

A. INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents a summary of the coordination efforts used to encourage public and agency participation for the Proposed Project's environmental review phase. Federally funded or permitted projects are required to be developed in accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), which provides a role for the public in the planning and decision-making process. The Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) guidance encourages citizen involvement at every stage of the environmental assessment. As described below, the Project Team has undertaken public and community outreach efforts for the Proposed Project, along with federal, state, and local agency coordination.

AGENCY COORDINATION AND PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT PLAN

During the early phases of the Proposed Project, FRA and the Maryland Department of Transportation (MDOT) prepared an Agency Coordination and Public Involvement Plan (the Plan). The Plan identified a proactive approach to effectively engage the public and agencies throughout the environmental review process. For the purposes of public outreach, a broad distribution list was prepared, which included elected officials, representatives from the City of Havre de Grace and the Town of Perryville, representatives from Harford County and Cecil County, individuals and organizations who signed up for the mailing list through the project's website, owners of adjacent properties, stakeholder groups, community facilities, agency contacts, and potential Section 106 consulting parties. The Project Team has presented the Proposed Project at Interagency Review Meetings (IRMs) and public outreach information sessions. Members of IRM include representatives from the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), Maryland State Highway Administration (SHA), Federal Transit Administration (FTA), FRA, Maryland Department of Natural Resources (DNR), Maryland Department of Planning (MDP), Maryland Department of the Environment (MDE), MDOT, Maryland Historical Trust (MHT), Maryland Port Administration, Maryland Transportation Authority (MdTA), National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS), Susquehanna River Basin Commission, U.S. Coast Guard (USCG), U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE), U.S. Department of the Interior (USDOJ), U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA), U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS), and National Parks Service (NPS).

The Project Team has used a variety of methods to obtain feedback from the public and interested stakeholders throughout the planning process. Postcards, press releases, and public meeting announcements have been sent prior to public outreach information sessions and a variety of comment mechanisms are available. The following goals were established at the initiation of the outreach program:

- Engage with agencies, local entities, the general public, and other interested parties throughout the project.

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- Provide opportunities for agencies, local entities, the general public, and other interested parties to participate in the development of the project by sharing information and providing various ways to collect comments, feedback, and suggestions.
- Specific agency coordination objectives of the Plan include:
 - Build working relationships with agency partners and identify cooperating and coordinating agencies to be involved in ongoing agency coordination.
 - Establish the timing and format for agency involvement in: developing the project’s purpose and need, study area, analysis methodologies, and range of alternatives to be investigated; reviewing the EA; selecting the preferred alternative; and developing conceptual mitigation strategies.
 - Establish the timing and format for involvement by local governments that may be affected by the Proposed Project.
 - Consult with appropriate agencies under Section 106 and Section 4(f).
 - Describe methods that have been and will be employed by the Project Team to communicate with agencies and local governments.
- Specific public involvement objectives of the Plan include:
 - Establish the timing and format for public input on: environmental, cultural, and community resources; the project’s purpose and need; the study area, the range of alternatives to be investigated; comment on the EA; selecting the preferred alternative; and developing conceptual mitigation strategies.
 - Determine the need for targeted public involvement by identifying tribal entities, environmental justice populations, and limited English proficiency (LEP) populations.
 - Describe the communication methods that will be implemented to inform the community about the project.

EARLY COORDINATION

During the spring and summer of 2013, FRA, MDOT, and the National Railroad Passenger Corporation (Amtrak) initiated early coordination with cooperating and coordinating agencies, local municipalities and counties, and various regional planning organizations. Cooperating agencies include FTA, USACE, and USCG. FTA is a cooperating agency because of the Proposed Project’s potential to affect MARC commuter rail services along the NEC. USACE is a cooperating agency because permits are required under Section 404 of the Clean Water Act and under Section 10 of the Rivers and Harbors Act. USCG is a cooperating agency because an approval will be required pursuant to Section 9 of the Rivers and Harbors Act. As part of this early coordination, a project notification letter was sent to select agencies and local entities (see **Appendix H**, “Public Involvement and Agency Correspondence” for a copy of the May 15, 2013 letter and the list of recipients). The letter included general information about the project and requested that each respondent provide feedback that may be useful for the planning stage of the project by June 30, 2013.

Amtrak received 25 response letters and emails from May through September of 2013. Most of this correspondence was in direct response to the May 15, 2013 project notification letters; the remainder was from citizens who learned about the project by media coverage or through other sources. All agencies, organizations, and individuals who submitted comments or questions to the Project Team were added to the project mailing list (discussed below). The information

received from this early coordination helped the Project Team identify environmental, cultural, and community resources and understand local priorities. This valuable input also was considered during conceptual engineering.

EARLY COORDINATION MEETINGS

At the request of the City of Havre de Grace and the Town of Perryville and to promote early agency coordination, FRA, MDOT and Amtrak gave an introductory presentation to local officials on June 10, 2013. Comments received at the meeting included concerns about potential impacts to the surrounding natural, socioeconomic and cultural resources.

On July 17, 2013, FRA, MDOT, and Amtrak delivered a project presentation to federal and state agencies as part of an IRM, which is described in detail below. The IRM presentation focused on general project background, the project site location, and future planned interagency meetings, and served as an initial project introduction for the agencies.

Also, during the summer of 2013, Amtrak and its representatives reached out to local marina owners and operators, shippers, dock managers, the USCG, and other members of the maritime community. The purpose of this outreach was to understand the current navigational uses along this segment of the Susquehanna River and the anticipated USCG requirements for the vertical clearance of any potential fixed bridge. This information was factored into conceptual engineering.

INFORMATIONAL MATERIALS

PROJECT WEBSITE

The Project Team created a dedicated website for the Proposed Project: www.susrailbridge.com. The website was launched in April 2014 (prior to the first public outreach information session) and the site has been updated as needed as the Proposed Project progressed. The project website provides up-to-date information regarding the project and any upcoming meetings or events. Information on the website includes project description, project history, Purpose and Need, frequently asked questions (FAQs), study area map, a description of the NEPA process and EA, project schedule and public involvement efforts. The site provides contact information for the Project Team, meeting information, and a form to submit comments online.

MEETING PUBLICITY

Postcards, email blasts, press releases, and public meeting announcements have been sent prior to public outreach information sessions. Public outreach information sessions were publicized through meeting postcards mailed to the entire project mailing list, as well as local libraries and community centers to be publicly posted. Extra efforts were made by posting more notices in environmental justice areas. Meeting information was also posted on the project website.

PROJECT DOCUMENT REPOSITORIES

The project website will identify where documents are available for public review, how the public can provide input, comment period deadlines, and whom to contact with comments or for additional information. Copies of the EA documents will be available for public inspection at local municipal offices and libraries.

B. PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT

PUBLIC OUTREACH INFORMATION SESSIONS

Numerous public meetings have been held throughout the environmental process (see **Table 20-1**). Each public outreach information session has been held on at project milestones, including project purpose and need, development of feasible alternatives, alternatives retained for detailed study, and release of the NEPA document. The public was encouraged to attend and participate in these meetings as well as submit any written comments.

APRIL 28, 2014—PURPOSE & NEED / PROJECT INTRODUCTION

The first public outreach information session was held in an open house format where stakeholders reviewed project displays and a Fact Sheet handout, spoke with Project Team members, and submitted written comments. This format allowed stakeholders flexibility to participate at their convenience and allow them to engage with the Project Team. Topics presented to the public included the Purpose and Need, environmental resources and constraints within the study area, conceptual alternatives, and the anticipated project schedule. Feedback from comment sheets allowed the Project Team to gauge the priorities and concerns of the public. This meeting offered the opportunity for new conceptual alternatives or design considerations to be suggested by the public and other stakeholders. No interpreters were requested for the meeting. All display materials and handouts were posted on the project website within one week of the meeting.

This public outreach information session was held at the Havre de Grace Activity Center on April 28, 2014, from 5 PM to 8 PM. Approximately 115 people attended and 30 written comments were provided to the Project Team that night. The major themes of the public comments received include: importance of aesthetics and bridge design; construction of a bicycle/pedestrian path across the river; transit/traffic/parking improvements; minimizing property acquisition; maintaining jobs; enhancing public parks; and encouraging tourism and local businesses. At the meeting and in the days following this public outreach information session, the public provided input on the long list of alternatives considered in the initial screening process, and reiterated critical properties to be avoided if possible.

AUGUST 13, 2014—FEASIBLE ALTERNATIVES

Based on the input from the April 2014 public outreach information session, the IRMs, and the results of conceptual engineering, the Project Team presented the feasible alternatives to the public. This included the comprehensive “long list” of all conceptual alternatives identified to date. The presentation explained the fatal flaw screening rationale used for eliminating conceptual alternatives deemed infeasible. The Project Team developed a summary of comments after the meeting and posted all display materials and handouts on the project website within one week of the public meeting. As described below, this meeting also served as a Section 106 consulting parties meeting.

Table 20-1
All Meetings Held to Date

Meeting Date	Meeting Topic
Public Involvement Meetings	
April 28, 2014	POIS Purpose & Need/ Project Introduction
August 13, 2014	POIS Feasible Alternatives
December 10, 2014	POIS Alternatives Retained for Detailed Study
November 10, 2015	POIS Alternatives Retained for Detailed Study and Bridge Types
April 14, 2016	POIS Review Preliminary Environmental Analyses Results / Conceptual Mitigation
Stakeholders Meetings	
June 6, 2014	Bicycle-Pedestrian stakeholders meeting
June 17, 2014	Presentation to the Town of Perryville
July 1, 2014	Presentation to Cecil County
November 6, 2014	Meeting with Susquehanna River Rail Bridge Project Advisory Board
December 2, 2014	Bicycle-Pedestrian Coordination Meeting
March 9, 2015	Section 106 Consulting Parties
March 26, 2015	Meeting with Susquehanna River Rail Bridge Project Advisory Board
July 8, 2015	Meeting with Harford County Public Schools
July 28, 2015	Baltimore Metropolitan Council (BMC) Meeting
August 17, 2015	Meeting with Harford County Public Schools
August 18, 2015	Section 106 Consulting Parties
January 20, 2016	Meeting with Harford County Public Schools
March 17, 2016	Meeting with Susquehanna River Rail Bridge Project Advisory Board
October 11, 2016	Section 106 Consulting Parties
Agency Coordination Meetings	
July 17, 2013	IRM Project Introduction
February 19, 2014	IRM Purpose & Need Meeting
March 19, 2014	Project Coordination Meeting with NS/FRA/MDOT/Amtrak
April 16, 2014	IRM Purpose & Need/ Conceptual Alternative
June 18, 2014	IRM Feasible Alternatives
February 18, 2015	IRM Preliminary Alternatives Retained for Detailed Study
March 12, 2015	IRM Agency Field Visit
April 15, 2015	IRM ARDS Field Visit Recap
June 17, 2015	IRM Refined Alternatives Retained for Detailed Study
September 16, 2015	IRM Revised ARDS Report
December 9, 2015	IRM Bridge Types
December 14, 2015	WILMAPCO Presentation
March 9, 2016	Smart Growth Coordinating Committee Presentation
March 17, 2016	WILMAPCO Presentation
April 20, 2016	IRM Detailed Presentation of NETR
Notes: See Appendix H, "Public Involvement and Agency Correspondence." POIS = Public Outreach Information Session IRM = Interagency Review Meeting NS = Norfolk Southern FRA= Federal Railroad Administration MDOT= Maryland Department of Transportation	

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This public outreach information session was held at the Perryville Fire House on August 13, 2014 from 5 PM to 8 PM. Approximately 60 people attended and 10 written comments were received by the Project Team that night. The major themes of the public comments received include: construction of a bicycle/pedestrian path across the river; importance of aesthetics and bridge design; alternatives preference; removal of remnant piers/existing bridge; and transit improvements/concerns.

A few comments indicated a preference for a particular alternative. From the August 13, 2014 public information session, one attendee commented in favor of Alternative 9B. Another comment from the August 13, 2014 public information session favored Alternative 8A. A written submission received September 2, 2014 favored the alternative with the construction of a new bridge as well as the replacement of the existing bridge to allow for a total of four tracks. The majority of public input did not indicate the preference for a particular alternative.

DECEMBER 10, 2014—ALTERNATIVES RETAINED FOR DETAILED STUDY

A third public outreach information session was held at the Havre de Grace High School on December 10, 2014 from 5 PM to 8 PM. As described below, this meeting also served as a Section 106 consulting parties meeting. This presentation explained the screening process used to determine the alternatives retained for detailed study. A comprehensive alternative comparison matrix was presented to the public to explain the detailed screening rationale used to determine the alternatives that would progress to detailed study in the EA. Potential property impact maps for the alternatives retained for detailed study were shared with the public. Public comments received at the meeting indicated no preference for any of the three remaining alignments. Overall, the Project Team received positive feedback regarding minimization of permanent property impacts.

NOVEMBER 10, 2015—ALTERNATIVES RETAINED FOR DETAILED STUDY AND BRIDGE TYPES

A fourth public information session was held at Perryville High School on November 10, 2015 from 5 PM to 8 PM. As described below, this meeting also served as a Section 106 consulting parties meeting. The open house-style format gave an overview of the two alternatives retained for detailed study, as well as the four bridge design types. A comprehensive bridge-type comparison matrix board was prepared for the meeting, and provided an easy to understand visual of the strengths and weaknesses of each bridge type. Street view renderings of all four bridge types were also presented from the perspective of both Perryville and Havre de Grace. A new comment card was developed for the meeting, which included a bridge survey. The survey was designed to receive feedback on bridge type preference and the top three factors of most importance to meeting attendees. Based on the completed surveys, the girder approach/arch main span bridge design type was overwhelmingly the favorite.

APRIL 14, 2016—REVIEW PRELIMINARY ENVIRONMENTAL ANALYSES RESULTS/ CONCEPTUAL MITIGATION

This public information session was held at the Havre de Grace Activity Center on April 14, 2016 from 5 PM to 8 PM. The meeting also served as a Section 106 consulting parties meeting. The open house-style format gave an overview of all potential environmental impacts from Alternative 9A and Alternative 9B, including property acquisitions, parks and Section 6(f) properties, Section 4(f) properties, natural resources, historic and archaeological resources,

visual and aesthetic resources, air quality, and noise and vibration considerations. Approximately 60 people attended and seven written comments were received by the Project Team.

COORDINATION WITH LOCAL OFFICIALS

The Proposed Project is located within Cecil County, Harford County, the Town of Perryville and the City of Havre de Grace. Coordination with these local governments is ongoing. Briefings with local government officials have been used as an opportunity to introduce the project to county/local officials, provide updates at project milestones, and facilitate the flow of information between the officials, FRA, MDOT, and Amtrak.

The Project Team has exchanged written correspondences with municipal representatives and elected officials. The Project Team delivered presentations to the Town of Perryville, Cecil County, and Havre de Grace. Early input from the Town of Perryville and the City of Havre de Grace regarding important local properties was factored into conceptual engineering and the fatal flaw screening.

Three meetings were held with representatives from Harford County Public Schools on July 8, 2015, August 17, 2015, and January 20, 2016. During the first meeting, the Project Team presented plans for Alternative 9A and Alternative 9B and the potential impacts to the Havre de Grace High School and Middle School recreational facilities. Alternative 9A would not directly impact the football field and grandstands. However, Alternative 9A would impact the existing pole vault, shed, and long running start. After the meeting, Harford County provided design plans for planned future recreational improvements, including new tennis courts and realigned ballfields near the track.

During the meeting on August 17, 2015, Harford County Public Schools representatives provided an overview of their comments on the project alternatives. Key concerns included impacts to the race track starting block area, space limitations associated with potential ball field relocations, and potential impacts to a proposed City of Havre de Grace floodplain mitigation site along Lily Run. Based on the information provided, school officials verbally expressed a preference for Alternative 9B over Alternative 9A. Alternative 9B would not require any acquisition of school property and would not directly impact the athletic fields.

At the meeting on January 20, 2016, the Project Team provided updates on design evaluation, mitigation options, and the applicability of Section 6(f) and Section 4(f). Key concerns from the Harford County Public Schools representatives included the changes to the proposed North Baseball Field required under Alternative 9A, safety, construction effects, and the need for additional coordination and outreach.

SUSQUEHANNA RIVER RAIL BRIDGE PROJECT ADVISORY BOARD

The Project Team is coordinating with Susquehanna River Rail Bridge Project (SRRBP) Advisory Board. The SRRBP Advisory Board is a group of community representatives self-organized to proactively convey input to the Project Team. The Project Team has been invited on two occasions to attend SRRBP Advisory Board meetings (November 6, 2014 and March 26, 2015). At a meeting on November 6, 2014, the SRRBP Advisory Board itemized the following top six priorities:

- Request for a Special Briefing;

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- Bridge Architecture;
- Bridge Abutment Area;
- Westerly Right-of-Way and Alignments;
- Street and Lane Underpasses; and
- Rail Commuter Station.

Since the initial meeting, the Project Team has continued to coordinate with the SRRBP, who have provided additional advisory bulletins regarding river navigation, the safe harbor jetty proposal, pedestrian and bicycle river crossing, bridge historical preservation and display, easterly right-of-way and alignments in Perryville, street underpasses in Perryville, and rail operation noise control in Perryville. The Project Team has evaluated the feasibility of developing these suggestions in conjunction with the Proposed Project, and the bridge abutment area surrounding the Otsego Street and Union Avenue intersection in Havre de Grace would be improved as a part of the Proposed Project. To address the Advisory Board's request to realign the intersection located at Otsego, Union, and Water Streets, the Proposed Project would extend the Havre de Grace abutment south towards the alley between Union Avenue and Stokes Street.

BICYCLE-PEDESTRIAN STAKEHOLDERS

The Project Team has received substantial public input requesting inclusion of a bicycle and pedestrian river crossing into the Proposed Project. Several organizations responsible for trail planning (such as the Lower Susquehanna Heritage Greenway and the Maryland DNR), advocacy organizations (such as the East Coast Greenway Alliance and the September 11th National Memorial Trail Alliance), a number of elected officials, and members of the public have expressed support for a multi-use path across the river. Specifically, some commenters have noted that a connection between Cecil and Harford Counties would fulfill a "missing link" in several regional trails and provide a new multi-modal option for travel between communities. While bicycle and pedestrian facilities were not expressly addressed in the scope of the project grant, as part of the public involvement process, FRA, MDOT, and Amtrak are working with government agencies and interested organizations to assess the feasibility of coordinating the Proposed Project with potential bicycle and pedestrian access across the river.

Connectivity to the existing road network and existing or planned trails (and the attendant property acquisitions and environmental impacts) must be evaluated in the context of regional bicycle-pedestrian planning. MDOT and the Project Team have hosted stakeholder meetings (June 2014 and December 2014) with trail planning organizations and bicycle-pedestrian advocacy groups to discuss the Proposed Project in the context of ongoing trail and greenway planning efforts (including MDOT's 2014 *Maryland Twenty-Year Bicycle & Pedestrian Master Plan* and MDOT's 2002 *Susquehanna River Pedestrian Bridge Crossing Feasibility Study*).

Furthermore, to respond to the input received regarding a multi-use path, MDOT and Amtrak are conducting a feasibility evaluation. The evaluation entails: reviewing prior studies of Susquehanna River bicycle/pedestrian crossings; ensuring that the Proposed Project does not adversely affect the existing bicycle and pedestrian trails within the Proposed Project's study area; making efforts not to preclude the potential for a future multi-use path across the Susquehanna River; and assessing the feasibility of constructing a multi-use path in conjunction with a new rail bridge.

The Project Team is considering a multitude of factors, including visual impacts, safety and security, constructability, effects to rail alignments, cost, noise and vibration, in-water impacts, functionality, and community impacts. The Project Team will continue to evaluate the feasibility of accommodating a multi-use path within the project limits in coordination with the high-speed rail project. The Project Team is conducting a Susquehanna River Rail Bridge Project Bicycle/Pedestrian Crossing Hazard Analysis and Security Risk Assessment. If deemed feasible, a separate project would be required for design, environmental review, and identification of potential funding for a bicycle/pedestrian crossing. The Project Team will continue to obtain input from stakeholders on the feasibility evaluation.

U.S. COAST GUARD AND MARINERS

Upon project inception, Amtrak and its representatives reached out to local marina owners and operators, shippers, dock managers, the USCG, and other members of the maritime community. The purpose of this outreach was to understand the current navigational uses along this segment of the Susquehanna River and the anticipated USCG requirements for the vertical clearance of any potential fixed bridge. This information was factored into conceptual engineering. As stated above, the navigation survey concluded that any new high-level fixed bridge should provide a minimum 60-foot vertical clearance. The navigation survey was transmitted to USCG on February 18, 2014.

FREIGHT RAILROADS

The Project Team has been coordinating with NS and CSX regarding their current and planned freight rail operations in the area (CSX trains currently use a separate Susquehanna River crossing located to the north of the Susquehanna River Rail Bridge). NS trains currently use the Susquehanna River Rail Bridge. A coordination meeting with NS, Amtrak, FRA, and MDOT was held on March 19, 2014. The Project Team will continue to seek input from the freight rail operations throughout preliminary and final design.

MARC

The Project Team is also coordinating with Maryland Transit Administration (MTA). MTA is the operator of the MARC Penn Line service over the bridge. Coordination between the Project Team and MTA is also essential to ensuring the Proposed Project's compatibility with MTA's proposed MARC Northeast Maintenance Facility.

SECTION 106 CONSULTATION

Since the Susquehanna River Rail Bridge is NR-eligible, FRA (as the lead federal agency) has initiated consultation in accordance with Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA). All correspondence related to Section 106 is attached to **Appendix D**, "Cultural Resources." This correspondence is summarized in **Table 20-2**. FRA has invited the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation (ACHP) to participate in the Section 106 consultation. On August 22, 2014, ACHP declined to participate and will instead rely on the Maryland Historic Trust (MHT) to provide comments and concurrence. FRA submitted to MHT a Section 106 consultation initiation package (dated April 10, 2014), including the proposed APEs, analysis methodologies, and a list of potential consulting parties. MHT sent a response letter on June 16, 2014. The Project Team sent a letter to MHT on September 24, 2014 regarding potential historic resources. The Project Team received a letter from MHT on November 12, 2014 providing

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guidance regarding cultural resources and has proceeded accordingly with the cultural resources inventory and the effects assessment. The Project Team submitted the *Effects Assessment for Historic Architectural Resources* (see **Appendix D**) to MHT on May 19, 2016. In a letter dated August 24, 2016, MHT agreed with FRA’s effect determinations and encouraged continued coordination with the Section 106 consulting parties (see **Appendix H**).

Table 20-2
Section 106 Correspondence Summary

Letter Date	Recipient/Topic
April 10, 2014	Project Initiation Letter to MHT
June 16, 2014	MHT Response to Project Initiation Letter
September 24, 2014	Section 106 Resources Letter to MHT
November 12, 2014	MHT Response to Section 106 Resources Letter
December 17, 2014	Phase IA Archaeological Study to MHT
January 27, 2015	MHT Response to Phase IA
February 12, 2015	Determination of Eligibility Forms to MHT
April 22, 2015	MHT Response to Determination of Eligibility Forms
May 19, 2016	Effects Assessment submitted to MHT
July 13, 2016	Letter from City of Havre de Grace Regarding Section 106
July 15, 2016	Letter from Town of Perryville Regarding Section 106
July 15, 2016	Letter to Star-Spangled Banner National Historic Trail
July 15, 2016	Letter to Washington-Rochambeau Revolutionary Route National Historic Trail
July 20, 2016	Letter from Lower Susquehanna Heritage Greenway Regarding Effects Assessment
August 5, 2016	NPS Response Regarding Star-Spangled Banner National Historic Trail
August 24, 2016	MHT Response Regarding the Effects Assessment
October 11, 2016	SRRBP Advisory Board Letters Regarding Alterations to Undergrade Bridges and Case for a Longer Span
November 1, 2016	Letter to Lower Susquehanna Heritage Greenway in Response to Comments on the Effects Assessment
November 22, 2016	Letter from Lower Susquehanna Heritage Greenway regarding stipulations for agreement on mitigation
January 18, 2017	Correspondence with National Parks Service to transmit the Analysis of Captain John Smith Chesapeake National Historic Trail Resources with Respect to the Susquehanna River Rail Bridge Project.
Notes: See Appendix D , “Cultural Resources” and Appendix H , “Public Involvement and Agency Correspondence.”	

All Section 106 consulting parties were invited to each public outreach information session and a dedicated Section 106 meeting was held on March 9, 2015. The dedicated Section 106 meeting was held at the Havre de Grace Activity Center at 1 PM. Several Section 106 consulting parties were in attendance. Topics presented included an overview of Section 106 regulations and

process, and how the Section 106 process would run parallel with the environmental studies following the compliance process for NEPA. The Project Team and the consulting parties discussed the known adverse effects to the Susquehanna River Rail Bridge and Overpasses and the Perry Interlocking Tower, along with conceptual ideas for mitigation. The Project Team will continue to coordinate with MHT and consulting parties throughout the Section 106 process.

A second dedicated Section 106 consulting parties meeting was held in Perryville on August 18, 2015 at 1 PM. Topics included potential project impacts on various historic resources, potential avoidance/mitigation measures, and opportunities for design input. The Perry Interlocking Tower—a contributing element of the NR-eligible Perryville Railroad Station—was discussed at length. The Perry Interlocking Tower was determined to conflict with the proposed rail alignment for Alternative 9A and Alternative 9B, but not for other alternatives under consideration at the time. The Project Team is investigating the feasibility of shifting the tower, rather than demolishing it. Several consulting parties expressed a preference for preserving the tower, either in place or in a new location.

The third dedicated Section 106 consulting parties meeting was held the Havre de Grace Activity Center, on October 11, 2016 at 1 PM. Topics included a discussion of adverse effects, input received from Section 106 consulting parties and proposed measures to avoid, minimize and mitigate adverse effects. The Project Team shared an outline of a draft agreement on implementing avoidance, minimization, and mitigation measures and continuing consultation.

C. AGENCY COORDINATION

INTERAGENCY REVIEW MEETINGS

This section describes the IRM presentations delivered by the Project Team to date (see **Table 20-1**). The Maryland IRM process is intended to achieve the timely and efficient identification, evaluation, and resolution of environmental and regulatory issues. IRMs have been held at project milestones.

PROJECT INTRODUCTION IRM MEETING (JULY 17, 2013)

FRA, MDOT, and Amtrak presented the general history, project goals, and anticipated schedule at the IRM.

PURPOSE AND NEED IRM MEETING (FEBRUARY 19, 2014)

The goal of the second IRM was to review the project introduction, purpose and need, project description, environmental resources, and public involvement.

PURPOSE AND NEED/CONCEPTUAL ALTERNATIVE IRM MEETING (APRIL 16, 2014)

The Purpose and Need Statement was circulated to the IRM agencies two weeks prior to the meeting. During the presentation, the Project Team solicited agency feedback on the Purpose and Need Statement. The remainder of the presentation provided information regarding the conceptual alternatives development process. The Project Team responded to agency comments regarding the conceptual alternatives.

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FEASIBLE ALTERNATIVES IRM MEETING (JUNE 18, 2014)

Based on the input from the April IRM, the public outreach information session (described below), and the results of conceptual engineering, the Project Team presented the feasible project alternatives to the IRM. This included the comprehensive “long list” of all conceptual alternatives identified to date (including alternatives suggested by members of the public). The presentation explained the “fatal flaw screening” rationale used for eliminating conceptual alternatives deemed infeasible.

ALTERNATIVES RETAINED FOR DETAILED STUDY IRM MEETING (FEBRUARY 18, 2015)

The purpose of the IRM was to review the Project Team’s alternatives screening process, present the alternatives retained for detailed study (ARDS) and provide an update on public outreach efforts to date. The Project Team reviewed the two-step alternatives screening process that included the fatal flaw screening and the more detailed screening based on specific project goals. An Alternatives Comparison Matrix along with a Natural Environmental Impacts Matrix was presented and used as the basis for choosing Alternative 9A and Alternative 9B for further study. The meeting concluded with an agreement to schedule a field visit to allow the agencies to observe the range of resources potentially affected by the Proposed Project.

AGENCY FIELD VISIT (MARCH 12, 2015)

In response to request made during the February 18, 2015 IRM, the resource agencies attended a field visit to evaluate the quality of the natural and human environmental resources within the study area. As a result of the field review some of the original resources were re-characterized and in some cases new resources were identified.

ARDS FIELD VISIT RECAP (APRIL 15, 2015)

The purpose of the IRM was to recap the results of the agency field review, update the agencies on the status of the engineering design and to explain the status of the ARDS package. The Project Team reviewed the updated natural environmental features including a re-characterized wetland/stream system and a newly discovered potential wetland close to the Perryville Railroad Station. The Project Team also updated the group on design modifications that would ultimately affect the natural and human environmental impacts for the project, relayed updates on the bike/pedestrian path feasibility study and presented next steps for the Proposed Project.

REFINED ALTERNATIVES RETAINED FOR DETAILED STUDY (JUNE 17, 2015)

The purpose of the IRM was to provide a project update and overview of the key operational considerations associated with maximum allowable speeds and travel times. The Project Team presented the agencies with a revised Alternatives Comparison Matrix, which was based on updated human/natural resource information and new design details. The Project Team also discussed the approach for ARDS package resubmittal.

IRM REVISED ARDS REPORT (SEPTEMBER 16, 2015)

The purpose of this IRM was to update agency representatives on the ongoing efforts with the Susquehanna River Rail Bridge Project. Topics included recent key stakeholder and Section 106 meetings, a presentation of the ARDS—Alternative 9A and Alternative 9B, a review of

responses to agency comments on the ARDS report, and a discussion of the anticipated ARDS concurrence milestone and next steps for the project.

IRM BRIDGE TYPES (DECEMBER 9, 2015)

The purpose of this IRM was to present a comparison of bridge types and explain the rationale for moving forward with the girder approach span/arch main span bridge type. The meeting began with a brief overview of the project, followed by a recap of the November 2015 Public Outreach Informational Session. The detailed bridge comparison matrix was presented and discussed, with the Project Team recommending only taking the girder approach span/arch main span bridge type into the EA document. None of the agency representatives objected to proceeding with this bridge type in the EA document. Also discussed was an update on wetlands delineation.

IRM DETAILED PRESENTATION OF NETR (APRIL 20, 2016)

The purpose of this IRM was to present the detailed findings of the Natural Resources Technical Report in order to discuss avoidance and minimization measures, describe proposed wetland mitigation approach, describe potential on-site or off-site mitigation locations, and provide a summary of the mitigation site search results. A summary of all potential environmental impacts from Alternative 9A and Alternative 9B was distributed at the meeting.

OTHER AGENCY COORDINATION

Other agency coordination includes consultation with WILMAPCO and the Smart Growth Coordinating Committee. The Project Team presented to WILMAPCO in December 2015 and March 2016. WILMAPCO is the federally designated Metropolitan Planning Organization for Cecil County, Maryland and New Castle County, Delaware. The purpose of these presentations was to give WILMAPCO an introduction to the Proposed Project and discuss the alternative screening process, bridge design types, special considerations, and next steps.

The Project Team presented to the Smart Growth Coordinating Committee in March 2016. The Smart Growth Coordinating Committee is responsible for reviewing and commenting on projects to be funded under Extraordinary Circumstances that are not within a Priority Funding Area. The purpose of this meeting was to review the project introduction and background, discuss the alternatives retained for detailed study and environmental considerations, and receive an exception to allow the state to fund a project that is partially outside of the Priority Funding Area.

In addition, correspondence related to natural resources is discussed in **Appendix E**, “Natural Environmental Technical Report.” Attachment E of this appendix includes all correspondence letters. These letters are summarized in **Table 20-3**. Other correspondence is listed in **Table 20-4**.

Table 20-3
Natural Resources Correspondence Summary

Letter Date	Recipient/Topic
February 14, 2014	Critical Area Commission
February 18, 2014	Response from Critical Area Commission
February 14, 2014	National Marine Fisheries Service
March 5, 2014	Response from National Marine Fisheries Service
February 14, 2014	Wildlife and Heritage Service Maryland Department of Natural Resources
March 20, 2014	Response from Wildlife and Heritage Service Maryland Department of Natural Resources
September 1, 2015	Response from Wildlife and Heritage Service Maryland Department of Natural Resources
February 14, 2014	U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
December 18, 2015	Response from U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
January 15, 2016	Response from U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
February 14, 2014	Integrated Policy and Review Unit Department of Natural Resources
October 22, 2014	Response from Integrated Policy and Review Unit Department of Natural Resources
February 14, 2014	Maryland Department of Planning
April 7, 2016	Wildlife and Heritage Service Maryland Department of Natural Resources
May 9, 2016	Response from Department of Natural Resources
May 10, 2016	National Marine Fisheries Service
June 14, 2016	Department of Natural Resources
November 28, 2016	National Marine Fisheries Service
Notes: See Appendix E , “Natural Environment Technical Report.”	

**Table 20-4
Other Correspondence**

Letter Date	Recipient/Topic
April 15, 2016	Letter to Havre de Grace Planning regarding <i>de minimis</i> Section 4(f) use
April 22, 2016	Letter to Harford County Public Schools regarding <i>de minimis</i> Section 4(f) use
April 25, 2016	Letter to Harford County Public Schools regarding <i>de minimis</i> Section 4(f) use
June 15, 2016	Havre de Grace Planning response regarding <i>de minimis</i> Section 4(f) use
September 7, 2016	Harford County Public Schools response regarding <i>de minimis</i> Section 4(f) use
October 7, 2016	Letter to Harford County Public Schools regarding <i>de minimis</i> clarifications
December 21, 2016	Harford County Public Schools letter regarding construction schedule
January 24, 2017	Letter from C.A. Dutch Ruppertsberger, Member of Congress, regarding bridge design
February 14, 2017	Letter from Volney H. Ford, Susquehanna River Rail Bridge Advisory Board Chair, to Mayor William T. Martin regarding bridge design and accompanying report
February 15, 2017	Letter from Mayor William T. Martin regarding bridge design
Notes: See Appendix H , “Public Involvement and Agency Correspondence.”	

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