



**US Army Corps  
of Engineers**  
Wilmington District

NCDOT Improvement of Travel  
between NC 28 and US 74 (A-9),  
Graham and Cherokee Counties, NC  
(Regulatory)

- **Current project purpose is to improve travel between NC 28 (at Stecoah) and US 74 (east of Andrews) in western North Carolina (A-9)**
- **A-9 is part of the Appalachian Development Highway System “Corridor K”**
- **Involves potential improvements to US 129 and NC 143**
- **Project previously known as “Relocation of US 74”**
- **Interagency project team has developed new and preliminary (draft) project scope and purpose and need(s) for this project**
- **A-9 was previously divided into four (4) sections – A, B, C, and D; D has already been permitted and constructed**
- **Previous efforts to permit B and C (without A) met with concerns about project segmentation, purpose and need, effects on drinking water, and other resources**
- **Project team no longer refers to unconstructed sections as A, B, and C**
- **Once the interagency preliminary planning efforts are complete, this project may be re-entered into the Merger Process**

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CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT: NC 11

DATE: 25 March 2019

1. **PURPOSE:**

To provide updated and current information about the portions of the A-9 project that are not permitted or constructed yet (previously referred to as Sections A, B, and C). The NC Department of Transportation (NCDOT) will be the applicant.

2. **BACKGROUND:**

a. A-9 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 was previously divided into 4 sections: A, B, C, and D. The entire corridor was evaluated in a 1984 Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS).

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

c. In 2011, the proposed A-9 B and C project was in the process of being evaluated under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA)/404 Merger process in NC. Due to the complexity of the issues associated with this project, and to the review agencies’ concerns

PROJECT INFORMATION – NCDOT Proposed Relocation of US 74, Graham and Cherokee Counties, NC (Regulatory) – Continued

(project segmentation, purpose and need, etc.), the FHWA and NCDOT suspended this evaluation and enlisted the help of the U.S. Institute for Environmental Conflict Resolution (IECR).

d. In 2011, the IECR conducted interviews and published their findings. Based on the IECR recommendations, a comprehensive plan (Opt-In) was developed for the seven western counties in NC and was published in November 2014. Comprehensive Plans for Graham and Cherokee Counties, and a comprehensive transportation plan for Graham County, were developed concurrently with the regional plan.

e. The Southern Environmental Law Center met with the Corps in December 2011 to verbally express their concerns regarding the A-9 B and C proposal.

f. FHWA and NCDOT held multiple reengagement meetings between July 2, 2015, and August 23, 2018, with agency leaders, interagency project team members, and stakeholders to review and update information from the initial planning process for this project.

3. **CURRENT STATUS:**

The FHWA and NCDOT are currently working to finalize the Design Study Report and present several corridors/conceptual designs to the public for comment. FHWA and NCDOT presented the latest DRAFT report and received comments from the agencies at the December 17, 2018, team meeting.