



**US Army Corps  
of Engineers**  
Wilmington District

## NCDOT Proposed Relocation of US 74, Graham County, NC (Regulatory)

- **Proposed relocation of US 74 from Robbinsville to Stecoah, NC, known as A-9 B & C**
- **Reviewing agency concerns include project segmentation, purpose and need, and effect on drinking water supply**
- **Federal, state and local agencies have formed implementation team to recommend plan of action by mid 2015**

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CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT: NC-11

DATE: 23 February 2015

1. **PURPOSE:**

To provide information concerning the current status of the proposal by the NC Department of Transportation (NCDOT) to relocate US 74 from US 129 in Robbinsville to NC 28 in Stecoah, Graham County, North Carolina, TIP Project No. A-9 B & C, file number SAW-2009-01346.

2. **BACKGROUND:** This project, A-9 B and C, is part of the Appalachian Development Highway System Corridor "K", which extends from I-75 in Cleveland, TN to US 23 near Sylva, NC. The entire A-9 Project Corridor is approximately 28 miles long and is divided into 4 sections: A, B, C, and D. The entire corridor was evaluated in a 1984 Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS).

A draft supplemental FEIS (DSFEIS) was completed in 2008 by the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and NCDOT for Sections B and C, which are proposed for construction under the current proposal. Section D has already been constructed and Section A of the project, which would complete the A-9 corridor, was not included in the study because it was not funded at the time.

Agencies expressed concerns about, among other issues, segmentation of the project, purpose and need, disposal of waste material that would be generated, mitigation, and effects on drinking water supplies. Due to concerns of the agencies and the complexity of the issues associated with the A-9 project, the FHWA and NCDOT enlisted the help of an independent facilitator, the U.S. Institute for Environmental Conflict Resolution (IECR) to

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help FHWA/NCDOT, other agencies, and local elected leaders identify and understand all issues associated with the A-9 project (to include project status), develop a resolution that all can live with and will commit to support, and develop a plan of the next steps to take.

The IECR conducted a phone interview with members of the Corps in February 2011. In April 2011, the IECR provided a report of their assessment of the potential for interagency collaboration to NCDOT, FHWA, the Corps, and other involved agencies and groups.

The Southern Environmental Law Center (SELC) has expressed an interest in this project by writing letters to FHWA, NCDOT, and the Corps. SELC met with the Corps in December of 2011 in order to verbally express these concerns.

3. **CURRENT STATUS:**

Based on project controversy and concerns expressed by permitting and commenting agencies, a comprehensive regional plan is being developed for the seven western counties in NC. The implementation team is composed of the NC Department of Commerce, the Appalachian Regional Commission, the Southwestern Commission, the Federal Highway Administration and the NCDOT. The goal of this planning process, as noted by the NCDOT, is to develop a plan of action with local and regional officials and stakeholders to determine how transportation can best support the goals of the local area, such as economic development and protecting the natural environment. Estimated completion date of plan is mid 2015.