

**FEDERAL HIGHWAY ADMINISTRATION
FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT (FONSI)
FOR
Interstate 15 South Corridor Improvement
Sloan Road to Tropicana Avenue
Clark County, Nevada**

The Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) has determined that the selected alternative will have no significant impact on the human environment. The selected alternative is to improve 12 miles of the I-15 corridor from Sloan Road to Tropicana Avenue, including Las Vegas Boulevard South between Sloan Road and Sunset Road. Improvements for I-15 consist of expanding the freeway to a ten-lane facility (five general purpose lanes in each direction) from Sloan Road to Blue Diamond Road, and a ten-lane facility (five general purpose lanes in each direction) with collector-distributor (C-D) lanes from Blue Diamond Road to Tropicana Avenue. The Las Vegas Boulevard South would be improved to a six-lane facility (three lanes in each direction) from Sloan Road to Sunset Road, and separated by an open median designated for future use by the Regional Transportation Commission (RTC) of Southern Nevada's Regional Fixed Guideway System. The selected alternative would also include three new service interchanges along I-15 at Bermuda Road, Starr Avenue, and Cactus Avenue; a reconstructed interchange at Sloan Road; a reconstructed overpass at Warm Springs Road; and new overpasses at Pebble Road and Sunset Road. A detailed description of the selected alternative is found in Section 1.3.3 of the Environmental Assessment (EA) as the Build Alternative. This project will be constructed in phases.

The Clean Air Act Transportation Conformity regulations (40 CFR Part 93, Subpart A) establish the following requirements for project-level conformity determinations:

- 1) The project must be included in a conforming transportation plan and transportation improvement program (TIP) (40 CFR 93.114 and 93.115): The selected Alternative was incorporated into the conforming RTC 2030 Transportation Plan and TIP on July 13, 2006. The design concept and scope of the selected Alternative are consistent with the project as analyzed by RTC in its regional emissions analysis for conformity.
- 2) Carbon Monoxide (CO) hotspot analysis: Since the project is located in a nonattainment area for CO, a CO hotspot analysis is required per 40 CFR 93.116 and 93.123. The results of the CO hotspot analysis are discussed in section 2.5.2 of the EA. Since the modeled CO concentrations are well below the CO National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS), the analysis demonstrates that the project will not cause new violations of, worsen existing violations of, or delay attainment of the CO NAAQS.
- 3) Particulate Matter (PM₁₀) hotspot analysis: Since the project is located in a nonattainment area for PM₁₀, a qualitative PM₁₀ hotspot analysis is required per 40 CFR 93.116 and 93.123. The results of the PM₁₀ hotspot analysis are discussed in section 2.5.2 of the EA. The analysis demonstrates that the project will not cause new violations of, worsen existing violations of, or delay attainment of the PM₁₀ NAAQS.
- 4) PM₁₀ control measures (40 CFR 93.117): The PM₁₀ State Implementation Plan (SIP) that covers the project area does not contain any control measures that would be applicable to this

project; therefore, the selected alternative meets all applicable project-level transportation conformity requirements.

This FONSI is based on the Environmental Assessment, supplied materials, and the Nevada Department of Transportation's Design Recommendation and Hearing Certification which have been independently evaluated by the FHWA and determined to adequately and accurately discuss the environmental issues and impacts of the proposed project.

Construction of the proposed project will require the acquisition of 85 acres of land including the relocation of two businesses, 35 single family residences, eight multi-family residencies, and 20 parking spaces (Section 2.3.4 of the EA). In addition, a list of mitigation measures is attached and it shall be part of this FONSI.

These documents provide sufficient evidence and analysis for determining that an Environmental Impact Statement is not required. The FHWA takes full responsibility for the accuracy, scope, and content of the EA and its attachments.

4-20-2009
Date

Brenda Z Redwing
For FHWA, Brenda Redwing

4-20-2009
Date

A. A. Abdalla
For FHWA, Abdelmoez Abdalla

^{aa}**LIST OF MITIGATION MEASURES**

The following list describes measures that will be implemented as part of the project to avoid, reduce, or otherwise mitigate environmental impacts associated with the project.

Mitigation measures and compliance with federal, state, and local laws and regulations with regards to noise, air quality, water quality, hazardous materials, and cultural resources will be specified in the contract documents.

The following list of mitigation measures and commitments are not subject to change or modification without prior written approval of the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA).

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Responsible Party	EA Page No. Reference	Mitigation Category	Description
Contractor	49	Hazardous Waste and Materials	Prior to demolition, structures will be assessed for asbestos, and required abatement measures will be enforced.
Contractor and NDOT	50	Biological Resources	<p>Cacti and yucca species that are present will be salvaged prior to construction activities.</p> <p>All terms and conditions of the BLM Programmatic Biological Opinion will be adhered to and would be specified in the Special Provisions for the project. As specified in the programmatic biological opinion, remuneration fees for the desert tortoise will be paid into the Desert Tortoise Public Lands Conservation Fund prior to surface-disturbing activities. Fees will be paid for both Section 7 and Section 10, due to the presence of both land ownerships in the project area. There are approximately 17.3 acres of BLM land (Section 7) that will be acquired for the project; however, only 15 acres would be considered new disturbance. The 15 acres will be charged at \$753 per acre for a total of \$11,295 paid to the fund. The \$753 remuneration fee is indexed for inflation and is increased each year on March 1. If fees are paid after March 1, 2009, the new mitigation fee will apply to the number of acres that are disturbed. Section 10 funds are for state or private lands and are charged \$550 per acre of disturbance. There are 43.7 acres that will be disturbed, and a total of \$24,035 will be paid to the fund.</p>

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Contractor	51	Noxious Weeds	<p>Earth-moving and hauling equipment will be washed at the contractor's storage facility prior to arriving onsite to prevent the introduction of noxious weed seeds. Disturbed areas will be landscaped and/or seeded with certified weed-free mixes.</p> <p>A noxious weed management plan will be specified in the Contract Special Provisions, prepared according to BLM's Las Vegas Field Office Noxious Weed Plan, and implemented to prevent noxious weeds from becoming established in the project area during and following construction. Elements of the plan will include surveying the project area to confirm absence of noxious weeds, verifying that vehicles and equipment are free of caked mud prior to being used at the construction site, eradication measures if noxious weeds do become established, and the use of approved BLM seed mixes.</p>
NDOT Right-of-Way (ROW) Division	55	Social	<p>The NDOT ROW Division, under the guidance of the Relocation Assistance and Real Property Acquisition Policy Act of 1970 (Uniform Act), will negotiate with the property owners directly impacted, ensuring that they receive fair market value for the acquired ROW and appropriate relocation assistance. Legally permitted property access will be perpetuated in the after condition.</p> <p>A detailed traffic plan will be created to maintain traffic circulation and access during construction. NDOT will coordinate with the existing businesses and residents about the construction schedule.</p>
NDOT Design Division	56	Visual	<p>Aesthetic treatments to sound walls and structures within the project area will be in accordance with NDOT's Landscape and Aesthetics Master Plan and I-15 Corridor Plan. New freeway and street lighting will employ shields on luminaries to minimize light and glare impacts on adjacent residences.</p>
Contractor	62	Air Quality	<p>NDOT contract documents will specify that the contractor must implement a dust control program to minimize impacts. In addition, the contractor will comply with all federal, state, and local laws, including Clark County Department of Air Quality and Environmental Management (CCDAQEM) regulations governing air pollution control.</p>

Responsible Party	EA Page No. Reference	Mitigation Category	Description
Contractor	77	Noise	<p>Sound walls will be constructed early in the project, as feasible, to mitigate construction noise (see Figures 10a through 10i). Sound wall height, length, and location will be determined during final design in coordination with NDOT Environmental Services Division.</p> <p>Contract documents will require the contractor to submit a noise control plan for review and approval by NDOT. The plan will specify how noise mitigation measures will be implemented during construction that occurs near residences. Contract specifications will address hours of operation and noise-level limits. Construction specifications will require performance of proper maintenance on construction equipment and that stationary equipment be placed as far from homes as feasible.</p>
NDOT Design Division	79	Drainage/Flood Control	<p>Floodplain impacts will be minimized by improving the offsite drainage system of the highway, by designing drainage systems in consultation with Clark County Regional Flood Control District (CCRFCD), and by incorporating designs that perpetuate existing flow patterns without increasing upstream water levels.</p> <p>Drainage and flood control systems will be designed in consultation with CCRFCD and in accordance with the CCRFCD Flood Control Master Plan for the Las Vegas Valley.</p>
Contractor	83	Water Resources	<p>If previously unidentified wells are encountered during project construction, the contractor is responsible for notifying the Nevada Department of Water Resources and for retaining a Nevada-licensed driller to properly abandon the well, if necessary.</p>

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NDOT Design Division and Contractor	83	Water Resources	<p>In addition to securing a Section 404 Permit for the discharge of fill material into a Waters of the United States, Section 401 Water Quality Certification issued by NDEP, Bureau of Water Quality Planning, will also be required for water quality assurances. If construction equipment is required to enter any of the ephemeral stream channels, then a Temporary Working in Waterways Permit issued by NDEP, Bureau of Water Pollution Control, will be obtained by the contractor for water quality assurances as well.</p> <p>As part of the freeway design, erosion control measures will be incorporated for site stabilization. The contractor will obtain a construction storm water permit issued by NDEP, Bureau of Water Pollution Control. To secure coverage under this permit, the contractor will file a Notice of Intent (NOI) and develop a Storm water Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP) identifying sources of onsite storm water discharge into adjacent surface waters and describing the implementation of best management practices (BMPs) to prevent or reduce to the maximum extent possible said discharges.</p>