

Direct and Indirect Screening Tool

Project HB-0001

Replace U.S. 64 Tyrrell County Bridge No. 7 over the Alligator River

Document Type: NEPA SEPA

Prepared by: Diana Young-Paiva, Three Oaks Engineering

NCDOT Project Manager: John Conforti CS Reviewer: Herman Huang

State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) Project HB-0001 proposes to replace the existing U.S. 64 Tyrrell County Bridge No. 7 (Lindsay C. Warren Bridge) over the Alligator River in a rural and sparsely developed area of Tyrrell and Dare Counties. The existing 2.83-mile long bridge is a two-lane, swing bridge and would be removed as part of the project. There are currently no existing dedicated bicycle or pedestrian facilities along U.S. 64 in the project vicinity, and the highway is not a designated bicycle route.

The proposed replacement structure would be a modern two-lane, fixed-span bridge providing a vertical navigable channel clearance of 65-feet. The proposed bridge typical section consists of two 12-foot travel lanes, undivided, with 8-foot outside shoulders (5-foot paved shoulders on the roadway approaches). The project starts in Tyrrell County on U.S. 64, just west of Fort Landing Road. The new bridge alignment diverges from the existing U.S. 64 alignment, passes north of an existing marina/convenience store/gas station (Alligator River Marina) and crosses the Alligator River to the north of the existing bridge. The project ends in Dare County and ties back into the existing U.S. 64 alignment, east of Old Ferry Landing Road. The total project length is approximately 4.64 miles. During construction, vehicular traffic will be maintained on the existing bridge, marine traffic will continue to use the existing navigation channel, and the swing span bridge will continue to function.

The proposed bridge replacement was originally included as part of a larger project, State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) project R-2544/R-2545. A State Draft Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) was completed in 2012, and a Final Environmental Impact Statement was drafted but the project did not reach a signed Record of Decision. Four bridge alignment alternatives were carried forward to the Final EIS, with the "Dare North 2" bridge alignment alternative selected as the Least Environmentally Damaging Practicable Alternative (LEDPA). Although the larger project has not advanced past the completion of the Draft EIS, the Lindsay C. Warren Bridge will be replaced under this HB-0001 project using the bridge alignment of the previously identified LEDPA alternative.

In Tyrrell County, the Alligator River Marina, two residences, and a utility/communications tower are situated on the north side of U.S. 64 between the existing alignment at the bridge approach and the proposed new alignment to the north. On the south side of U.S. 64, a rock jetty with bulkhead, 10 boat slips, and unpaved parking is located within NCDOT right-of-way for U.S. 64 at the existing bridge. This small facility supporting local commercial fishing was constructed using funding from the Waterfront Access Marine Industry (WAMI) Fund.

In Dare County, a contractor business, two residences (one of which is unoccupied) and a NC Wildlife Resource Commission (NCWRC) public boat ramp are located off of Old Ferry Landing Road just north of

the proposed alignment of the new U.S. 64 bridge approach. Two single family residences are located just east of the existing Old Ferry Landing Road intersection with U.S. 64 on the north side, and a utility/communications tower is located on the south side of U.S. 64. The unincorporated East Lake community is located east of the project along U.S. 64. The East Lake community includes primarily single-family homes which support two churches and a community center. Agricultural fields are found along the south side of U.S. 64 east of the East Lake community.

Census data indicate a notable presence of low-income populations meeting the criteria for Environmental Justice (EJ) within the Demographic Study Area. In Census Tract (CT) 9705.01 Block Group (BG) 1 in Dare County, 17.9% of the population is considered Near Poor, with income that falls between 100% and 149% of the Poverty Level, compared to 9.6% for Dare County as a whole. Based on aerial imagery and county parcel data, the majority of homes in the East Lake community are manufactured homes, which can be an indication of a low-income neighborhood. In addition, this community was identified as a low-income EJ community in NCDOT's 2012 Draft EIS for STIP Project R-2544/R-2545.

Census data also indicate the presence of Limited English Proficiency (LEP) populations within the Demographic Study Area.

Direct Impacts

1. Are notable right-of-way impacts possible?

Notable right-of-way impacts include residential, institutional and/or business relocations, loss of one or more required parking spaces, major changes to property access, and similar direct property effects.

- No right-of-way needed for this project.
- No
- Yes

2. Are negative impacts to pedestrian or bicycle facilities possible?

Pedestrian and bicycle impacts include facilities that currently do not or that after completion will not meet ADA or comply with Complete Streets policies, blocked or notably delayed crossings (temporary or permanent), notably longer or indirect routes, insufficient space to share or to separate lanes, a notable increase in conflict points, and similar barrier effects or inadequate accommodations.

- Not present/Not applicable
- No
- Yes

3. Are negative impacts to transit possible?

Transit is considered to be present if a fixed route bus travels along the project corridor or if it travels along an intersecting street and crosses the project corridor. There does not need to be a stop within the project footprint. Impacts include notable delays, stop relocations, and/or increased difficulty for bus riders to reach a stop.

- Not present/Not applicable
- No
- Yes

4. Are negative impacts to local traffic on intersecting routes possible?

Local traffic impacts include closed intersections, notably longer routes to reach destinations on the other side of the project corridor, notable delays or difficulties for emergency vehicles, school buses, garbage trucks, farm equipment, etc. to cross the corridor, inadequate accommodation of vehicles making left or U turns to access local streets, and similar concerns. Adding signals, roundabouts, superstreets or medians do not, in and of themselves, notably impact local traffic, but the spacing of median openings and distances needed to make U turns may have negative impacts.

- Not present/Not applicable
- No
- Yes

5. Are negative impacts to parks and recreational facilities possible?

Right-of-way impacts may be permanent or temporary, including temporary construction easements. Access impacts must substantially impair access to and use of a facility, such as during construction should lane narrowing or detours notably hinder vehicles with trailers from reaching a boat ramp. Parks and recreation facilities must be publicly owned or leased and open to the public.

- Not present/Not applicable
- No
- Yes

6. Are negative impacts to farmland soils, agricultural operations, or voluntary agriculture districts possible?

Right-of-way impacts may be permanent or temporary, including temporary construction easements, which convert farmland to non-farm use. Access impacts must substantially impair access to and use of an operation, such as during construction should lane narrowing, detour routes or detour bridge weight limits prevent farm vehicles from accessing fields or require low speed vehicles to use high speed roads. VADs and EVADs are not impact categories but may affect right-of-way acquisition and are noted to avoid project delay.

- Not present/Not applicable
- No
- Yes

7. Is the project potentially inconsistent with local area land development plans, health or active transport goals, or economic development needs? Is it possible for the project to negatively impact businesses and economic resources through loss of parking, reduced visibility, notable changes in access or travel patterns, disruption of district or corridor stability and cohesion through relocations or barrier effects, or similar impacts?

- Not present/Not applicable
- No
- Yes

The realignment of U.S. 64 will mean reduced visibility for the Alligator River Marina and loss of direct driveway access to U.S. 64. In addition, existing billboard signage for the business, located in advance of the business for eastbound travelers, will not be visible from the new U.S. 64 alignment. Local and beach-bound travelers will follow a slightly less direct route to reach the business via old (existing) U.S. 64. The project is expected to have right of way impacts on the marina parcel, which would be mitigated through right-of-way acquisition. The designs would allow for relocation of billboard signage for eastbound travelers to be placed on a portion of the existing marina parcel in advance of the intersection of old U.S. 64, which could be coordinated through the right-of-way acquisition process.

8. Is it possible that the project may negatively impact community resources, or to alter the overall functioning of a district, community, or neighborhood, or disrupt connections between residential and commercial, institutional, recreational and employment areas? Is it possible for the project to negatively affect emergency services access or pedestrian safety, including perceived crime concerns? Are there any known or anticipated concerns or controversies relative to the project?

- Not present/Not applicable
- No
- Yes

In Tyrrell County on the south side of U.S. 64, a rock jetty with bulkhead, 10 boat slips, and unpaved parking is located within NCDOT right-of-way. This small facility supporting commercial fishing was constructed using funding from the Waterfront Access Marine Industry (WAMI) Fund. The WAMI program was established by the N.C. General Assembly to ensure existing and future waterfront-dependent uses. The WAMI site is operated by a waterman's association whose members pay dues to the association for access and maintenance of the site. The project is not anticipated to directly impact the facility;

however, plans for demolition of the existing bridge have not yet been developed, and therefore proposed temporary construction easements are not yet known.

- If demolition plans will impact the WAMI site they should be coordinated with the waterman's association (Aron Gallop (252) 394-5185) prior to completion of final designs and right-of-way plans.

There are no known or anticipated concerns or controversies relative to this project; however, the last public meeting for the former R-2544/R-2545 U.S. 64 widening project was held in April 2012, and there has been no public outreach conducted for this bridge replacement project as of June 2021. Funds for construction are anticipated but have not yet been identified, and the current project planning scope of work does not include public engagement activities.

- It is recommended that the Type III CE environmental document include a green sheet project commitment requiring public engagement activities be coordinated with NCDOT Public Involvement prior to completion of final designs and right-of-way plans, to ensure full and fair participation of all potentially affected communities in the transportation decision-making process.

Drew Pearson, Dare County Emergency Management Director, reported in a telephone interview on June 9, 2021, that in consideration of NCDOT plans to maintain traffic on the existing bridge during construction, the project is not likely to have adverse impacts on emergency responders. The Director noted that NCDOT had followed good communication practices during recent construction of the Marc Basnight Bridge over Oregon Inlet, and he anticipated that communications would be the same for this project. The Director requested that the bridge "landing points" be designed to accommodate emergency vehicle access onto the bridge during peak traffic times, as traffic congestion can make it difficult for emergency vehicles to get onto the bridge to respond to emergencies. The request for design considerations at the base of the bridge has been provided to the NCDOT Project Manager and project team members.

Tyrrell County Emergency Management did not provide input on potential impacts.

David Davenport, the Tyrrell County School Transportation Lead, does not anticipate any project impacts to school transportation. Alex Chandler, the Dare County School Transportation Director, reported in a telephone interview on June 2, 2021, that one school bus operates on U.S. 64 within the project limits, turning around prior to the bridge using a "vee" area at the Old Ferry Landing Road intersection with U.S. 64. One bus turns around twice each school day (morning and afternoon). This information, along with the contact information for the Transportation Director, was provided to the NCDOT Project Manager and project team members.

- It is recommended that the project team evaluate design revisions that accommodate a bus turnaround in the vicinity of Old Ferry Landing Road, as well as provisions for continued turnaround access during construction.

9. Is it possible for the project to add to recurring effects on any populations, neighborhoods or communities? Recurring effects include past, current and anticipated near term actions that may have minor impacts individually but when taken as a whole may have notable effects.

- Not present/Not applicable
- No
- Yes

10. Is it possible for the project to have a disproportionately high and adverse impact, including delay or denial of benefit, on low income, young, old, disabled or minority persons?

- Not present/Not applicable
- No
- Yes

Indirect Impacts

11. Is it likely that the project may result in travel time savings of more than one minute?

- No
- Yes

12. Will the project permanently add new connections to the existing road network (i.e. new intersections, intersection-to-interchange conversions¹ or new service roads²)?

- No
- Yes

13. Will the project provide new or expanded access to properties?

- No
- Yes

14. Will the project encourage the development of activity centers or similar areas of concentrated, moderate to high intensity land development or redevelopment?

- No
- Yes

¹ This refers to a replacement as an individual project. Converting intersections to interchanges as part of corridor upgrade projects should be considered within the context of the larger project.

² This refers to construction of new roads along an existing highway frontage to provide access where none has existed previously. Generally this does not apply to constructing service roads to replace driveways due to a change in access or other access management considerations.

LOCAL INPUT SOURCES

Dare County Schools Transportation Director

Alex Chandler

chandleral@daretolearn.org

252-473-3717

Phone call interview 06/02/2021

Tyrrell County Schools Transportation Department Lead

David Davenport

ddavenp.tycomail.net

252-796-1121 ext 419

Phone call interview 06/02/2021

Dare County Emergency Management

Drew Pearson, Director

Drew.pearson@darenc.gom

252-475-5897

Phone call interview 06/09/2021

Tyrrell County Emergency Management

Wesley Hopkins. Coordinator

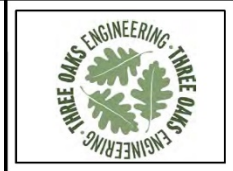
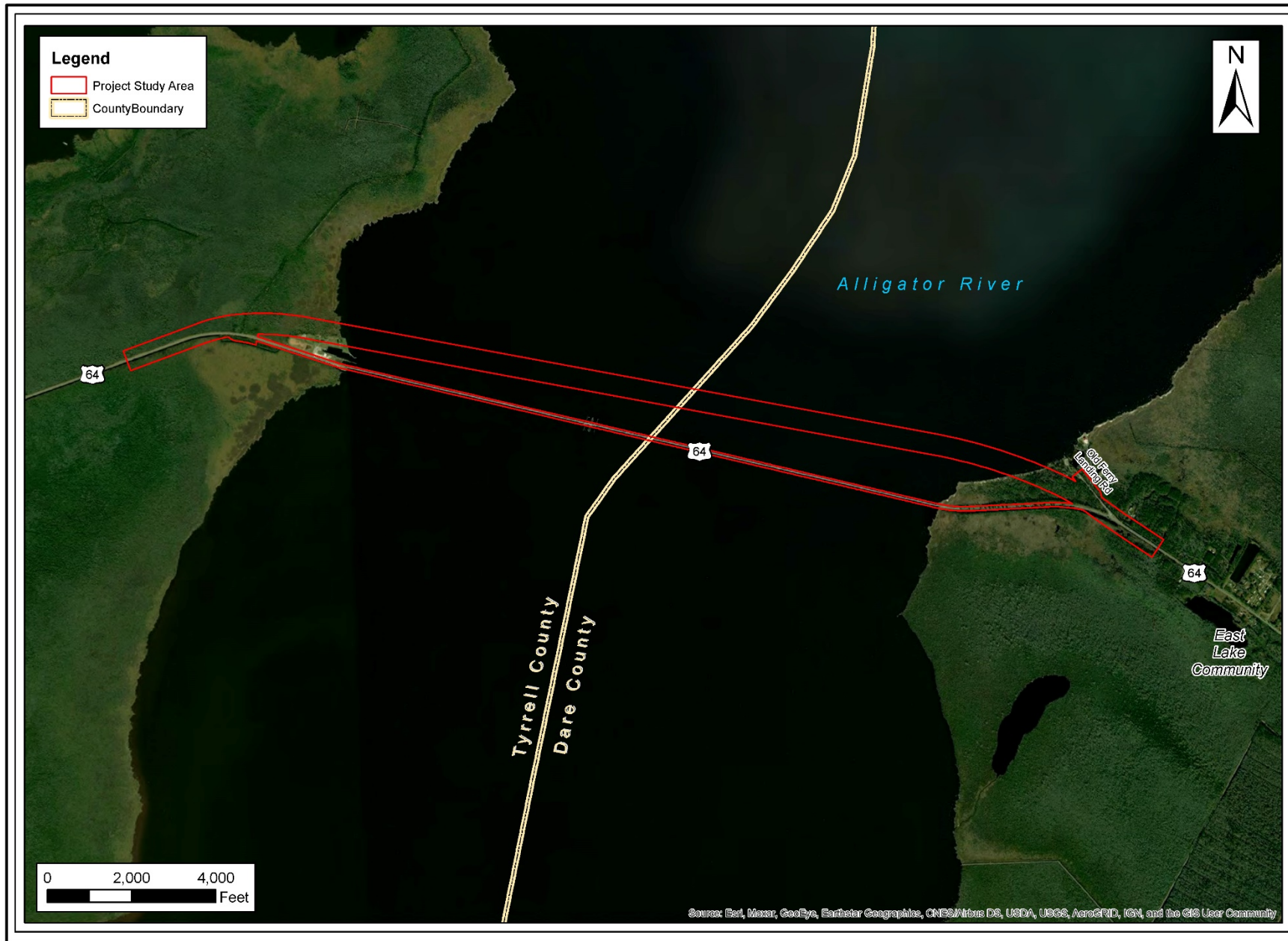
weshopkins@tyrrellcounty.net

252-796-1371, ext. 2613

Phone voicemail messages left on 06/09/2021 and 06-16-2021

Email sent 06-16-2021

No input received



**Replace U.S. 64
Tyrrell County Bridge
No. 7 over the
Alligator River.**

Tyrrell & Dare Counties

**HB-0001
Study Area Map**

Date:	June 2021
Scale:	As Shown
Job No.:	HB-0001
Drawn By:	CMR
Checked By:	JSM

Figure
2

Dare County Emergency Management Input

Diana Young-Paiva

From: Diana Young-Paiva
Sent: Wednesday, June 9, 2021 4:54 PM
To: drew.pearson@darenc.com
Cc: Conforti, John G; Hobbs, Barry; Craig Young, PE; Brandon Johnson
Subject: NCDOT STIP Project HB-0001
Attachments: HB-0001_StudyAreaMap.pdf

Mr. Pearson

I am following up on our conversation this afternoon regarding NCDOT's proposed replacement of the U.S. 64 bridge over the Alligator River. I don't have a map that I can share with the proposed designs, but I have attached a map of the project study area within which the new bridge is proposed to be located. Note that the study area includes the existing U.S. 64 and bridge alignment.

During our discussion of potential NCDOT project impacts on emergency services for Dare County, your main points were:

- The bridge "landing points" should be designed to accommodate emergency vehicle access onto the bridge during peak traffic when there are high volumes, as traffic congestion can make it difficult to get emergency vehicles onto the bridge
- As long as the bridge is being designed to accommodate large vehicles you have no specific concerns about the proposed designs which include two 12-foot travel lanes, undivided, with 8-foot outside shoulders.
- It is important for the existing bridge to be well-maintained and operable until the new bridge is opened
- You are anticipating good communications with NCDOT during construction of the Alligator River bridge, based on your recent good experience with NCDOT when the Basnight bridge was constructed

If you have additional input after talking with others, please pass that along. Or, feel free to contact the NCDOT Project Manager John Conforti (919-707-6105) or NCDOT Division 1 Project Development Team Lead Barry Hobbs (252-482-1862).

Thanks again for your time this afternoon.
Kind regards,
Diana Young-Paiva

Diana Young-Paiva
Senior Transportation Planner
Three Oaks Engineering
American Tobacco Campus
324 Blackwell Street, Suite 1200
Durham, North Carolina 27701
Phone: 919.495.6101
Email: diana.young-paiva@threeoaksengineering.com
Web: www.threeoaksengineering.com
Twitter: @threeoakseng

Dare County School Transportation Input Via Phone Interview

Wednesday, June 2, 2021 9:00 AM

Dare County Schools

Alex Chandler Transportation Director
chandleral@daretolearn.org
(252) 473-3717 ext 3402

Spoke by phone 6/2/21 and Mr. Chandler provided information about the existing turnaround spot at Old Ferry Landing Road. One bus turns around twice a day- once in the morning, and once in the afternoon. Information was provided to NCDOT Project Manager John Conforti and project team members.

Follow up email sent to Alex Chandler on 6-2-21

Hi Alex,

Thanks for talking with me this morning about Dare County school bus transportation in relation to the proposed replacement of the U.S. 64 bridge over Alligator River.

I've copied a few people from the project team on this email including NCDOT Project Manager John Conforti (919-707-6105) and NCDOT Division 1 Project Development Team Lead Barry Hobbs (252-482-1862), so that you will have their contact information, and to make sure they are aware of the need to coordinate with you further regarding turnaround access during construction, and to assess bus turnaround accommodations in the new designs.

The screenshot below shows the proposed alignment and the "vee" area you described that the school buses currently use as a turnaround. You mentioned that the last stop on the route is at 19401 Hwy 64, less than ½ mile to the east, so potentially, a temporary turnaround could be constructed further east. However, access will be maintained for Old Ferry Landing Road during construction, so that might not be necessary. Note that the project proposes a realignment of the Old Ferry Landing Road intersection. One thing I forgot to ask you is how many bus trips a day currently operate in this area?

You asked about the project schedule- the right of way and construction LET date are still to be determined. NCDOT is working to secure funding, and the project schedule will be developed based on the funding.

Thanks again for your time and information! We will include the information in the project files, and note that additional coordination with you at Dare County Schools (252-473-3717 ext. 3402) will be needed as the project moves through planning and final design.

Kind regards,
Diana



Tyrrell County School Transportation Input Via Phone Interview

Friday, June 18, 2021 9:46 AM

Tyrrell County Schools

David Davenport, Transportation Department Lead
Ddavenp.tycomail.net
252-796-1121 ext 419

Notes from 06/02/2021 phone call interview. Mr. Davenport does not expect the project to impact Tyrrell County School transportation. One house is at the bridge, but no students live there so no school bus transportation in the area. Currently, when the existing bridge is closed for repairs, trips made to Dare County for athletic events must detour to the south, adding an additional hour to the typical one hour trip.