

# Bridge Rehabilitation & Bridge Construction



Wilson Road over Dunes Creek

Indiana Dunes State Park  
Porter County

Des. No. 2200175 & 2400093

Indiana Department of Transportation

LaPorte District



# Welcome

## Agenda

- Purpose of the Hearing
- Hearing Comment Process
- Overview of Environmental Document
- Review of Project Design
- Right-of-Way
- Project Schedule
- Q & A
- Opportunity to Provide Verbal Comments

# Public Hearing

- Conducted as a requirement of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA).
- Requires the evaluation of the environmental impacts (direct, indirect, and cumulative) of the project to the natural and social environments.
- Impacts are described in the environmental document prepared for the project.
- Requires the opportunity for the public to be involved and comment in the decision-making process.

# Public Hearing

- Environmental document was released for public involvement on October 23, 2024.
- A legal notice was advertised in *The Chesterton Tribune* Newspaper on October 23 and October 30.
- Also available at:  
<https://www.in.gov/indot/about-indot/central-office/welcome-to-the-laporte-district>
- Add your name and address to the sign-in sheet to get future project information.
- Project Fact Sheets are available at registration table



# How to Submit a Public Comment

- **On-Site Tonight**
  - Statement made during the public comment session.
  - Complete comment sheet and leave in comment box.
- **After the Hearing**
  - Mail comments to Kaskaskia Engineering Group: 208 E. Main St., Suite 100, Belleville, IL 62220
  - Email comments to Kaskaskia Engineering Group: [vflynn@kaskaskiaeng.com](mailto:vflynn@kaskaskiaeng.com)
  - Comment Deadline: **November 20, 2024**
- Comments will be reviewed, evaluated, and given full consideration during the decision making process.

# Project Development



**Public Hearing  
(Today)**

**Public Involvement  
Communicate Project  
Decision**

# National Environmental Policy Act

## Impact

Requires that federal agencies consider the effects of their actions on surrounding natural, cultural and social environments

## Involvement

Requires the public be provided the opportunity to be involved and comment

## Information

Requires that impacts be described in an environmental document

# Environmental Document

- Processed as a Level 4 Categorical Exclusion
  - Bridge Rehabilitation and New Bridge Construction, Indiana Dunes State Park
  - Historic Bridge and within Historic District of Indiana Dunes State Park
- Establishes the Purpose and Need for the proposed project.
- Evaluates a number of possible alternatives, including a “Do Nothing” alternative as a baseline.
- Solicits public comment on environmental document and project design.
- Addresses and fully considers public comments as part of the decision-making process.



# Document Viewing Locations

Westchester Public Library  
Thomas Branch  
200 W. Indiana Avenue  
Chesterton, IN 46304  
Phone (219) 926-7696



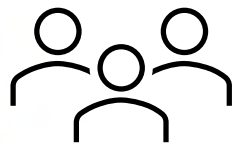
Michigan City Public Library  
100 E. 4<sup>th</sup> Street  
Michigan City, IN 46360  
Phone (219) 873-3042



INDOT LaPorte District Webpage:

<https://www.in.gov/indot/about-indot/central-office/welcome-to-the-laporte-district/>

# Project Stakeholders



- Indiana Department of Natural Resources
- Indiana Department of Transportation
- Federal Highway Administration
- National Park Service
- US Fish and Wildlife Service
- US Army Corps of Engineers
- Indiana Department of Environmental Management
- Section 106 – Cultural Resources Consulting Parties
- Community
- Elected Officials

# Purpose & Need

## Need:

- Deteriorated condition of the existing bridge.
  - Superstructure and deck are in serious condition (rating 3 out of 9). Piers and abutments have a rating of 4 (poor).
- Maintain access at all times to the campground and park facilities.
  - Bridge provides access to the campground, and a vast majority of the trails in the Park, the Nature Center, and 2/3 of the picnic shelters. It is the only means of critical access points for first responders and ambulance services and if closed would result in dramatic increases in response times for these emergency services.

## Purpose:

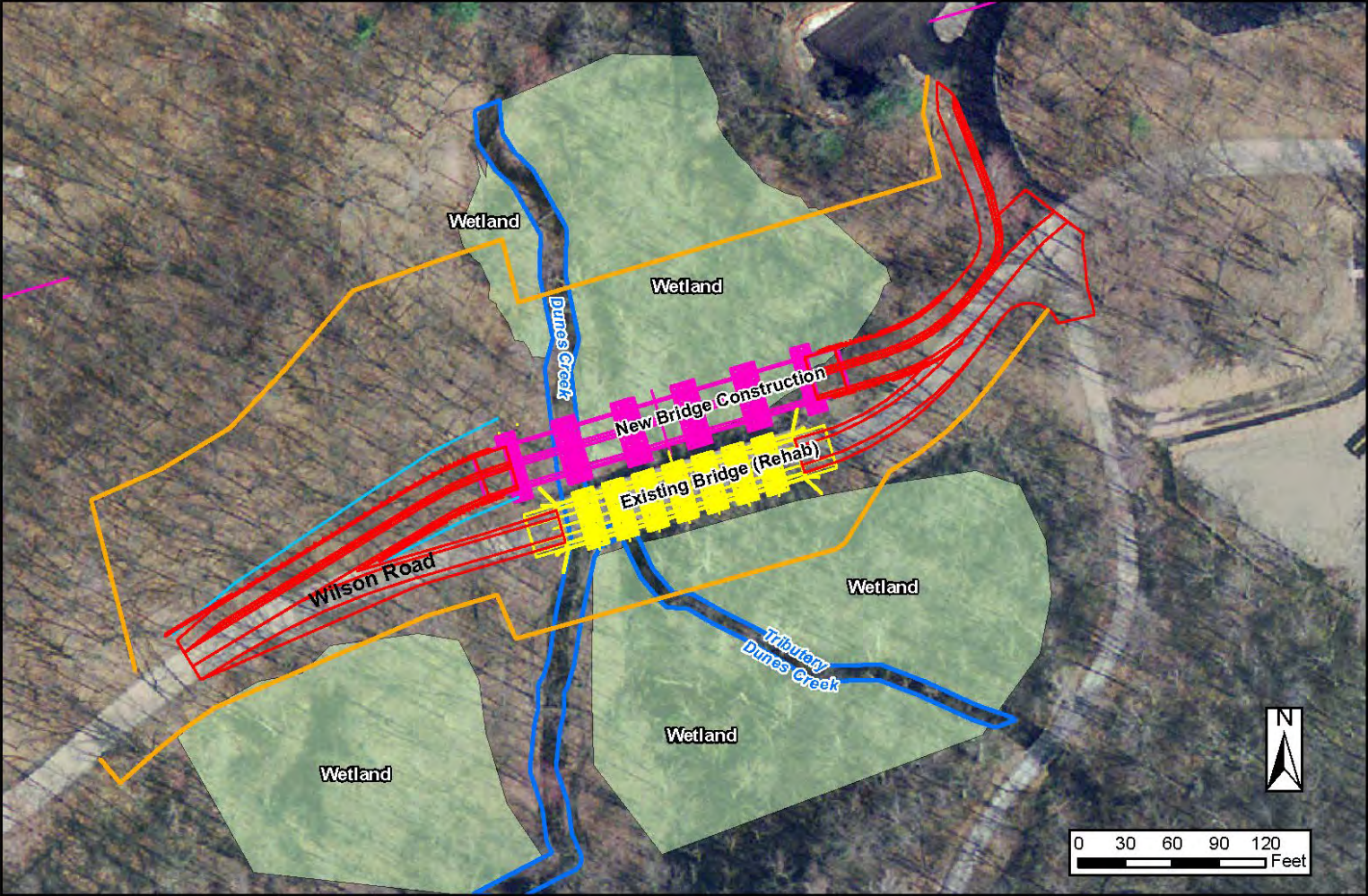
- Provide a crossing of Dunes Creek such that all structural elements have a condition rating of at least 7 (good) out of 9.
- Secondary purpose of this project is to maintain access at all times to the park facilities serviced by the bridge.

# Elements of Environmental Document

- Threatened & Endangered Species
- Historic & Archaeological
- Community Impacts
- Floodplains
- Farmland
- Wetlands & Waterways
- Noise
- Air Quality
- Hazardous Materials
- Section 4(f)
- Section 6(f)

# Wetlands & Waterways

- Wetland and Waters of the U.S. Survey
- Forested Wetland
  - 0.143 acre of permanent impacts
- Two Jurisdictional Streams
  - 172 LFT of permanent impacts
- Permitted under the Clean Water Act, Section 401 and 404



<p><b>Wetlands and Waterways Bridge Project</b>                  Wilson Road over Dunes Creek                  Porter County, Indiana                  Des. No. 2200175 &amp; 2400093</p> <p>Map Source: Esri and IndianaMAP, 2024</p>	<table border="0"> <tr> <td>— Proposed Bridge Plan</td> <td>— Ditchline</td> </tr> <tr> <td>— Existing Bridge Plan</td> <td>— Construction Limits</td> </tr> <tr> <td>— Streams</td> <td>— Roadway</td> </tr> <tr> <td>■ Wetlands</td> <td></td> </tr> </table>	— Proposed Bridge Plan	— Ditchline	— Existing Bridge Plan	— Construction Limits	— Streams	— Roadway	■ Wetlands		 <p>Created 9/10/2024</p>
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— Existing Bridge Plan	— Construction Limits									
— Streams	— Roadway									
■ Wetlands										

# Mitigation for Permanent Impacts

## Wetlands & Streams:

Mitigation via the Indiana  
In-Lieu Fee mitigation program.



# Mitigation Cont.

## Temporary Impacts to Wetlands & Streams:

- Trees will be replaced on site within wetlands (1:1 ratio).
- Tree species planting list was developed by the Indiana DNR Division of Nature Preserves.
- Reseed with an IDNR-approved native wetland seed mix
- On-Site Mitigation & Monitoring Plan for Wetlands and Streams

## Other Trees:

- Replaced on site at a 1:1 ratio.





# Threatened & Endangered Species

## USFWS

- Range-Wide Programmatic Informal Consultation for the Indiana Bat and Northern Long Eared Bat
  - “Not Likely to Adversely Affect”
  - Avoidance, Minimization, & Mitigation Measures (AMMs) will be implemented
- Four other species were listed that may be present within the project area:
  - Tricolored Bat - With implementation of AMMs, impacts are not likely from the project.
  - Karner Blue Butterfly – Project site does not provide suitable habitat for the Karner blue butterfly.
  - Pitcher’s Thistle - Project site does not provide suitable habitat for the Pitcher’s thistle.
  - Eastern Massasauga Rattlesnake - Last reliable record of massasaugas in the Indiana dunes region was about 20 years ago. Project not likely to adversely affect.





# Cultural Resources



- Archaeological
  - No archeological sites present.
- Historic Properties
  - Two resources eligible for the National Register of Historic Properties within the Area of Potential Effects (APE).
    - Historic Bridge
    - Indiana Dunes Historic District
- Effect Finding:
  - “No Adverse Effect” published June 30, 2024, in *The Chesterton Tribune*
  - State Historic Preservation Officer concurred with Finding on July 11, 2024

## Section 4(f) – US DOT Act of 1966

Prohibits the use of certain public and historic lands for federally funded transportation facilities unless there is no feasible and prudent alternative.

### Historic Properties:

- Historic Bridge & Indiana Dunes State Park Historic District
  - Section 4(f) is fulfilled under Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA) process.
  - No Section 4(f) analysis required.



# Section 4(f) cont.

## Other Section 4(f) Properties:

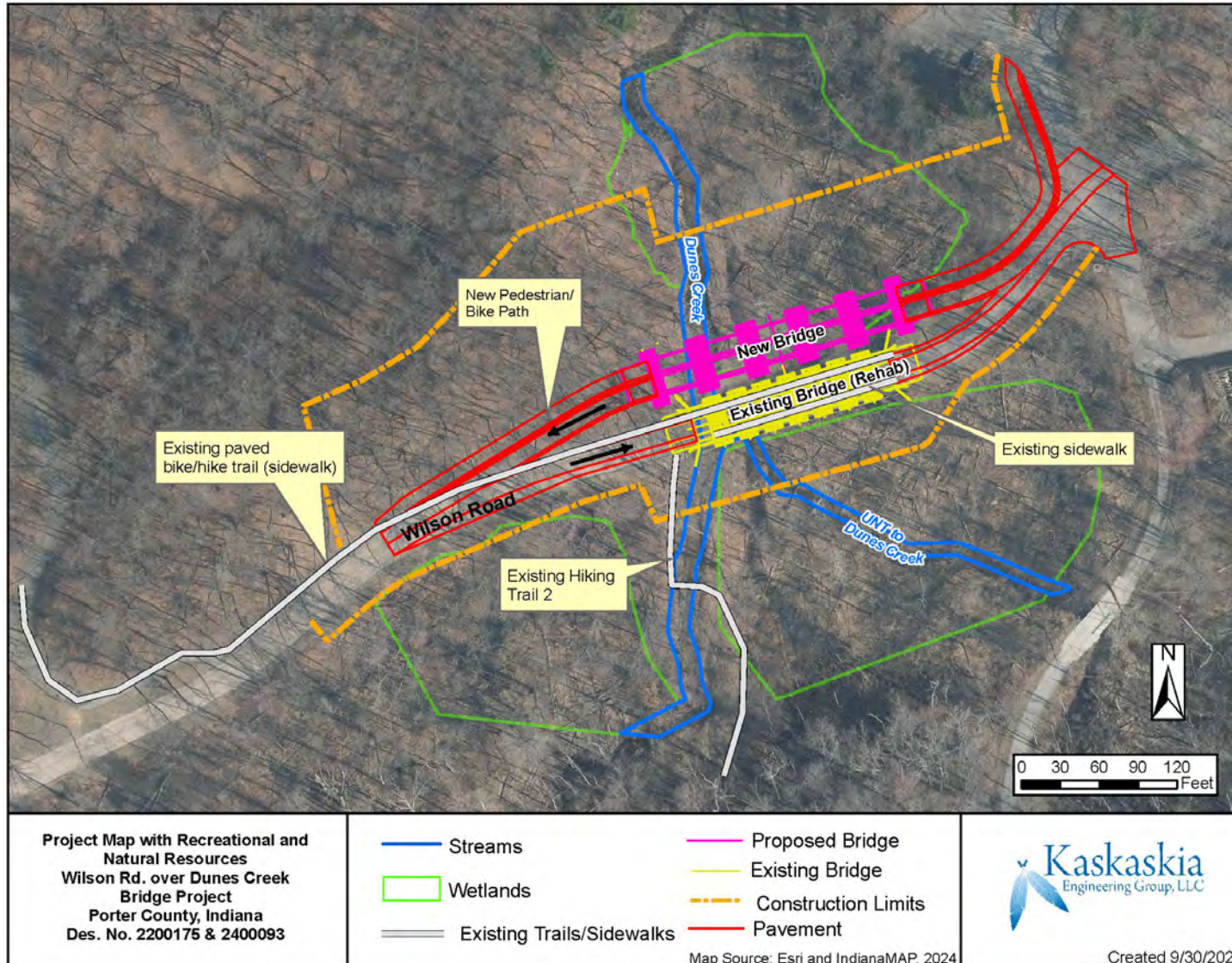


- Indiana Dunes State Park
  - Public park and recreation area.
  - No right-of-way or easement will be acquired from park property.
  - Access to the park and park facilities will not be restricted.
  - Considered a *de minimis* (minor) use of the park.
  - Official with Jurisdiction (Indiana Dunes State Park) is expected to give concurrence with *de minimis* finding.

# Section 4(f) cont.

## Other Section 4(f) Properties:

- Paved Hike/Bike Trail
  - Paved segment of a hike/bike trail located on the west side of the project area.
  - Trail will remain open, and access will be maintained for the duration of construction (12-18 months).
  - *De minimis* use is expected of this Section 4(f) resource.
- Hiking Trail #2
  - Trail #2 trailhead located on the southwest edge of the existing bridge.
  - Access to this trail will be maintained at all times during construction.
  - *De minimis* use is expected of this Section 4(f) resource.



## Section 6(f) – Land and Water Conservation Fund Act



- The Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) was created to preserve, develop, and assure accessibility to outdoor recreation resources.
- Section 6(f) of this Act prohibits conversion of lands purchased with LWCF monies to a non-recreation use.
- Indiana Dunes State Park
  - Coordination letter was sent to the IDNR Division of State Parks (the LWCF coordinator for Indiana).
  - IDNR indicated they do not have any concerns regarding the project and 6(f) since there are no proposals to change the ownership or long-term land use of the project site.



# Alternatives

- As part of the Historic Bridge Preservation Programmatic Agreement (HBPPA), there is a specific process for identifying the preferred rehabilitation alternative that meets the project's purpose and need.
- Alternatives were identified within the Historic Bridge Alternatives Analysis Report.

## Alternatives Cont...

- **Alternative B1a - Rehabilitation of Existing Bridge for Continued Vehicular Use (2-lane option) Meeting Secretary of Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation - Deck Overlay**
  - Cross sections on the bridge are not wide enough to accommodate phased lane closures.
  - Bridge/roadway needs to remain open as it is the only access to park campground. No detour route is available.
  - Creating a detour would entail improving a narrow gravel road and would cause more impacts than constructing a new bridge, including purchasing ROW from the Indiana Dunes National Park.

# Alternatives Cont...

- Alternative B1b – Rehabilitation for Continued Vehicular Use (two-lane option) Meeting Secretary of Interior’s Standards for Rehabilitation - Deck Overlay and Replacement of Spans B & F
  - Cross sections on the bridge are not wide enough to accommodate phased lane closures.
  - Bridge/roadway needs to remain open as it is the only access to park campground. No detour route is available.
  - Creating a detour would entail improving a narrow gravel road and would cause more impacts than constructing a new bridge, including purchasing ROW from the Indiana Dunes National Park.



# Alternatives Cont...

- **Alternative B2: Rehabilitation for Continued Vehicular Use (two-lane option) NOT Meeting Secretary of Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation**
  - Would not meet the Secretary of Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation of Historic Bridge.
  - Would substantially diminish the bridge's historic integrity.
  - This alternative would not be prudent for the same reasons as those of Alternatives B1a and B1b.

# Alternatives Cont...

- **No Build or Do Nothing Alternative**
  - No expenditure of capital funds – utilize existing facility.
  - Result in bridge closure.
  - Does not meet purpose of project.
  - Not prudent.
- **Preferred Alternative – Rehabilitation of Existing Bridge and Construction of New Bridge Parallel and Adjacent to Existing Bridge**
  - Meets Purpose and Need.
  - Feasible and prudent.



# Preferred Alternative

Rehabilitation of the existing historic bridge and the construction of a new bridge parallel and adjacent to the existing bridge.

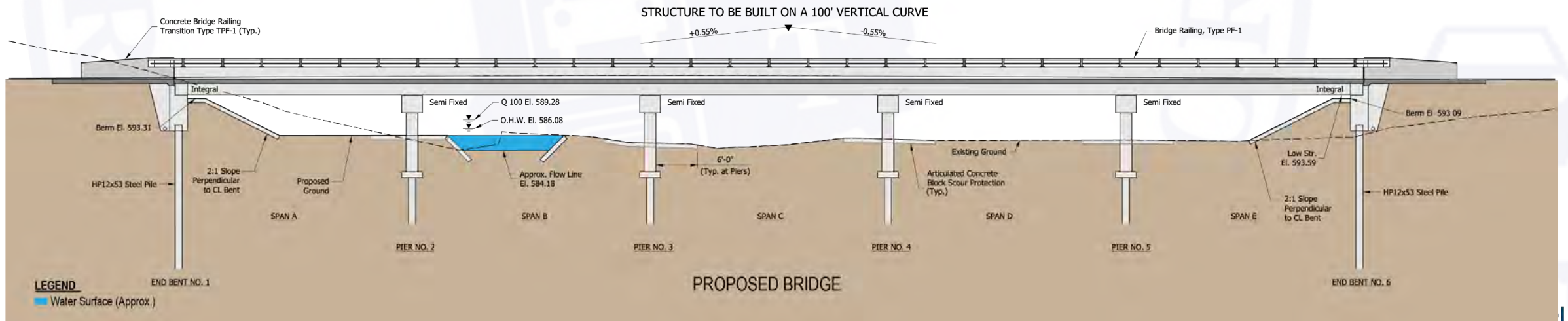
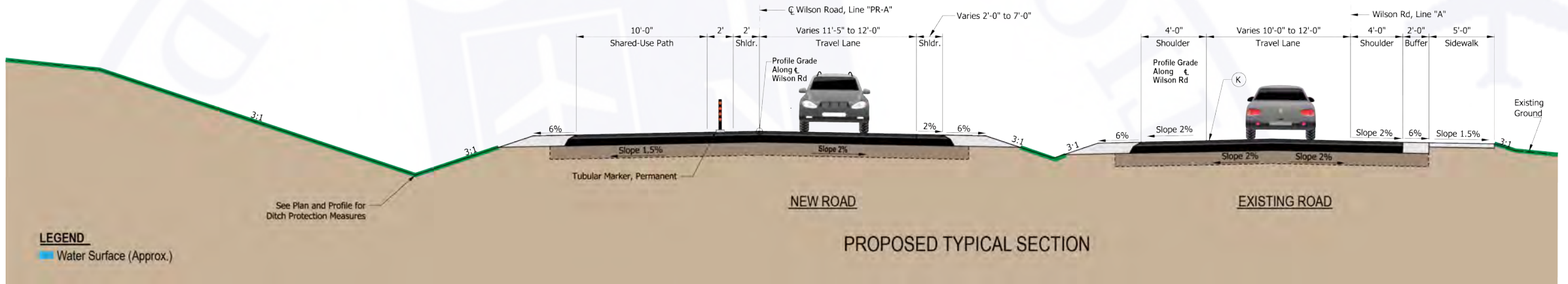
- Existing bridge: 8-span concrete cast-in-place structure with a deck width of 30 feet and a length of 160 feet.
  - Two spans removed and replaced,
  - New bridge deck overlay,
  - Concrete patching on the existing deck, beams, sidewalk, and piers,
  - Fiber wrap all piers, and
  - Scour protection around the existing piers.

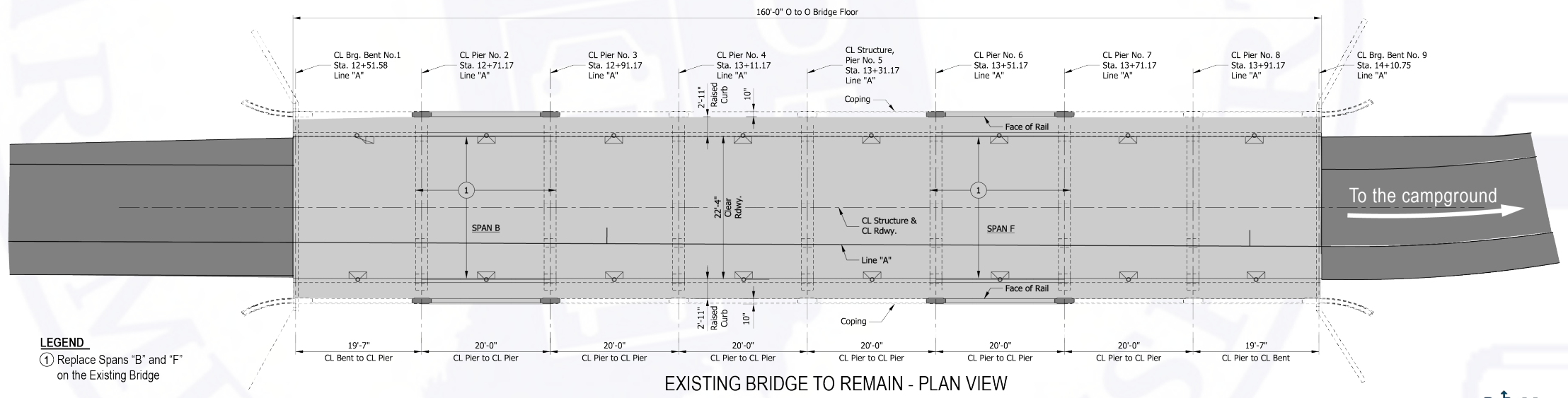
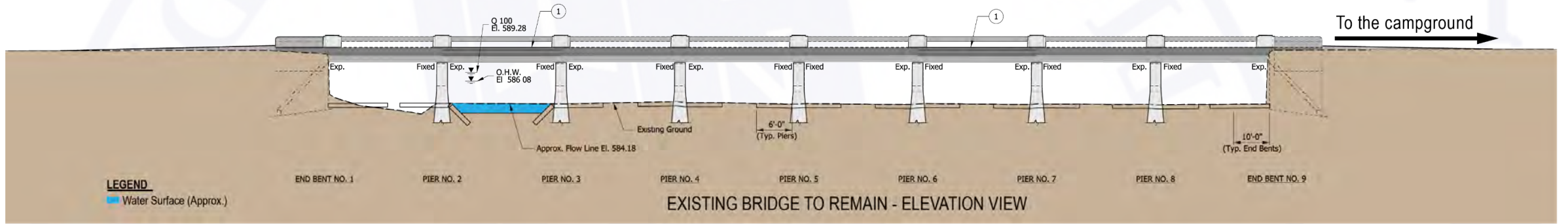


## Preferred Alternative Cont...

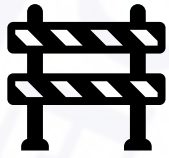
- New bridge: 5-span prestressed reinforced concrete structure, 200 feet long, 30 feet wide and 9 feet high.
  - Constructed parallel to the north side of the existing bridge.
  - Includes a new 10-foot sidewalk, new guardrail, approach roadway to connect the new bridge to the existing roadway.
  - Scour protection around the new piers.



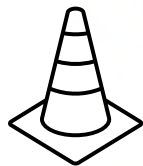








# Maintenance of Traffic (MOT)



- Method of traffic maintenance will consist of two phases:
  - Phase 1: Keep current traffic patterns, including pedestrian/bike traffic on the existing bridge during the construction of the new bridge.
  - Phase 2: Move all traffic, including pedestrian/bike traffic to the new bridge and sidewalk while the existing bridge is rehabilitated.
- Access to all sidewalks and trails within or near the project area will be maintained during construction with signage and pavement markings for safety.



# Right-of-Way

- This project will require no right-of-way

# Project Schedule



# Project Resource Locations

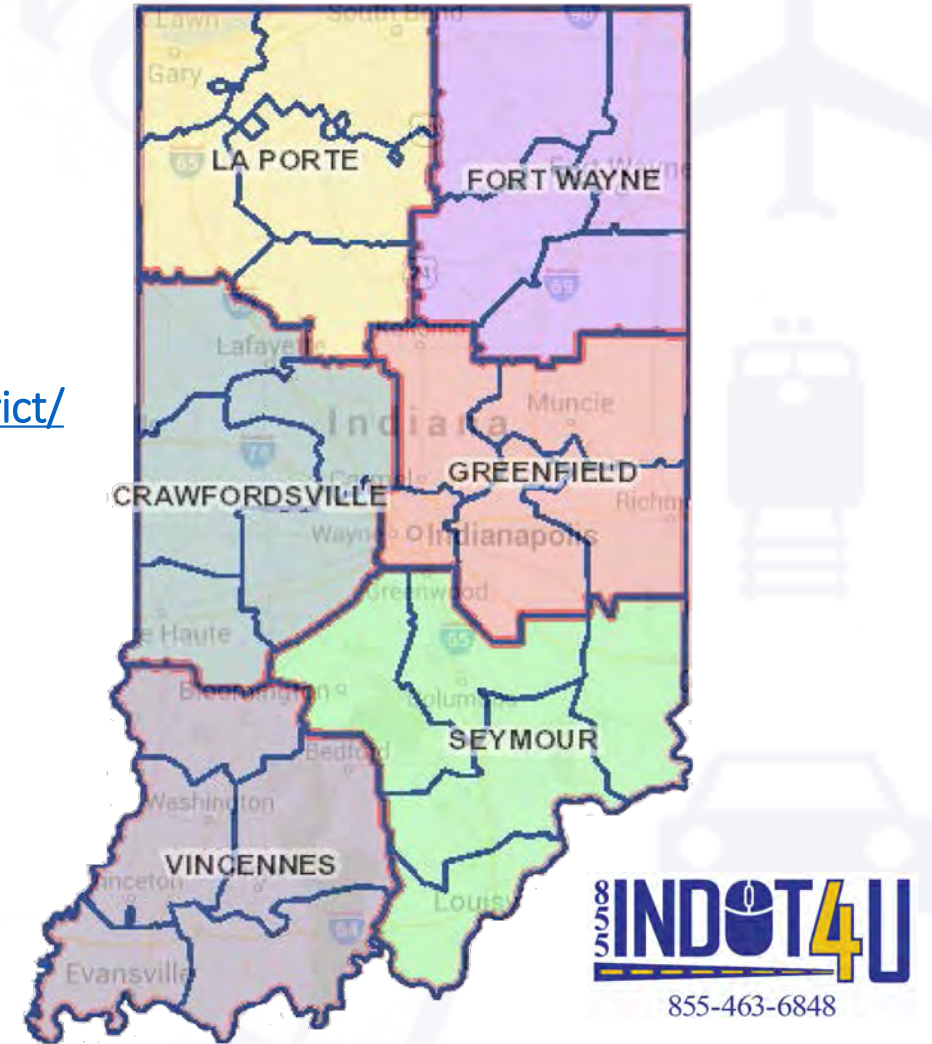
INDOT Laporte District website –  
[www.in.gov/indot/about-indot/central-office/welcome-to-the-laporte-district/](http://www.in.gov/indot/about-indot/central-office/welcome-to-the-laporte-district/)

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## Transportation Services Call Center

Provides citizens and business customers with a single point of contact to request transportation services, obtain information, or provide feedback through multiple channels of communication.

855-463-6848 • [INDOT4U.com](http://INDOT4U.com) • [INDOT@indot.in.gov](mailto:INDOT@indot.in.gov)



## Providing Verbal Comments

- Opportunity for verbal comments will follow this presentation based on those who indicated on the sign-in sheet that they wanted to speak.
- Please state your name and address before providing your comment.
- All comments will be reviewed, evaluated, and given due consideration during the decision-making process.

# Share Your Feedback

Comments are accepted through November 20, 2024.



## **In Person:**

Before departing this evening  
Leave your written comment at  
The comment table.

or

Make a verbal comment today.



## **USPS:**

Virginia Flynn  
Kaskaskia Engineering Group, LLC.  
208 E. Main Street, Bellville, IL  
62220



## **Email to:**

[vflynn@kaskaskiaeng.com](mailto:vflynn@kaskaskiaeng.com)