ST. CROIX RIVER CROSSING PROJECT SUPPLEMENTAL FINAL EIS
CHAPTER 1
INTRODUCTION TO THE SUPPLEMENTAL FINAL EIS

1.0 INTRODUCTION

This document is a supplement to the St. Croix River Crossing Project's 1995 Final EIS and Section 4(f) Evaluations (signed April 1995) for the Trunk Highway (TH) 36/State Trunk Highway (STH) 64 St. Croix River Crossing Project between the City of Oak Park Heights in Washington County, Minnesota, and the Town of St. Joseph in St. Croix County, Wisconsin, and associated roadways in both states. The Project also includes construction in Stillwater and Bayport in Washington County, Minnesota. This chapter describes the purpose of the document and summarizes the project's history and context. It also describes the project schedule and lists the project managers.

1.1 PURPOSE OF SUPPLEMENTAL FINAL EIS

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)[1] and the Minnesota Environmental Policy Act (MEPA)[2] require review of potential environmental impacts for proposed projects that exceed state regulatory thresholds. This 2006 *Supplemental Final Environmental Impact Statement* (SFEIS) was prepared as part of the federal NEPA process and state environmental review processes (WEPA and MEPA) to fulfill requirements of 42 USC 4321 et. seq., s 1.11 Wisconsin Statutes, Wisconsin Administrative Rules Chapter Trans 400, and Minnesota Rules Chapter 4410[3]. This SFEIS was prepared by the project proposers: the Minnesota Department of Transportation (Mn/DOT), the Wisconsin Department of Transportation (WisDOT) and the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA).

The purpose of this 2006 SFEIS and Final Section 4(f) Evaluation is to evaluate and document social, economic and environmental impacts of the Preferred Alternative now being considered for a new St. Croix River crossing. The format of this SFEIS is a condensed Final EIS (i.e., material from the SDEIS is incorporated by reference; SFEIS discussion focuses on changes in technical analysis, setting, impacts, and mitigation since the SDEIS was circulated). This document also describes efforts that will be taken to avoid and minimize impacts associated

[1] Wisconsin Administrative Rules Trans 400.8 directs WisDOT to follow NEPA and its implementing regulations for both NEPA and WEPA purposes when federal funds are involved in the proposed action.

[2] The decision on the need for an EIS according to MEPA is outlined in Minnesota Rules 4410.1700. The EIS process for MEPA is outlined in Minnesota Rules Chapter 4410.2000 through Chapter 4410.3100.

[3] The mandatory threshold categories for completing an EIS in Minnesota are outlined in Minnesota Rules Chapter 4410.4400. An EIS was completed under MEPA as the project exceeds the mandatory threshold under Minnesota Rules 4410.4400 Subp. 16 Highway Projects – construction of a road on a new location which is four or more lanes in width and two or more miles in length.

with the Preferred Alternative, and the measures that will be employed to mitigate those impacts that are unavoidable.

This SFEIS is supplemental to several previously completed documents for the project, which are incorporated by reference into this Supplemental Final EIS. These documents include the *1985 Scoping Document/Draft Scoping Outline*, *1987 Scoping Decision Document/Final Study Outline*, the *1990 Draft EIS* and related special studies, the *1995 Final EIS*, a *1995 Record of Decision*, the *1999 Amended Scoping Decision Document*, the *2003 Scoping Document/ Amended Draft Scoping Decision Document*, *2004 Amended Final Scoping Decision Document,* and *2004 Supplemental Draft Environmental Impact Statement (SDEIS)*. A complete list of project documents is provided in Appendix A of the SDEIS.

The 2004 SDEIS considered four Build Alternatives as well as the No-Build Alternative (see Section 1.2.1 of the SDEIS). These Build Alternatives were identified through the Stakeholder Resolution Process, involving federal, state and local interests described in Section 1.2.4.7 of the SDEIS. Following evaluation of impacts of these alternatives, considering Stakeholder input, and review of public and agency comments on the SDEIS, a Preferred Alternative river crossing location was identified by the project proposers (the two DOTs and FHWA). In addition, the bridge type, future use of the Lift Bridge, and a mitigation package were identified with the Preferred Alternative river crossing location (collectively considered as the Preferred Alternative package).

The function of the environmental review process is to facilitate informed project decision-making by identifying the potential environmental impacts of a proposed action, identifying measures to avoid and minimize damage to the natural and human environments caused by the proposed action, and to identify potential mitigation measures where appropriate. The EIS process is a thorough study of a project's environmental impacts and a comparative analysis of its potential economic and sociological effects. It considers reasonable alternatives to a proposed action, including the No-Build Alternative. When completed, the review provides governmental units and the public detailed information about the extent of environmental impacts and how these impacts may be avoided or minimized.

In addition, Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (as amended) requires federal agencies or their designees to assess the effects of their actions by identifying properties listed on, or eligible for the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP); determining effects of the project on those properties; and consulting with interested parties to determine ways to avoid, minimize, or mitigate effects caused by an undertaking. For this document, FHWA is the lead agency for addressing Section 106 requirements; FHWA is responsible for all decision-making in the Section 106 process. Details of the Section 106 process (coordination and consultation) are included in Chapter 11 of this SFEIS.

FHWA, in cooperation with Mn/DOT and WisDOT, is responsible for all decision-making in the NEPA process and has guided activities conducted as part of this SFEIS. It is the intent of the proposing agencies that this document serve as the coordination of both NEPA and Section 106 processes.

1.2 PROJECT SUMMARY AND CONTEXT

1.2.1 Project Summary

The St. Croix River Crossing Project (project) includes a crossing of the St. Croix River between TH 36 in the City of Oak Park Heights, Minnesota, and STH 64 in the Town of St. Joseph, Wisconsin. The project also includes reconstruction/construction of the Minnesota and Wisconsin approach roadways to the bridge (including interchanges at Minnesota TH 36 and TH 95, at Wisconsin STH 64 and STH 35, and St. Croix County Trunk Highway (CTH) E), as well as construction in Stillwater and Bayport, Minnesota (see Figures 1-1a, 1-1b, and 1-2). The project would extend from a point 1,050 feet east of the TH 36 intersection with Washington/Norell Avenues in Minnesota to a point 100 feet southwest of the 150th Avenue overpass on STH 35/64 in Wisconsin.

The 2004 SDEIS considered four Build Alternatives and a No-Build, or do nothing, Alternative. The No-Build Alternative would include no changes to the existing transportation system, and continue the use of the existing Lift Bridge in Stillwater (the Lift Bridge) on TH 36/STH 64 between Stillwater and the Town of St. Joseph. The four Build Alternatives (Alternative B-1, C, D, and E) are summarized in Section 1.2.1 of the SDEIS and described in detail in Chapter 3 of the SDEIS.

Alternative B-1_a was identified as the Preferred Alternative. The Preferred Alternative river crossing 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 Preferred Alternative river crossing bridge is located approximately 7,550 feet south of the Lift Bridge along the Minnesota shoreline and approximately 6,450 feet south of the Lift Bridge along the Wisconsin shoreline (see Figure 1-2). An extradosed bridge was identified as the Preferred Alternative bridge type. Since release of the SDEIS, the design of the TH 36 segment of the project, from TH 5 to Osgood Avenue, was revised due to community concerns to reduce right-of-way impacts.

The existing TH 36/STH 64 river crossing (the Lift Bridge) will be converted to a pedestrian/bicycle facility with completion of the loop trail system mitigation item. Chapter 3 of this SFEIS provides a full description of the Preferred Alternative design.

Subsequent chapters of this SFEIS identify possible unavoidable impacts of the project, and where appropriate, proposed mitigation of those impacts. In addition, a number of items have been identified that may minimize and mitigate the project's possible impacts on the St. Croix River (a federally-designated Wild and Scenic River) and other river valley resources (see Chapter 15 of this SFEIS).

1.2.2 Regional Context and Other Area Projects

The project includes a bridge over the St. Croix River between eastern Washington County, Minnesota, and western St. Croix County, Wisconsin. As such, it would provide additional river crossing capacity between the urbanized Twin Cities area and less-developed western Wisconsin area. The four Twin Cities regional St. Croix River crossings occur at I-94 in Hudson, WI; at

TH 36/STH 64 in Stillwater, MN/Town of St. Joseph, WI (the Lift Bridge); at State Trunk Highway (STH 243) in Osceola, WI; and at U.S. Highway (USH) 8 in Taylors Falls, MN/St. Croix Falls, WI. The nearest bridges to the Lift Bridge are Osceola (20 miles to the north) and Hudson/ I-94 (7 miles to the south) shown on Figure 1-1b of this SFEIS.

Washington County is the eastern-most county of the seven-county planning area of the Metropolitan Council, the regional planning agency for the Twin Cities area. Historically, Washington County has defined the eastern edge of the Twin Cities metropolitan area. However, both St. Croix and Pierce Counties in Wisconsin are included in the thirteen-county Minneapolis-St. Paul Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA) defined by the U.S. Census Bureau (see Figure 1-1a of this SFEIS). The MSA is a functional definition, based on the degree of economic, social, and transportation (commuting) relationships of outlying counties within an urbanized area.

Section 1.2.2 of the SDEIS identifies roadway and transportation projects or studies that are planned or underway in the vicinity of the St. Croix River Crossing Project. These projects are independent of the St. Croix River Crossing Project; that is, the projects are not needed to support each other and each has independent utility. The social, economic, and environmental impacts of each of the projects has been or will be evaluated in independent environmental review processes as required by law. Chapter 14 of this SFEIS presents a comprehensive list of the regional infrastructure and development projects taken into consideration in this study.

1.2.3 Geographic Setting and Context

The project is located between the City of Oak Park Heights in Washington County, Minnesota, and the Town of St. Joseph in St. Croix County, Wisconsin. The project also includes construction in the cities of Stillwater and Bayport, Minnesota. The western project terminus along TH 36 is the TH 36/5 interchange in Minnesota. The eastern project terminus along STH 35/64 is the 150th Avenue overpass in Wisconsin. The Preferred Alternative extends from east of Washington/Norell Avenues in Oak Park Heights to approximately 150th Avenue on STH 35/64 in Wisconsin, and includes a bridge crossing over the St. Croix River, a federally-protected natural resource (the Lower St. Croix National Scenic Riverway, which is part of the National Wild and Scenic Rivers System).

The St. Croix River and river valley influence the natural character of the project setting. The Lift Bridge over the St. Croix River 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. The Lift Bridge and other buildings near the Lift Bridge are on the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) as part of the Stillwater Commercial Historic District and/or are individually eligible for listing on the NRHP.

1.2.3.1 Lower St. Croix National Scenic Riverway

The Lower St. Croix National Scenic Riverway extends for 52 miles along the boundary of Minnesota and Wisconsin from Taylors Falls, MN/St. Croix Falls, WI, to the confluence with the Mississippi River at Point Douglas, MN/Prescott, WI. The Riverway includes the river itself and adjacent lands (see Figure 1-3 of this SFEIS).

In 1972, the Lower St. Croix River was added to the National Wild and Scenic Rivers System by the U. S. Congress. The resulting Lower St. Croix National Scenic Riverway is managed by the Lower St. Croix Management Commission (LSCMC), which consists of the National Park Service (NPS), Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (MnDNR) and Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (WisDNR). The Lower St. Croix National Scenic Riverway is split into two management zones (shown on Figure 1-3). The State zone, administered by the NPS, MnDNR and WisDNR through the LSCMC, extends 25 miles from approximately two miles north of Stillwater downstream to the Mississippi River confluence. The Federal zone, administered by the NPS, extends 27 miles from approximately two miles north of Stillwater upstream to the dam at Taylors Falls/St. Croix Falls. The NPS has review authority over water resources projects under Section 7(a) of the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act (Public Law 90-542 or 16 USC 1271-1287) in both the state and federal zones.

As stated in the Lower St. Croix Management Commission's *Final Cooperative Management Plan Environmental Impact Statement (2002)*, the Riverway's scenery, plentiful fish and wildlife, largely unpolluted and free-flowing character, many access points, and proximity to the Minneapolis-St. Paul metropolitan area attract many visitors and users in the spring, summer, and fall. Although the Lower St. Croix River has a natural appearance for long stretches, much of it is adjacent to the rapidly growing Twin Cities area. Of the communities along the river, those near the project include the cities of Stillwater, Oak Park Heights, and Bayport in Minnesota, and the unincorporated area of Houlton, the Town of St. Joseph, the Village of North Hudson, and the City of Hudson in Wisconsin.

The Wild and Scenic Rivers Act established a method for protecting certain free-flowing rivers in the United States and preserving them and their immediate environments for the benefit of present and future generations. Section 1(b) of the Act introduces the concept of "outstandingly remarkable values" to describe the reasons for which a river is designated:

> "It is hereby declared to be the policy of the United States that certain selected rivers of the Nation which, with their immediate environments, possess outstandingly remarkable scenic, recreational, geologic, fish and wildlife, historic, cultural, or other similar values, shall be preserved in free-flowing condition, and that they and their immediate environments shall be protected for the benefit and enjoyment of present and future generations. The Congress declares that the established national policy of dam and other construction at appropriate sections of the rivers of the United States needs to be complemented by a policy that would preserve other selected rivers or sections thereof in their free-flowing condition to protect the water quality of such rivers and to fulfill other vital national conservation purposes."

The St. Croix River above St. Croix Falls, Wisconsin/Taylors Falls, Minnesota and the Namekagon River were designated by Congress in the 1968 Wild and Scenic Rivers Act. In 1972, in response to requests by the states of Minnesota and Wisconsin, Congress designated the 52 mile-long Lower St. Croix National Scenic Riverway. This Lower St. Croix extends below St. Croix Falls/Taylors Falls to the confluence with the Mississippi River at Prescott, Wisconsin. The states of Minnesota and Wisconsin and the NPS share management responsibility for the lower 25 miles in the "state zone" and the National Park Service has lead responsibility for the upper 27 miles in the "federal zone." By virtue of its inclusion in the National Wild and Scenic Rivers System, the Lower St. Croix was designated to preserve its free-flowing condition and its outstandingly remarkable values, which were identified to be scenic, recreational and geologic.

The Lower St. Croix Riverway boundaries through the project area are defined by TH 95 in Minnesota and STH 35 in Wisconsin (see inset graphic in Figure 1-3 of this SFEIS).

1.2.3.2 Historic Stillwater Area

The City of Stillwater is situated on the western shore of the St. Croix River and overlooks the river and the Lift Bridge. It is one of the oldest European settlements in Minnesota and is known as the "Birthplace of Minnesota." The downtown area is dominated by late 19th and early 20th century commercial architecture using native stone, brick, and iron materials. The city and surrounding communities have become a tourist attraction because of the historic significance of the area and the proximity to the river. During the summer, recreational and entertainment attractions in this area of the St. Croix River Valley draw large numbers of people.

The historic character of Stillwater has been recognized through the official designation of two special districts in Stillwater. The "Stillwater Commercial Historic District" encompasses most of the older portion of the downtown commercial area. It includes some 11 blocks in the central business district and contains 57 contributing buildings. The Stillwater Commercial Historic District is listed on the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP). The "Stillwater Cultural Landscape District" includes both cultural and natural resources, associated with an historic event, activity or person. The Stillwater Cultural Landscape District has been determined eligible for listing on the NRHP. Chapter 11 of the SDEIS and this SFEIS provides details on these designated districts.

The first Stillwater bridge over the St. Croix River opened in 1876. This bridge burned down in 1904 and was replaced by a timber and pontoon swing bridge that lasted until 1928. The Lift Bridge (see Figure 1-4 of the SDEIS) was opened to traffic in 1931 and remains operational today. The bridge was placed on the NRHP in 1989 because it is one of the few remaining original examples in the Upper Midwest of a tower-and-cable highway lift bridge. The Lift Bridge is considered by many to be an icon for the city. Due to its National Register status, any proposed federal action affecting the Lift Bridge must be reviewed under Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act and any transportation "use" reviewed under Section 4(f) of the Federal Transportation Act.

1.2.4 History of Project Documentation

A replacement bridge crossing the St. Croix River near Stillwater, Minnesota, and the Town of St. Joseph, Wisconsin, has been discussed for many years in response to traffic congestion in downtown Stillwater, delays caused by the Lift Bridge, and safety and geometric design concerns regarding vehicles and pedestrians/bicyclists on the approach roadways. More recently, the condition and maintenance costs of the Lift Bridge have become a growing concern.

The project has been controversial because of concerns about the future of the Lift Bridge; balancing impacts on the river environment, downtown Stillwater, and on existing neighborhoods and businesses; concerns about regional growth and development; disagreements about the location and size of a replacement river crossing; and the concerns of special interest groups in this corridor. In addition, the reach of the St. Croix River within the project area includes territory governed by several entities, including local, county, regional, and state agencies in two states and by multiple agencies of the federal government.

The first serious consideration of a replacement bridge crossing occurred in the early 1970s, but a project was not pursued because of a lack of funding. Current environmental documentation and analysis of a replacement bridge crossing began in 1985.

1.2.4.1 1985 Draft Study Outline and Scoping Document

In the 1980s Mn/DOT, WisDOT, and the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) began working with the communities of Stillwater and Oak Park Heights in Minnesota, and the Town of St. Joseph in Wisconsin to identify possible solutions for a replacement crossing. The *1985 Draft Study Outline and Scoping Document* introduced the proposed project, river crossing location alternatives, and environmental concerns to be studied in future project documentation.

1.2.4.2 1987 Scoping Decision Document / Final Study Outline for the Stillwater-Houlton Bridge Study

The 1987 *Scoping Decision Document/Final Study Outline for the Stillwater-Houlton Bridge Study* identified four broad corridors for a new river crossing both north and south of downtown Stillwater as well as two corridors in or near the downtown area.

1.2.4.3 1990 Draft EIS

The 1990 DEIS analyzed three of the four corridors identified in the 1987 study, along with a "No Action" Alternative and a Transportation System Management (TSM) Alternative, which examined various options to maximize use of the existing transportation system.

1.2.4.4 1994 Memorandum of Agreement

In 1994, a Section 106 Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) was prepared to identify measures to offset adverse effects on historic properties (see Appendix G of the SDEIS). The MOA stated that the Lift Bridge was to remain on the state trunk highway systems, would not be affected by

the project and would be reviewed later whenever a change in operations and maintenance and/or jurisdiction was deemed prudent by Mn/DOT and WisDOT. The 1994 MOA was signed by the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation (ACHP), FHWA, MnSHPO, WisSHPO, Mn/DOT, and WisDOT.

1.2.4.5 1995 Final EIS

In April 1995, FHWA approved a Final EIS and Section 4(f) Evaluation for a replacement St. Croix River crossing about 6,300 feet south of the Lift Bridge. A Record of Decision (ROD) was issued by FHWA in July 1995, concluding the environmental review process that began in 1985. Following the ROD, work began on final design of the river crossing and the approach roadways, right-of-way was acquired, and site preparation work was initiated. The National Park Service (NPS), in response to federal permit applications for the project, evaluated the project as a water resources project under Section 7(a) of the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act in December 1996 and found that the project, as proposed, would have a direct and adverse effect on the outstandingly remarkable values for which the Lower St. Croix River was included in the National Wild and Scenic Rivers System. As a result of the finding, federal permits from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and the Coast Guard could not be issued for the project, and it was not allowed to proceed. In April 1998, the U.S. District Court upheld the NPS authority to review the project under the act and its determination.

1.2.4.6 Braun Facilitation Process and Supplemental DEIS (1998 – 2001)

In June 1998, after discussions with legislators and other interested parties, and after obtaining the concurrence of WisDOT and the NPS, Mn/DOT decided to revisit the issue of a river crossing near Stillwater. Richard P. Braun, a retired Mn/DOT Commissioner, was asked to facilitate this process. Braun's charge was to determine whether present and future traffic could be accommodated on the Lift Bridge, determine whether a replacement crossing was needed, and investigate potential bridge alignment alternatives between the 1995 Final EIS Preferred Alternative on the south and the Lift Bridge on the north. The Braun facilitation process concluded that a new four-lane bridge would be required to satisfy present and future traffic demand and recommended further study of a bridge alignment 3,600 feet south of the Lift Bridge.

In February 1999, an *Amended Scoping Decision Document* was completed for the Braun Process proposed location. Work began on an SDEIS in 1999, which collectively referred to the Braun Facilitation Process recommendations as the "Consensus Alternative." The preliminary work on a Section 7(a) review for the project included three options[4] for the future of the Lift Bridge, a $10 to $15 million conservation fund 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. During this time, disagreement concerning the future of the Lift Bridge was brought to a federal level.

[4] The three options for future use of the Lift Bridge considered during the Braun Facilitation process included: 1) relocation or removal of the Lift Bridge and causeway; 2) preservation of the lift span portion of the Lift Bridge, conversion of the existing structure to a pier, and removal of the remaining spans and causeway; 3) preservation of the Lift Bridge as pedestrian/bicycle facility for its remaining useful service life.

Work on the project was suspended by the DOTs in January 2001 due to the inability to reach a consensus on the future of the Lift Bridge, insufficient federal funding for the conservation fund, and anticipated failure to obtain municipal consent on the project. Due to project suspension, the 2000 SDEIS addressing the Consensus Alternative was not published.

Refer to Section 1.2.4.6 of the SDEIS for detailed information on the Braun Facilitation Process and 2001 Supplemental Draft EIS.

1.2.4.7 2004 SDEIS and 2006 SFEIS and Stakeholder Resolution Process

In the fall of 2001, while work on the project was suspended, FHWA requested the assistance of the U.S. Institute for 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 concluded that a consensus decision regarding the project was possible. With the determination that regulatory agencies and federal partners were willing to proceed, Mn/DOT and WisDOT re-initiated the project in June 2002.

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, and provided a federal level mechanism to resolve issues if an effort focused on local representatives should fail.

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 that would inform the decision-making process of the project proposers, while still retaining the actual decision-making authority with the proposing agencies. 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, consistent with policy set forth in Section 101 [42 USC § 4331] of the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (NEPA). Formal facilitated Stakeholder meetings began in June 2003. Chapter 15 of the SDEIS provides a detailed description of the Stakeholder Resolution Process. Section 16.1.1 of this SFEIS provides a listing of participants in the Stakeholders Group and an update of the Stakeholder Resolution Process since publication of the SDEIS.

Stakeholder Group members were also identified by FHWA as consulting parties for the Section 106 process. The role of Stakeholder Group members as consulting parties under Section 106 was to provide consultation on identification of historic properties, determination of eligibility for the NRHP, determination of effect and identification of mitigation measures. Consulting parties were also invited to concur in the Section 106 Amended Memorandum of Agreement. Further detail on Section 106 consulting parties is located in Sections 11.1.3 and 11.1.8 of this SFEIS.

In August 2004, a Supplemental Draft EIS was published, which evaluated the potential impacts of four Build Alternatives as well as the No-Build Alternative identified during the Stakeholder Resolution Process and *2004 Amended Final Scoping Decision Document*. This 2006 Supplemental Final EIS documents the impacts associated with the Preferred Alternative package, identifies efforts that will be taken to avoid and minimize impacts associated with the Preferred Alternative package, and describes measures that will be employed to mitigate those impacts that are unavoidable. Responses to comments on the 2004 SDEIS are included with Chapter 17 of this SFEIS.

The Stakeholder Resolution Process was active through the identification of the Preferred Alternative and mitigation package. The Stakeholder Resolution Process will continue through publication of the ROD and Adequacy Determination. Additional Stakeholder involvement will occur through committees and working groups as documented in the Riverway, Growth Management, and Water Quality Memoranda of Understanding.

1.2.4.8 $5 Million Lift Bridge Repair Project

In the 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 Repair Project"), and was completed as a separate project. A separate environmental document (Mn/DOT Project Memorandum, *Lift Bridge Repair*, Bridge #4654, March 2004) resulted in a federal categorical exclusion under NEPA, meaning that the project would result in no significant environmental impacts. These repairs began in summer 2005 and were completed in spring 2006.

Refer to Section 1.2.4.7 of the SDEIS and Section 11.2.4 of this SFEIS for additional information on the $5 Million Lift Bridge Repair Project.

1.3 PROJECT SCHEDULE

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

Activity	**Date**	**Status**
Scoping Document/Draft Scoping Decision Document	November 2003	Completed
Scoping Meetings	December 2003	Completed
Final Scoping Decision Document	March 2004	Completed
Public Information Meetings	June 2004	Completed
Supplemental Draft EIS – Public Review	August – October 2004	Completed
SDEIS Public Hearings in Minnesota and Wisconsin	September 2004	Completed
Supplemental Final EIS	June 2006	In progress
Record of Decision/Adequacy Determination (anticipated outcome)	August 2006	To be completed

Activity continued	Date	Status
Final Design	2006-2008 [1]	To be completed
Right-of-Way Acquisition	2007-2009	To be completed
Construction	2009-2014 [2]	To be completed
Project Completion	2012-2014	

[1] Two to three years for final design following completion of this SFEIS, dependent on available project funding, environmental clearances and other necessary agreements.

[2] Three to six years for construction, dependent upon available project funding.

1.4 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 the 2003 ASD/ADSDD, the 2004 FSDD, the 2004 SDEIS, and this SFEIS. The FHWA is the responsible federal agency under NEPA in cooperation with Mn/DOT and WisDOT. The contact person for each agency is listed below.

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

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

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The project manager for WisDOT is:

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Figure 1-1a – Project Location – Regional Setting (8.5x11 – color)

Figure 1-1b – Project Location – Local Setting (8.5x11 – color)

Figure 1-2 – Project Area and Supplemental Final EIS Preferred Alternative (8.5x11 – color)

Figure 1-3 – Lower St. Croix National Scenic Riverway (11x17 – color)