

St. Croix River Crossing PROJECT

FALL/WINTER 2003

“Stakeholder Problem Solving Process” Re-Initiates Project

Utilizing a “Stakeholder Problem Solving Process”, the St. Croix River Crossing Project resumed in June 2003. The Stakeholders Group includes individuals from federal and state agencies, local government officials and other interested parties representing diverse interests. The process is being facilitated by RESOLVE, a conflict resolution consultant.

The Stakeholders developed an Operating Agreement that established rules and procedures for the group. The Stakeholder Group provides recommendations to the proposing agencies (Mn/DOT, Wis/DOT) with the goal of achieving consensus regarding project decisions.

The Stakeholder Group has focused its most recent meetings on identifying alternatives and issues to be addressed in the Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement (SEIS). The alternatives currently under discussion are shown in Figure 1. The potential recommendations are summarized in the 2003 Amended Scoping Document and 2003 Amended Draft Scoping Decision Document currently available for public review and comment. Scoping meetings will be held the first week of December to gather additional public comment.

Following the public comment period, Mn/DOT and Wis/DOT will issue a 2003 Amended Scoping Decision Document. This document will formalize the decisions regarding the number of alternatives to be studied in the forthcoming SEIS, which will be completed as a Draft, followed by a Final SEIS.

Public Scoping Meetings to be Held December 2 and 3

Mn/DOT and Wis/DOT have scheduled two public scoping meetings for the St. Croix River Crossing Project in December to present information gathered during the scoping process to-date and to present recommendations for project alternatives and issues to be studied in the SEIS.

The two meetings will cover the same material and no single formal presentation will be made. Stop by at any time during the meeting to view materials, a presentation tape and to discuss the project on a one-on-one basis with project staff.

SPECIFIC INFORMATION INCLUDES:

- Preliminary layouts for the alternatives (including proposed improvements to Highway 36 and Highway 95 (in Minnesota), and Highway 64 and Highway 35 (In Wisconsin), and potential river crossing locations;
- Information on the Stakeholder problem-solving process;
- Tentative SEIS schedule and project schedule;
- Description of studies to be completed for the SEIS.

WISCONSIN
TUESDAY, DECEMBER 2
4:30PM TO 8:30PM
 Houlton Elementary School
 #70 County Road E
 Houlton, WI

MINNESOTA
WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 3
4:00PM TO 8:00PM
 Washington County Government Center
 South Building
 14949 62nd Street North
 Stillwater, MN

Community members are encouraged to attend the meetings to learn more about the proposed alternatives and provide their official public input regarding the number of alternatives and items to be studied in the SEIS.

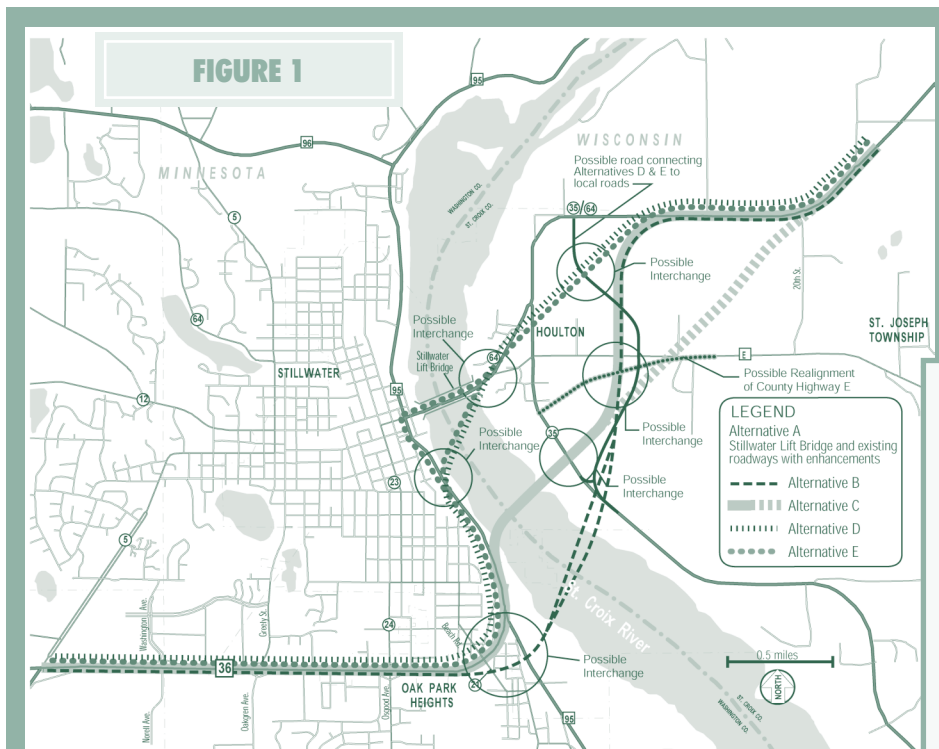
The public comment period for the 2003 Amended Scoping Document ends December 10, 2003.

Copies of the 2003 Amended Scoping Document and 2003 Amended Draft Scoping Decision Document are available at the following locations: Bayport Public Library (Bayport), the Carleton A. Friday Memorial Library (New Richmond), the Hudson Area Joint Library (Hudson), St. Joseph Town Hall (St. Joseph), the Somerset Public Library (Somerset), the Stillwater Public Library (Stillwater), the Washington County Government Center Library (Stillwater), Mn/DOT Library (395 John Ireland Boulevard, St. Paul) the Environmental Conservation Library (Minneapolis), and the Wis/DOT Planning Library (Madison).

The document is available in PDF format on this website: <http://www.dot.state.mn.us/metro/projects/stcroix/documents.html>

FIGURE 1: ALTERNATIVES

Alternatives being considered for the SEIS include enhancements to transit and the existing roadways (including widening WIS 65 in central St. Croix County, Wisconsin to 4 lanes - not shown on this figure) enabling continued use of the Lift Bridge for Alternative A, a new bridge crossing for Alternatives B, C or D, or a one-way pair of bridges using the Lift Bridge and a new bridge for Alternative E. Alternatives B, C, D and E would also include improvements to Highway 36, Highway 95, WIS 64 and WIS 35.



Stillwater Lift Bridge To Receive \$5 Million in Repairs in 2005/2006

In 2002, Congress appropriated \$5 million in funds for the repair of the Stillwater Lift Bridge between Stillwater, Minn. and Houlton, Wisconsin. These repairs are occurring independently of plans for a potential new river crossing but are necessary to continue operation of the Lift Bridge.

Earlier this year, a study involving local, state, and federal agencies and interested stakeholders was conducted to identify and prioritize necessary repairs. The \$5 million will be used to repair the tender's/electrical house, repair the mechanical and electrical systems that operate the lift mechanism, patch the concrete substructure, replace the bridge deck, repair the trusses, repair the sidewalk support system, and repair the pedestrian railing.



Repairs are slated for the 2005-2006 construction season. In 2005, traffic crossing the St. Croix River will be diverted to I-94 at Hudson during a 10-week shutdown of the Lift Bridge.

Visit the Lift Bridge Repair Project website at: <http://www.dot.state.mn.us/metro/projects/liftbridge>

Trunk Highway 36 Layout Refinement

Mn/DOT continues to work with representatives of the City of Oak Park Heights, the City of Stillwater, Washington County and the Greater Stillwater Area Chamber of Commerce to finalize the location of buttonhook interchange ramps and relocated frontage roads between Osgood Ave. and Highway 5 as recommended by the Highway 36 Partnership Study completed in December 2002. These decisions will guide the design for this segment of the St. Croix River Crossing Project, which would be included with Alternatives B, C, D and E (Alternative A would not reconstruct this segment of the roadway). The Technical Advisory Group is meeting bi-weekly to review possible interchange ramp and frontage road locations in coordination with ongoing planning efforts in both cities. Mn/DOT hopes to finalize these decisions in December 2003 for use in the development of the Supplemental EIS.

ST. CROIX RIVER CROSSING PROJECT SCHEDULE*

OCTOBER 2003	2003			2004			2005		
	JULY	AUG	SEPT	OCT	NOV	DEC	JAN	FEB	MAR
Preparation of Scoping Document	█								
Public Comment on Scoping Document									
Public Scoping Meetings									
Final Scoping Decision Document Release									
Preparation of Supplemental Draft EIS									
Public Comment on Supplemental DEIS									
Public Hearings									
Preparation of Supplemental Final EIS									
Publication of FEIS									
Record of Decision									
Final Design									2005
Right of Way Acquisition									2005-07
Letting									2007
Construction									2007-10
Project Opening									2010

* Tentative Schedule. Subject to change.

MORE INFORMATION

VISIT MN/DOT'S WEBSITE:
<http://www.dot.state.mn.us/metro/projects/stcroix>

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