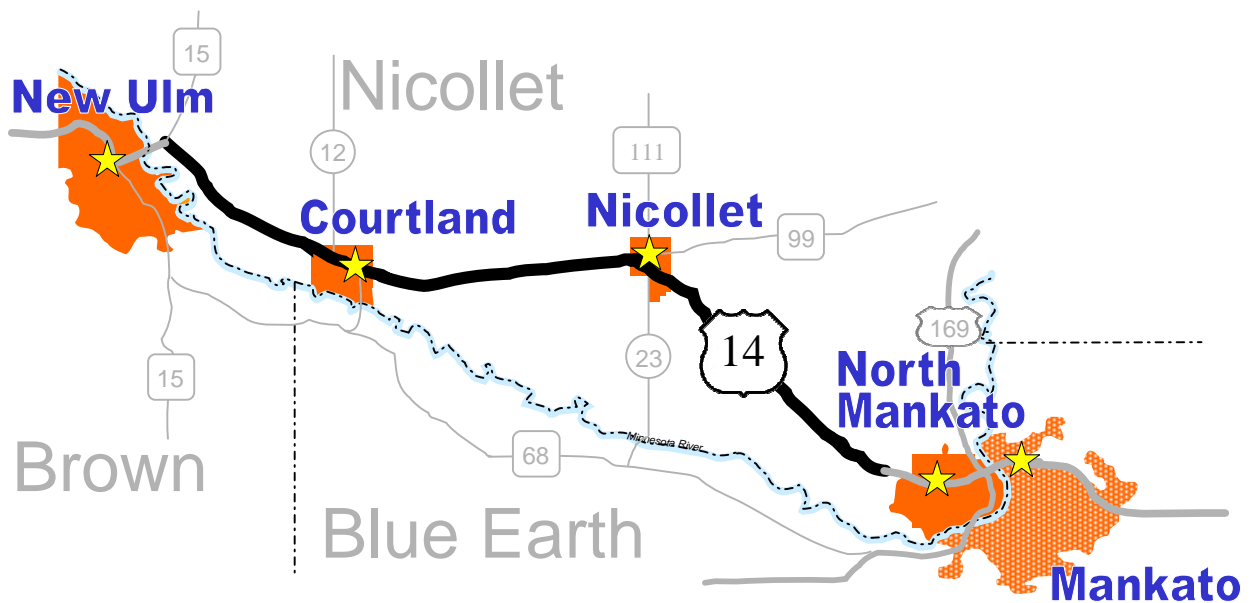


14 West Interregional Corridor



North Mankato to New Ulm

May 2003

SCOPING DECISION DOCUMENT

TRUNK HIGHWAY 14: NORTH MANKATO TO NEW ULM

MINNESOTA DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Trunk Highway Number: TH 14
State Project Number:
S.P. XXXX-XX – Roadway Reconstruction

The project is approximately 22 miles long and is located in Nicollet County, Minnesota from State Highway 15, just east of New Ulm, to County Road 6 near North Mankato. The Minnesota Department of Transportation (Mn/DOT) has identified high crash rates along the corridor and at three intersections, lack of passing zones, high percentage of truck traffic, and future levels of congestion, all indicating a need to improve the roadway. Therefore, Mn/DOT is proposing to address safety, operations, and geometric issues by reconstructing this section of TH 14.

The following person may be contacted for additional information on this document:

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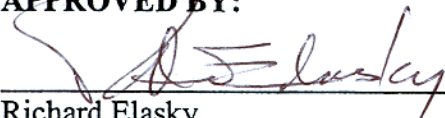
APPROVED BY:



for James W. Swanson, P.E.
Transportation District Engineer

5-30-03
Date Approved

APPROVED BY:

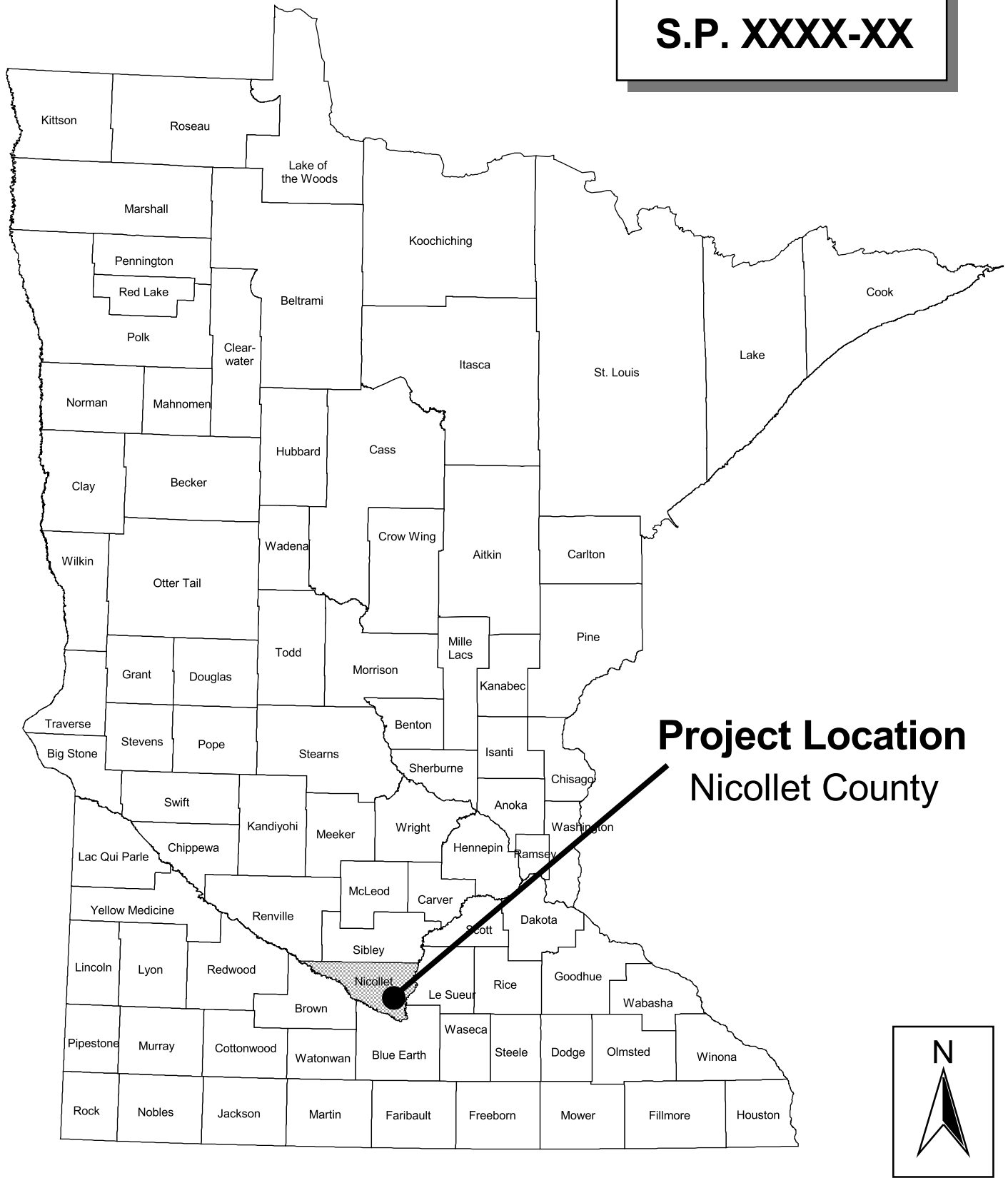


Richard Elasky
Chief Environmental Officer
Program Support Group, Mn/DOT

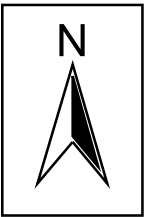
6/17/03
Date Approved

This document is available in alternative formats to individuals with disabilities by calling the Minnesota Relay Service at 1-800-627-3529.

S.P. XXXX-XX



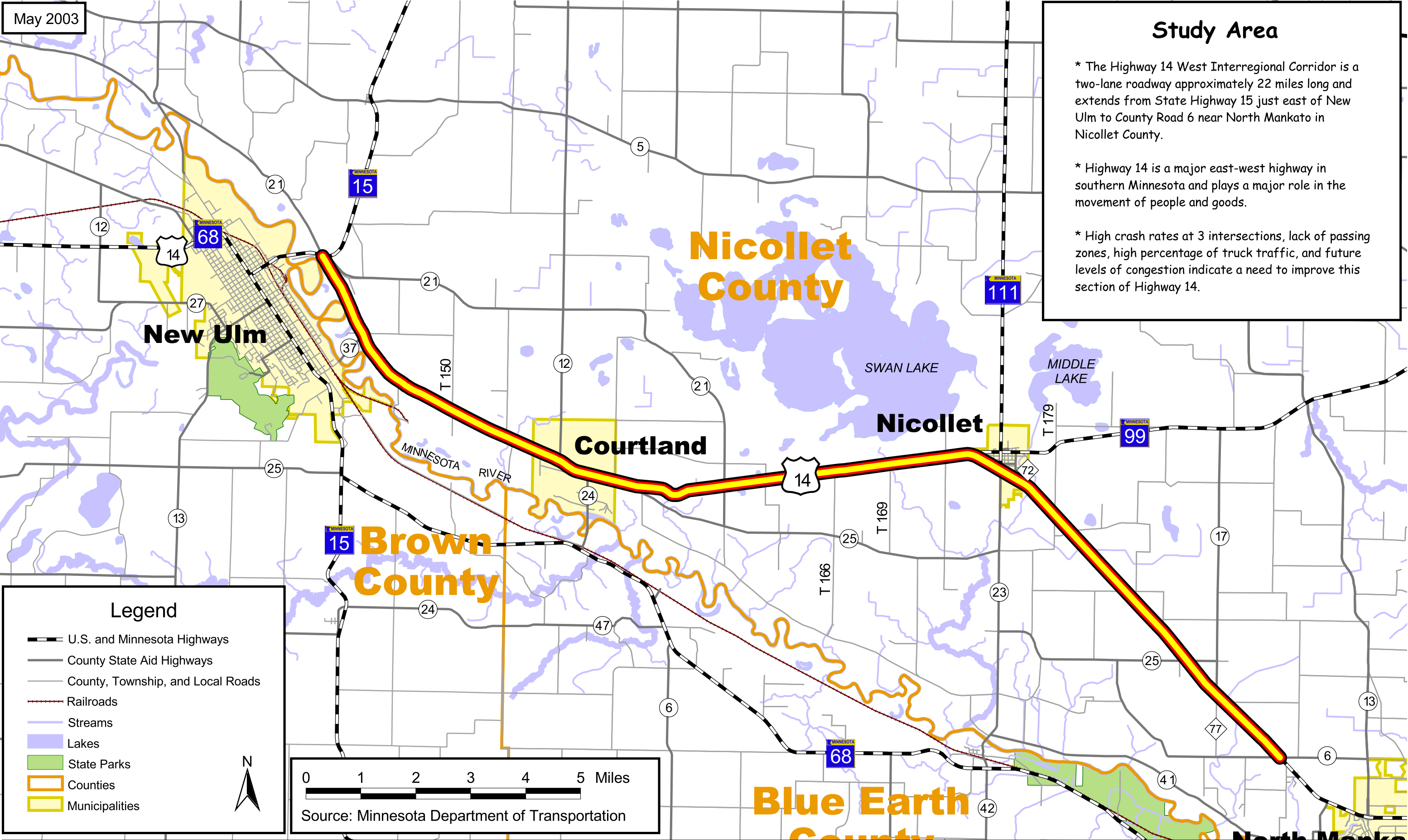
**Project Location
Nicollet County**



May 2003

Study Area

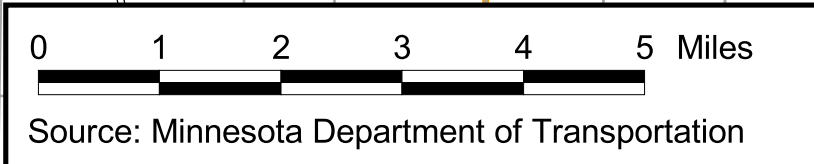
- * The Highway 14 West Interregional Corridor is a two-lane roadway approximately 22 miles long and extends from State Highway 15 just east of New Ulm to County Road 6 near North Mankato in Nicollet County.
- * Highway 14 is a major east-west highway in southern Minnesota and plays a major role in the movement of people and goods.
- * High crash rates at 3 intersections, lack of passing zones, high percentage of truck traffic, and future levels of congestion indicate a need to improve this section of Highway 14.



Legend

- U.S. and Minnesota Highways
- County State Aid Highways
- County, Township, and Local Roads
- Railroads
- Streams
- Lakes
- State Parks
- Counties
- Municipalities

Source: Minnesota Department of Transportation



14 West Interregional Corridor:
North Mankato to New Ulm

Figure 2
Study Area



SCOPING DECISION DOCUMENT

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- Scoping Hearing Transcripts
 - Sign-in sheets
 - Speaker Cards

Note: To review the Appendices, Contact Project Manager Mark Scheidel at 507.389.6149 or the Mn/DOT website at:

<http://www.dot.state.mn.us/d7/projects/14westIRCscoping/>

SCOPING DECISION DOCUMENT

TH 14: NORTH MANKATO TO NEW ULM

1.0 REPORT PURPOSE

This Scoping Decision Document (SDD) has been prepared after the scoping hearings were held and the scoping comment period closed for the U.S. Trunk Highway 14 (TH 14) Interregional Corridor (IRC) Project. The SDD indicates the issues and alternatives that will be examined in-depth in the Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS). The decisions presented are a result of comments and concerns raised through the completion of the scoping process.

2.0 PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Trunk Highway Number:

TH 14

State Project Numbers:

S.P. XXXX-XX – Roadway Reconstruction

The project is approximately 22 miles long and is located in Nicollet County, Minnesota from State Highway 15, just east of New Ulm, to County Road 6 near North Mankato. The Minnesota Department of Transportation (Mn/DOT) has identified high crash rates at three intersections, lack of passing zones, high percentage of truck traffic, and future levels of congestion, all indicating a need to improve the roadway. Therefore, Mn/DOT is proposing to address safety, access, and congestion issues by reconstructing this section of TH 14.

TH 14 is a major east-west highway in southern Minnesota and plays a major role in the movement of people and goods. This roadway serves a variety of travel demands including mobility to serve commuter, commercial, and truck traffic and access to homes, farms, and commercial retail businesses. The key issues in this corridor are high crash rates at three intersections; lack of passing zones; increased traffic congestion forecast for the entire corridor by 2025; difficulty meeting the future IRC performance target of above 55 miles per hour and Mn/DOT's access management guidelines; high percentage of trucks; and concern that the increase in traffic, especially truck traffic, could negatively impact community cohesiveness in the Cities of Courtland and Nicollet.

The purpose of the TH 14 West IRC project is to address present and future safety, operations, and geometric deficiencies along this 22-mile segment of TH 14, consistent with community and public expectations.

The Scoping Document identified existing and forecast conditions along the 22-mile segment of TH 14 and found there are operational and safety deficiencies along the entire section. Mn/DOT intends to complete the environmental review for the whole corridor to be prepared to move forward with the improvements when funding becomes available in the future.

Therefore, the scope of the project is to identify the preferred location of TH 14 and the number of lanes needed to accommodate future traffic.

3.0 SCHEDULE AND PROJECT MANAGER

SCHEDULE

The Scoping process for the TH 14 West IRC overlaps the finalization of the Corridor Management Plan for the project. In essence, this project culminates with the completion of the Scoping Decision Document, so that the RGU will be prepared to move forward with the Environmental Impact Statement as soon as funding is received. The schedule for the Scoping process, the completion of the Corridor Management Plan, and the Environmental Impact Statement process is identified below.

Activity	Date
Notice of Availability of Scoping Document and Scoping Meetings in <i>EQB Monitor</i>	March 31, 2003
Interagency Scoping Meeting	April 23, 2003
Public Scoping Meeting	April 23, 2003
Scoping Comment Period Closes	May 2, 2003
Scoping Decision Document	May 2003
Final Corridor Management Plan	June 2003
Notice of Intent to Prepare EIS in Federal Register	June 5, 2003
State EIS preparation Notice	July 2003
Draft EIS Distribution/Notice of Availability	June 2004
Public Hearing on Draft EIS	July 2004
Final EIS Review Period	Fall 2004
FHWA Record of Decision	Fall 2004
Adequacy Decision	Late Fall 2004
Study Report	Summer 2005
Detail Design	TBD
Right-of-Way Acquisition	TBD
Contract Letting – Roadway	TBD

PROJECT MANAGER

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