



US Army Corps
of Engineers
Wilmington District

NCDOT US Highway 64 Widening and Bridge Project (Regulatory)

- **A Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) has been prepared jointly by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and the North Carolina Department of Transportation (NCDOT).**
- **Department of the Army authorization, pursuant to both Section 10 of the Rivers and Harbors Act and Section 404 of the Clean Water Act, is required for the construction of the bridge and the widening.**

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT: NC-03

DATE: 6 February 2014

1. **PURPOSE:**

To provide the status of the proposal by the North Carolina Department of Transportation to replace the bridge over the Alligator River and to widen the existing road from a two-lane highway to a four-lane highway, Tyrrell and Dare Counties, North Carolina (State Project No. 6.049002T, T.I.P. No. R- 2544 & R-2545). Action ID 199811011.

2. **BACKGROUND:**

a. On June 17, 1999, an interagency meeting was conducted to discuss the feasibility of the proposed project. It was determined the project did not have a valid Purpose and Need (P & N).

b. On June 19, 2002, the first Merger Team meeting was held to discuss Concurrence Point (CP) No. 1 (P & N) for the project. A new feasibility study dated 2 June 2002 was presented with a new P & N statement. Concurrence was not reached for P & N and NCDOT was advised that they must provide justification that supports hurricane evacuation as a valid P & N for the project before the Merger Team could consider it valid.

c. On February 11, 2007, a Merger Scoping Meeting was held to discuss the proposed project and updates since the project was delayed years ago. The team was advised that NCDOT was waiting on the completion of a new 2005 Hurricane Evacuation Report.

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d. On June 14, 2007, a merger team meeting was held for CP No. 1. Concurrence was reached for P & N and the study area was defined for the project.

e. On June 19, 2008 and August 21, 2008, merger team meetings were held for CP No.2 (alternatives selected for detailed study). Several issues and concerns were raised during the meeting and concurrence was not reached because agencies could not agree upon median widths through the Alligator River National Wildlife Refuge. CP No. 2 was elevated for review to the Merger Management Team as part of the conflict/dispute resolution process. On October 16, 2008, the Merger Management Team agreed to CP No. 2.

f. On April 27 and 28, 2009, citizen's informational workshops were held in East Lake and Columbia, North Carolina.

g. On December 14, 2011, the DEIS was approved and signed by NCDOT. On January 11, 2012, the DEIS was approved and signed by the Corps. The Notice of Availability of the DEIS was published in the Federal Register On February 17, 2012 and a Corps Public Notice was issued announcing the availability of the DEIS and asking for comments on the various alternatives being considered for the project.

h. The US Fish and Wildlife Service is concerned about potential adverse impacts to the Federally Listed red wolf and red-cockaded woodpecker populations caused by construction of the proposed project. Formal consultation will be required, and project modification may be necessary to minimize impacts.

i. Concurrence Point 3, Selection of The Least Environmentally Damaging Practicable Alternative (LEDPA), was signed on February 14, 2013. Public information meetings were held in the East Lake and Alligator Communities on August 19-20, 2013 to present the LEDPA.

3. CURRENT STATUS:

A Draft Biological Assessment to evaluate potential effects of the proposed widening of US 64 on the Federally Listed red wolf was submitted to the Corps in December 2013. This document is currently being reviewed.