



STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA
DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

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GOVERNOR

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SECRETARY

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**ENVIRONMENTAL STUDIES CONTINUE FOR PROPOSED N.C. 143
IMPROVEMENTS WEST OF ROBBINSVILLE IN GRAHAM COUNTY**

RALEIGH — The N.C. Department of Transportation is continuing its study of proposed improvements to N.C. 143 west of Robbinsville in Graham County. The project begins at West Buffalo Creek and ends at N.C. 143 Business, a distance of approximately five miles. The purpose of the project is to improve safety.

NCDOT staff will be in the area performing environmental surveys over the next several months. These surveys are being conducted in order to identify potential impacts to the human and natural environments, in accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). Residents should note that the presence of NCDOT staff does not necessarily mean that the properties they are studying will be purchased as right of way for the project.

A recommended alternative will be selected after the environmental studies are completed and after citizens have had the opportunity to comment on the project.

Based upon coordination with representatives of federal, state and local governmental agencies and comments received from citizens, the following three alternatives are being studied. Each alternative proposes widening travel lanes and shoulders on N.C. 143.

- Alternative 1 – Widen existing N.C. 143 with curve improvements from West Buffalo Creek to just north of N.C. 143 Business, including realignment of the N.C. 143 intersection with N.C. 143 Business at the east end of the project.
- Alternative 2 – Widen existing N.C. 143 with curve improvements from West Buffalo Creek to just north of Buchanan Branch Road (S.R. 1125), following the Alternative 1 alignment; construct a new roadway to east of S.R. 1118, with a new crossing of Snowbird Creek; and widen existing N.C. 143 with curve improvements to just north of N.C. 143 Business, including realignment of the N.C. 143 intersection with N.C. 143 Business.
- Alternative 4 - Widen existing N.C. 143 from West Buffalo Creek to N.C. 143 Business with no curve improvements and no realignment of the N.C. 143 intersection with N.C. 143 Business.

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1 SOUTH WILMINGTON STREET
RALEIGH NC

Under each alternative, N.C. 143 would remain a two-lane road, possibly with turn lanes at selected intersections. The proposed improvements will require the acquisition of additional right of way and possibly the displacement of homes and businesses.

A fourth alternative, Alternative 3, was considered during the early project development stages. That improvement, which would have required a greater amount of new road construction north of Buchanan Branch Road and the crossing of a wider section of Santeetlah Lake, was eliminated from further consideration due to potential adverse impacts to Nantahala National Forest.

Additional public involvement for the project is scheduled to take place later this year or in early 2012 prior to the selection of a recommended alternative. It is anticipated that acquisition of right of way for the project will begin in late 2015 and project construction will begin in late 2017. This schedule is subject to change.

Maps displaying the three alternatives for which detailed studies are underway are available for public review at the Graham County Manager's Office, located at 12 North Main St. in Robbinsville, and at the Snowbird Community Center near Robbinsville.

For more information about the project, contact NCDOT Project Engineer Wilson Stroud at (919)707-6045 or wstroud@ncdot.gov.

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