridge, which is a major component of Alternative A, is susceptible to closures due to flooding, repairs, maintenance. Recent studies of the structural condition of the Lift Bridge indicate that continued use of the Lift Bridge for unrestricted⁶ vehicular traffic may markedly increase the probability of component failure, shortening the anticipated life of the Lift Bridge. Recent examination of flood data also indicates that the elevation of the bridge's bottom chord is below the elevation of the 10-year flood, suggesting that the Lift Bridge will be subject to frequent flooding (data suggests flooding approximately every six to seven years). During periods of bridge closure due to flooding, repairs, or maintenance, traffic would be diverted to other routes.

Alternative B: The new river crossing proposed with Alternative B would not be prone to flooding, so would not be susceptible to closures. During periods of bridge closure due to flooding, repairs, or maintenance, traffic would be diverted to other routes.

Alternative C: Similar to Alternative B.

Alternative D: The new river crossing proposed with Alternative D would not be prone to flooding. The Lift Bridge, which is also a component of Alternative D, is susceptible to closure as explained in Alternative A. Unrestricted vehicular use would continue, increasing the probability of component failure.

Alternative E: The new river crossing proposed with Alternative E would not be prone to flooding. The Lift Bridge, which is also a component of Alternative E, is susceptible to closure as explained in Alternative A. With Alternative E, an ability to provide two-

⁶ Other than current weight restrictions.

way traffic on the new bridge during closures for flooding or repairs/maintenance could potentially alleviate this closure, but this option has not yet been thoroughly examined. During periods of bridge closure due to flooding, repairs, or maintenance, traffic would be diverted to other routes. During periods of bridge closure due to flooding, repairs, or maintenance, traffic would be diverted to other routes.

Objective 2 - Limited facility closures due to accidents or other incidents.

Alternative A: Constraints on the vertical clearance within the truss of the Lift Bridge make it susceptible to vehicular collisions. Damage to the bridge truss can require closure of the bridge until repairs are made. Additionally, any traffic incident on the bridge impedes traffic flow for a period of time as damaged vehicles have no shoulder to pull onto to allow traffic to flow while the incident is being cleared.

Alternative B: Improved geometrics on the new bridge would likely result in lowered crash rates on this bridge. Improved shoulders on the approaches and remainder of the roadway project area would allow vehicles to move out of traffic lanes if necessary (i.e., if damaged, or to avoid damaged vehicles) thus reducing delay. If the Lift Bridge would continue to carry vehicular traffic, during periods of bridge closure due to flooding, repairs, or maintenance, traffic would be diverted to other routes

Alternative C: Similar to Alternative B.

Alternative D: Similar to Alternative B.

Alternative E: Similar to Alternative B with the exception of the westbound bridge. The westbound bridge (Lift Bridge) would be susceptible to closures similar to Alternative A, but could reduce those closures by prohibiting vehicles exceeding the clearance limits of the existing trusses.

Objective 3 - Crash rates at or better than state average for facility type.

Alternative A: Alternative A may have a reduced crash rate due to reduced congestion.

Alternative B: Crash rates would improve for Alternative B due to new facilities with improved geometrics and conformance to safety and design standards.

Alternative C: Similar to Alternative B.

Alternative D: Similar to Alternative B.

Alternative E: Similar to Alternative B. Although crash rates would be expected to improve on the new portion of the facility due to improved geometrics, Alternative E would continue to use a portion of the existing facility with geometric deficiencies; therefore it is anticipated that the existing crash rates would be retained.

Objective 4 - Transportation benefit/cost ratio greater than or equal to 1.0

No benefit/cost information is available at this time for any of the alternatives, but will be available for the SEIS.

ENVIRONMENTAL, CULTURAL, ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL OBJECTIVES

Objective 1 - Maintain and enhance the Outstandingly Remarkable Values of the Lower St. Croix National Scenic Riverway (scenic (visual), recreational and geologic).

Alternative A: Alternative A would not alter the visual, recreational or geologic characteristics of the riverway, with the exception of construction of dock facilities for the water taxi and other improvements potentially required for the commuter rail or other facilities such as parking lots.

Alternative B: Alternative B would minimize geologic (Wisconsin bluff) impacts by entering Wisconsin at the location of an existing ravine, although bluff cuts and retaining walls would be necessary. Impacts to recreational values would include visual and scenery changes and placement of piers in the river. Inclusion of a pedestrian/bicycle facility on the new bridge would enhance the recreational experience in the valley.

Alternative C: Similar to Alternative B.

Alternative D: Alternative D would utilize an existing bluff cut but would likely require additional excavation into the bluff for approach road widening. Impacts to recreational values would include visual and scenery changes and placement of piers in the river. Conversion of the Lift Bridge to a pedestrian/bicycle facility would enhance the recreational experience in the valley.

Alternative E: Similar to Alternative D. Inclusion of a pedestrian/bicycle facility on the new bridge would enhance the recreational experience in the valley.

Objective 2 – Maintain the visual integrity of the Lower St. Croix National Scenic Riverway.
The boundaries of the National Scenic Riverway are shown on Figure 11.

Alternative A: Alternative A would not alter the visual, recreational or geologic characteristics of the riverway, with the exception of construction of dock facilities for the water taxi and other improvements potentially required for the commuter rail or other facilities.

Alternative B: This alternative potentially has the longest length of new bridge directly over the river of the four alternatives that include a new bridge. Alternative B potentially lowers the height of the new bridge, potentially lessens the number of bridge piers in the water, and examines an optional alignment, bridge types and aesthetic treatments. Retaining walls (which could be as tall as 26 feet in height based on current information) would be required at the Minnesota end of the bridge. Removal of vegetation and grading would be required in the ravine where the bridge enters Wisconsin.

Alternative C: The Alternative C alignment would result in a shorter bridge crossing than Alternative B, due to the perpendicular crossing of the river. Retaining walls (which could be as tall as 30 feet in height based on current information) would be required at the Minnesota end of the bridge. Removal of vegetation and grading would be required in the ravine where the bridge enters Wisconsin.

Alternative D: The new bridge in Alternative D would be similar to the Alternative E bridge in length, but would be wider to carry two-directional traffic. This alternative requires vehicular use of two bridges in the area. Due to the expansion of the Minnesota approach to four lanes, fill into the Aiple property would require retaining walls, currently anticipated as high as 40 feet. Terracing of this retaining wall may be implemented in some areas and may reduce the visual impact, but would require additional Aiple Property. Ramps providing vehicular access from the new crossing to the east end of the Lift Bridge may require retaining walls as high as 90 feet, provided in stepped, 30-foot increments (based on current information). Expansion of the Wisconsin approach would require additional excavation of the bluff and impacts to the Kolliner Park property.

Alternative E: New bridge would be similar in length, but narrower than the Alternative D bridge; however, it requires continued vehicular use of two bridges in the area. Due to the expansion of the Minnesota approach to four lanes, fill into the Aiple property would require retaining walls, currently anticipated as high as 45 feet (based on current information). Terracing of this retaining wall may be implemented in some areas and may reduce the visual impact, but would require additional Aiple Property. Expansion of the Wisconsin approach would require additional excavation of the bluff and retaining walls up to 45 feet in height (based on current information), and impacts to the Kolliner Park property.

Objective 3 - Maintain the existing water quality of the St. Croix River Watershed. Known natural resources, including wetland areas are shown on Figure 11.

Alternative A: Alternative A would maintain the existing drainage patterns. Wetland impacts resulting from elements of the alternatives (e.g. water taxi and park and ride facilities) have not been estimated.

Alternative B: Alternative B would increase the impervious surface area, although stormwater ponding and management will be used to minimize impacts on the water quality and possibly treat additional currently untreated areas beyond the roadway. Internal drainage systems on a new bridge and discontinued vehicular use of the Lift Bridge would better protect the riverway from chemical spills and deicing chemicals. The Alternative B alignment would impact some wetlands, but these impacts would need to be reassessed in the SEIS.

Alternative C: Similar to Alternative B. Alternative C would impact some wetlands, but impacts would need to be reassessed in the SEIS.

Alternative D: Similar to Alternative B, although continued vehicular use of the Lift Bridge would leave the riverway susceptible to chemical spills and deicing chemicals. Alternative D would impact some wetlands, but impacts would need to be reassessed in the SEIS.

Alternative E: Similar to Alternative D, although overall impervious surface area could be less than that of Alternative D. Alternative E would impact some wetlands, but impacts would need to be reassessed in the SEIS.

Objective 4 - Maintain the existing air quality of the St. Croix River Valley.

Alternative A: No air quality studies available; however, previous studies indicate that air quality standards would not be exceeded in a No Build condition due to low background concentrations of carbon monoxide. As this alternative would only result in improved congestion from the No Build condition, no air quality issues are anticipated.

Alternative B: Similar to Alternative A.

Alternative C: Previous studies indicate that air quality standards would not be exceeded with this alternative.

Alternative D: Similar to Alternative A.

Alternative E: Similar to Alternative A.

Objective 5 - Maintain the integrity of area historic properties including the Lift Bridge, the Downtown Stillwater Historic District and the Stillwater Cultural Landscape District. Known historic properties are shown on Figure 10. An assessment of effects (direct, indirect and cumulative) on historic properties is required under Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 as amended. The following discussion is not intended to convey this formal “finding of effect” but rather, a preliminary assessment of potential effects based on known information and historic properties identified to date.

Alternative A: Assessment of potential direct impacts to historic properties would require clarification regarding location of proposed elements of the alternative including water shuttle facilities and park-and-ride locations.

Alternative B: Conversion of Lift Bridge to a pedestrian and bicycle facility would require an assessment of effect in cooperation with the MnSHPO and WisSHPO and cooperating agencies under Section 106. Potential indirect effects to the Stillwater Cultural Landscape District, the Downtown Stillwater District, the St. Croix Overlook, the Log Cabin Restaurant, and the Thelen Farmstead would also require assessment. An additional study to determine if National Register eligible properties exist would need to be conducted for the optional southern alignment in Wisconsin.

Alternative C: Conversion of Lift Bridge to a pedestrian and bicycle facility would require an assessment of effect. Potential indirect effects to the Stillwater Cultural Landscape District, the Downtown Stillwater District, the Hersey and Bean Mill site, the St. Croix Overlook, the Log Cabin Restaurant, and the Thelen Farmstead would require assessment.

Alternative D: Direct impacts to the Hersey and Bean Mill site are anticipated. Potential indirect effects to the Stillwater Cultural Landscape District, the Downtown Stillwater District, the St. Croix Overlook, the Log Cabin Restaurant, and the Thelen Farmstead would require assessment.

Alternative E: Similar to Alternative D.

Objective 6 - Minimize impacts to area parklands. Known parks and recreation areas in the project area are shown on Figure 10. Acres of impact are not provided because design factors affecting levels of impacts continue to be under study. Specific acres of impact will be provided in the SDEIS and draft 4(f) evaluation.

Alternative A: Direct impacts to the Aiple property, Lowell Park, Kolliner Park and the Lower St. Croix National Scenic Riverway could likely be avoided with the exception of docking facilities for the water shuttle service. Further development of Alternative A would be required to assess additional parkland impacts resulting from park and ride lots, bypass lanes, commuter rail facilities, expansion of STH 65, and other elements of this alternative.

Alternative B: Alternative B would result in impacts to the Lower St. Croix National Scenic Riverway, Kolliner Park (if vehicular access is removed due to conversion of the Lift Bridge as a pedestrian/bicycle facility) and potential temporary construction impacts to Lowell Park (again, if vehicular access is removed, and the Lift Bridge is converted to a pedestrian and bicycle facility a vehicle turn-around may impact Lowell Park). The Aiple property would be directly accessible from TH 95. If the Lift Bridge is converted to a pedestrian/bicycle facility, access to Lowell Park and Kolliner Park would still be available to pedestrians and bicyclists, but temporarily limited during the conversion.

Alternative C: Similar to Alternative B with the addition of impacts to the Aiple property. The bridge abutment for Alternative C would cross directly over the southern end of the Aiple property.

Alternative D: Alternative D would result in impacts to the Aiple property, the Lower St. Croix National Scenic Riverway and Kolliner Park. The permanent impacts to the Aiple property and Kolliner Park would result from the expansion of the bridge approach

to four lanes in Minnesota and Wisconsin, respectively, the bridge abutments in both Minnesota and Wisconsin, and the construction of retaining walls. Accessibility to the Aiple property would be limited to the south end of the property due to the location of the TH 36/95 junction at the north end of the property.

Alternative E: Alternative E would result in similar parkland impacts as Alternative D. However, these impacts may be less because the bridge crossing would be only two lanes, compared to the four-lane crossing of Alternative D.

Objective 7 - Minimize impacts to threatened and endangered species Known natural resources are shown on Figure 11.

Alternative A: No impacts to threatened and endangered species anticipated at this time; however, as elements of this alternatives are sited (e.g. water shuttle and park and ride facilities) impacts to threatened and endangered species will need to be considered.

Alternative B: Alternative B could potentially impact Higgins eye pearly mussel (a federal threatened and endangered species) beds primarily located on the east shore of the St. Croix River. Impacts to the bald eagle (a federal threatened and endangered species), peregrine falcon (MN threatened species, WI endangered species) and osprey (MN species of special concern, WI threatened species) and their nests could result from this alternative, but could be minimized or avoided by prohibiting construction during nesting season. A small population of dotted blazing star, a Wisconsin threatened species, was found near the 1995 FEIS alignment.

Alternative C: Similar to Alternative B, however no dotted blazing star has been found on this alignment.

Alternative D: Similar to Alternative B, however no surveys for plant species have been conducted in the Wisconsin segment of the project.

Alternative E: Similar to Alternative B, however no surveys for plant species have been conducted in the Wisconsin segment of the project.

Objective 8 - Protect area communities from adverse impacts of induced or accelerated development pressure resulting from improved mobility.

Studies of this issue are not available at this time.

E. ALTERNATIVES SUMMARY

At this early scoping stage, even with limited detailed information, a summary of the identified alternatives' ability to meet the stated project objectives and of their effects on various resources is useful to help understand the potential impacts, and to provide a rudimentary comparison of the alternatives. Table 2 shows the transportation objectives and the key social, economic and

environmental resources discussed above, and notes the alternatives' potential for direct impacts on these resources. The symbols used in the table denote whether the alternative will impact the listed resource. For this table, except where given otherwise, the symbology used is:

Y = "YES – potential direct effect"

N = "NO – no direct effects are anticipated"

NA = "not applicable"

NI = "not enough information."

For the purposes of this table the term "effect" is not intended to convey an adverse impact, the effect may be beneficial; "effect" simply means the resource is somehow changed by the alternative.

IV. SOCIAL, ECONOMIC AND ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES

A. ISSUES IDENTIFICATION PROCESS

A comprehensive review of a wide range of social, economic, and environmental (SEE) issues is required by federal and state legislation as part of the environmental review process. A detailed analysis of SEE impacts is not required for scoping, however a preliminary assessment has been made to identify the types of SEE impacts that will be discussed in the SEIS. If adverse impacts are recognized during the review of SEE issues, appropriate mitigation measures will be identified at that time.

The types of SEE impacts have been divided into four categories: issues requiring a special study, issues of major concern, issues of moderate concern, and issues not discussed in the SEIS. The topics to be addressed in each category are listed in the following sections with a brief description of how each topic will be studied in the SEIS.

B. ISSUES REQUIRING A SPECIAL STUDY IN THE SEIS

The following areas of environmental concern will require a special study (separate report) in the SEIS:

Wild and Scenic Rivers Act - Section 7(a) Evaluation (Wild and Scenic Rivers Act) and Section 4(f) Evaluation

The St. Croix River within the project area is included in the Lower St. Croix National Scenic Riverway (NSR), which was designated as a Wild and Scenic River in 1972. The Lower St. Croix NSR stretches from Taylors Falls, Minnesota to the confluence with the Mississippi River (see Figure 11). Because this portion of the river is a federally-designated National Scenic Riverway, additional protection is afforded to the river. As part of the SEIS process, impacts to the Riverway and its outstandingly remarkable values (scenic, recreational and geologic – as guided by the Cooperative Management Plan for the Lower St. Croix National Scenic Riverway) for which it was designated, will be carefully assessed for each alternative. A separate evaluation of the project under Section 7(a) of the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act will be performed

**TABLE 2
SCOPING ALTERNATIVES SUMMARY**

	No Build	Alternative A	Alternative B	Alternative C	Alternative D	Alternative E
GENERAL DESCRIPTION						
River Crossing		Retain current crossing at Lift Bridge; implement measures to reduce travel demand.	New 4-lane bridge in southern corridor	New 4-lane bridge in southern part of central corridor	New 4-lane bridge in central corridor	New 2-lane eastbound bridge in central corridor combined with westbound Lift Bridge
Lift Bridge	Continued vehicular use	Continued vehicular use	Limited vehicular use or conversion to a pedestrian/ bicycle facility	Limited vehicular use or conversion to a pedestrian/ bicycle facility	Vehicular use as access from downtown Stillwater to new STH 64	Continued vehicular use for westbound traffic
PROJECT OBJECTIVES						
Regional Access (Improved, Maintained or Decreased)	Maintained (Not changed)	Maintained (Not changed)	Improved (Full movement at TH 95, new interchange at STH 35)	Improved (Full movement at TH 95, new interchange at STH 35)	Potentially ⁽¹⁾ Improved (Full movement provided at TH 95; new interchange at STH 35 may or may not be provided)	Potentially ⁽¹⁾ Improved (New interchanged may or may not be provided at TH 95 and STH 35)
Local Access (Improved, Maintained, or Decreased)	Maintained (Not changed)	Maintained (Not changed)	Decreased in some areas (Lookout Trail, Kolliner Park, Beach Road, potential changes to Houlton access)	Decreased in some areas (Lookout Trail, Kolliner Park, Beach Road, potential changes to Houlton access)	Decreased in some areas (Lookout Trail, Kolliner Park, Beach Road, access to Aiple property only at south end, potential changes to Houlton access)	Decreased in some areas (Lookout Trail, Kolliner Park, Beach Road, access to Aiple property only at south end, potential changes to Houlton access)
Roadway Capacity (Maintained or Altered)	Maintained (Not changed)	Maintained (physical capacity of roadway not changed; travel demand potentially affected)	Altered (Due to new river crossing and expansion of approaches)	Altered (Due to new river crossing and expansion of approaches)	Altered (Due to new river crossing and expansion of approaches)	Altered (Due to new river crossing and expansion of approaches)

	No Build	Alternative A	Alternative B	Alternative C	Alternative D	Alternative E
Sufficient Intersection Capacity (Improved, Maintained or Decreased)	Decreased (Increased volumes expected to detract from intersection operations)	NI	NI	NI	NI	NI
Provision of Alternative Travel Modes	N	Y (Express bus, Commuter Rail, water transit improved bicycle/ pedestrian facilities)	Y (Improved bicycle/ pedestrian facilities, potential park and ride facilities)	Y (Improved bicycle/ pedestrian facilities, potential park and ride facilities)	Y (Improved bicycle/ pedestrian facilities, potential park and ride facilities)	Y (Improved bicycle/ pedestrian facilities, potential park and ride facilities)
Navigation (Lift Bridge operations)	N (Unchanged)	N (Unchanged)	Y (Could revert to an “on demand” schedule)	Y (Could revert to an “on demand” schedule)	Y (Could revert to an “on demand” schedule)	N (Unchanged as needed for WB traffic)
Facility Closures/ Repairs	N (Unchanged)	N (Unchanged)	Y (Closures will no longer affect trunk highway system)	Y (Closures will no longer affect trunk highway system)	N (Unchanged for STH 64 access to downtown Stillwater)	N (Unchanged)
Crash Rates	N (Unchanged)	NI (Uncertain if measures will be sufficient to reduce congestion)	Y (Reduced congestion and improved geometrics)	Y (Reduced congestion and improved geometrics)	Y (Reduced congestion and improved geometrics)	Y (Reduced congestion and improved geometrics)
Characteristics of National Scenic Riverway - Scenic	N (Unchanged)	NI (Specific locations of transit facilities uncertain)	Y (New bridge, approach roadway expansion and bluff impacts)	Y (New bridge, approach roadway expansion and bluff impacts)	Y (New bridge, approach roadway expansion and bluff impacts)	Y (New bridge, approach roadway expansion and bluff impacts)

	No Build	Alternative A	Alternative B	Alternative C	Alternative D	Alternative E
-Recreational - Geologic	N (Unchanged) N (Unchanged)	Y (Visual changes) NI (Potential impacts to bluff due to transit access facilities)	Y (Impacts from visual changes, river piers; benefit from trail) Y (Impacts to bluff due to new bridge and expanded roadways)	Y (Impacts from visual changes, river piers; benefit from trail) Y (Impacts to bluff due to new bridge and expanded roadways)	Y (Impacts from visual changes, river piers; benefit from trail) Y (Impacts to bluff due to new bridge and expanded roadways)	Y (Impacts from visual changes, river piers; benefit from trail) Y (Impacts to bluff due to new bridge and expanded roadways)
Visual Impacts (throughout corridor)	N (Unchanged)	NI (Specific locations of transit facilities uncertain)	Y (New bridge, approach roadway expansion and bluff impacts)	Y (New bridge, approach roadway expansion and bluff impacts)	Y (New bridge, approach roadway expansion and bluff impacts)	Y (New bridge, approach roadway expansion and bluff impacts)
Water Quality	N (Unchanged)	N (Unchanged)	Y (opportunity for spill control, improved storm water treatment; increased impervious surface, wetland impacts)	Y (opportunity for spill control, improved storm water treatment; increased impervious surface, wetland impacts)	Y (opportunity for spill control, improved storm water treatment; increased impervious surface, wetland impacts)	Y (opportunity for spill control, improved storm water treatment; increased impervious surface, wetland impacts)
Historic properties ^(2,3) - Lift Bridge - Stillwater Commercial District - Cultural Landscape District - Log Cabin Restaurant	N N N N	N Y (access lanes, parking structures) Y (Water taxi facility inside district) N	Y (potential conversion) N N (New bridge outside district) N	Y (potential conversion) N N (New bridge outside district) N	N N Y (New bridge outside district) N	N Y Y (New bridge outside district) N

	No Build	Alternative A	Alternative B	Alternative C	Alternative D	Alternative E
- St. Croix Overlook	N	N	Y (Direct access from TH 95 eliminated)	Y (Direct access from TH 95 eliminated)	Y (Direct access from TH 95 eliminated)	Y (Direct access from TH 95 potentially eliminated)
- Hersey & Bean Mill	N	N	N	N	Y (Expansion of TH 36/ 95)	Y (Expansion of TH 36/ 95)
- Webster House	N	N	N	N	N	N
- Jenks House	N	N	N	N	N	N
- Wash. Co. Courthouse	N	N	N	N	N	N
- Hersey House	N	N	N	N	N	N
- Depot/ Freight House	N	N	N	N	N	N
- McKusick House	N	N	N	N	N	N
- Lowell Park	N	NI (Potential impact from access lanes)	Y (Potential change due to Lift Bridge conversion to bike/ped facility)	Y (Potential change due to Lift Bridge conversion to bike/ped facility)	N	N
- St. Croix Lumber Mill	N	N	N	N	N	N
- Warden's House	N	N	N	N	N	N
- Sauntry Rec Hall	N	N	N	N	N	N
- Sauntry House	N	N	N	N	N	N

	No Build	Alternative A	Alternative B	Alternative C	Alternative D	Alternative E
- Territorial /State Prison	N	N	N	N	N	N
-Thelen Farmsted	N	N	N	N	N	N
Parkland ⁽⁴⁾						
- Aiple property	N (Unchanged)	N (Unchanged)	N (Unchanged)	Y (Impacts to southern portion)	Y (Impacts along length; access restricted to south end)	Y (Impacts along length; access restricted to south end)
- Lowell Park	N (Unchanged)	NI (Potential impacts from access lanes)	Y (Potential change due to Lift Bridge conversion to bike/ped facility)	Y (Potential change due to Lift Bridge conversion to bike/ped facility)	N	N
- Kolliner Park	N (Unchanged)	Y (Impacts from water taxi facility and access lanes)	Y (Potential permanent loss of access due to Lift Bridge conversion to bike/ped facility)	Y (Potential permanent loss of access due to Lift Bridge conversion to bike/ped facility)	Y (Impacts due to roadway expansion)	Y (Impacts due to roadway expansion)
Federal Threatened/ Endangered Species						
- Mussels	N (Unchanged)	N (Unchanged)	Y (Potential impacts due to pier construction)	Y (Potential impacts due to pier construction)	Y (Potential impacts due to pier construction)	Y (Potential impacts due to pier construction)
- Bald eagle	N	N	N	N	N	N

⁽¹⁾Regional access can be increased with reconstruction of the TH 36/95 interchange, and construction of an interchange with STH 35.

⁽²⁾Bergstein House and Mill were removed per Section 106 Memorandum of Agreement for the 1995 FEIS Preferred Alternative.

⁽³⁾**Estimated direct impacts only** – additional studies to determine potential for impacts (direct and indirect) will be performed in consultation with the Minnesota and Wisconsin SHPO and other consulting parties under the NHPA Section 106 evaluation.

⁽⁴⁾Additional land near TH 36 in Stillwater (Cover Park) may receive parkland status in the near future, and require analysis in the SEIS. See Figure 10 for existing parklands.

by the National Park Service. A separate Section 4(f) Evaluation will also be performed for the National Scenic Riverway.

Historic Properties - Section 106 Evaluation and Section 4(f) Evaluations

Figure 9 shows known historic properties in the project area. Several separate studies and surveys of the area have been completed for this ongoing project providing detailed information about the historical, archaeological and architectural properties in the project area, and additional studies will be necessary to clarify the extent of the impacts from the alternatives examined in the SEIS. Historic properties discussed in previous sections of this document have been identified as eligible for or listed on the National Register of Historic Places, and several of the alternatives currently proposed would have either direct or indirect effects on these resources to varying degrees. An Area of Potential Effect (APE) will be defined, based on the alternatives identified in the final Scoping Decision Document and a detailed discussion of the resources and impacts from the alternatives will be included in the SEIS. A Memorandum of Agreement was previously signed for a new river crossing in 1994, however, a new Memorandum of Agreement is anticipated for the project. It is not anticipated that a this new Memorandum of Agreement (even in draft form) will be provided in the Supplemental Draft EIS, but a discussion of preliminary findings of effect as determined under 36 CFR 800 and the ability to mitigate the identified adverse effects will be provided. A new Memorandum of Agreement will be provided in the Final EIS.

A separate study (Section 4(f) Evaluation) of these resources protected by Section 4(f) of the Department of Transportation Act of 1966 will be completed as necessary. A map showing the known historic properties is provided as Figure 9.

The project will require review under Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act (16 USC 470 et seq.) and its implementing regulations (36 CFR Part 800). The SEIS will also serve as the required documentation for this review as well as NEPA.

Parks and Recreational Areas - Section 4(f)/6(f) Evaluations on recreational resources

Numerous parks and recreation areas are located in and near the project area, including land near TH 36 in Stillwater (Cover Park) that may receive parkland status in the near future, as shown on Figure 10. Of these, several could be affected by the proposed alternatives. Potential impacts of the project on each of these facilities will be described in the SEIS. In addition, separate Section 4(f) Evaluations will be completed for each of the parks or recreation areas affected by the alternatives.

C. ISSUES REQUIRING DETAILED ANALYSIS IN THE SEIS

The following issues are of concern for the project. The SEIS will provide detailed analysis of impacts for each of these environmental concerns, but no separate report will be generated. Coordination of these issues with the appropriate agency will occur.

Project Cost, Funding and Jurisdictional Changes

The cost of the alternatives, cost participation, the funding sources and any jurisdictional changes that result from each of the alternatives will be explored in the SEIS. A benefit/cost analysis will be included.

Air Quality

A large part of the study area is located within the Twin Cities metropolitan area, which was redesignated by the Environmental Protection Agency as a “maintenance area” for carbon monoxide (CO) in 1990. The attainment status is contingent upon implementation measures to assure that the CO concentration remains below standards. The contingency stipulates that future CO concentrations be modeled for proposed transportation projects.

The SEIS will discuss relative traffic operations projections in relation to air quality for No Build and Build Alternatives. It will also include air quality analysis in compliance with relevant requirements and standards. Minnesota Pollution Control Agency staff will be consulted during the development of the scope, methods and procedures to be used in performing the air quality analysis.

Visual Impacts

Visual impacts will be assessed in the SEIS as they relate to users of the highway, users of the river corridor and users of the adjacent lands between the two project termini. The Mn/DOT Visual Impact Assessment (VIA) process will be used to identify visual resources, affected individuals and mitigation strategies. The Stakeholder Resolution Process will contribute to this process. In addition, bridge type and several aesthetic issues must be addressed relating to this project that potential crosses a Federally-designated Wild and Scenic Riverway and the National Register – eligible Stillwater Cultural Landscape District, including: location of the bridge structure; geometrics of the bridge approaches; height of the bridge structures; integration of the structure with the native landscape; and the design of and material used for the bridge and its approaches. These issues will be addressed in the SEIS.

Construction Impacts

Impacts on the physical and natural environment can be expected during the construction phase of the project. These include potential impacts related to water and air quality, erosion, steep slopes and slope stability, soils, sedimentation, noise, vibration, and traffic delays due to detours and construction operations. The SEIS will describe the relative construction phase impacts of alternatives being considered.

Vegetation/Cover Types

The project area in Minnesota is generally urbanized and consists primarily of areas already used for transportation purposes (TH 36 and TH 95) or for other urban development, with little undisturbed natural area. The Wisconsin bluff and ravine area supports a young- to middle-aged forest of mixed hardwood trees. Impacts on the Wisconsin resources are therefore anticipated to

be greater for most of the alternatives. The impacts on these resources will be examined for each of the proposed alternatives.

Farmlands

The federal Farmland Protection Policy Act and Conservation Policy Act ensure that impacts on agricultural lands are integrated into the environmental decision-making process and that impacts are minimized to the extent feasible. The majority of agricultural properties in the project area are located on the Wisconsin side of the river and may be affected by changes in the STH 35/STH 64 interchange and related alignment and access changes. The conversion of farmland to roadway use will depend on the location of each alternative. The SEIS will calculate conversion of total farmland acres, prime and unique farmland acreage and examine impact on farm operations, assuming existing land use.

Fish and Wildlife/Threatened and Endangered Species/Risk of Exotic Species Introduction

Most of the wildlife in the area consists of species that have adapted to a disturbed physical environment and would be tolerant of possible disturbances from the project. Figure 11 shows the known natural resources, including protected species in the project area. The project could remove and/or displace some kinds of habitat and could displace wildlife in certain areas, and potentially risk the introduction of exotic species into the area. Potential general effects of highway development on wildlife include habitat loss through its conversion into a paved highway surface, decreased attractiveness of habitat adjacent to the highway as a result of noise and activity, and an increase in wildlife-vehicle accidents as a result of increased traffic volumes. A new review of the Natural Heritage Inventory database maintained by the MnDNR and WisDNR will be performed to identify any state-endangered, threatened, or special concern species in the project area in addition to those species of concern previously identified in the area, including the bald eagle and pearly Higgin's eye mussel, and several other mussel species known to occur in other stretches of the St. Croix River. Special attention will be given to the examination of impacts on species that utilize the Lift Bridge for nesting areas, the timing of construction to minimize impacts, and the relocating of mussel beds.

Groundwater and Geology

Impacts on groundwater and geology will be examined in the SEIS, including impacts from infiltration of runoff from new impervious surfaces, impacts on existing wells, and impacts from excavation to the depth of the existing water table. Impacts on/resulting from unique geologic features are not anticipated, but will be examined in the SEIS.

Water Body Modification

Impacts on water bodies will be addressed through examination of impacts on wetlands, surface water quality and quantity, floodplains, and protected waterways.

Floodplains

Impacts on the floodplain of the St. Croix River will be examined in accordance with Executive Order 11988, Minnesota Statute 104.01, and Wisconsin Statute 87.30. Impacts to be examined include the flooding risk, floodplain values impacts, identification of any incompatible

floodplain development, potential for interruption of a transportation facility, minimization measures, restoration measures and preservation measures.

Surface Water/Water Quantity and Quality Management/Stormwater Management

Impacts on surface water quantity and quality will be examined in the SEIS. The primary potential for water quality impacts is related to surface and storm water runoff generated from new impervious surface areas of the alternatives and during construction. Storm water ponds and infiltration measures to minimize/decrease impacts will be required for alternatives.

Wetlands

Potential wetland impacts related to the proposed project are regulated by federal and state wetland protection laws. Current wetland regulations require (in order of preference) avoidance, minimization and mitigation of impacts resulting from a proposed project. The study area of the proposed project includes numerous wetlands and protected waters.

The SEIS will provide discussion of potential wetland impacts of each of the proposed alternatives carried forward. Initial avoidance and minimization efforts for the alternatives will also be discussed in the SEIS.

Federal and state wetland regulatory agencies have been involved in project planning and will continue to provide input on the proposed project and wetland impacts throughout the SEIS process.

Land Use

Land use impacts will vary greatly with the alternatives, dependent upon their location and configuration. The SEIS will examine the compatibility of the project alternatives with the existing land uses in the area and with future land use plans for affected properties. The SEIS will evaluate the direct land use impacts due to right of way acquisition and access changes and potential indirect land use impacts that may occur as a result of changes in traffic volumes and traffic patterns on area roadways following construction of the proposed project. Potential land use changes that will be examined in detail include those arising from the new interchanges in Minnesota and/or Wisconsin, and those related to the bridge location; potential redevelopment of land will also be considered. Induced or secondary land use impacts will also be considered in terms of location of development, and potential acceleration of planned development due to improved access.

Noise

Construction noise impacts are of a limited concern in comparison to the long-term operational noise of a highway, and therefore the SEIS will focus on traffic noise impacts. Noise standards have been established in Minnesota by the MPCA for daytime and nighttime hours, while Wisconsin has adopted the Federal noise abatement criteria. Residences comprise most of the receptors and are considered the most sensitive receptors of traffic noise along the project corridor and therefore will be the subject of most of the noise discussion in the SEIS. However, impacts on school and park locations will also be considered. In addition, a special section will

be included for the alternatives that include a new river bridge to assess the future noise impacts on the river surface resulting from vehicles traveling on the proposed bridge and if necessary, the Lift Bridge.

Right-of-Way Acquisition and Relocation

All alternatives will require a significant amount of acquisition of land within the study area for right of way. Acquisitions may require relocation of residents or businesses. The SEIS will analyze relative right of way acquisition impacts of each alternative based on total land area to be acquired and subdivided in categories including residential, commercial/industrial, public (including local, state and federal lands), and open space. This analysis will be based upon existing land uses.

Traffic

Impacts on the transportation systems/facilities in the project area will be addressed. Previous comprehensive data collection efforts will be used and updated in traffic analyses (forecasts and modeling) uses to document the past, existing, and future traffic conditions. Topics of study will include impacts on average daily traffic, traffic capacity, and turning movements/intersection operations at key locations. Issues to be considered in these studies include variations in daily traffic, hourly distribution of traffic, truck traffic and the Lift Bridge weight limits (and subsequent effects of changing travel patterns for these vehicles).

Transit

The alternatives may include provision for transit services. The SEIS will study the potential impacts of the alternatives on the ability of transit services to be provided or impeded.

Bicycle and Pedestrian Movement/Handicapped Accessibility

The SEIS will evaluate the opportunities and constraints associated with providing for non-motorized travel within the project corridor, including but not limited to the effect of the proposed project on current trail plans. The SEIS will also assess impacts on any planned handicapped facilities and will identify if special consideration needs to be made for handicapped facilities in the project design in conjunction with the analysis of impacts on pedestrian/bicycle facilities as described above.

Navigation

The SEIS will study the effect of the alternatives to allow continued navigation on this segment of the St. Croix River.

Social (Neighborhood and Community Facilities Impacts)

The SEIS will compare alternatives with respect to impacts on community facilities, access to residential areas and community facilities and services, neighborhood and community cohesiveness, and provision of emergency services, based primarily on existing land uses. In Minnesota, the focus will be on the impacts to the two main communities with the potential for social impacts: Stillwater and Oak Park Heights. Impacts on the City of Bayport will also be

considered. In Wisconsin, the area with potential for social impacts is the northwestern quadrant of St. Joseph Township, which includes the unincorporated community of Houlton. Most residences and businesses in Houlton are concentrated in the downtown area, but impacts on the other residences and farms in the township will be included in the analysis. Representatives of the Houlton community have expressed a strong concern for the potential impacts on community cohesion; these potential impacts will be studied.

Recreational Experience

Recreation is one of the three outstandingly remarkable values that caused the riverway to be designated as a Wild and Scenic Riverway. Potential impacts to the recreational experience are auditory, visual, and physical. Impacts on the recreational aspects of the river will be examined as a separate resource.

Economic Impacts

Economic impacts will vary greatly depending on the alternative being considered. Alternative location will affect right of way acquisition, access, land use and other items related to the economic functioning of the area. The countervailing beneficial and adverse effects of a roadway on the values of the affected properties are generally not quantifiable with any level of reliability. Therefore, the SEIS will address economic impacts of the project using relative/qualitative analysis rather than quantitative analysis. The economic impacts will be examined with respect to relationship of the project to area development plans and the potential effect on local taxes.

Environmental Justice

Executive Order 12898 requires that the evaluation of environmental impacts resulting from a proposed project include assessment of the extent of these impacts on minority and low-income populations. Several locations within the study area have been identified as having potential sensitivity to environmental justice issues. The SEIS will identify any concentrations of minority and/or low-income persons in the project area (based on current conditions) and assess the impact of the project alternatives on any such groups identified.

Cumulative Impacts

Cumulative impacts are defined as “the impact on the environment which results from the incremental impact of the action when added to other past, present, and reasonably foreseeable future actions regardless of what agency (federal or non-federal) or person undertakes such other actions.” (40 CFR 1508.7)

Cumulative impacts are not causally linked in their entirety to the project, but are the total effects of actions with similar impacts in a broader geographic area. The purpose of a cumulative impacts analysis is to look for impacts that may be minimal and therefore neither significant nor adverse when examined within the context of the proposed action, but that may accumulate and become significant and adverse over a large number of actions. The cumulative impacts analysis will address all resources affected by the project.

The SEIS will compare the relative incremental impacts among the proposed alternatives compared to past, present and other foreseeable future actions. Foreseeable future actions include planned development and related infrastructure over the next 20 years.

D. ISSUES REQUIRING LESS DETAILED ANALYSIS

The following issues are of moderate concern for the project. The SEIS will identify impacts, including analysis in accordance with federal and state requirements where appropriate, for each of these areas of environmental concern; however, major impacts are not anticipated.

Excess Materials

Construction of any alternative except the No Build alternative could require the disposal of excess material outside of the project construction limits. Excess materials would be predominantly soil materials, which pose little environmental hazard, but may also include demolition of existing highway pavement and/or building materials. All demolition and construction material removed from the construction area will be recycled and/or disposed of in compliance with federal and state solid waste management regulations. The SEIS will provide general discussion of appropriate handling of excess materials if appropriate, as this will have a limited influence on the identification of a Preferred Alternative.

Hazardous Materials, Contaminated Properties, Spills Management

Several operations or properties in the project area may be potential sources of contamination. The SEIS will summarize the results of state and local agency file searches to determine the relative potential for each alternative considered to impact contaminated property. Analysis will be based on a Phase I Environmental Site Assessment to be conducted for determining any potential contamination source impacts to be avoided or minimized. The previously completed Phase I ESA information will be used in the Scoping process to the extent possible, and supplemented with additional studies to be performed in the SEIS, if necessary.

Soils

The previously completed soils information will be used in the Scoping process to the extent possible, and supplemented with additional studies to be performed in the SEIS, if necessary, to identify soils or areas of concern.

Utility Locations

Previous studies have identified known utilities in the project area, including power transmission lines, gas lines, electric substations, and sewer trunk lines. The SEIS will address utility locations and any substantive differences among alternatives that could affect selection of the preferred alternative.

Relationship of Local Short-Term Uses Versus Long-Term Productivity

The SEIS will address the short-term adverse impacts and use of resources and their relationship to the long-term gains in productivity resulting from each alternative being considered.

Irreversible and Irretrievable Commitment of Resource

For each alternative considered, the SEIS will discuss the commitment of resources, including as appropriate, natural, physical, human and fiscal resources, that would be permanently dedicated to public use, and not able to be reversed or retrieved.

E. ISSUES NOT ADDRESSED IN THE SEIS

The following issues will not be discussed in the SEIS because they are not relevant to the proposed project.

Coastal Zones

No coastal zones exist in the project area, and therefore this issue will not be addressed in the SEIS.

Federal and/or State-Designated Critical Areas (i.e., legislatively-defined areas)

No federal and/or state-designated (legislatively defined) critical areas currently exist in the project area, and therefore, this issue will not be addressed in the SEIS. While the Lower St. Croix was designated a "critical area" under the Minnesota Critical Areas Act (Minn. Stat. 116G.01-116G.14), that designation expired in the 1970s. No state-designated critical areas now exist in the project area, and therefore this issue will not be addressed in the EIS.

V. PUBLIC AND AGENCY INVOLVEMENT

As described in Section I.B., the project has been ongoing for many years, and public and agency involvement has been a major component of the project. The 1985 Draft Study Outline and Scoping Document, and 1987 Scoping Decision Document/Final Study Outline included public involvement, as have all of the subsequent iterations of the project documentation since that time.

A. AGENCY COORDINATION

Under Minnesota rules, the Responsible Governmental Unit (RGU) for the scoping process and upcoming SEIS is Mn/DOT. The three joint lead agencies for the project are Mn/DOT, Wis/DOT, and the FHWA and the dispute resolution service being provided by RESOLVE. Six other federal agencies are also cooperating agencies for the project: the Advisory Council on

Historic Preservation, the National Park Service, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, U.S. Coast Guard, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. State cooperating agencies are the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency, the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources, the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources, the Wisconsin State Historic Preservation Office, and the Minnesota State Historic Preservation Office. Table 3 lists all the agencies and other organizations involved in the current scoping process and likely to be involved in the SEIS process as well.

In April of 2003, the facilitated Stakeholders Group, was established for the current project (the SEIS), and the Stakeholder Resolution Process was initiated. The facilitated Stakeholder Resolution Process functions under guidance from an Operating Agreement and associated schedule also adopted in spring 2003. Regular meetings of the Stakeholder Group began in June of 2003. Table 3 lists all members of the Stakeholders Group.

Subcommittees were developed to provide assistance and support to the Stakeholder Group and were established under the Operating Agreement. These include:

The Technical Advisory Team (TAT): Established for the purpose of providing technical support to the Stakeholder Group by providing requested data and materials addressing design and impacts of alternatives considered for the project. The TAT began meeting regularly in June, 2003. Table 3 also lists agencies participating as part of the TAT.

The Policy Advisory Team (PAT): A high-level team of agency representatives to periodically measure the progress of the consensus-building efforts, assess the relationship between the negotiated outcomes and regulatory and policy requirements. The team will work to resolve policy differences that the group may elevate to them. Table 3 also lists agencies participating as part of the PAT.

Process Advisory Committee (PAC): A small group of stakeholders to assist the facilitators in developing agendas and guiding the decision-making process. Table 3 also lists agencies participating as part of the PAC.

B. COORDINATION WITH NATIVE AMERICAN TRIBES

During previous studies and in accordance with 36 CFR Part 800 (rules governing implementation of Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act), Native American tribes were consulted for their assistance in identifying historic properties to which their tribe attaches religious and cultural significance to in the project area. Coordination with the tribes will continue through the current process and SEIS.

**TABLE 3
AGENCY AND STAKEHOLDER INVOLVEMENT**

AGENCY	LOCATION	PARTICIPATING GROUP(S)
<i>Federal:</i>		
Federal Highway Administration	St. Paul, MN	Stakeholder, TAT; PAT
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers	St. Paul, MN	Stakeholder
U.S. Coast Guard	St. Louis, MO	Stakeholder
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service	Bloomington, MN	Stakeholder
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency	Chicago, IL	Stakeholder
National Park Service	St. Croix Falls, WI	Stakeholder, TAT: PAT
Advisory Council on Historic Preservation	Washington, D.C.	Stakeholder ; PAC
The Office of U.S. Representative Mark Kennedy	Washington D.C.	
The Office of U.S. Representative Ron Kind	Washington, D.C.	
<i>State:</i>		
Minnesota Department of Natural Resources	St. Paul, MN	Stakeholder, TAT: PAT; PAC
Minnesota Department of Transportation	St. Paul, MN	Stakeholder, TAT; PAT
Minnesota State Historic Preservation Office	St. Paul, MN	Stakeholder, TAT; PAT
Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources	Eau Claire, WI	Stakeholder, TAT: PAT
Wisconsin Department of Transportation	Eau Claire, WI	Stakeholder, TAT; PAT
Wisconsin State Historic Preservation Office	Madison, WI	Stakeholder, TAT; PAT
<i>Regional:</i>		
Metropolitan Council	St. Paul, MN	
<i>Local:</i>		
City of Stillwater	Stillwater, MN	Stakeholder
City of Oak Park Heights	Oak Park Heights, MN	Stakeholder
St. Joseph Town Board	St. Joseph, WI	Stakeholder
St. Croix County Transportation Committee	Hammond, WI	Stakeholder
Washington County	Stillwater, MN	
<i>NGOs:</i>		
Sierra Club	Minneapolis, MN	Stakeholder; PAC
National Trust for Historic Preservation	Chicago, IL	Stakeholder
Preservation Alliance of Minnesota	Minneapolis, MN	Stakeholder
Minnesota Center for Environmental Advocacy	St. Paul, MN	Stakeholder
Friends of the St. Croix	Marine on St. Croix, MN	Stakeholder
St. Croix River Association	Stillwater, MN	Stakeholder
St. Croix County Historical Society	Hudson, WI	
Washington County Historical Society	Stillwater, MN	
History Network of Washington County	St. Mary's Point, MN	
Rivertown Restoration	Stillwater, MN	
Stillwater Lift Bridge Association	Stillwater, MN	Stakeholder
New St. Croix Bridge	Stillwater, MN	Stakeholder
Stillwater Heritage Preservation Commission	Stillwater, MN	Stakeholder; PAC
Greater Stillwater Area Chamber of Commerce	Stillwater, MN	Stakeholder
St. Croix Alliance for an Interstate Bridge	New Richmond, WI	Stakeholder
New Richmond-Somerset Chamber of Commerce	New Richmond, WI	
Riverwood Public Affairs/Western WI Realtors	River Falls, WI	Stakeholder; PAC

C. PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT

The 1995 Draft EIS, 2000 Final EIS and the Braun Facilitation Process all included public involvement. For this 2003 Amended Scoping Document, scoping meetings will be held in Minnesota and Wisconsin, and representatives of non-governmental organizations (i.e., representatives of the public) are included in the Stakeholders Resolution Process. For the SEIS process, Mn/DOT and Wis/DOT will conduct public involvement through public hearings, public information meetings, newsletters, press releases and meetings with representatives from interested agencies and organizations. A public hearing will also be conducted after the Draft SEIS is published. In addition, information will be provided to news media and the general public through a website.

At a minimum, the following agencies will participate in the SEIS process:

Federal:

Advisory Council on Historic Preservation
Federal Highway Administration
National Park Service
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
U.S. Coast Guard
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency

Federal/ State:

Lower St. Croix Management Commission (includes the Minnesota DNR, the Wisconsin DNR and the National Park Service)

State:

Minnesota Department of Natural Resources
Minnesota Department of Transportation
Minnesota Historical Society (State Historic Preservation Office)
Wisconsin Historical Society (State Historic Preservation Office)
Minnesota Pollution Control Agency
Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources
Wisconsin Department of Transportation

Regional:

Metropolitan Council
West Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission

Local:

City of Oak Park Heights (MN)
City of Stillwater (MN)
St. Croix County (WI)
St. Joseph Township (WI)
Washington County (MN)

Local Watershed Districts (MN)
 St. Croix River Association
 Unincorporated community of Houlton (WI)

VI. PERMITS AND APPROVALS

A. GOVERNMENTAL APPROVALS & PERMITS REQUIRED

A list of applicable permits and approvals for this project is provided in Table 4.

B. LEVEL OF ACTION

The level of action of the proposed study has not changed since the original Scoping Decision Document/Final Study Outline (January 1987). The project is a Federal Class I Action and a major action as defined by the Mn/DOT Project Development Process. An SEIS will be prepared in accordance with the environmental review process of both Minnesota and Wisconsin as well as the federal government. The SEIS process will be a cooperative effort between the States of Minnesota and Wisconsin and FHWA.

**TABLE 4
 APPLICABLE AGENCY PERMITS AND APPROVALS**

AGENCY	PERMIT/APPROVAL
FEDERAL:	
Advisory Council on Historic Preservation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Section 106 Memorandum of Agreement
Federal Highway Administration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ SEIS (Draft and Final) ▪ Section 4(f) Evaluation (Draft and Final) ▪ Section 106 Memorandum of Agreement ▪ SEIS Record of Decision
National Park Service	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Section 7(a) Evaluation (Draft and Final)
U.S. Army, Corps of Engineers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Section 10 Permit (navigable waters) ▪ Section 404 Permit (fill in U.S. waters)
U.S. Coast Guard	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Section 9 Permit (navigable waters)
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Biological Opinion
STATE:	
MN Department of Transportation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Amended Scoping Decision Document ▪ SEIS (Draft and Final) ▪ Wetland Conservation Act (WCA)
WIS Department of Transportation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Amended Scoping Decision Document ▪ SEIS (Draft and Final) ▪ SEIS Adequacy Determination
MN Department of Natural Resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Protected Waters Permit ▪ Mussel Relocation Permit
MN Pollution Control Agency	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Indirect Source Permit (ISP) ▪ Section 401 Water Quality Certification

AGENCY	PERMIT/APPROVAL
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System Permit (NPDES)
WIS Department of Natural Resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Indirect Source Air Permit ▪ Concurrence Letter and Section 401 Water Quality Certification to Wis/DOT (as co-lead agency) in lieu of water regulation, stormwater, wastewater and other permits per 30.12(4), Wis. Stats. and per And DNR/DOT Cooperative Agreement ▪ Scientific Collector Permits (surveys) ▪ Endangered/Threatened Species Permit ▪ Authorization for Taking E/T Species (requires jeopardy determination)
MN State Historic Preservation Office	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Section 106 Memorandum of Agreement
WIS State Historic Preservation Office	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Section 106 Memorandum of Agreement
REGIONAL:	
Metropolitan Council	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Controlled Access Approval
LOCAL:	
City of Oak Park Heights	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Municipal Consent on Project
City of Stillwater	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Municipal Consent on Project
Local Watershed Districts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Coordination of Grading and Drainage Plans