

US 321 Improvements Project

From Blackberry Road to US 221
at Blowing Rock
Caldwell and Watauga Counties, North Carolina

State Project No. 6.739001T
TIP No. R-2237C

Final Environmental Impact Statement Volume 1

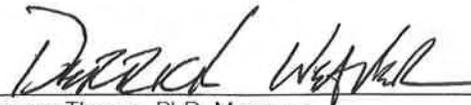
North Carolina Department of Transportation

Submitted Pursuant to the
North Carolina Environmental Policy Act (NCGS 113A-1)

A highway improvement project is proposed for US 321 in Caldwell and Watauga Counties from Blackberry Road north to US 221 in Blowing Rock. A No-Build Alternative and five Build Alternatives are examined. The Build Alternatives include widening US 321 along its current alignment (Preferred Alternative) and four Bypass Alternatives. Two Bypass Alternatives would pass through the east side of Blowing Rock and two would remain outside Blowing Rock, following the Blue Ridge escarpment to a tunnel under the Blue Ridge Parkway. This report documents the project purpose and need, examines the alternatives, describes the studies that led to the selection of the Bypass Alternatives, and describes each alternative's design features. The characteristics of the existing environment are described. The direct, secondary, and cumulative impacts of the proposed project are assessed, including community, visual, cultural resource, natural resource, and environmental quality considerations.

APPROVED:

9/6/06
Date


FIA Gregory Thorpe, PhD, Manager

Project Development and Environmental Analysis Branch
North Carolina Department of Transportation

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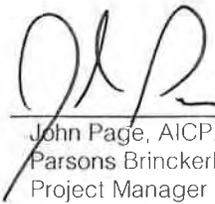
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Documentation prepared by:
Parsons Brinckerhoff Quade & Douglas, Inc.

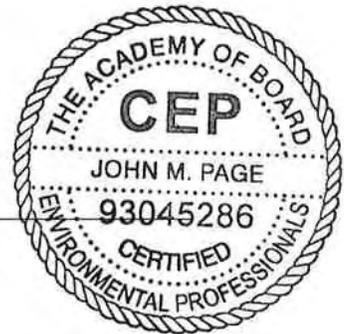
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