

Appendix G

Agency and Tribal Coordination

Accessibility Support

This document may contain elements that are not fully accessible to screen readers. For a detailed explanation of the content or to request an alternative format, please contact Marissa Kuehn, NDOT Public Involvement Manager at marissa.kuehn@nebraska.gov or 402-479-4514

Chronology of Agency and Trial Coordination

	Date of Correspondence	Correspondence provided in an appendix to the EA	Correspondence in the Project File
USCG Project Kick-off Meeting	2023-10-19	☐	☒
Identified consulting parties (Nebraska) invitation to participate/consult – Section 106-Early Coordination	2023-10-20	☒	☐
USACE Project Kick-off Meeting	2023-11-03	☐	☒
IDNR, NGPC, USFWS Project Kick-off Meeting	2023-11-17	☐	☒
Iowa SHPO concurrence with Phase 1A Archeological and Geomorphological Investigation	2023-10-20	☒	☐
USACE Coordination Meeting	2024-01-04	☐	☒
DWEE, IDNR Coordination Meeting	2024-02-09	☐	☒
USCG Coordination Meeting	2024-05-09	☐	☒
USACE Coordination Meeting	2024-05-17	☐	☒
Identified consulting parties (Nebraska) request for comments on cultural desktop review	2024-06-11	☒	☐
USCG / USACE Joint Coordination Meeting	2024-09-25	☐	☒
Iowa SHPO concurrence with Phase 1 Archeological and Geomorphological Investigation	2024-10-23	☒	☐
Flandreau Santee Sioux, Omaha Tribe of Nebraska, Winnebago Tribe of Nebraska Tribal Survey/Field Review	2024-11-08	☒	☐
USCG invitation to be a cooperating agency	2025-04-22	☒	☐
USCG acceptance to be a cooperating agency	2025-04-24	☒	☐
DWEE, IDNR Coordination Meeting	2025-05-13	☐	☒
Agency Scoping / Section 106 Early Coordination Packet	2025-05-19	☒	☐
USACE invitation to be a cooperating agency	2025-05-19	☒	☐
USACE acceptance to be a cooperating agency	2025-05-28	☒	☐
Prairie Band Potawatomi Nation – email deferring to Omaha and Winnebago tribes	2025-07-23	☒	☐
IDNR Coordination Meeting	2025-07-29	☐	☒

Chronology of Agency and Tribal Coordination (cont'd)

FHWA recommends that there are no feasible and prudent alternatives to the use of this historic bridge, and that this use would fall under the Programmatic Section 4(f) Evaluation and Approval of FHWA Projects that Necessitate the Use of Historic Bridges.	2025-08-20	☒	☐
Agency and Tribal Cultural request for comment on National Register of Historic Places eligibility and the project effects determination	2025-08-26	☒	☐
Iowa Tribe of Kansas and Nebraska phone log	2025-08-27	☒	☐
Winnebago Tribe of Nebraska correspondence	2025-08-27	☒	☐
FEMA Coordination Meeting	2025-09-04	☐	☒
Iowa SHPO request for concurrence of Adverse Effect	2025-09-05	☒	☐
NESHPO concurrence of Adverse Effect	2025-09-05	☒	☐
Iowa Tribal and Interested Parties request for concurrence of Adverse Effect	2025-09-16	☒	☐
Northern Cheyenne concurrence with findings of adverse effect	2025-09-18	☒	☐
Lower Sioux Indian Community defer to local tribes of Nebraska	2025-09-30	☒	☐
Iowa SHPO concurrence of Adverse Effect	2025-10-06	☒	☐
IDNR Coordination Meeting	2025-10-17	☐	☒
USACE Coordination Meeting	2025-10-24	☐	☒
ACHP deferred participation notification	2025-11-04	☒	☐
Section 106 - Consultation	2025-11-21	☒	☐
IDNR, NCPC, USACE, UFWS Joint Coordination Meeting	2025-12-05	☐	☒
Section 106 - Consultation	2026-01-07	☒	☐
USACE Coordination Meeting	2026-02-11	☐	☒
Bureau of Indian Affairs, Omaha Tribe of Nebraska request for review of the draft Biological Assessment	2026-02-04	☒	☐
Bureau of Indian Affairs response to review of the draft Biological Assessment	2026-02-20	☒	☐

Section 106 – Early Coordination / Agency Scoping



Good Life. Great Journey.

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION



10/20/2023

Nebraska DOT Project No: STP-51-7(109) CN 32395
Iowa DOT Project No: STP-175-1(106)—2C-67
Decatur Bridge Location and Environmental Study
Burt County, Nebraska and Monona County, Iowa

Jim Pillen, Governor

Section 106 - Early Coordination

The Decatur Bridge has provided regional connectivity between Burt County, Nebraska and Monona County Iowa for more than 70 years and serves as an important link to jobs and services across the Missouri River. The Nebraska Department of Transportation (NDOT) is pleased to partner with the Iowa Department of Transportation to complete the Decatur Bridge Location and Environmental Study Project (Project). This Project includes environmental studies to support the identification of potential solutions to improve the existing Missouri River crossing of Nebraska Highway 51 and Iowa Highway 175 over the Missouri River (Enclosure 1). The study of such possible future improvements to the crossing are subject to compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), Section 4(f) of the Department of Transportation (DOT) Act, and Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA). FHWA is the lead federal agency and Nebraska will be the lead state.

The Project includes early concept, preliminary, and final design of a preferred alignment that may include removal and replacement of the bridge. As such, no formal Area of Potential Effects (APE) will be defined until the preferred alignment has been determined. An initial survey area has been established and comprises a 1,000-foot buffered area centered along the existing river crossing (bridge and connecting roadways) (Enclosure 1). Environmental surveys conducted within this area are intended to determine the presence or absence of key resources that could be affected by proposed improvements to the river crossing and to guide subsequent phases of the alignment and alternative development process.

Officially opened in 1956, the Decatur Bridge (Nebraska bridge structure no. S051 03644; NeHSR BT03-0014) was determined eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) under Criterion A and C (Iowa SHPO, 2011; Nebraska SHPO, 2013).

We are beginning early cultural resource identification and evaluation efforts in support of the Project, and on behalf of FHWA, we invite your participation as a consulting party under 36 CFR 800.2(c).

Tribes: As part of this coordination effort, we are requesting your comments regarding any concerns you have that this project could impact any sites of religious or cultural significance to your tribe [36 CFR 800.2(c)(2)(ii)].

Vicki Kramer, Director

Department of Transportation

MAILING ADDRESS

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Lincoln, NE 68509-4759

PHYSICAL ADDRESS

1500 Nebraska Parkway
Lincoln, NE 68502

PHONE 402-471-4567

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dot.nebraska.gov

Interested Parties: As part of this coordination effort, we are requesting your comments regarding any concerns you have that this project could impact any historic properties [36 CFR 800.2(c)(3)].

SHPO: As part of this coordination effort, we are requesting your comments regarding any concerns you have that this project could impact any historic properties [36 CFR 800.2(c)(1)].

To aid in your initial assessment, please find attached a project location map. If you have any questions regarding this information, please do not hesitate to contact me using the information provided below. If you wish to speak to FHWA, please contact Dillon Dittmer, FHWA Nebraska Division at dillon.dittmer@dot.gov or 402-742-8465.

Thank you,

Stacy Stupka

Stacy Stupka
Cultural Resource Manager
stacy.stupka@nebraska.gov
402-479-3879

cc:

Dillon Dittmer, FHWA, Nebraska Division
Betty Gillespie, Nebraska SHPO
Tribes – Burt County Interest
Nebraska Commission on Indian Affairs
Burt County Board of Supervisors
Village of Decatur, Village Board
Burt County Historical Society
Decatur Museum
Brennan Dolan, Iowa DOT Cultural Resources
Janee Becker, Iowa DOT Cultural Resources
Michelle Winkelmann, Burns & McDonnell

ENCLOSURE:

1. Project Location Map

Vicki Kramer, Director

Department of Transportation

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Lincoln, NE 68502

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From: [Gillespie, Betty](#)
To: [Stupka, Stacy](#)
Cc: [Dittmer, Dillon \(FHWA\)](#)
Subject: RE: Nebraska DOT project Decatur Bridge Location and Environmental Study - Section 106 Early Coordination
Date: Thursday, November 2, 2023 11:03:32 AM
Attachments: [image007.png](#)

Morning Stacy,

Thank you for sending over the early coordination documents for the Decatur Bridge. At this time our main concern would be the Decatur Bridge itself with it being eligible for listing on the National Register. Any major changes to it or demolition would result in an Adverse Effect determination.

Within the initial survey area there is also the listed Fuller House on 8th Street to be aware of. It does not appear any of the other recorded structures within the survey area have had full determinations of eligibility made at this time.

Turning to archeology in the proposed survey area, it looks like there is a known archeological site just south of the bridge near the campgrounds but has previously been determined as not eligible for listing. A second known site is within the area as well in the western most portion but it also appears to have been determined as not eligible. Finally, a survey was completed in 1995 of the whole area along the river. This survey may be of particular help along the bluffs of the survey area.

Thank you again for this initial coordination and we look forward to future talks and plans for this project. The SHPO project number currently assigned to this project is 2310-076-01.

Best,

Betty Gillespie (She/Her)

Interim Deputy SHPO

Section 106 Review & Compliance Coordinator



P: 402-805-7392 | betty.gillespie@nebraska.gov
1500 R Street, Lincoln, NE 68508
history.nebraska.gov



From: Stupka, Stacy <stacy.stupka@nebraska.gov>

Sent: Friday, October 20, 2023 11:11 AM

To: NDOT Section106 <NDOT.Section106@nebraska.gov>

Cc: Dillon Dittmer <dillon.dittmer@dot.gov>; luther, justin <justin.luther@dot.gov>; Jurgens, Jason

<Jason.Jurgens@nebraska.gov>; Hartman, Jeff <jeff.hartman@nebraska.gov>; Trenne, Ben <Ben.Trenne@nebraska.gov>; Becker, Janee <Janee.Becker@iowadot.us>; Dolan, Brennan <Brennan.Dolan@iowadot.us>; Winkelmann, Michelle L <mlwinkelmann@burnsmcd.com>; Harris, Brandy M <bmharris@burnsmcd.com>

Subject: Nebraska DOT project Decatur Bridge Location and Environmental Study - Section 106 Early Coordination

Hello,

The Decatur Bridge has provided regional connectivity between Burt County, Nebraska and Monona County Iowa for more than 70 years and serves as an important link to jobs and services across the Missouri River. The Nebraska Department of Transportation (NDOT) is pleased to partner with the Iowa Department of Transportation to complete the Decatur Bridge Location and Environmental Study Project (Project). This Project includes environmental studies to support the identification of potential solutions to improve the existing Missouri River crossing of Nebraska Highway 51 and Iowa Highway 175 over the Missouri River, please see attached project location map (Enclosure 1).

The study of such possible future improvements to the crossing are subject to compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), Section 4(f) of the Department of Transportation (DOT) Act, and Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA). FHWA is the lead federal agency and Nebraska will be the lead state.

The Project includes early concept, preliminary, and final design of a preferred alignment that may include removal and replacement of the bridge. As such, no formal Area of Potential Effects (APE) will be defined until the preferred alignment has been determined. An initial survey area has been established and comprises a 1,000-foot buffered area centered along the existing river crossing (bridge and connecting roadways). Environmental surveys conducted within this area are intended to determine the presence or absence of key resources that could be affected by proposed improvements to the river crossing and to guide subsequent phases of the alignment and alternative development process.

Officially opened in 1956, the Decatur Bridge (Nebraska bridge structure no. S051 03644; NeHRSI BT03-0014) was determined eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) under Criterion A and C (Iowa SHPO, 2011; Nebraska SHPO, 2013).

We are beginning early cultural resource identification and evaluation efforts in support of the Project, and on behalf of FHWA, we invite your participation as a consulting party under 36 CFR 800.2(c).

To aid in your initial assessment, please find attached a project location map (Enclosure 1) as well as a Google Earth kmz. If you have any questions regarding this information, please do not hesitate to contact me using the information provided below. If you wish to speak to FHWA, please contact Dillon Dittmer, FHWA Nebraska Division at dillon.dittmer@dot.gov or 402-742-8465.

Thank you for your time,
Stacy

Stacy Stupka
Cultural Resources Manager



1500 Nebraska Parkway | Lincoln, NE | 68509-4759
402.479.3879 | stacy.stupka@nebraska.gov
she/her

Pawnee Nation

Tuesday, November 28, 2023

NDOT Section 106 Team
Nebraska Department of Transportation

RE: *Proposed Early Concept, Preliminary, & Final Design for
Removal/Replacement of Bridge
STP-51-7(109) CN 32395
Burt County, Nebraska*

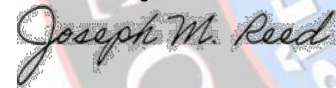
The Pawnee Nation Office of Historic Preservation has received the information and materials requested for our Section 106 Review and Consultation. Consultation with the Pawnee Nation is required by Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (NHPA) and 36 CFR Part 800.

Given the information provided, you are hereby notified that the proposed project/s will should not adversely affect the cultural landscape of the Pawnee Nation.

However, be advised that additional undiscovered properties could be encountered, and they must immediately be reported to us under both the National Historic Preservation Act and the Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act regulations.

This information is provided to assist you in complying with 36 CFR Part 800 for Section 106 Consultation procedures. Should you have questions, please do not hesitate to contact me at jreed@pawneenation.org or by phone at 918-762-2180 ext. 220. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,



Matt Reed
Historic Preservation Officer
Pawnee Nation of Oklahoma

Historic Preservation Office
Matt Reed
Phone: 918.762.2180
E-mail: jreed@pawneenation.org
P.O. Box 470
Pawnee, Oklahoma 74058

From: [Stupka, Stacy](#)
To: [NDOT Section106](#)
Cc: [Dillon Dittmer](#); [luther. justin](#); [Jurgens, Jason](#); [Hartman, Jeff](#); [Trenne, Ben](#); [Becker, Janee](#); [Dolan, Brennan](#); [Winkelmann, Michelle L](#); [Harris, Brandy M](#)
Bcc: [Sunshine Thomas-Bear - Winnebago Tribe of Nebraska \(sunshine.bear@winnebagoTribe.com\)](#); [Jarell Grant](#); [Alan Kelley](#); [Lance M. Foster \(lfoster@iowas.org\)](#); [Elsie Whitehorn \(ewhitehorn@omTribe.org\)](#); [j.pourier@oglala.org](#); [Ricky Wright \(rwrightjr@poncatTribe-ne.org\)](#); [tfoley@poncatTribe-ne.org](#); [benridgley007@gmail.com](#); [Max Bear \(mbear@c-a-tribes.org\)](#); [Teanna Limpy \(teanna.limpy@cheyenneNation.com\)](#); [Matt Reed \(jreed@pawneeNation.org\)](#); [ademaray@mhanation.com](#); [Pemina Yellow Bird \(PemYB@outlook.com\)](#); [jmyrick@mhanation.com](#); [Mark Fox \(chairmanfox@mhanation.com\)](#); [yst.thpo@gmail.com](#); [Ione Quigley \(ione.quigley@rst-nsn.gov\)](#); [Gaiashkibos, Judi](#); [decaturclerk@nntc.net](#); [burtcomuseum@abbnebraska.com](#); [jane.judt@gmail.com](#); [Gillespie, Betty](#); [clerk@burtcountyne.gov](#)
Subject: Nebraska DOT project Decatur Bridge Location and Environmental Study - Section 106 Early Coordination
Date: Friday, October 20, 2023 11:11:00 AM
Attachments: [32395_Section 106_NDOT invitation to consult letter_10.20.2023.pdf](#)
[Enclosure 1_Decatur Bridge Initial SurveyArea_Aerial.pdf](#)
[32395 Decatur Initial Survey Area 2023-08-03.kmz](#)
[image003.png](#)

Hello,

The Decatur Bridge has provided regional connectivity between Burt County, Nebraska and Monona County Iowa for more than 70 years and serves as an important link to jobs and services across the Missouri River. The Nebraska Department of Transportation (NDOT) is pleased to partner with the Iowa Department of Transportation to complete the Decatur Bridge Location and Environmental Study Project (Project). This Project includes environmental studies to support the identification of potential solutions to improve the existing Missouri River crossing of Nebraska Highway 51 and Iowa Highway 175 over the Missouri River, please see attached project location map (Enclosure 1).

The study of such possible future improvements to the crossing are subject to compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), Section 4(f) of the Department of Transportation (DOT) Act, and Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA). FHWA is the lead federal agency and Nebraska will be the lead state.

The Project includes early concept, preliminary, and final design of a preferred alignment that may include removal and replacement of the bridge. As such, no formal Area of Potential Effects (APE) will be defined until the preferred alignment has been determined. An initial survey area has been established and comprises a 1,000-foot buffered area centered along the existing river crossing (bridge and connecting roadways). Environmental surveys conducted within this area are intended to determine the presence or absence of key resources that could be affected by proposed improvements to the river crossing and to guide subsequent phases of the alignment and alternative development process.

Officially opened in 1956, the Decatur Bridge (Nebraska bridge structure no. S051 03644; NeHRSI BT03-0014) was determined eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) under Criterion A and C (Iowa SHPO, 2011; Nebraska SHPO, 2013).

We are beginning early cultural resource identification and evaluation efforts in support of the Project, and on behalf of FHWA, we invite your participation as a consulting party under 36 CFR 800.2(c).

To aid in your initial assessment, please find attached a project location map (Enclosure 1) as well as a Google Earth kmz. If you have any questions regarding this information, please do not hesitate to contact me using the information provided below. If you wish to speak to FHWA, please contact Dillon Dittmer, FHWA Nebraska Division at dillon.dittmer@dot.gov

or 402-742-8465.

Thank you for your time,
Stacy

Stacy Stupka

Cultural Resources Manager



1500 Nebraska Parkway | Lincoln, NE | 68509-4759
402.479.3879 | stacy.stupka@nebraska.gov
she/her

January 4, 2024

Location & Environment Bureau

800 Lincoln Way, Ames, IA 50010

Phone: 515.233.7820 | Email: janee.becker@iowadot.us

Iowa DOT Project Number: STP-175-1(106)--2C-67

Nebraska DOT Project Number: STP-51-7(109), CN 32395 (Project Lead)

Primary System

Monona County

R&C: **20231067477**

Ms. Sara André
Mr. Dan Higginbottom
State Historic Preservation Office
1963 Bell Ave., Suite 200
Des Moines, IA 50315

RE: Improvement Study for the IA 175 Decatur Bridge over the Missouri River; FHWA #036810; Historic Architectural Reconnaissance and Phase IA Archaeological and Geomorphological Evaluation, Monona County, Iowa

Dear Sara and Dan,

Enclosed for your review and comment is the historic architectural reconnaissance (Thompson 2024a) and Phase IA archaeological and geomorphological evaluation (Thompson 2024b) for the above referenced project. The Iowa Department of Transportation is partnering with **the Nebraska Department of Transportation, who will be the lead** for the project in an effort to improve the crossing of the Missouri River along IA 175 at the Decatur Bridge (FHWA #036810; 67-00750). It's unknown at this time what the alignment will be or how much right-of-way will be needed. Initial review of this project has identified a preliminary survey area for the Iowa side that measures 487.4 ac (197.2 ha).

The historic architectural reconnaissance (Thompson 2024a) consisted of an archival and site records search, assessment of the area for potential historic architectural resources, and a general historic context. The bridge (FHWA #036810; 67-00750) was previously determined eligible for the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion A and C by our 2011 statewide bridge study (Baynard et al. 2011). The reconnaissance also identified three parcels containing extant structures. They include a private campground owned by Decatur Lake Development Company that contains cabins, campers, and outbuildings, some of which may be 45 years of age or older; a rural residence that may be abandoned, and a single agricultural building. This reconnaissance also assessed the potential for historic-era shipwrecks and identified two wrecks (the Tennessee and Nugget) that have been mentioned near this area, however there is currently no historical or archaeological evidence for an extent steamboat wreckage site within the study area. Due to the presence of structures that are 45 years of age or older, it was recommended that an intensive architectural survey be completed for the study area.

The Phase IA archaeological and geomorphological assessment (Thompson 2024b) consisted of an archival and sites records search and desktop landform assessment for geological potential to contain prehistoric and historic archaeological sites. The study area has experienced extensive historic and modern scouring and redeposition of sediment over the western three-quarters and the remaining quarter is covered by older point bar deposits representing at least two alluvial packages. Overall, there is little to no potential for prehistoric archaeological sites, but these deposits do have potential for terminal late Prehistoric/proto historic and or historic period archaeological sites. This assessment recommended a geomorphic evaluation and Phase I archaeological survey of the study area.

If you agree with these findings, we ask that you sign the concurrence line noted below and provide any comments you have. At this time, we have not determined the effects of this project on cultural resources. If you have any questions, please feel free to call me at (515) 233-7820 or email me at jane.becker@iowadot.us.

Sincerely,



Jane Becker
Cultural Resources Manager/Archaeologist

Cc: Tribes/Nations – Monona County Interest
Monona County Historic Preservation Commission
Monona County Historical Museum
HistoricBridges.org
Jessica Felix – District 3 Engineer
Shane Tymkowicz – Assistant District 3 Engineer
DeeAnn Newell – NEPA Team Lead
Stacy Stupka – NE DOT Cultural Resources
Dawn Knott – NE DOT Project Manager
Michelle Winkelmann – Burns & McDonnell

Concur: See SHPO Comments Date: 02/13/2024
SHPO Architectural Historian

Concur: See SHPO Comments Date: 02/13/2024
SHPO Archaeologist

Comments:

From: [Sara Andre](#)
To: [Becker, Janee](#)
Cc: [Dolan, Brennan](#); branden.scott@iowaeda.com; shpo106@iowaeda.com
Subject: R&C 231067477 - 00048477 - FHWA - Monona - IA 175 Decatur Bridge Improvement Project over the Missouri River; FHWA #036810; Phase IA and Architectural Reconnaissance
Date: Tuesday, February 13, 2024 2:49:15 PM

CAUTION:

This email originated from outside the Iowa Department of Transportation.
Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

We have received your submittal for the above referenced federal undertaking. We provide the following response in accordance with Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 and its implementing regulations 36 CFR 800.

Regarding this project, please see the following comments:

R&C 231067477 - 00048477 - FHWA - Monona - IA 175 Decatur Bridge Improvement Project over the Missouri River; FHWA #036810; Phase IA and Architectural Reconnaissance - The Iowa Department of Transportation is partnering with the Nebraska Department of Transportation, who will be the lead for the project in an effort to improve the crossing of the Missouri River along IA 175 at the Decatur Bridge (FHWA #036810; 67-00750)

- Thank you for providing us the opportunity to review and comment on both the *Phase IA Archeological and Geomorphological Review for Proposed Improvement of the IA 175 Bridge over the Missouri River, Franklin Township, Monona County, Iowa*, and A Phase IA Historical Background and Architectural Review for Proposed Improvement of the IA 175 Bridge over the Missouri River, Franklin Township, Monona County, Iowa (Historical/Architectural Report), both documents prepared by Bear Creek Archeology, Inc. January 2024.
- SHPO archaeologists reviewed the *Phase IA Archeological and Geomorphological Review* and agree with the recommendations.
- SHPO agrees that the Decatur Bridge (ISIF# 67-00714) is still eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places.
- Comments on the Historical/Architectural Report
 - We do not agree that further survey of the campground is necessary. No further work needed.
 - The Historical/Architectural Report contains information about shipwrecks; this documentation would be more appropriately placed within the *Archeological and Geomorphological Review* report.
 - Additionally, it appears to be a combination of archeological reporting standards/language and historical/architectural survey/reporting standards. Above-ground surveys and related reports submitted to SHPO should meet or exceed the draft Guidelines for Historic Architectural Survey in Iowa, the National Park Service bulletin (#24) Guidelines for Local Surveys: A Basis for Preservation Planning, and the Secretary of the Interior's Standards and Guidelines for Historical Documentation.
 - It does not appear that a Secretary of the Interior (Sol) qualified historian/architectural historian was involved in the preparation of the report. SHPO would like to stress that it is important that the appropriate Sol qualified professional be involved in survey and reporting.
- We recognize the complexities in working on a project involving two states. Please keep us informed as the project and the consultation progresses, and feel free to reach out if there are additional questions or comments.

You will not receive a hard copy of this email. It is the submitter's responsibility to maintain the official file of record. If you have any questions or comments, please feel free to contact our office.

Sincerely,

Sara André
Architectural Historian/Historic Preservation Specialist
State Historic Preservation Office
Pronouns: She/Her/Hers
sara.andre@iowaeda.com | +1 (515) 348-6286 | culture.iowaeda.com/shpo

Iowa Economic Development Authority





Good Life. Great Journey.

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION



06/11/2024

Nebraska DOT Project No: STP-51-7(109) CN 32395

Iowa DOT Project No: STP-175-1(106)—2C-67

Decatur Bridge Location and Environmental Study

Burt County, Nebraska and Monona County, Iowa

**Section 106 – Desktop Review Report, CR-NE Study Area
Request for Review and Comment**

NDOT invites your review and comment on the results of a desktop review completed for the Nebraska portion of the undertaking referenced above. As you may remember, the Nebraska Department of Transportation (NDOT) is partnering with the Iowa Department of Transportation and the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) in an effort to improve the crossing of the Missouri River at Decatur, Nebraska.

The project is still in the early stages of planning and is in the pre-NEPA stage, therefore, a formal Area of Potential Effects (APE) has not been defined but will be defined when a preferred alignment has been determined. The initial survey area comprises a 1,000-foot buffered area centered along the existing river crossing. The enclosed desktop review (Enclosure 1) completes a file search of the initial survey area including a 1-mile buffer around the Nebraska (CR-NE Study Area) portion of the project. The enclosed letter report provides information regarding previously identified archeological sites as well as previously identified architectural resources located within the Nebraska portion of the project (Enclosure 1, Gottsfield, 2023).

Gottsfield indicates that nine archeological sites have been previously recorded within the CR-NE Study Area, two of which fall within the Initial Survey Area (Enclosure 1, Table 1; (Attachment: Figures 2 and 3). Three prehistoric sites have been recommended as potentially eligible for inclusion on the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP). Five sites have been recommended as potentially not eligible for inclusion on the NRHP and one site has not been assessed for NRHP status.

Gottsfield further reports that the Missouri River valley landforms have variable archeological potential. The landforms created in the nineteenth and twentieth century have low potential for all resources except for maritime resources. If extant, the maritime resources would be deeply buried. Landforms in the Elm Creek valley and adjoining portions in the Missouri River valley have a higher potential for surface and deeply buried resources due to their expected age of formation throughout the Holocene (Enclosure 1, Figures 1 and 2).

Regarding architectural and structural properties, 38 above-ground resources have been inventoried within the CR-NE Study Area (Enclosure 1, Table 3; (Attachment: Figures 1 and 2). Of the 38 resources, 33 have not been assessed for NRHP eligibility. One resource is listed on

Vicki Kramer, Director

Department of Transportation

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the NRHP (A.B. Fuller House – BT03-004), and four resources (BT03-0007, BT03-0014, BT03-0015, and BT03-0031) are recommended potentially eligible for listing on the NRHP (Attachment: Figure 3). BT03-0007 is a dwelling. BT03-0014 is the Decatur Bridge, and BT03-0015 is the Village Hall. BT03-0031 is a Decatur School building.

Efforts to identify and evaluate historic properties have not yet been completed and no project effect determinations have been made. The enclosed report recommends a mixture of pedestrian survey and shovel testing. Geophysical surveys or mechanical deep testing would be employed to determine presence or absence of any maritime resources.

We invite your comments the enclosed desktop review letter report. If you have any questions regarding this information, please do not hesitate to contact me using the information provided below. If you wish to speak to FHWA, please contact Luke Pitts, FHWA Nebraska Division luke.pitts@dot.gov or 402-742-8466.

Thank you,

Stacy Stupka

Stacy Stupka
Cultural Resource Team Lead
stacy.stupka@nebraska.gov
402-479-3879

cc:

Luke Pitts, FHWA, Nebraska Division
Betty Gillespie, Nebraska SHPO
Tribes – Burt County Area of Interest
Nebraska Commission on Indian Affairs
Burt County Board of Supervisors
Village of Decatur, Village Board
Burt County Historical Society
Decatur Museum
Brennan Dolan, Iowa DOT Cultural Resources
Janee Becker, Iowa DOT Cultural Resources
Michelle Winkelmann, Burns & McDonnell

ENCLOSURE:

1. Desktop Review Report, CR-NE Study Area

Vicki Kramer, Director

Department of Transportation

MAILING ADDRESS

PO Box 94759
Lincoln, NE 68509-4759

PHYSICAL ADDRESS

1500 Nebraska Parkway
Lincoln, NE 68502

PHONE 402-471-4567

EMAIL NDOT.ContactUs@nebraska.gov

dot.nebraska.gov



From: gary.lafranier@cheyennenation.com
To: [NDOT Section106](#)
Subject: 10 Projects
Date: Wednesday, July 24, 2024 5:57:56 PM
Importance: High

Good Afternoon,

US-6 - Platte River, STP-44-1(107), CN 71270: Northern Cheyenne is requesting a Class I and or Class III report before any determination.

Merritt Dam North, STP-97-4(114), CN 81074: Northern Cheyenne is requesting a Class I and or Class III report before any determination.

Decatur Bridge Location and Environmental Study, Burt County Nebraska and Monona County Iowa - Northern Cheyenne is requesting a Class I and or Class III report before any determination.

NDOT Project Central City Viaduct_RRZ-TMT-14-2(123)_CN 42013 Northern Cheyenne concurs with findings of No Historic Properties.

Nebraska DOT project In Red Cloud_NH-281-1(117)_42619: Will the project affect any historic buildings, etc.? If not, it would be safe to have a determination of No Adverse Effect.

NDOT Project: US-81 – Thayer/Jefferson County Line, STP-8-5(112), CN 42865: Northern Cheyenne is requesting a Class I and or Class III report before any determination.

NDOT Project N-50 Ramp, Omaha_NH-MTIS-80-9(201)_CN 22850: Northern Cheyenne concurs with findings of No Historic Properties.

NDOT Project: Alexandria West, BRO-7085(41), CN 42997: Northern Cheyenne is requesting a Class I and or Class III report before any determination.

NDOT Project: Genoa Northwest, BRO-7063(9), CN 42998: Northern Cheyenne is requesting a Class I and or Class III report before any determination.

NDOT Project: 71237, NH-6-3(133) N-46 West: Northern Cheyenne concurs with findings of No Historic Properties.

Thank You,

Gary LaFranier

FCC/ Section 106 Coordinator

(406) 477-8114

Lame Deer, MT. 59043



Hinono'ainino'
 Northern Arapaho Tribe
 TRIBAL HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICE
 P.O. Box 67 - St. Stephens, Wyoming 82524
 PH: 307.856.1628 FX: 307.856.1974



Date: 8/30/24

Contact Name: Stacy Stupka

Contact Phone: none provided

Email Address: stacy.stupka@nebraska.gov

Company Name: Nebraska Department of Transportation

Company Address: not provided

City: Belden

State: NE

Zip Code: 68717

RE: *Decatur Bridge Location and Environmental Study*

Dear Sir or Madam:

After reviewing your request under the Section 106 process of the NHPA, and NEPA, our office would like to comment on the proposed project. The Northern Arapaho Tribal Historic Preservation Office makes the following determination:

Defer to local THPO/Cultural Resource Office

Site Visit: _____ Tribal Monitor: _____

Our office has come to this determination by drawing conclusions from the survey and file search from maps depicting the provenience of sites regarding the Direct and Visual APE.

Within the Area of Potential Effect, there are:

Cultural Resources: _____

Eligible Historic Properties: _____

Probability of properties of religious and cultural significance to the Northern Arapaho: HIGH

If traditional cultural properties, rock features, or human remains are found during excavation with any new ground disturbance, we request to be contacted and a report provided.

Thank you for consulting with the Northern Arapaho THPO.

Sincerely,

Crystal C'Bearing

THPO Director

crystal.cbearing@northernarapaho.com

838

From: [Stupka, Stacy](#)
To: [NDOT Section106](#); [Gillespie, Betty](#); [Gaiashkibos, Judi](#); [Sunshine Thomas-Bear - Winnebago Tribe of Nebraska](#) (sunshine.bear@winnebagotribe.com); [Jarell Grant](#); [Mark Parker](#) (mark.parker@theomahatribe.com); [Lance M. Foster](#) (lfoster@iowas.org); [Alan Kelley](#); [Elsie Whitehorn](#) (ewhitehorn@omtribe.org); [i.pourier@ogla.org](#); [Theresa Foley](#); [Ricky Wright](#) (rwrightjr@poncatribes-ne.org); [benridgley007@gmail.com](#); [crystal.cbearing@northernarapaho.com](#); [Max Bear](#) (mbear@c-a-tribes.org); [Teanna Limpy](#) (teanna.limpy@cheyennnation.com); [ademaray@mhanation.com](#); [Pemina Yellow Bird](#) (PemYB@outlook.com); [yst.thpo@gmail.com](#); [Ione Quigley](#) (ione.quigley@rst-nsn.gov); [clerk@burtcountyne.gov](#); [decaturclerk@nntc.net](#); [burtcomuseum@abbnebraska.com](#); [jane.iudt@gmail.com](#)
Cc: [luke.pitts](#); [Luther, Justin](#); [Jurgens, Jason](#); [Dolan, Brennan](#); [Becker, Janee](#); [Winkermann, Michelle L](#)
Subject: Decatur Bridge Location and Environmental Study, Burt County Nebraska and Monona County Iowa - Desktop Review Report (Nebraska portion); request for review and comment
Date: Tuesday, June 11, 2024 11:19:52 AM
Attachments: [32395 Section 106 NDOT invitation to comment on desktop review 06.11.2024.pdf](#)
[32395 Enclosure 1 Decatur Bridge Study Nebraska Cultural Resources Desktop Review 20231002.pdf](#)
[image002.png](#)

Hello,

NDOT invites your review and comment on the results of a desktop review completed for the Nebraska portion of the undertaking referenced above. As you may remember, the Nebraska Department of Transportation (NDOT) is partnering with the Iowa Department of Transportation and the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) in an effort to improve the crossing of the Missouri River at Decatur, Nebraska.

The project is still in the early stages of planning and is in the pre-NEPA stage, therefore, a formal Area of Potential Effects (APE) has not been defined but will be defined when a preferred alignment has been determined. The initial survey area comprises a 1,000-foot buffered area centered along the existing river crossing. The enclosed desktop review (Enclosure 1) completes a file search of the initial survey area including a 1-mile buffer around the Nebraska (CR-NE Study Area) portion of the project. The enclosed letter report provides information regarding previously identified archeological sites as well as previously identified architectural resources located within the Nebraska portion of the project (Enclosure 1, Gottsfield, 2023).

Efforts to identify and evaluate historic properties have not yet been completed and no project effect determinations have been made. The enclosed report recommends a mixture of pedestrian survey and shovel testing. Geophysical surveys or mechanical deep testing would be employed to determine presence or absence of any maritime resources.

We invite your comments the enclosed desktop review letter report. If you have any questions regarding this information, please do not hesitate to contact me using the information provided below. If you wish to speak to FHWA, please contact Luke Pitts, FHWA Nebraska Division luke.pitts@dot.gov or 402-742-8466.

Thank you for your time,
Stacy

Stacy Stupka
Cultural Resources Team Lead



1500 Nebraska Parkway | Lincoln, NE | 68509-4759

402.479.3879 | stacy.stupka@nebraska.gov
she/her



KIM REYNOLDS, GOVERNOR

SCOTT MARLER, IOWA DOT DIRECTOR

IOWA DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
DIVISION/BUREAU
800 Lincoln Way
Ames, IA 50010
515-233-7820
www.iowadot.gov

October 23, 2024

Iowa DOT Ref. STP-175-1(106)--2C-67
Nebraska DOT Ref. STP-51-7(109), CN 32395 (Project Lead)
Primary System
Monona County
R&C: 20231067477

Mr. Branden Scott
State Historic Preservation Office
1963 Bell Avenue, Suite 200
Des Moines, Iowa 50315

RE: Phase I Archaeological and Geomorphological Investigation for the Improvement Study for the IA 175 Decatur Bridge over the Missouri River (FHWA #036810; 67-00750), [Sec 17 & 18, T83N-R46W] Monona County, Iowa; **No Project Determination**

Dear Branden:

Enclosed for your review and comment is the Phase I archaeological and geomorphological investigation (Langseth and Layzell 2024) for the above referenced project. The Iowa Department of Transportation is partnering with the Nebraska Department of Transportation, who will be the lead for the project in an effort to improve the crossing of the Missouri River along IA 175 at the Decatur Bridge (FHWA #036810; 67-00750). It's unknown at this time what the alignment will be or how much right-of-way will be needed. Initial review of this project has identified a preliminary survey area for the Iowa side that measures 487.4 ac (197.2 ha).

The archaeological investigation consisted of an archival and site records search, soils assessment, geomorphological investigation, pedestrian survey, and subsurface testing ($n = 328$). The survey area extends along three nearly level terrace treads overlooking the Missouri River channel. The soils assessment suggests historic and modern alluvial sediments cover the surveyed area. The geomorphological investigation included a visual assessment and extraction of hand probes by the consultant and a formal geomorphological investigation using a trailer mounted Giddings hydraulic coring rig by the Kansas Geological Survey, University of Kansas. The geomorphological investigation identified that the landforms consisted of relatively young alluvial sediments that date from the modern era in the western portion to possibly as early as the Late-Precontact to Protohistoric period in the eastern portion, which displayed surficial soil development. No buried surfaces were identified during this investigation. Pedestrian survey was completed in areas with sufficient ground surface visibility and identified three archaeological sites (13MN97–99; Table 1). All three archaeological sites were identified as late nineteenth to twentieth century Euro-American farmsteads/residences. Subsurface testing of these sites showed that subsurface deposits were mostly contained within plowzone and disturbed contexts and did not identify any features. As these sites were primarily contained within disturbed contexts and no cultural features were identified, 13MN97, 13MN98, and 13MN99 were recommended not eligible for the National Register of Historic Places. No further archaeological work was recommended for the 487.4 ac (197.2 ha) surveyed under this investigation.

Table 1 – Identified Archaeological Sites

Site Number	Site Type	NRHP Recommendation
13MN97	Historic farm/residence	Not Eligible
13MN98	Historic farm/residence	Not Eligible
13MN99	Historic farm/residence	Not Eligible

If you agree with these findings, we ask that you sign the concurrence line noted below and provide any comments you have. At this time, we have not determined the effects of this project on cultural resources. If you have any questions, please contact me at (515) 233-7820 or janee.becker@iowadot.us.

Sincerely,



Janee Becker
Cultural Resources Manager/Archaeologist

cc: Tribes/Nations – Monona County Interest
Jessica Felix – District 3 Engineer
Shane Tymkowicz – Assistant District 3 Engineer
DeeAnn Newell – NEPA Team Lead
Stacy Stupka – NE DOT Cultural Resources
Dawn Knott – NE DOT Project Manager
Michelle Winkelmann – Burns & McDonnell

Concur: See Concurrence Email Date: 11/07/2024
SHPO Archaeologist

Comments:
See Concurrence Email for additional comments

From: branden.scott@email.iowaeda.com
To: [Becker, Janee](#)
Cc: [Dolan, Brennan](#); branden.scott@iowaeda.com; shpo106@iowaeda.com; derek@bearcreekarcheology.com; sara.andre@iowaeda.com
Subject: R&C 231067477 - 00048477 - FHWA - Monona - IA 175 Decatur Bridge Improvement Project over the Missouri River; FHWA #036810; Phase IA and Architectural Reconnaissance
Date: Thursday, November 7, 2024 11:54:56 AM

CAUTION:

This email originated from outside the Iowa Department of Transportation.
Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Ms. Becker:

We have received your submittal for the above referenced federal undertaking. We provide the following response in accordance with Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 and its implementing regulations 36 CFR 800.

Regarding this project, please see the following comments:

R&C 231067477 - 00048477 - FHWA - Monona - IA 175 Decatur Bridge Improvement Project over the Missouri River; FHWA #036810; Phase IA and Architectural Reconnaissance - The Iowa Department of Transportation is partnering with the Nebraska Department of Transportation, who will be the lead for the project in an effort to improve the crossing of the Missouri River along IA 175 at the Decatur Bridge (FHWA #036810; 67-00750)

Thank you for providing us with a copy of "Phase I Archeological Survey for Proposed Improvements to the Iowa 175 Bridge Spanning the Missouri River, Franklin Township, Monona County, Iowa" prepared by Bear Creek Archeology. For this phase of the project, you have requested that we review the completeness of this report and the recommendations provided by the consultant. At this time, no federal determination of effect has been provided and additional information is forthcoming. Therefore, we are offering this opinion as "technical assistance". After reviewing the report, we believe that the fieldwork and reporting are consistent with Association of Iowa Archaeologists guidelines. We do note, however, that the consulting archaeologist plans to update the report once a final geomorphological/geoarchaeological assessment is provided the University of Kansas. As this report is still in "draft" stages, we cannot yet accept it into our permanent holdings. Barring any significant changes to the report, the findings can be used to support an agency determination of effect. Please provide a final copy of the report when it is completed.

The consulting archaeologist identified three sites within the APE (13MN97, 13MN98, 13MN99). The consulting archaeologist recommended that all three of these sites are not eligible for listing to the National Register of Historic Places. We agree with the consulting archaeologist.

This case will be returned so that consultation on this undertaking can continue. You will not receive a hard copy of this email. It is the submitter's responsibility to maintain the official file of record. If you have any questions or comments, please feel free to contact our office.

With kind regards,
Branden K. Scott
Archaeologist, State Historic Preservation Office
branden.scott@iowaeda.com | 515.348.6291 | culture.iowaeda.com/shpo

Iowa Economic Development Authority

----- Original Message -----

From: sara.andre@email.iowaeda.com [sara.andre@email.iowaeda.com]

Sent: 9/6/2024 2:53 PM

To: jane.becker@iowadot.us

Cc: brennan.dolan@iowadot.us; branden.scott@iowaeda.com; shpo106@iowaeda.com

Subject: R&C 231067477 - 00048477 - FHWA - Monona - IA 175 Decatur Bridge Improvement Project over the Missouri River; FHWA #036810; Phase IA and Architectural Reconnaissance

We have received your submittal for the above referenced federal undertaking. We provide the following response in accordance with Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 and its implementing regulations 36 CFR 800.

Regarding this project, please see the following comments:

R&C 231067477 - 00048477 - FHWA - Monona - IA 175 Decatur Bridge Improvement Project over the Missouri River; FHWA #036810; Phase IA and Architectural Reconnaissance - The Iowa Department of Transportation is partnering with the Nebraska Department of Transportation, who will be the lead for the project in an effort to improve the crossing of the Missouri River along IA 175 at the Decatur Bridge (FHWA #036810; 67-00750)

Thank you for the information regarding the public meetings held in August.

At this point, we have no further comments regarding historic resources. Please see our February 13, 2024 response (also below) for those comments.

Please keep us informed of the project, especially changes that may occur. We look forward to continuing consultation with you regarding this project.

The case in ESHPO will be returned to you to enable ongoing consultation.

You will not receive a hard copy of this email. It is the submitter's responsibility to maintain the official file of record. If you have any questions or comments, please feel free to contact our office.

Sincerely,

Sara André

Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer

Review and Compliance Coordinator

State Historic Preservation Office

Pronouns: She/Her/Hers

sara.andre@iowaeda.com | +1 (515) 348-6286 | culture.iowaeda.com/shpo

Iowa Economic Development Authority

----- Original Message -----

From: Sara Andre [sara.andre@iowa.gov]

Sent: 2/13/2024 2:49 PM

To: jane.becker@iowadot.us

Cc: brennan.dolan@iowadot.us; branden.scott@iowaeda.com; shpo106@iowaeda.com

Subject: R&C 231067477 - 00048477 - FHWA - Monona - IA 175 Decatur Bridge Improvement Project over the Missouri River; FHWA #036810; Phase IA and Architectural Reconnaissance

We have received your submittal for the above referenced federal undertaking. We provide the following response in accordance with Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 and its implementing regulations 36 CFR 800.

Regarding this project, please see the following comments:

R&C 231067477 - 00048477 - FHWA - Monona - IA 175 Decatur Bridge Improvement Project over the Missouri River; FHWA #036810; Phase IA and Architectural Reconnaissance - The Iowa Department of Transportation is partnering with the Nebraska Department of Transportation, who will be the lead for the project in an effort to improve the crossing of the Missouri River along IA 175 at the Decatur Bridge (FHWA #036810; 67-00750)

Thank you for providing us the opportunity to review and comment on both the Phase IA Archeological and Geomorphological Review for Proposed Improvement of the IA 175 Bridge over the Missouri River, Franklin Township, Monona County, Iowa, and A Phase IA Historical Background and Architectural Review for Proposed Improvement of the IA 175 Bridge over the Missouri River, Franklin Township, Monona County, Iowa (Historical/Architectural Report), both documents prepared by Bear Creek Archeology, Inc. January 2024.

SHPO archaeologists reviewed the Phase IA Archeological and Geomorphological Review and agree with the recommendations.

SHPO agrees that the Decatur Bridge (ISIF# 67-00714) is still eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places.

Comments on the Historical/Architectural Report

We do not agree that further survey of the campground is necessary. No further work needed. The Historical/Architectural Report contains information about shipwrecks; this documentation would be more appropriately placed within the Archeological and Geomorphological Review report. Additionally, it appears to be a combination of archeological reporting standards/language and historical/architectural survey/reporting standards. Above-ground surveys and related reports submitted to SHPO should meet or exceed the draft Guidelines for Historic Architectural Survey in Iowa, the National Park Service bulletin (#24) Guidelines for Local Surveys: A Basis for Preservation Planning, and the Secretary of the Interior's Standards and Guidelines for Historical Documentation.

It does not appear that a Secretary of the Interior (SoI) qualified historian/architectural historian was involved in the preparation of the report. SHPO would like to stress that it is important that the appropriate SoI qualified professional be involved in survey and reporting.

We recognize the complexities in working on a project involving two states. Please keep us informed as the project and the consultation progresses, and feel free to reach out if there are additional questions or comments.

You will not receive a hard copy of this email. It is the submitter's responsibility to maintain the official file of record. If you have any questions or comments, please feel free to contact our office.

Sincerely,

Sara André
Architectural Historian/Historic Preservation Specialist
State Historic Preservation Office
Pronouns: She/Her/Hers
sara.andre@iowaeda.com | +1 (515) 348-6286 | culture.iowaeda.com/shpo

Iowa Economic Development Authority 

From: [Dolan, Brennan](#)
To: [Felix, Jessica](#); [Poole, Angela](#); [Stupka, Stacy](#); [Winkelmann, Michelle L](#); [Becker, Janee](#)
Cc: [Domogalla, Kevin](#); [Tymkowicz, Shane](#); [Tracy, Sarah](#); [Cannon-Mackey, Shari](#); [LaPietra, Mike \(FHWA\)](#)
Subject: FW: NE 51 / IA 175 Decatur Bridge - Week of Nov 18 - Tribal Surveys
Date: Tuesday, December 3, 2024 8:57:16 AM
Attachments: [image002.png](#)
[image004.png](#)
[Project Safety Plan for STP-175-1\(106\)--2C-67.pdf](#)

Jessica / Angie / Stacy / Michelle / Janee –

As noted below I was in the field the week of Nov 18 with three of our consulting Tribes/Nations who had requested either Tribal Survey or Field Review for the subject Project.

- Flandreau Santee Sioux (Tim Mentz Jr/Dennis Gill Sr)
- Omaha Tribe of Nebraska (Mark Parker/Jarell Grant)
- Winnebago Tribe of Nebraska (Sunshine Thomas-Bear)

In brief the Tribal Survey or Field Review findings were as follows:

1. No sharing of information about known sites or traditional cultural places/properties was provided or known. All three Tribes/Nations said that they would continue to check records.
2. The Omaha Tribe / Winnebago Tribe requested a joint field review with NE DOT (Stupka) and IA DOT (Dolan) once we are nearing a preferred alternative, largely to share with Tribal Council members (Stacy and I discussed yesterday).
3. The Omaha Tribe / Winnebago Tribe shared a concern for cultural materials in fill of roadway (as has recently occurred in MN - <https://www.startribune.com/indigenous-remains-unearthed-at-site-of-major-duluth-road-project/600257832>)

As we near a preferred alternative, please know that Stacy and I will be working to jointly coordinate bullet #2. If there are any as-builts known for the project please let me know, as I will share with our Tribal partners.

Please let me know if you have any questions,

Brennan Dolan, RPA 16260
Cultural Resources Team Lead/Tribal Liaison
Location and Environment Bureau
Iowa Department of Transportation
800 Lincoln Way
Ames, Iowa 50010
515-239-1795
brennan.dolan@iowadot.us
iowadot.gov



From: Dolan, Brennan

Sent: Tuesday, November 12, 2024 11:23 AM

To: Poole, Angela <Angela.Poole@iowadot.us>; Felix, Jessica <Jessica.Felix@iowadot.us>

Cc: Becker, Janee <Janee.Becker@iowadot.us>; McCullough, Susan

<Susan.Mccullough@iowadot.us>; Tymkowicz, Shane <Shane.Tymkowicz@iowadot.us>; Tracy, Sarah <Sarah.Tracy@iowadot.us>

Subject: IA 175 Decatur Bridge - Week of Nov 18 - Tribal Surveys

Angie / Jessica –

This is just a heads up, I don't need a response.

I will be in the field next week completing tribal review of this project. To date the following Tribes are planning to join me:

- Flandreau Santee Sioux (Tim Mentz/Sara Childers)
- Omaha Tribe of Nebraska (Mark Parker)
- Winnebago Tribe of Nebraska (Sunshine Thomas-Bear)

I have contacted landowners and the Iowa DNR. I suspect most of our work will be on foot. The weather looks seasonal. My safety plan is attached.

Let me know if you have any questions,

Brennan Dolan, RPA 16260

Cultural Resources Team Lead/Tribal Liaison

Location and Environment Bureau

Iowa Department of Transportation

800 Lincoln Way

Ames, Iowa 50010

515-239-1795

brennan.dolan@iowadot.us

iowadot.gov



Cooperating Agency Invitation & Response

Winkelmann, Michelle L

From: Pitts, Luke (FHWA) <luke.pitts@dot.gov>
Sent: Tuesday, April 22, 2025 3:46 PM
To: 'Eric.Washburn@uscg.mil'; 'David.a.Orzechowski@uscg.mil'
Cc: LaPietra, Mike (FHWA); Luther, Justin (FHWA); Knott, Dawn; jon.barber; Ondracek, Anna; Schwienebart, Christine; Winkelmann, Michelle L; Cannon-Mackey, Shari
Subject: USCG Cooperating Agency Invitation: Decatur Bridge_STP-51-7(109)_CN 32395
Attachments: USCG Cooperating Agency Invitation Decatur Bridge_STP-51-7(109)_CN 32395.pdf

Mr. Washburn and Mr. Orzechowski,

The Nebraska Department of Transportation (NDOT), in partnership with the Iowa Department of Transportation (Iowa DOT) and the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), is proposing the improvement of the Nebraska Highway 51 (N-51) and Iowa Highway 175 (IA-175) crossing of the Missouri River connecting Burt County, Nebraska and Monona County, Iowa. We invite USCG to be a cooperating agency for the project. Please see the attached formal invitation. To keep the project schedule, we request USCG provide a written response either accepting or declining this invitation within 15 days of the date of this letter.

Please let us know if you have any questions.

Thank you.

Luke Pitts, PMP
Environmental Specialist
Federal Highway Administration
Nebraska Division
402.742.8466

Luke Pitts, PMP
Environmental Specialist
Federal Highway Administration
Nebraska Division
402.742.8466



U.S. Department
of Transportation
**Federal Highway
Administration**

NEBRASKA DIVISION

April 22, 2025

100 Centennial Mall North, Rm 220
Lincoln, Nebraska 68508
402-742-8460
402-742-8480
FHWA.NE@dot.gov

Eric Washburn
Bridge Supervisor
Eighth Coast Guard District Bridge Office
1222 Spruce Street, Room 2, 102D
St. Louis MO 63103-2832
Eric.Washburn@uscg.mil
618.623.2745

David Orzechowski
Eighth Coast Guard District Bridge Office
1222 Spruce Street, Room 2, 102D
St. Louis MO 63103-2832
David.a.Orzechowski@uscg.mil
314.269.2382

Re: Invitation to the United States Coast Guard to Become a Cooperating Agency for the
Proposed Nebraska Department of Transportation and Iowa Department of Transportation
Project to Replace the Decatur Bridge over the Missouri River Connecting
Burt County, Nebraska and Monona County, Iowa
STP-51-7(109), CN 32395

Dear Mr. Washburn and Mr. Orzechowski:

The Nebraska Department of Transportation (NDOT), in partnership with the Iowa Department of Transportation (Iowa DOT) and the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), is proposing the improvement of the Nebraska Highway 51 (N-51) and Iowa Highway 175 (IA-175) crossing of the Missouri River connecting Burt County, Nebraska and Monona County, Iowa (see attachments). The Decatur Bridge Location and Environmental Study completed by NDOT and the Iowa DOT in November 2024 identified two build alternatives to be carried forward for further analysis in accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA).

The purpose of the project is to provide a resilient river crossing connecting Decatur, Nebraska/N-51 and Onawa, Iowa/IA-175 that maintains access to regional commerce, employment, education, health care, and recreation facilities; maintains accessibility to and by emergency services; and provides infrastructure to support current and future travel demand. The project is needed to maintain connectivity, improve the condition of the river crossing, and improve the resiliency of the crossing against flooding.

The United States Coast Guard (USCG) has been identified as having an interest in the Decatur Bridge because of the agency's jurisdiction over navigable waters in the project area under Section 9 of the Rivers and Harbors Act of 1899 and expertise in river navigation and water-related resources.

Role as a Cooperating Agency: As a cooperating agency for the Decatur Bridge Environmental Assessment, the USCG will be afforded the opportunity, together with the public, to review the purpose and need established for the proposed project and to provide input into the evaluation of reasonable alternatives. The USCG's involvement should include those areas under its jurisdiction and expertise, with no direct writing or analysis expected in preparation of the environmental document. FHWA invites the USCG to:

- Participate in the NEPA process at the earliest practicable time.
- Participate in the scoping process (Agency Scoping invitations will be distributed in the next several weeks).
- Support the development of information and scoping of environmental and engineering analyses for areas under your jurisdiction or expertise.
- Make staff available under your own funding mechanisms to support the interdisciplinary review of the proposed action.
- Consult with FHWA, NDOT, Iowa DOT, and other Cooperating Agencies in developing and meeting the project schedule.
- Meet FHWA's schedule for providing comments and limiting your agency's comments to those matters under your jurisdiction by law or areas of special expertise.
- Issue environmental documents or decisions, when practicable, jointly with FHWA, NDOT, and Iowa DOT or using the documentation developed by FHWA to support the issuance of your own decision document.

Response Requested: We request USCG provide a written response either accepting or declining this invitation within 15 days of the date of this letter. If your agency declines this invitation, please indicate the reason for declining. Please submit your response, including confirmation of your project point of contact via email to Luke Pitts, FHWA Environmental Protection Specialist, luke.pitts@dot.gov

If you have any questions or would like to discuss the project in more detail or your agency's respective roles and responsibilities during the preparation of the Decatur Bridge Environmental Assessment, please contact Jon Barber, Environmental Documents Supervisor, jon.barber@nebraska.gov.

Thank you for your consideration and interest in the Decatur Bridge Project.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Luke Pitts', with a stylized, cursive script.

Luke Pitts
Environmental Specialist
Federal Highway Administration
Nebraska Division
402.742.8466

Attachments:

Project Location Map

Cc: Mike LaPietra, FHWA Iowa Division
Dawn Knott, NDOT
Jon Barber, NDOT
Anna Ondracek, NDOT
Christine Schwienebart, Iowa DOT
Michelle Winkelmann, Burns & McDonnell
Shari Cannon-Mackey, Burns & McDonnell



Project Location

The Nebraska Department of Transportation (NDOT), in partnership with the Iowa Department of Transportation (Iowa DOT) and the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), is proposing the improvement of the Nebraska Highway 51 (N-51) and Iowa Highway 175 (IA-175) crossing of the Missouri River connecting Burt County, Nebraska and Monona County, Iowa, known as the Decatur Bridge.

The Decatur Bridge (S051 03644), constructed in 1951 and opened to traffic in 1956, has been determined eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP).

**U.S. Department of
Homeland Security**

**United States
Coast Guard**



Commander
United States Coast Guard
Eighth Coast Guard District

1222 Spruce St, Room 2.102D
St. Louis, MO 63103
Staff Symbol: dwb
Phone: (314) 269-2382
Email:
David.A.Orzechowski@uscg.mil

16591 /691.0 MOR
April 24, 2025

Mr. Luke Pitts
Federal Highway Administration
Nebraska Division
100 Centennial Mall North, Rm 220
Lincoln, NE 68508

Dear Mr. Pitts:

The Coast Guard has established a bridge permitting project for the proposed highway fixed bridge – Decatur Bridge across Missouri River, mile 691.0 at Decatur, Burt County, Nebraska.

The Coast Guard hereby accepts Cooperating Agency/Consulting Party status with the Federal Highway Administration - FHWA as the Lead Federal Agency (LFA) for the above Federal undertaking as requested in your letter dated April 22, 2025. This designation applies to compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) (42 U.S.C. 4321, et seq), National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA) of 1966 (54 U.S.C. § 306108, et seq) (if applicable), and all other applicable environmental control laws.

If the NHPA has application in this project, the Coast Guard does not intend to serve as signatory to the MOA, unless assigned responsibilities to carry out functions within the Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) (beyond issuance of a Coast Guard Bridge Permit).

The Coast Guard Bridge Permit Application Guide (BPAG), Commandant Publication P16591.3D, and BPAG Applicant Template are enclosed to provide information concerning the environmental documentation requirements related to Coast Guard bridge permitting.

Please contact Mr. David A. Orzechowski, project officer, at the above telephone number or email address if you have any questions. Please maintain frequent and regular contact with the project officer to ensure efficient and effective project administration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Eric A. Washburn", written over a horizontal line.

ERIC A. WASHBURN
Bridge Supervisor, Western Rivers
By direction of the District Commander

16591 /691.0 MOR
April 24, 2025

Encl: Bridge Permit Application Guide, COMDTPUB P16195.3D and BPAG Applicant
Template located at <https://www.dco.uscg.mil/Our-Organization/Assistant-Commandant-for-Prevention-Policy-CG-5P/Marine-Transportation-Systems-CG-5PW/Office-of-Bridge-Programs/Bridge-Permit-Application-Process/>

Copy: CG Sector UMR, Waterways Management
U. S. Army Corps of Engineers, Kansas City District
Federal Highways Administration, Iowa Division



U.S. Department
of Transportation
**Federal Highway
Administration**

NEBRASKA DIVISION

May 19, 2025

100 Centennial Mall North, Rm 220
Lincoln, Nebraska 68508
402-742-8460
FHWA.NE@dot.gov

Colonel Robert J. Newbauer
Commander and District Engineer
US Army Corps of Engineering, Omaha District
1616 Capitol Avenue
Omaha NE 68102-4901

Re: Invitation to the United States Army Corps of Engineers to Become a Cooperating Agency for the Proposed Nebraska Department of Transportation and Iowa Department of Transportation Project to Replace the Decatur Bridge over the Missouri River Connecting Burt County, Nebraska and Monona County, Iowa
STP-51-7(109), CN 32395

Dear Colonel Newbauer:

The Nebraska Department of Transportation (NDOT), in partnership with the Iowa Department of Transportation (Iowa DOT) and the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), is proposing the improvement of the Nebraska Highway 51 (N-51) and Iowa Highway 175 (IA-175) crossing of the Missouri River connecting Burt County, Nebraska and Monona County, Iowa (see attachments). The Decatur Bridge Location and Environmental Study completed by NDOT and the Iowa DOT in November 2024 identified two build alternatives to be carried forward for further analysis in accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA).

The purpose of the project is to provide a resilient river crossing connecting Decatur, Nebraska/N-51 and Onawa, Iowa/IA-175 that maintains access to regional commerce, employment, education, health care, and recreation facilities; maintains accessibility to and by emergency services; and provides infrastructure to support current and future travel demand. The project is needed to maintain connectivity, improve the condition of the river crossing, and improve the resiliency of the crossing against flooding.

The United States Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) has been identified as having an interest in the Decatur Bridge because of the agency's jurisdiction under Section 404 of the Clean Water Act and Section 14 (codified as 33 USC 408) of the Rivers and Harbors Act of 1899, ownership of mitigation easements within the project area, and expertise in hydrology, water features, and water-related resources.

Role as a Cooperating Agency: As a cooperating agency for the Decatur Bridge Environmental Assessment, the USACE will be afforded the opportunity, together with the public, to review the purpose and need established for the proposed project and to provide input into the evaluation of reasonable alternatives. The USACE's involvement should include those areas under its

jurisdiction and expertise, with no direct writing or analysis expected in preparation of the environmental document. FHWA invites the USACE to:

- Participate in the NEPA process at the earliest practicable time.
- Participate in the scoping process (Agency Scoping invitations will be distributed in the next several weeks).
- Support the development of information and scoping of environmental and engineering analyses for areas under your jurisdiction or expertise.
- Make staff available under your own funding mechanisms to support the interdisciplinary review of the proposed action.
- Consult with FHWA, NDOT, Iowa DOT, and other Cooperating Agencies in developing and meeting the project schedule.
- Meet FHWA's schedule for providing comments and limiting your agency's comments to those matters under your jurisdiction by law or areas of special expertise.
- Issue environmental documents or decisions, when practicable, jointly with FHWA, NDOT, and Iowa DOT or using the documentation developed by FHWA to support the issuance of your own decision document.

Response Requested: We request USACE provide a written response either accepting or declining this invitation within 15 days of the date of this letter. If your agency declines this invitation, please indicate the reason for declining. Please submit your response, including confirmation of your project point of contact via email to Luke Pitts, FHWA Environmental Protection Specialist, luke.pitts@dot.gov

If you have any questions or would like to discuss the project in more detail or your agency's respective roles and responsibilities during the preparation of the Decatur Bridge Environmental Assessment, please contact Jon Barber, Environmental Documents Supervisor, jon.barber@nebraska.gov.

Thank you for your consideration and interest in the Decatur Bridge Project

Sincerely,

JAMES R SIMERL

Digitally signed by
JAMES R SIMERL
Date: 2025.05.19
15:17:27 -05'00'

James R. Simerl
Acting Division Administrator

Attachments:

Project Location Map

Cc: Sean Litteral, FHWA Iowa Division
Dawn Knott, NDOT
Jon Barber, NDOT
Christine Schwienebart, Iowa DOT
Michelle Winkelmann, Burns & McDonnell
Shari Cannon-Mackey, Burns & McDonnell



Project Location

The Nebraska Department of Transportation (NDOT), in partnership with the Iowa Department of Transportation (Iowa DOT) and the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), is proposing the improvement of the Nebraska Highway 51 (N-51) and Iowa Highway 175 (IA-175) crossing of the Missouri River connecting Burt County, Nebraska and Monona County, Iowa, known as the Decatur Bridge.

The Decatur Bridge (S051 03644), constructed in 1951 and opened to traffic in 1956, has been determined eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP).

From: [Pitts, Luke \(FHWA\)](#)
To: [Winkelmann, Michelle L](#); [Coburn, John](#); [Domogalla, Kevin](#); [Harvey, Kirk](#); [Ondracek, Anna](#); ["Raaska, AJ"](#); [Shreya, Aritree](#); [Stupka, Stacy](#); [Ferdon, Andrew S](#); [Zillig, Kyle](#); [Narigon, Linda](#); [Pottorff, Justin](#); [Schwienebart, Christine](#); [Todsén, Michael](#); [Tracy, Sarah](#); [Mitrising, Andrew S \(Drew\)](#); [Cannon-Mackey, Shari](#)
Cc: [Barron, Ross](#); [Hummel, Lisa K](#); [Knott, Dawn](#); [Laffin, Diane](#); [Harris, Brandy M](#); [Becker, Janee](#); [Felix, Jessica](#); [Newell, Deeann](#); [Schmit, Brandon N](#)
Subject: FW: 408-NWO-2023-0050 / RE: USACE Cooperating Agency Invitation: Decatur Bridge_STP-51-7(109)_CN 32395
Date: Thursday, May 29, 2025 11:31:08 AM
Attachments: [USACE_CooperatingAgencyInvite_2025-05-19-2025-signed.pdf](#)

Decatur Project Team,

Please see the attached FHWA invitation to USACE and the USACE response below.

Let me know if you have any questions.

Luke Pitts, PMP

Environmental Specialist
Federal Highway Administration
Nebraska Division
402.742.8466

From: Nebel, Adam R CIV USARMY CENWO (USA) <Adam.R.Nebel@usace.army.mil>
Sent: Wednesday, May 28, 2025 4:11 PM
To: Pitts, Luke (FHWA) <luke.pitts@dot.gov>; Grauf, Jeremy CIV USARMY CENWO (USA) <Jeremy.Grauf@usace.army.mil>
Cc: Luther, Justin (FHWA) <Justin.Luther@dot.gov>; Harbison, Brett A CIV (USA) <Brett.Harbison@usace.army.mil>; Podkowka, Rebecca L CIV USARMY CENWO (USA) <Rebecca.L.Podkowka@usace.army.mil>; Steele, Abigail A CIV USARMY CEMVR (USA) <Abigail.A.Steele@usace.army.mil>; Scott, Aurora C CIV USARMY CEMVR (USA) <Aurora.C.Scott@usace.army.mil>; Bentzinger, Ruth E CIV USARMY CENWO (USA) <Ruth.E.Bentzinger@usace.army.mil>
Subject: 408-NWO-2023-0050 / RE: USACE Cooperating Agency Invitation: Decatur Bridge_STP-51-7(109)_CN 32395

CAUTION: This email originated from outside of the Department of Transportation (DOT). Do not click on links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Luke,

This approach works great. Thank you for the updated letter.

The USACE accepts the FHWA's cooperating agency invitation for the subject Decatur Bridge project, proposing the improvement of the Nebraska Highway 51 (N-51) and Iowa Highway 175 (IA-175) crossing of the Missouri River connecting Burt County, Nebraska and Monona County, Iowa. Portions

of the project will require USACE review and approval under Section 404 of the Clean Water Act (33 U.S.C. 1344) and Section 14 of the Rivers and Harbors Act (33 U.S.C. 408) for alterations to the Missouri River Bank Stabilization and Navigation Project (BSNP) and Missouri River Recovery Program (MRRP), and associated USACE Real Estate instruments. Most of the proposed project study area is within the Omaha District's Regulatory and Civil Works areas of responsibility, however a portion of the project is within Rock Island District's Regulatory area of responsibility. Omaha District has coordinated with Rock Island District (cc'd) and determined Omaha District will be the lead USACE district for this project.

Brett Harbison will be the point of contact for the USACE Nebraska Regulatory Office (Section 404). [Reference # TBD]

I (Adam Nebel) will be the point of contact for the Section 408. [Reference # 408-NWO-2023-0050] I have also cc'd Ruth Bentzinger with the USACE Missouri River Project Office (MRPO) which oversees alterations to MRRP lands.

In accordance with 42 U.S.C 4321 et seq., USACE Omaha District accepts Cooperating Agency status for the Decatur Bridge project and recognizes FHWA as the Lead Agency for NEPA on these actions. We will continue to work together in attempt to minimize duplication of efforts and to the maximum extent practicable, will adopt and utilize analysis conducted for the development of environmental documents.

Let us know if you have any questions.

Thank you,

Adam Nebel
Section 408 Coordinator & Program Manager
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers - Omaha District
Planning Branch, CENWO-PMA-A
1616 Capitol Avenue
Omaha, NE 68102
(402) 995-2068
<https://www.nwo.usace.army.mil/Missions/Civil-Works/Section-408/>

Adverse Effect Determination Review & Concurrence



U.S. Department
of Transportation
**Federal Highway
Administration**

NEBRASKA DIVISION

August 20, 2025

100 Centennial Mall North, Rm 220
Lincoln, Nebraska 68508
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FHWA.NE@dot.gov

Janee Becker
Cultural Resources Manager
Location and Environment Bureau
Iowa Department of Transportation
800 Lincoln Way
Ames, IA 50010

Nebraska DOT Project No: STP-51-7(109) CN 32395
Iowa DOT Project No: STP-175-1(106)—2C-67
Burt County, Nebraska and Monona County, Iowa

Dear Ms. Becker:

Regarding the undertaking referenced above, one historic property, the Decatur Bridge, has been identified in the Section 106 area of potential effects (APE).

The FHWA is the lead federal agency. Based on the Alternatives Analysis, which considered avoidance and minimization measures, the consideration of project effects, and public input, we recommend that there are no feasible and prudent alternatives that avoid the demolition of the bridge. Therefore, the proposed undertaking would have an adverse effect on historic properties. FHWA has made a project effects determination of *adverse effect*. FHWA will notify the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation of this adverse effect.

It is recommended that there are no feasible and prudent alternatives to the use of this historic bridge, and FHWA recommends that this use would fall under the Programmatic Section 4(f) Evaluation and Approval of FHWA Projects that Necessitate the Use of Historic Bridges.

Please let me know if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

Luke Pitts
Environmental Protection Specialist
luke.pitts@dot.gov
402-742-8466

cc: Sean Litteral, FHWA, Iowa Division
Stacy Stupka, NDOT
Dawn Knott, NDOT
Anna Ondracek, NDOT



U.S. Department
of Transportation
**Federal Highway
Administration**

NEBRASKA DIVISION

August 26, 2025

100 Centennial Mall North, Rm 220
Lincoln, Nebraska 68508
402-742-8460
402-742-8480
FHWA.NE@dot.gov

Michael Sothan
Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer
Nebraska State Historical Society
1500 R ST
Lincoln, NE 68508

RE: NDOT Project No: STP-51-7(109) CN 32395, Decatur Bridge, Burt County, Nebraska and
Monona County, Iowa Cultural Resources Evaluation

Dear Mr. Sothan:

The Nebraska Department of Transportation (NDOT), in partnership with the Iowa Department of Transportation (Iowa DOT), proposes to construct the project referenced above using funds from the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA). The Project is in Burt County, Nebraska and Monona County, Iowa, along Nebraska Highway 51 (N-51) and Iowa Highway 175 (IA-175) (Enclosure 1). Because of FHWA involvement, the proposed project is a federal undertaking that must be reviewed under Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA), as amended (36 CFR Part 800), requiring federal agencies to consider and consult about the effects of proposed projects on historic (National Register of Historic Places [NRHP]-listed or eligible) properties.

An Environmental Assessment (EA) is currently being prepared, within which the results of Section 106 consultation will be included. As an EA, this project has not been assigned to NDOT pursuant to 23 U.S.C. §326, commonly referred to as "CE Assignment." FHWA Nebraska Division is the lead federal agency. An evaluation of the potential for cultural resources, archeological, architectural, and structural, is provided below and in the accompanying enclosures. Please review this documentation as required under Section 106 of the NHPA of 1966, as amended, and implementing regulations at 36 CFR Part 800.

The US Army Corps of Engineers (USACE), Omaha District; US Coast Guard (USCG), Eighth Coast Guard District; Nebraska State Historic Preservation Office (NESHPO); Iowa SHPO; Burt County, Nebraska; Monona County, Iowa, Monona County Historic Preservation Commission, the Village of Decatur, Nebraska; and City of Onawa, Iowa have been identified as consulting parties for this project.

Further, the following tribes have been identified as having an interest in the Project Area: Arapahoe Tribe of the Wind River Reservation, Wyoming, Cheyenne and Arapaho Tribes, Flandreau Santee Sioux, Iowa Tribe of Kansas and Nebraska, Iowa Tribe of Oklahoma, Northern Cheyenne Tribe of the

Northern Cheyenne Indian Reservation, Montana, Oglala Sioux Tribe, Omaha Tribe of Nebraska, Otoe-Missouria Tribe of Indians, Pawnee Nation of Oklahoma, Peoria Tribe of Indians of Oklahoma, Ponca Tribe of Nebraska, Prairie Band Potawatomi Nation, Prairie Island Indian Community, Rosebud Sioux Tribe, Sac & Fox Nation of Oklahoma, Sac & Fox Tribe of the Mississippi in Iowa, Santee Sioux Nation, Sisseton-Wahpeton Oyate, Spirit Lake Tribe, Three Affiliated Tribes, Upper Sioux Community, Winnebago Tribe of Nebraska, and Yankton Sioux.

Project Description Summary

The project is proposed along N-51 / IA-175 within Burt County, Nebraska and Monona County, Iowa, at the bridge over the Missouri River (Structure Number S051 03644), mile marker (MM) 36.63. Construction may begin just east of Broadway Street in Decatur, Nebraska, at MM 36.17, and end near IA-175 reference post (RP) 1.09 to accommodate the replacement of the structure.

During the *Decatur Bridge Location and Environmental Study*,¹ conducted in 2023-2024, NDOT and Iowa DOT developed and screened a universe of alternatives to improve the N-51/IA-175 crossing of the Missouri River. The alternatives included the No Build, Rehabilitation of the existing bridge, Use of Another River Crossing, Transportation Systems Management (TSM)/Transportation Demand Management (TDM), Alternate Transportation Modes, and several alignments for a new river crossing including the existing N-51/IA-175 location. These alternatives were shared with, and the DOTs received input from agencies, a Community Advisory Group (CAG), and the public.

The build alternative under consideration would remove the existing bridge (S051 03644) and replace the crossing with a new bridge north of the existing bridge (identified as Blue Alternative in the *Decatur Bridge Location and Environmental Study*). Phasing will require a permanent alignment shift and grade raise. Work will be required in the Missouri River. The exact bridge location is being evaluated as part of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) process. Approach roadways on both sides of the Missouri River (N-51 / IA-175) will be reconstructed to the extent determined by Roadway Design, and guardrails will be removed and replaced.

The project will be constructed under traffic with lane closures and temporary crossovers as needed. Additional property rights will be required. Access to adjacent properties will be maintained but may be limited at times due to phasing requirements. A detailed project description is included as Enclosure 2.

Initial Survey Area (ISA) and Area of Potential Effects (APE)

Prior to the development of possible build alternatives, an Initial Survey Area (ISA) was developed to identify historic (NRHP-listed or eligible) resources along with other features that could represent constraints to Project Development. The ISA was defined as roughly 1,500 feet north of the existing crossing and 1,000 south of the existing crossing and extending along N-51 and IA-175 an appropriate distance to allow for connections back into the existing roadway for alignments that may deviate from the existing highways. This ISA comprised approximately 223.8 acres on both sides of the existing river crossing. The ISA in Nebraska included approximately 79.7 acres (Enclosures 1 and 3).

¹ The *Decatur Bridge Location and Environment Study* can be accessed at: [cn32395-decatur-bridge-location-and-environmental-study-feasibility-report-2025-01-13-final-1.pdf](https://dnr.nebraska.gov/publications/cn32395-decatur-bridge-location-and-environmental-study-feasibility-report-2025-01-13-final-1.pdf)

Following the completion of the *Decatur Bridge Location and Environmental Study*, an area of potential effects (APE) for both archeological and architectural/structural properties was developed to adequately identify any historic properties that may be potentially affected given the scale and scope of this undertaking. For effects to archeological resources the physical APE represents the limits of disturbance of the subject build alternative that would site a new bridge north of the existing bridge. The physical APE comprises approximately 10.6 acres in Nebraska within the original boundaries of the ISA (Enclosure 3, page 1). The APE for visual effects to above ground resources was defined as areas within the viewshed of the proposed bridge structure. It comprises the limits of disturbance plus 26.4 acres (Enclosure 3, page 2).

Archeological Evaluation

Burns & McDonnell's archeologists completed a survey report for the 79.7-acre Nebraska ISA in January 2024 as part of the pre-NEPA studies conducted during the Feasibility Study (Enclosure 4). The Iowa DOT conducted cultural resources surveys for the Iowa portion of the ISA in the Spring of 2024. The results of those investigations are described in survey reports provided by Iowa DOT, reviewed by Iowa SHPO, and not further referenced herein.

Burns & McDonnell conducted a subsequent archeological field survey of the direct APE comprising the limits of disturbance for the proposed build alternative on May 14 and 15, 2025. According to Nebraska State Archeology Office's Nebraska Cultural Resources Geographic Information System (NCRGIS), no previously recorded archeological resources are within the direct APE (Enclosures 4 and 8). Two historic-age artifact scatters were identified during the recent field investigation. Both scatters are derived from fill and were not recorded as archeological sites due to their secondary context and lack of depositional integrity.

No archeological historic properties are present within the direct APE.

Architectural/Structural Evaluation

The ISA was investigated by Burns & McDonnell using the Nebraska State Historic Preservation Office inventory and site files, Historic Resources Survey of Burt County, Nebraska (2016), historic maps, and other primary and secondary sources in September 2023. Burns & McDonnell conducted field surveys from September 19 through September 21, 2023. All properties identified as meeting the NESHPO Historic Resources Survey Manual criteria for survey were evaluated and incorporated into this investigation. These criteria include, but are not limited to, properties that are 50 years old or older, in their original location, and which possess the potential for integrity, significant historic association, and historic architectural qualities.

This survey resulted in the documentation of 94 historic-age architectural resources on 63 properties within or immediately adjacent to the ISA. Of the resources recorded, historians documented one NRHP-listed resource, the A.B. Fuller House/Decatur Museum (BT03-004/no-longer-extant), a bungalow recommended for NRHP inclusion under Criterion C (BT03-007), and the NRHP-eligible Decatur Bridge (BT03-004). Of these resources, only the Decatur Bridge (BT03-014/S051 03644) is located within the direct APE (Enclosures 5 and 7). There are no historic properties identified within the visual APE.

S051 03644 (Decatur Bridge)

The Decatur bridge is a continuous thru-truss steel bridge consisting of a three-span Nebraska approach unit, a two-span Warren thru-truss River Unit, and two Iowa approach units, each three spans long. Construction began in 1950, and the bridge opened to traffic in 1956. The bridge was erected to provide the first highway crossing over the Missouri River between Burt County, Nebraska and Monona County, Iowa. The Decatur Bridge is 1,956 feet long and 23 feet wide. It was previously determined NRHP eligible under Criterion A (Enclosure 6): Transportation “for establishing a first highway crossing of a major waterway and as a major state bridge building initiative” and under Criterion C: Engineering, as a “steel continuous thru-truss bridge of an exceptional span length” under the update to the MPD Form, Intensive Architectural Survey of Iowa Primary and Secondary Road Bridges Built Between 1942 and 1970 (Baynard et al. 2011). The registration requirements include spans of over 400 feet in length as exceptional. With a main span of 421 feet, the Decatur bridge meets this requirement. The NESHPO officially concurred with the NRHP eligibility determination in 2013 (Enclosure 6).

Alternatives Evaluation

To consider the priorities identified in the Historic Bridge Management Plan (Enclosure 7), NDOT is responsible for identifying and evaluating treatments/alternatives for the historic bridge. This alternatives discussion entitled Decatur Bridge Alternatives Analysis to Support Coordination Under Section 106 of the NHPA (Alternatives Analysis) is relevant to Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended and Section 4(f) of the U.S. Department of Transportation Act of 1966. For your reference, please find it attached to this document (Enclosure 7).

Section 106 of the NHPA requires federal agencies to consider the effects of a federally permitted, sponsored, or funded undertaking on historic (NRHP-listed or eligible) resources. The Programmatic Agreement Among the Federal Highway Administration, the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation and the Nebraska State Historic Preservation Officer for the Highway Bridge Replacement and Rehabilitation Program (PA) executed in 1991 established the review parameter priorities regarding the evaluation of historic bridges in Nebraska. While that PA has expired, it is still used for evaluation of historic bridges; it required the development of the Nebraska Historic Bridge Inventory and Historic Bridge Management Plan (FraserDesign and Hess, Roise and Company 1991). The PA, inventory, and management plan helped to establish a firm foundation for the consideration of historic bridges in Nebraska and established priorities for the treatment of historic bridges. These treatments are discussed in the Alternatives Analysis (Enclosure 7).

The priorities for treatment of historic bridges as outlined in the Nebraska Bridge Inventory and Historic Bridge Management Plan (FraserDesign and Hess, Roise and Company 1991), were evaluated with respect to the historic Decatur Bridge (S051 03644). Each treatment priority is discussed in the Alternatives Analysis (Enclosure 7). In summary, due to the functional and structural deficiencies of the Decatur Bridge discussed below and, in the enclosures, it is not possible to meet the priorities outlined in the bridge management plan. Please see the Alternatives Analysis for a detailed discussion.

Constructed in 1950-1955, the Decatur Bridge has undergone nine major structural repairs including the replacement of the deck in 2000-2001 and the addition of structural steel repairs in 2017. Other

repairs and ongoing maintenance have included expansion joint repairs, measures to arrest further cracking, resetting of the bearing devices, and painting. The most recent inspection, conducted in 2024, identified areas of section loss and spalling and cracking within sections of the truss' main tension members. Several cracks in floor beams and connection angles were also observed (Alternatives Analysis).

During an inspection in 2024, the Decatur Bridge was determined to be both structurally deficient and functionally deficient, as discussed below. Continued use of the bridge for vehicular traffic at either its existing location or an alternate location would require these deficiencies to be addressed.

Structural Deficiencies

The bridge is a fracture-critical structure, meaning that this steel structure lacks redundant supporting elements. If any of the main structural components become damaged or fail, there are no backup components to redistribute the structural load to support this bridge. It's important to note that this is a function of the design of the bridge and is not related to the condition of the bridge (Alternatives Analysis). During the 2024 inspection, the Decatur Bridge was determined to be structurally deficient. The bridge deck and substructure were assigned a National Bridge Inventory (NBI) rating of "5, Fair" and "7, Good," respectively, and the superstructure was assigned an NBI rating of "4, Poor."

Deck deficiencies include full replacement of the original concrete deck with open steel grate decking during 2000 – 2001 due to age-related deterioration and material degradation. The open steel grate decking, weighing approximately 20 percent of the original concrete deck, was installed to reduce dead load and preserve the bridge's functional load rating. While this intervention mitigated some structural strain, the steel grate system introduces additional exposure to weathering, reduces ride quality, and limits surface durability compared to modern bridge deck systems.

Superstructure deficiencies addressed in 2017 included steel repairs to the River Unit and Iowa Approach Unit trusses with post-tensioning of floor beams in the River Unit to increase capacity. Corrosion, section loss, and damage to structural connections were mitigated through localized repair. The entire superstructure and exposed steel substructure elements were abrasive blasted and repainted to address widespread corrosion and coating failure.

Substructure deficiencies included spalling and deterioration of concrete elements, which were repaired and strengthened at several piers. Lighting systems were overhauled, and approach railings were updated, though geometric and load-related deficiencies remain unaddressed. Overall, this structure is rated low and deficient, therefore it is deemed structurally inadequate to handle future traffic demand and was determined to be structurally deficient.

Functional Deficiencies

Narrow travel lanes, lack of sufficient shoulders, substandard vertical clearance, and load limitations restrict the use of the Decatur Bridge by overweight and oversized vehicles. The bridge has two travel lanes, each 11 feet 3-inches wide with no shoulders, falling short of current design criteria that call for 12-foot-wide lanes and 6-foot-wide shoulders on each side. The narrow width limits the size of vehicles and agricultural equipment that can cross the bridge. Agricultural equipment can take up

both lanes, limiting the bridge to a single lane of traffic. The bridge is an important crossing for trucks and large farm equipment because the nearest alternate river crossing involves an 80-mile round trip (approx.) from the Decatur area. Frequent vehicle impacts with the River Unit through-truss superstructure have contributed to approximately 20 structural deficiencies identified during the 2024 inspection. While the bridge meets current vertical clearance requirements, the overhead members still obstruct passage of some large equipment and show signs of past collisions. The bridge's inventory rating is less than half that of a modern bridge, and its load posting further restricts legal use by heavy vehicles. The existing built-up steel bridge rail does not meet current crash safety standards under AASHTO MASH TL-4 and is shorter than the required 3 feet 3 inch tall concrete barrier, increasing the risk of rollover in a crash scenario. These conditions collectively reduce the operational capacity and safety of the structure, particularly for agricultural and freight traffic, which must otherwise detour approximately 80 miles to the next nearest Missouri River crossing (Alternatives Analysis).

Analysis

Because the Decatur Bridge is both structurally deficient and functionally obsolete, continued use of the bridge for vehicular traffic at its existing location would require these deficiencies to be addressed. As described above, during the *Decatur Bridge Location and Environmental Study*, NDOT and Iowa DOT evaluated several alternatives to improve the N-51/IA-175 crossing of the Missouri River. TSM/TDM, Use of Another Crossing, and Alternate Transportation Modes did not meet the identified needs and would not provide a river crossing that meets current design standards. In addition, the population size, existing and forecasted traffic volumes, existing roadway infrastructure, including the lack of controlled intersections, and availability/accessibility to other modes were reasons why these alternatives were removed from further consideration. The three alternatives described in greater detail in the attached Alternatives Analysis include the No Build, Rehabilitation, and the Build Alternatives. Based on the 2024 inspection, the Decatur Bridge will undergo additional repair in 2025 anticipated to keep the bridge in service until replacement or rehabilitation. All three alternatives include the additional repairs planned for 2025. Unless a rehabilitation project is completed or the bridge is replaced by 2035, NDOT will close the bridge in 2035.

Rehabilitation would repair those structural deficiencies remaining after the 2025 repair project is completed. Should rehabilitation be conducted, it could address the continued deterioration of load-carrying members, including the trusses, beams, and piers, depending on what is identified during future inspections. If feasible, the potential replacement of structural components may include the truss, floorbeams, and other components that contribute to the NRHP-eligibility of the Decatur Bridge. Rehabilitation would not address the functional deficiencies of the bridge.

Rehabilitation does not meet the stated purpose and needs, which would facilitate the safe movement of people and goods along N-51/IA-175 while improving mobility, connectivity, and accessibility across the Missouri River. The original materials used to construct the bridge are wearing out. Corrosion, section loss, and pack rust will continue as new paint applied in 2017 breaks down with time and the deck continues to drain water directly onto the members below, further accelerating their deterioration.

The Alternatives Analysis further summarizes that rehabilitation would only extend the service life of the infrastructure at this location for eight to ten years beyond the No Build Alternative due to the physical condition of numerous critical elements. In addition, rehabilitation would not address the 100-year flood (Q100) overtopping risk at the Iowa roadway approach during future flood events, requiring the highway to be closed. If rehabilitation were to occur after completion of the 2025 repair project, it would not include full replacement of the bridge deck, truss expansion or replacement, or replacement of the bridge rail with a safety-compliant rail because of the physical and non-redundant design of the bridge. Rehabilitation could only potentially extend the useful life of the bridge until 2045.

Given its structural deficiencies and functional obsolescence, the Decatur Bridge would not support future vehicular use in its current location. Continued use of the bridge would require appreciable modifications to the existing structure, which, if feasible, would alter or destroy the features that make it eligible for listing on the NRHP under Criterion C, resulting in the loss of its historic integrity.

Consulting Parties

NDOT and Iowa DOT identified Section 106 consulting parties based upon professional knowledge and areas of interest identified by tribes. Early coordination letters were sent on October 20, 2023, to the following potential consulting parties: US Army Corps of Engineers, Omaha District, US Coast Guard, Eighth Coast Guard District, Nebraska SHPO, Iowa SHPO, Burt County, Nebraska, Monona County, Iowa, Monona County Historic Preservation Commission, Village of Decatur, Nebraska, City of Onawa, Iowa and to the following tribes: Arapahoe Tribe of the Wind River Reservation, Wyoming, Cheyenne and Arapaho Tribes, Flandreau Santee Sioux, Iowa Tribe of Kansas and Nebraska, Iowa Tribe of Oklahoma, Northern Cheyenne Tribe of the Northern Cheyenne Indian Reservation, Montana, Oglala Sioux Tribe, Omaha Tribe of Nebraska, Otoe-Missouria Tribe of Indians, Pawnee Nation of Oklahoma, Peoria Tribe of Indians of Oklahoma, Ponca Tribe of Nebraska, Prairie Band Potawatomi Nation, Prairie Island Indian Community, Rosebud Sioux Tribe, Sac & Fox Nation of Oklahoma, Sac & Fox Tribe of the Mississippi in Iowa, Santee Sioux Nation, Sisseton-Wahpeton Oyate, Spirit Lake Tribe, Three Affiliated Tribes, Upper Sioux Community, Winnebago Tribe of Nebraska, and Yankton Sioux Tribe.

NDOT received two responses from the NESHPO and the Pawnee Nation. NESHPO expressed concern over the Decatur Bridge and said any major changes to it or demolition would result in an Adverse Effect determination. It confirmed the NRHP listed Fuller House along with two archeological sites in its proximity. The Pawnee Nation indicated that the proposed project would not adversely affect the tribe's cultural landscape (Enclosure 8).

Requests for review and comments on the cultural desktop review completed for the Nebraska portion of the project were sent on 06/11/2024. NDOT received two responses from the Northern Cheyenne Nation and the Northern Arapaho Tribe. The Northern Cheyenne Nation requested a Class I and/or Class III report before any determination. The Northern Arapaho Tribe indicated a "high" probability of properties of religious and cultural significance to the tribe (Enclosure 9). FHWA will continue consultation regarding these comments.

Public Input

To obtain public input, NDOT held public information open house meetings on August 28, 2024, and on August 29, 2024, during the Feasibility Study. Public information open house meetings were used to provide information regarding the project and to receive the public's input from residents and individuals that represent businesses directly adjacent, homeowner associations and local agencies.

Public Information Open House Meeting – August 28, 2024 (Onawa, Iowa)

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A second public information open house was held on August 29, 2024, at Decatur City Hall in Decatur, Nebraska, with approximately 81 attendees. Public input reflected strong local interest in maintaining access to health care, employment, and daily services in Onawa. Many attendees expressed concern over extended bridge closures and supported alternatives that would allow the existing bridge to remain open during construction. The Blue and Orange alignments were again commonly favored for their proximity to the existing crossing and reduced impact on Decatur's businesses and residential areas.

Recommended Section 106 Effects and Section 4(f) Use

Based on the Alternatives Analysis, the consideration of the priorities for treatment of historic bridges as outlined in the Nebraska Bridge Inventory and Historic Bridge Management Plan (FraserDesign and Hess, Roise and Company 1991), NDOT's recommended project effects determination (Enclosure 10) and lack of public opposition, FHWA recommends that there are no feasible and prudent alternatives that avoid the demolition of the bridge. Therefore, the proposed undertaking would have an adverse effect on historic properties and FHWA has made a project effects determination of *adverse effect*. FHWA will notify the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation of this adverse effect.

It is recommended that there are no feasible and prudent alternatives to the use of this historic bridge, and FHWA recommends that this use would fall under the Programmatic Section 4(f) Evaluation and Approval of FHWA Projects that Necessitate the Use of Historic Bridges.

This undertaking has been reviewed under the programmatic agreement entitled Programmatic Agreement Among the Federal Highway Administration, the Nebraska State Historic Preservation Officer, the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation and the Nebraska Department of Transportation to Satisfy the Requirements of Section 106 for the Federal Aid Highway Program in the State of Nebraska (February 2023), as amended, and meets the requirements to be considered a Tier III project.

FHWA respectfully requests NESHPO concurrence with the above NRHP eligibility determinations, Section 106 determination of effects, and Section 4(f) use recommendations. Upon receipt of your concurrence, FHWA, with the assistance of NDOT and Iowa DOT will begin facilitating discussions with your office, the Iowa SHPO, and consulting parties to seek ways to mitigate the adverse effect. Following additional consultation, we will generate a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) documenting agreed-upon mitigation measures.

If you have any questions regarding this information do not hesitate to contact me at your earliest convenience.

Sincerely,



Luke Pitts

Environmental Protection Specialist

Federal Highway Administration

luke.pitts@dot.gov

402-742-8466

SHPO Concurrence

Date

ENCLOSURES:

1. Project Location Map
2. Project Description
3. APE map
4. Archeology Report
5. Architectural/Structural Report
6. Decatur Bridge Eligibility Determination Letters
7. Section 106 Alternatives Analysis
8. Section 106 Early Coordination Letter and Responses
9. Section 106 Desktop Review CR-NE Study Area Request for Review and Comment
10. Assessment of Effects



U.S. Department
of Transportation
**Federal Highway
Administration**

NEBRASKA DIVISION

August 26, 2025

100 Centennial Mall North, Rm 220
Lincoln, Nebraska 68508
402-742-8460
402-742-8480
FHWA.NE@dot.gov

RE: NDOT Project No: STP-51-7(109) CN 32395, Decatur Bridge, Burt County, Nebraska and Monona County, Iowa Cultural Resources Evaluation

Dear Consulting Party:

The Nebraska Department of Transportation (NDOT), in partnership with the Iowa Department of Transportation (Iowa DOT), proposes to construct the project referenced above using funds from the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA). The Project is in Burt County, Nebraska and Monona County, Iowa, along Nebraska Highway 51 (N-51) and Iowa Highway 175 (IA-175) (Enclosure 1). Because of FHWA involvement, the proposed project is a federal undertaking that must be reviewed under Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA), as amended (36 CFR Part 800), requiring federal agencies to consider and consult about the effects of proposed projects on historic (National Register of Historic Places [NRHP]-listed or eligible) properties.

An Environmental Assessment (EA) is currently being prepared, within which the results of Section 106 consultation will be included. As an EA, this project has not been assigned to NDOT pursuant to 23 U.S.C. §326, commonly referred to as "CE Assignment." FHWA Nebraska Division is the lead federal agency. An evaluation of the potential for cultural resources, archeological, architectural, and structural, is provided below and in the accompanying enclosures. Please review this documentation as required under Section 106 of the NHPA of 1966, as amended, and implementing regulations at 36 CFR Part 800.

The US Army Corps of Engineers (USACE), Omaha District; US Coast Guard (USCG), Eighth Coast Guard District; Nebraska State Historic Preservation Office (NESHPO); Iowa SHPO; Burt County, Nebraska; Monona County, Iowa, Monona County Historic Preservation Commission, the Village of Decatur, Nebraska; and City of Onawa, Iowa have been identified as consulting parties for this project.

Further, the following tribes have been identified as having an interest in the Project Area: Arapahoe Tribe of the Wind River Reservation, Wyoming, Cheyenne and Arapaho Tribes, Flandreau Santee Sioux, Iowa Tribe of Kansas and Nebraska, Iowa Tribe of Oklahoma, Northern Cheyenne Tribe of the Northern Cheyenne Indian Reservation, Montana, Oglala Sioux Tribe, Omaha Tribe of Nebraska, Otoe-Missouria Tribe of Indians, Pawnee Nation of Oklahoma, Peoria Tribe of Indians of Oklahoma, Ponca Tribe of Nebraska, Prairie Band Potawatomi Nation, Prairie Island Indian Community, Rosebud Sioux Tribe, Sac & Fox Nation of Oklahoma, Sac & Fox Tribe of the Mississippi in Iowa, Santee Sioux Nation, Sisseton-Wahpeton Oyate, Spirit Lake Tribe, Three Affiliated Tribes, Upper Sioux Community, Winnebago Tribe of Nebraska, and Yankton Sioux.

Project Description Summary

The project is proposed along N-51 / IA-175 within Burt County, Nebraska and Monona County, Iowa, at the bridge over the Missouri River (Structure Number S051 03644), mile marker (MM) 36.63. Construction may begin just east of Broadway Street in Decatur, Nebraska, at MM 36.17, and end near IA-175 reference post (RP) 1.09 to accommodate the replacement of the structure.

During the *Decatur Bridge Location and Environmental Study*,¹ conducted in 2023-2024, NDOT and Iowa DOT developed and screened a universe of alternatives to improve the N-51/IA-175 crossing of the Missouri River. The alternatives included the No Build, Rehabilitation of the existing bridge, Use of Another River Crossing, Transportation Systems Management (TSM)/Transportation Demand Management (TDM), Alternate Transportation Modes, and several alignments for a new river crossing including the existing N-51/IA-175 location. These alternatives were shared with, and the DOTs received input from agencies, a Community Advisory Group (CAG), and the public.

The build alternative under consideration would remove the existing bridge (S051 03644) and replace the crossing with a new bridge north of the existing bridge (identified as Blue Alternative in the *Decatur Bridge Location and Environmental Study*). Phasing will require a permanent alignment shift and grade raise. Work will be required in the Missouri River. The exact bridge location is being evaluated as part of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) process. Approach roadways on both sides of the Missouri River (N-51 / IA-175) will be reconstructed to the extent determined by Roadway Design, and guardrails will be removed and replaced.

The project will be constructed under traffic with lane closures and temporary crossovers as needed. Additional property rights will be required. Access to adjacent properties will be maintained but may be limited at times due to phasing requirements. A detailed project description is included as Enclosure 2.

Initial Survey Area (ISA) and Area of Potential Effects (APE)

Prior to the development of possible build alternatives, an Initial Survey Area (ISA) was developed to identify historic (NRHP-listed or eligible) resources along with other features that could represent constraints to Project Development. The ISA was defined as roughly 1,500 feet north of the existing crossing and 1,000 south of the existing crossing and extending along N-51 and IA-175 an appropriate distance to allow for connections back into the existing roadway for alignments that may deviate from the existing highways. This ISA comprised approximately 223.8 acres on both sides of the existing river crossing. The ISA in Nebraska included approximately 79.7 acres (Enclosures 1 and 3).

Following the completion of the *Decatur Bridge Location and Environmental Study*, an area of potential effects (APE) for both archeological and architectural/structural properties was developed to adequately identify any historic properties that may be potentially affected given the scale and scope of this undertaking. For effects to archeological resources the physical APE represents the limits of disturbance of the subject build alternative that would site a new bridge north of the existing

¹ The *Decatur Bridge Location and Environment Study* can be accessed at: [cn32395-decat-ur-bridge-location-and-environmental-study-feasibility-report-2025-01-13-final-1.pdf](https://www.ndot.gov/files/Document/cn32395-decat-ur-bridge-location-and-environmental-study-feasibility-report-2025-01-13-final-1.pdf)

bridge. The physical APE comprises approximately 10.6 acres in Nebraska within the original boundaries of the ISA (Enclosure 3, page 1). The APE for visual effects to above ground resources was defined as areas within the viewshed of the proposed bridge structure. It comprises the limits of disturbance plus 26.4 acres (Enclosure 3, page 2).

Archeological Evaluation

Burns & McDonnell's archeologists completed a survey report for the 79.7-acre Nebraska ISA in January 2024 as part of the pre-NEPA studies conducted during the Feasibility Study (Enclosure 4). The Iowa DOT conducted cultural resources surveys for the Iowa portion of the ISA in the Spring of 2024. The results of those investigations are described in survey reports provided by Iowa DOT, reviewed by Iowa SHPO, and not further referenced herein.

Burns & McDonnell conducted a subsequent archeological field survey of the direct APE comprising the limits of disturbance for the proposed build alternative on May 14 and 15, 2025. According to Nebraska State Archeology Office's Nebraska Cultural Resources Geographic Information System (NCRGIS), no previously recorded archeological resources are within the direct APE (Enclosures 4 and 8). Two historic-age artifact scatters were identified during the recent field investigation. Both scatters are derived from fill and were not recorded as archeological sites due to their secondary context and lack of depositional integrity.

No archeological historic properties are present within the direct APE.

Architectural/Structural Evaluation

The ISA was investigated by Burns & McDonnell using the Nebraska State Historic Preservation Office inventory and site files, Historic Resources Survey of Burt County, Nebraska (2016), historic maps, and other primary and secondary sources in September 2023. Burns & McDonnell conducted field surveys from September 19 through September 21, 2023. All properties identified as meeting the NESHPO Historic Resources Survey Manual criteria for survey were evaluated and incorporated into this investigation. These criteria include, but are not limited to, properties that are 50 years old or older, in their original location, and which possess the potential for integrity, significant historic association, and historic architectural qualities.

This survey resulted in the documentation of 94 historic-age architectural resources on 63 properties within or immediately adjacent to the ISA. Of the resources recorded, historians documented one NRHP-listed resource, the A.B. Fuller House/Decatur Museum (BT03-004/no-longer-extant), a bungalow recommended for NRHP inclusion under Criterion C (BT03-007), and the NRHP-eligible Decatur Bridge (BT03-004). Of these resources, only the Decatur Bridge (BT03-014/S051 03644) is located within the direct APE (Enclosures 5 and 7). There are no historic properties identified within the visual APE.

S051 03644 (Decatur Bridge)

The Decatur bridge is a continuous thru-truss steel bridge consisting of a three-span Nebraska approach unit, a two-span Warren thru-truss River Unit, and two Iowa approach units, each three spans long. Construction began in 1950, and the bridge opened to traffic in 1956. The bridge was erected to provide the first highway crossing over the Missouri River between Burt County, Nebraska

and Monona County, Iowa. The Decatur Bridge is 1,956 feet long and 23 feet wide. It was previously determined NRHP eligible under Criterion A (Enclosure 6): Transportation “for establishing a first highway crossing of a major waterway and as a major state bridge building initiative” and under Criterion C: Engineering, as a “steel continuous thru-truss bridge of an exceptional span length” under the update to the MPD Form, Intensive Architectural Survey of Iowa Primary and Secondary Road Bridges Built Between 1942 and 1970 (Baynard et al. 2011). The registration requirements include spans of over 400 feet in length as exceptional. With a main span of 421 feet, the Decatur bridge meets this requirement. The NESHPO officially concurred with the NRHP eligibility determination in 2013 (Enclosure 6).

Alternatives Evaluation

To consider the priorities identified in the Historic Bridge Management Plan (Enclosure 7), NDOT is responsible for identifying and evaluating treatments/alternatives for the historic bridge. This alternatives discussion entitled Decatur Bridge Alternatives Analysis to Support Coordination Under Section 106 of the NHPA (Alternatives Analysis) is relevant to Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended and Section 4(f) of the U.S. Department of Transportation Act of 1966. For your reference, please find it attached to this document (Enclosure 7).

Section 106 of the NHPA requires federal agencies to consider the effects of a federally permitted, sponsored, or funded undertaking on historic (NRHP-listed or eligible) resources. The Programmatic Agreement Among the Federal Highway Administration, the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation and the Nebraska State Historic Preservation Officer for the Highway Bridge Replacement and Rehabilitation Program (PA) executed in 1991 established the review parameter priorities regarding the evaluation of historic bridges in Nebraska. While that PA has expired, it is still used for evaluation of historic bridges; it required the development of the Nebraska Historic Bridge Inventory and Historic Bridge Management Plan (FraserDesign and Hess, Roise and Company 1991). The PA, inventory, and management plan helped to establish a firm foundation for the consideration of historic bridges in Nebraska and established priorities for the treatment of historic bridges. These treatments are discussed in the Alternatives Analysis (Enclosure 7).

The priorities for treatment of historic bridges as outlined in the Nebraska Bridge Inventory and Historic Bridge Management Plan (FraserDesign and Hess, Roise and Company 1991), were evaluated with respect to the historic Decatur Bridge (S051 03644). Each treatment priority is discussed in the Alternatives Analysis (Enclosure 7). In summary, due to the functional and structural deficiencies of the Decatur Bridge discussed below and, in the enclosures, it is not possible to meet the priorities outlined in the bridge management plan. Please see the Alternatives Analysis for a detailed discussion.

Constructed in 1950-1955, the Decatur Bridge has undergone nine major structural repairs including the replacement of the deck in 2000-2001 and the addition of structural steel repairs in 2017. Other repairs and ongoing maintenance have included expansion joint repairs, measures to arrest further cracking, resetting of the bearing devices, and painting. The most recent inspection, conducted in 2024, identified areas of section loss and spalling and cracking within sections of the truss' main tension members. Several cracks in floor beams and connection angles were also observed (Alternatives Analysis).

During an inspection in 2024, the Decatur Bridge was determined to be both structurally deficient and functionally deficient, as discussed below. Continued use of the bridge for vehicular traffic at either its existing location or an alternate location would require these deficiencies to be addressed.

Structural Deficiencies

The bridge is a fracture-critical structure, meaning that this steel structure lacks redundant supporting elements. If any of the main structural components become damaged or fail, there are no backup components to redistribute the structural load to support this bridge. It's important to note that this is a function of the design of the bridge and is not related to the condition of the bridge (Alternatives Analysis). During the 2024 inspection, the Decatur Bridge was determined to be structurally deficient. The bridge deck and substructure were assigned a National Bridge Inventory (NBI) rating of "5, Fair" and "7, Good," respectively, and the superstructure was assigned an NBI rating of "4, Poor."

Deck deficiencies include full replacement of the original concrete deck with open steel grate decking during 2000 – 2001 due to age-related deterioration and material degradation. The open steel grate decking, weighing approximately 20 percent of the original concrete deck, was installed to reduce dead load and preserve the bridge's functional load rating. While this intervention mitigated some structural strain, the steel grate system introduces additional exposure to weathering, reduces ride quality, and limits surface durability compared to modern bridge deck systems.

Superstructure deficiencies addressed in 2017 included steel repairs to the River Unit and Iowa Approach Unit trusses with post-tensioning of floor beams in the River Unit to increase capacity. Corrosion, section loss, and damage to structural connections were mitigated through localized repair. The entire superstructure and exposed steel substructure elements were abrasive blasted and repainted to address widespread corrosion and coating failure.

Substructure deficiencies included spalling and deterioration of concrete elements, which were repaired and strengthened at several piers. Lighting systems were overhauled, and approach railings were updated, though geometric and load-related deficiencies remain unaddressed. Overall, this structure is rated low and deficient, therefore it is deemed structurally inadequate to handle future traffic demand and was determined to be structurally deficient.

Functional Deficiencies

Narrow travel lanes, lack of sufficient shoulders, substandard vertical clearance, and load limitations restrict the use of the Decatur Bridge by overweight and oversized vehicles. The bridge has two travel lanes, each 11 feet 3-inches wide with no shoulders, falling short of current design criteria that call for 12-foot-wide lanes and 6-foot-wide shoulders on each side. The narrow width limits the size of vehicles and agricultural equipment that can cross the bridge. Agricultural equipment can take up both lanes, limiting the bridge to a single lane of traffic. The bridge is an important crossing for trucks and large farm equipment because the nearest alternate river crossing involves an 80-mile round trip (approx.) from the Decatur area. Frequent vehicle impacts with the River Unit through-truss superstructure have contributed to approximately 20 structural deficiencies identified during the 2024 inspection. While the bridge meets current vertical clearance requirements, the overhead members still obstruct passage of some large equipment and show signs of past collisions. The

bridge's inventory rating is less than half that of a modern bridge, and its load posting further restricts legal use by heavy vehicles. The existing built-up steel bridge rail does not meet current crash safety standards under AASHTO MASH TL-4 and is shorter than the required 3 feet 3 inch tall concrete barrier, increasing the risk of rollover in a crash scenario. These conditions collectively reduce the operational capacity and safety of the structure, particularly for agricultural and freight traffic, which must otherwise detour approximately 80 miles to the next nearest Missouri River crossing (Alternatives Analysis).

Analysis

Because the Decatur Bridge is both structurally deficient and functionally obsolete, continued use of the bridge for vehicular traffic at its existing location would require these deficiencies to be addressed. As described above, during the *Decatur Bridge Location and Environmental Study*, NDOT and Iowa DOT evaluated several alternatives to improve the N-51/IA-175 crossing of the Missouri River. TSM/TDM, Use of Another Crossing, and Alternate Transportation Modes did not meet the identified needs and would not provide a river crossing that meets current design standards. In addition, the population size, existing and forecasted traffic volumes, existing roadway infrastructure, including the lack of controlled intersections, and availability/accessibility to other modes were reasons why these alternatives were removed from further consideration. The three alternatives described in greater detail in the attached Alternatives Analysis include the No Build, Rehabilitation, and the Build Alternatives. Based on the 2024 inspection, the Decatur Bridge will undergo additional repair in 2025 anticipated to keep the bridge in service until replacement or rehabilitation. All three alternatives include the additional repairs planned for 2025. Unless a rehabilitation project is completed, or the bridge is replaced by 2035, NDOT will close the bridge in 2035.

Rehabilitation would repair those structural deficiencies remaining after the 2025 repair project is completed. Should rehabilitation be conducted, it could address the continued deterioration of load-carrying members, including the trusses, beams, and piers, depending on what is identified during future inspections. If feasible, the potential replacement of structural components may include the truss, floorbeams, and other components that contribute to the NRHP-eligibility of the Decatur Bridge. Rehabilitation would not address the functional deficiencies of the bridge.

Rehabilitation does not meet the stated purpose and needs, which would facilitate the safe movement of people and goods along N-51/IA-175 while improving mobility, connectivity, and accessibility across the Missouri River. The original materials used to construct the bridge are wearing out. Corrosion, section loss, and pack rust will continue as new paint applied in 2017 breaks down with time and the deck continues to drain water directly onto the members below, further accelerating their deterioration.

The Alternatives Analysis further summarizes that rehabilitation would only extend the service life of the infrastructure at this location for eight to ten years beyond the No Build Alternative due to the physical condition of numerous critical elements. In addition, rehabilitation would not address the 100-year flood (Q100) overtopping risk at the Iowa roadway approach during future flood events, requiring the highway to be closed. If rehabilitation were to occur after completion of the 2025 repair project, it would not include full replacement of the bridge deck, truss expansion or replacement, or replacement of the bridge rail with a safety-compliant rail because of the physical and non-redundant

design of the bridge. Rehabilitation could only potentially extend the useful life of the bridge until 2045.

Given its structural deficiencies and functional obsolescence, the Decatur Bridge would not support future vehicular use in its current location. Continued use of the bridge would require appreciable modifications to the existing structure, which, if feasible, would alter or destroy the features that make it eligible for listing on the NRHP under Criterion C, resulting in the loss of its historic integrity.

Consulting Parties

NDOT and Iowa DOT identified Section 106 consulting parties based upon professional knowledge and areas of interest identified by tribes. Early coordination letters were sent on October 20, 2023, to the following potential consulting parties: US Army Corps of Engineers, Omaha District, US Coast Guard, Eighth Coast Guard District, Nebraska SHPO, Iowa SHPO, Burt County, Nebraska, Monona County, Iowa, Monona County Historic Preservation Commission, Village of Decatur, Nebraska, City of Onawa, Iowa and to the following tribes: Arapahoe Tribe of the Wind River Reservation, Wyoming, Cheyenne and Arapaho Tribes, Flandreau Santee Sioux, Iowa Tribe of Kansas and Nebraska, Iowa Tribe of Oklahoma, Northern Cheyenne Tribe of the Northern Cheyenne Indian Reservation, Montana, Oglala Sioux Tribe, Omaha Tribe of Nebraska, Otoe-Missouria Tribe of Indians, Pawnee Nation of Oklahoma, Peoria Tribe of Indians of Oklahoma, Ponca Tribe of Nebraska, Prairie Band Potawatomi Nation, Prairie Island Indian Community, Rosebud Sioux Tribe, Sac & Fox Nation of Oklahoma, Sac & Fox Tribe of the Mississippi in Iowa, Santee Sioux Nation, Sisseton-Wahpeton Oyate, Spirit Lake Tribe, Three Affiliated Tribes, Upper Sioux Community, Winnebago Tribe of Nebraska, and Yankton Sioux Tribe.

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Recommended Section 106 Effects and Section 4(f) Use

Based on the Alternatives Analysis, the consideration of the priorities for treatment of historic bridges as outlined in the Nebraska Bridge Inventory and Historic Bridge Management Plan (FraserDesign and Hess, Roise and Company 1991), NDOT's recommended project effects determination (Enclosure 10) and lack of public opposition, FHWA recommends that there are no feasible and prudent alternatives that avoid the demolition of the bridge. Therefore, the proposed undertaking would have an adverse effect on historic properties and FHWA has made a project effects determination of *adverse effect*. FHWA will notify the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation of this adverse effect.

It is recommended that there are no feasible and prudent alternatives to the use of this historic bridge, and FHWA recommends that this use would fall under the Programmatic Section 4(f) Evaluation and Approval of FHWA Projects that Necessitate the Use of Historic Bridges.

This undertaking has been reviewed under the programmatic agreement entitled Programmatic Agreement Among the Federal Highway Administration, the Nebraska State Historic Preservation Officer, the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation and the Nebraska Department of Transportation to Satisfy the Requirements of Section 106 for the Federal Aid Highway Program in the State of Nebraska (February 2023), as amended, and meets the requirements to be considered a Tier III project.

FHWA requests your review and comment with the above NRHP eligibility determinations and Section 106 determination of effects. We respectfully request any objections within 30 days of your receipt of this letter.

If you have any questions regarding this information do not hesitate to contact me at your earliest convenience.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Luke Pitts', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Luke Pitts

Environmental Protection Specialist

Federal Highway Administration

luke.pitts@dot.gov

402-742-8466

ENCLOSURES:

1. Project Location Map
2. Project Description
3. APE map
4. Archeology Report
5. Architectural/Structural Report
6. Decatur Bridge Eligibility Determination Letters
7. Section 106 Alternatives Analysis
8. Section 106 Early Coordination Letter and Responses
9. Section 106 Desktop Review CR-NE Study Area Request for Review and Comment
10. Assessment of Effects

From: [Jarell Grant](#)
To: [Pitts, Luke](#)
Cc: [Becker, Janee](#); [Winkermann, Michelle](#); [Ondracek, Anna](#); [Stupka, Stacy](#); [Luther, Justin](#)
Subject: Re: Request for Review and Comment Under Section 106 of the NHPA_STP-51-7(109)_CN 32395_Decatur Bridge
Date: Tuesday, August 26, 2025 2:17:35 PM

Greetings,

We will review and respond accordingly.

Thank you,

Jarell Grant

From: Pitts, Luke (FHWA) <luke.pitts@dot.gov>
Sent: Tuesday, August 26, 2025 11:52 AM
To: Pitts, Luke (FHWA) <luke.pitts@dot.gov>
Cc: Becker, Janee <Janee.Becker@iowadot.us>; Winkermann, Michelle L <mlwinkermann@burnsmcd.com>; Ondracek, Anna <anna.ondracek@nebraska.gov>; stupka, stacy <stacy.stupka@nebraska.gov>; Luther, Justin (FHWA) <Justin.Luther@dot.gov>
Subject: Request for Review and Comment Under Section 106 of the NHPA_STP-51-7(109)_CN 32395_Decatur Bridge

Project Name: Decatur Bridge

Project No.: STP-51-7(109)

Control No.: 32395

County: Burt

Dear Consulting Party,

The Nebraska Department of Transportation (NDOT) proposes to construct the referenced project above using funds from the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA). Due to FHWA involvement, the proposed project is a federal undertaking that must be reviewed under Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (36 CFR Part 800) requiring federal agencies to consider and consult about the effects of proposed projects on historic properties. FHWA is the lead federal agency and is in the process of completing an Environmental Assessment.

For your review and comment, please find attached information regarding the referenced project above. FHWA invites your comment upon National Register of Historic Places eligibility and the project effects determination indicated below and in the attached letter. Access to the letter enclosures will be sent in a separate email.

Under Section 106, FHWA has made the following project effects determination:

☐ **No Historic Properties Affected**

No historic properties were identified within the APE

☐ **No Historic Properties Affected**

Historic properties were identified within the APE, but they will not be affected by the proposed undertaking

☐ **No Adverse Effect**

Historic properties were identified within the APE, but they will not be adversely affected by the proposed undertaking

☒ **Adverse Effect**

Historic properties identified within the APE will be adversely affected by the proposed undertaking

If you have any questions, please don't hesitate to contact me.

Respectfully,

Luke Pitts, PMP

Environmental Protection Specialist

Federal Highway Administration

Nebraska Division

Desk: 402.742.8466

Cell: 531.310.9240

From: [Pitts, Luke \(FHWA\)](#)
To: [Stupka, Stacy](#)
Cc: [Ondracek, Anna](#)
Subject: Re: Request for Review and Comment Under Section 106 of the NHPA_STP-51-7(109)_CN 32395_Decatur Bridge
Date: Wednesday, August 27, 2025 8:41:10 AM

Stacy,

Yesterday at 2:47PM, I received a phone call from Alan Kelley, THPO of the Iowa Tribe of Kansas and Nebraska, who let me know he had received our request for review and comment and that the tribe had no concerns.

Luke Pitts, PMP

Environmental Specialist
Federal Highway Administration
Nebraska Division
402.742.8466

From: [Pitts, Luke \(FHWA\)](#)
To: [Warner, Roland](#)
Cc: [Tiffany Buchanan](#); [Gayla Whitewater](#); [Stupka, Stacy](#)
Subject: RE: NDOT Decatur Bridge Project
Date: Wednesday, August 27, 2025 1:05:34 PM

Roland Warner,

Thank you so much.

Luke Pitts, PMP

Environmental Specialist
Federal Highway Administration
Nebraska Division
[402.742.8466](tel:402.742.8466)

From: Roland Warner <roland.warner@winnebago-tribe.com>
Sent: Wednesday, August 27, 2025 12:25 PM
To: Pitts, Luke (FHWA) <luke.pitts@dot.gov>
Cc: Tiffany Buchanan <tiffany.buchanan@winnebago-tribe.com>; Gayla Whitewater <gayla.whitewater@winnebago-tribe.com>
Subject: NDOT Decatur Bridge Project

CAUTION: This email originated from outside of the Department of Transportation (DOT). Do not click on links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Dear Luke Pitts
Environmental Protection Specialist
Federal Highway Administration

The Winnebago Tribe of Nebraska has reviewed the document for the NDOT Project No: STP-51-7(109) CN 32395, Decatur Bridge, Burt County, Nebraska and Monona County, Iowa Cultural Resource Evaluation.

Based on the information provided, the project is not located near any known sites affiliated with our Tribe, nor does it appear to have the potential to affect properties of cultural, historical, or religious significance to us.

Accordingly, the Winnebago Tribe of Nebraska has no further interest in this project. We request that this correspondence be included in the project's 106 consultation record.

Respectfully,

Roland Warner

Winnebago Tribe of Nebraska
Cultural Preservation Director/Angel De Cora Museum Director/
THPO/NAGPRA Representative

Angel De Cora Museum & Research Center/THPO Office
601 E College Rd – Thunder Clan Building
Winnebago, NE 68071

Phone: (402) 257-5587 ext. 2600

E-mail: roland.warner@winnebago-tribe.com

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Here open to all is the history of this people.

September 5th, 2025

Luke Pitts
Federal Highway Administration
VIA EMAIL

RE: HP#2508-084-01; Decatur Bridge, Site No: BT03-014, NDOT Project No: ST-51-7(109)
CN 32395, Burt County, NE

Dear Luke,

Thank you for submitting the referenced project proposal for review and comment by the Nebraska State Historic Preservation Office (NESHPO). Our comment on this project and its potential to affect historic properties is required by Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended, and implementing regulations 36 CFR Part 800.

According to the information you have provided, the proposed project scope of work includes the demolition of the Decatur Bridge. Our office concurs with the Federal Highway Administration's finding that the demolition of the bridge would constitute an Adverse Effect, seeing as the bridge is eligible for the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion A and Criterion C.

As such, the federal agency responsible for this project will be required to invite the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation to consult on this project in order to avoid, minimize, or mitigate the adverse effects. Please submit any Section 106 correspondence to the ACHP's e106 inbox at <https://www.achp.gov/e106-email-form>. This determination does not mean that the project cannot proceed; however, you should take time to develop alternatives and mitigation measures. If you have any questions, please contact us at **Haylee.Rose@nebraska.gov** and/or Michael Sothan at **Michael.Sothan@nebraska.gov**.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Haylee Rose'.

Haylee Rose
Standing Structures Section 106 Coordinator
Nebraska State Historical Society

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads 'Michael Sothan'.

Michael Sothan
Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer
Nebraska State Historical Society

**1500 R Street
Lincoln, NE, 68508-1651
<https://history.nebraska.gov>**

FHWA respectfully requests NESHPO concurrence with the above NRHP eligibility determinations, Section 106 determination of effects, and Section 4(f) use recommendations. Upon receipt of your concurrence, FHWA, with the assistance of NDOT and Iowa DOT will begin facilitating discussions with your office, the Iowa SHPO, and consulting parties to seek ways to mitigate the adverse effect. Following additional consultation, we will generate a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) documenting agreed-upon mitigation measures.

If you have any questions regarding this information do not hesitate to contact me at your earliest convenience.

Sincerely,



Luke Pitts

Environmental Protection Specialist

Federal Highway Administration

luke.pitts@dot.gov

402-742-8466



SHPO Concurrence

September 5, 2025

Date

ENCLOSURES:

1. Project Location Map
2. Project Description
3. APE map
4. Archeology Report
5. Architectural/Structural Report
6. Decatur Bridge Eligibility Determination Letters
7. Section 106 Alternatives Analysis
8. Section 106 Early Coordination Letter and Responses
9. Section 106 Desktop Review CR-NE Study Area Request for Review and Comment
10. Assessment of Effects



KIM REYNOLDS, GOVERNOR
CHRIS COURNOYER, LT. GOVERNOR

SCOTT MARLER, IOWA DOT DIRECTOR
MELISSA GILLET, IOWA DOT COO

IOWA DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
LOCATION AND ENVIRONMENT BUREAU
800 Lincoln Way
Ames, IA 50010
515-233-7820
www.iowadot.gov

September 5, 2025

Ref. STP-175-1(106)--2C-67
Nebraska DOT Ref. STP-51-7(109), CN 32395 (Project Lead)
Primary System
Monona County
R&C: 20231067477

Mr. Branden Scott
Ms. Sara André
State Historic Preservation Office
1963 Bell Avenue, Suite 200
Des Moines, Iowa 50315

RE: Adverse Effect Determination for the IA 175 Decatur Bridge over the Missouri River (FHWA #036810; 67-00750), [Sec 17 & 18, T83N-R46W] Monona County, Iowa; **Adverse Effect**

Dear Branden and Sara:

We previously consulted on this project in 2023 and 2024, regarding identification efforts. The Iowa Department of Transportation is partnering with the Nebraska Department of Transportation, who is the lead for the project to improve the crossing of the Missouri River along IA 175 at the Decatur Bridge (FHWA #036810; 67-00750). Currently, the proposed preferred alternative will replace the IA 175 Decatur Bridge. Enclosed for your records is the bridge alternatives analysis technical memorandum and the Nebraska Federal Highway Administration's letter to the Nebraska SHPO requesting concurrence with an Adverse Effect determination.

The Decatur Bridge (FHWA #036810; 67-00750) was previously recommended eligible for the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) under Criterion C. The provided bridge alternatives analysis technical memorandum recommends the bridge for replacement and determined the leave in place, off-alignment, and rehabilitation were not feasible and prudent in accordance with the required considerations laid out under Section 4(f) of the U.S. Department of Transportation Act of 1966.

Following your review and concurrence, we will be working through an **Adverse Effect** scenario and the mitigation process under the NRHP (36 CFR 800.5-6), for the Decatur Bridge (FHWA #036810; 67-00750). We will be coordinating next steps together with the Nebraska Department of Transportation and tying further SHPO and stakeholder mitigation discussion for both states. If you agree with this approach, we ask that you provide concurrence and any comments you have. We anticipate continued consultation with Tribes/Nations with interest in Monona County, the Monona County Historic Preservation Commission, and the Monona County Historical Museum. Per 36CFR800.3(f), we are requesting your input regarding other potential consulting parties. If you have any questions, please contact me at (515) 233-7820 or jane.becker@iowadot.us.

As with any Iowa Department of Transportation project, should any new important archaeological, historical, or architectural materials be encountered during construction, project activities shall cease, and the Location and Environment Bureau shall be contacted immediately.



KIM REYNOLDS, GOVERNOR
CHRIS COURNOYER, LT. GOVERNOR

SCOTT MARLER, IOWA DOT DIRECTOR
MELISSA GILLETT, IOWA DOT COO

IOWA DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
LOCATION AND ENVIRONMENT BUREAU
800 Lincoln Way
Ames, IA 50010
515-233-7820
www.iowadot.gov

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Janee Becker", is written over a light blue circular stamp.

Janee Becker
Cultural Resources Manager/Archaeologist

cc: Tribes/Nations – Monona County Interest
Jessica Felix – District 3 Engineer
Shane Tymkowicz – Assistant District 3 Engineer
DeeAnn Newell – NEPA Team Lead
Stacy Stupka – NE DOT Cultural Resources
Dawn Knott – NE DOT Project Manager
Michelle Winkelmann – Burns & McDonnell

From: sara.andre@email.iowaeda.com
To: [Becker, Janee](#)
Cc: shpo106@iowaeda.com; branden.scott@iowaeda.com; [Dolan, Brennan](#)
Subject: R&C 231067477 - 00048477 - FHWA - Monona - IA 175 Decatur Bridge Improvement Project over the Missouri River; FHWA #036810; Phase IA and Architectural Reconnaissance
Date: Monday, October 6, 2025 3:23:37 PM

CAUTION:

This email originated from outside the Iowa Department of Transportation.
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We have received your submittal for the above referenced federal undertaking. We provide the following response in accordance with Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 and its implementing regulations 36 CFR 800.

Regarding this project, please see the following comments:

R&C 231067477 - 00048477 - FHWA - Monona - IA 175 Decatur Bridge Improvement Project over the Missouri River; FHWA #036810; Phase IA and Architectural Reconnaissance - The Iowa Department of Transportation is partnering with the Nebraska Department of Transportation, who will be the lead for the project in an effort to improve the crossing of the Missouri River along IA 175 at the Decatur Bridge (FHWA #036810; 67-00750)

- Concur with the federal agency and/or their designated representative (Adverse Effect).
- Thank you for providing a brief update to the recommended outreach and consulting parties coordination , including NDOT, NE SHPO, Tribes and Nations, etc.
- We recognize the complexities that come with inter-state projects. We appreciate the ongoing updates and coordination.
- Currently, the case will be returned to you for ongoing consultation.

You will not receive a hard copy of this email. It is the submitter's responsibility to maintain the official file of record. If you have any questions or comments, please feel free to contact our office.

Sincerely,

Sara André
Review and Compliance Coordinator - Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer
State Historic Preservation Office
sara.andre@iowaeda.com | +1 (515) 348-6286 | culture.iowaeda.com/shpo

Iowa Economic Development Authority



From: [Pitts, Luke \(FHWA\)](#)
To: [Stupka, Stacy](#)
Cc: [Ondracek, Anna](#)
Subject: FW: NHPA_STP-51-7(109)_CN 32395_Decatur Bridge
Date: Monday, September 22, 2025 10:27:54 AM
Importance: High

Stacy,

FYI

Luke Pitts, PMP

Environmental Specialist
Federal Highway Administration
Nebraska Division
402.742.8466

From: gary.lafranier@cheyennenation.com <gary.lafranier@cheyennenation.com>
Sent: Thursday, September 18, 2025 5:41 PM
To: Pitts, Luke (FHWA) <luke.pitts@dot.gov>
Subject: NHPA_STP-51-7(109)_CN 32395_Decatur Bridge
Importance: High

CAUTION: This email originated from outside of the Department of Transportation (DOT). Do not click on links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Good Afternoon,

NHPA_STP-51-7(109)_CN 32395_Decatur Bridge: Northern Cheyenne concurs with findings of Adverse Effect.

Gary LaFranier

FCC/ Section 106 Coordinator
(406) 477-8113
Lame Deer, MT. 59043

From: [Trish Leith](#)
To: [Becker, Janee](#); [Dolan, Brennan](#)
Cc: [Cheyanne St. John](#)
Subject: Ref. STP-175-1(106)--2C-67
Date: Tuesday, September 30, 2025 1:24:10 PM

CAUTION:

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Janee,

Thank you for contacting Lower Sioux Indian Community regarding your proposed undertaking. We defer The Bridge Replacement Project Bridge (FHWA #036810; 67-00750) located at Missouri River E of Decatur, Nebraska, to the local tribes of Nebraska, we support their Expertise.

PIDAMAYAYE (THANK YOU)

Trish Leith

Trish Leith: Preservation Coordinator

Lower Sioux Indian Community
39527 Res Hwy I
Morton MN 5627
(Office): 507.697.8705
Trish.Leith@LowerSioux.com

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ACHP Participation Notification



November 4, 2025

Luke Pitts
Environmental Specialist
Federal Highway Administration
Nebraska Division
100 Centennial Mall North, Room 220
Lincoln, Nebraska 68508

Ref: *Replacement of Decatur Bridge over the Missouri River
Burt County, Nebraska and Monona County, Iowa
ACHP Project Number: 023988*

Dear Mr. Pitts:

On October 27, 2025, the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation (ACHP) received your notification and supporting documentation regarding the potential adverse effects of the referenced undertaking on a property or properties listed or eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places. Based upon the information you provided, we have concluded that Appendix A, Criteria for Council Involvement in Reviewing Individual Section 106 Cases, of our regulations, "Protection of Historic Properties" (36 CFR Part 800) implementing Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act, does not apply to this undertaking. Accordingly, we do not believe our participation in the consultation to resolve adverse effects is needed.

However, if we receive a request for participation from the Nebraska or Iowa State Historic Preservation Officers (SHPOs), a Tribal Historic Preservation Officer (THPO), affected Indian Tribe, a consulting party, or other party, we may reconsider this decision. Should the undertaking's circumstances change, consulting parties cannot come to consensus, or you need further advisory assistance to conclude the consultation process, please contact us.

Pursuant to Section 800.6(b)(1)(iv), you will need to file the final Section 106 agreement document (Agreement), developed in consultation with the Nebraska and Iowa SHPOs and any other consulting parties, and related documentation with the ACHP at the conclusion of the consultation process. The filing of the Agreement and supporting documentation with the ACHP is required in order to complete the requirements of Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act.

Thank you for providing us with your notification of adverse effect. If you have any questions or require our further assistance, please contact Kasey Miller at (202) 517-6389 or by e-mail at kmiller@achp.gov and reference the ACHP Project Number above.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Kasey Miller". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Kasey" written in a smaller, more compact script and the last name "Miller" in a larger, more prominent script.

Kasey Miller
Program Analyst and FHWA Liaison
Advisory Council on Historic Preservation
Office of Federal Agency Programs

Section 106 – Consultation

From: [Winkelmann, Michelle L](#)
To: [Sothan, Michael](#); [Rose, Haylee](#); [Molnar, Mariska](#); [Sara Andre](#); [Branden Scott](#); [Doershuk, John F](#); [Roland Warner](#); [mark.parker](#); [Brown, Kirsten L CIV USARMY CEMVR \(USA\)](#); [Nebel, Adam R CIV USARMY CENWO \(USA\)](#); [Harbison, Brett A CIV \(USA\)](#); [Bentzinger, Ruth E CIV USARMY CENWO \(USA\)](#); [Stupka, Stacy](#); [Turner, Katie](#); [Anne.Bauer@nebraska.gov](#); [Ondracek, Anna](#); [Hardesty, Danielle](#); [Knott, Dawn](#); [Shreya, Aritree](#); [Dolan, Brennan](#); [Becker, Janee](#); [Schwienebart, Christine](#); [Felix, Jessica](#); [Tracy, Sarah](#); [Kepka, Jessica](#); [Cannon-Mackey, Shari](#); [Harris, Brandy M](#); [roads@burtcountyne.gov](#)
Cc: [jon.barber](#); [Thede, Nathan](#); [Schmit, Brandon N](#); [Ferdon, Andrew S](#); [Pitts, Luke \(FHWA\)](#); [Domogalla, Kevin](#); [Burda, Stacia](#); [Keach, Levi L CIV USARMY CENWO \(USA\)](#); [Max Bear](#); [Jarell Grant](#); [teanna.limpy@cheyennenation.com](#); [Heather Gibb](#); [NSHS S106](#); [janejudt@gmail.com](#); [Coburn, John](#)
Subject: Decatur Bridge_NE Project No. STP-51-7(109)_CN 32395, Iowa Project No. STP-175-1(106) - SHPO/Consulting Party Mitigation Review Meeting Notes
Date: Wednesday, November 26, 2025 6:45:00 PM
Attachments: [image001.png](#)
[image002.png](#)
[image003.png](#)
[image004.png](#)
[image005.png](#)
[image006.png](#)
[image007.png](#)
[2025-11-21 Consulting Party - STP-51-7\(109\); Decatur Bridge; CN 32395 Meeting Notes.pdf](#)

Thank you for your participation in the Friday, November 21, 2025 SHPO/Consulting Party Mitigation Review Meeting regarding the Decatur Bridge.

We are seeking your input!

Your ideas regarding appropriate mitigation will be considered during Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) development.

Please submit your ideas to Brandy Harris via email by **December 29, 2025**.

Brandy Harris

bmharris@burnsmcd.com

For your reference, please find attached meeting notes with presentation materials and key links to online mitigation examples.

We are targeting January 7, 2026 for a follow-up meeting to finalize selection of a mitigation option and to allow for preparation of a DRAFT MOA. Please watch your email for a calendar invitation.

Once the MOA is distributed, you will have 30 days to provide comments and/or to request signatory status.

Thank you and have a Happy Thanksgiving!

Michelle

Michelle Winkelmann, PE*

Project Manager

[Burns & McDonnell](#)

1010 N 102nd Street, Suite 200, Omaha, NE 68114

O +1 402-408-3013 | **M** +1 402-803-4565

E mlwinkelmann@burnsmcd.com

Meeting Notes



Meeting Subject: Decatur Bridge Section 106 Mitigation – Consulting Parties Meeting
Meeting Date: Friday, November 21, 2025
Time: 1:00 PM
Location: NDOT Microsoft Teams
Project Name: Decatur Bridge
Project No.: CN 32395, STP-51-7(109)

Attendees:

Michael Sothan, NE SHPO Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer
Haylee Rose, NE SHPO Review & Compliance: Standing Structures Coordinator
Mariska Molnar, NE SHPO Preservation Archeologist
Sara Andre, Iowa SHPO, Historic Preservation Specialist
Branden Scott, Iowa SHPO Archaeologist
John Doershuk, Iowa State Archaeologist
Roland Warner, Winnebago Tribe of Nebraska
Mark Parker, Cultural Resources lead for THPO of Omaha Tribe of Nebraska
Ted Connealy, Burt Co. NE supervisors
Ann Chytka, Burt Co. NE supervisors
Kirsten Brown, USACE Rock Island District, Section 404
Adam Nebel, USACE Omaha District, Section 408 Program Manager
Brett Harbison, USACE Omaha District, Section 404
Ruth Bensinger, USACE, Site Manager Missouri River Recovery Program
Stacy Stupka, NDOT Cultural Resources Team Lead
Katie Turner, NDOT Cultural Resources Manager
Katie Jenner, NDOT Cultural Resources
Anne Bauer, NDOT
Anna Ondracek, NDOT Environmental Project Manager
Danielle Hardesty, NDOT NEPA Specialist
Dawn Knott, NDOT Project Manager – Project Development Division
Aritree Shreya, NDOT, Project Engineer – Project Development Division
Brennan Dolan, Iowa DOT Cultural Resources Team Lead/Tribal Liaison
Janee Becker, Iowa DOT Cultural Resources Manager
Christine Schwienebart, Iowa DOT, NEPA Manager
Jessica Felix, Iowa DOT District 3 Engineer
Sarah Tracy, Iowa DOT District 3 Transportation Planner
Michelle Winkelmann, BMCD Project Manager
Brandy Harris, BMCD, Natural and Cultural Resources Lead
Shari Cannon-Mackey, BMCD NEPA Lead
Jessica Kepka, BMCD

Attachments:

Presentation Slides

Meeting Notes:

The purpose of this meeting was to continue Section 106 consultation and discuss mitigation options for STP-51-7(109) Decatur Bridge: CN 32395. This proposed project constitutes an “undertaking” subject to Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA) and its implementing regulations, 36 CFR Part 800.

- 1) Self-Introductions were made, see above attendance list
- 2) Section 106 Status Overview
 - a. Brandy Harris provided an overview of the four steps of the Section 106 Review process.
 - i. Step 1 initiated the process by determining the undertaking, coordinating with other reviews for NEPA compliance, identifying consulting parties and developing the plan to involve the public.
 - ii. Step 2 identified the Decatur Bridge as historic. The bridge was previously determined NRHP eligible under Criterion A: Transportation “for establishing a first highway crossing of a major waterway and as a major state bridge building initiative” and under Criterion C: Engineering, as a “steel continuous through-truss bridge of an exceptional span length” under the update to the Multiple Property Documentation Form, Intensive Architectural Survey of Iowa Primary and Secondary Road Bridges Built Between 1942 and 1970 (Baynard et al. 2011)
 - iii. Step 3 assessed adverse effects to the Decatur Bridge. Three categories of alternatives were studied as possible solutions to improve the river crossing: leave the crossing as it is today, repair or replace key components of the historic bridge, and alternatives that would build a new bridge to replace the Decatur Bridge.
 - iv. Step 4 is to resolve the adverse effects that include development and consideration of alternatives to avoid, minimize, or mitigate adverse effects.
- 3) Project Background
 - a. Identified as *Decatur Bridge*, the proposed project would improve the Nebraska Highway 51 (N-51) / Iowa Highway 175 (IA-175) Missouri River crossing in Burt County, Nebraska and Monona County, Iowa.
 - b. The purpose of the proposed action is to provide a resilient river crossing connecting Decatur, Nebraska/N-51 and Onawa, Iowa/IA-175 that maintains access to regional commerce, employment, education, health care, and recreation facilities; maintains accessibility to and by emergency services; and provides infrastructure to support current and future travel demand.
 - c. The project is needed to maintain safe and reliable connectivity; improve the infrastructure condition of the river crossing; and improve the crossing’s resiliency against flooding
- 4) Bridge History
 - a. The Decatur Bridge was built as a toll bridge by the Burt County Bridge Commission between 1951-1956. It was built “in the dry,” with the United States Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) diverting the Missouri River under the bridge in 1955.
 - b. The bridge began to receive regular structural repairs starting in 1970.
 - c. A major bridge repair occurred in 2000 which included installation of a steel grid deck.
 - i. Scour from the 2011 flood resulted in a 5-month closure to perform repairs.

- ii. The bridge operated as a toll bridge until 2013 when ownership was transferred to NDOT and Iowa DOT.
 - iii. A major repair in 2017 strengthened the floor beam.
 - iv. Another major repair is anticipated late 2025 / early 2026
- 5) Initial Input from Stakeholders
 - a. Brennan Dolan reminded meeting attendees that the Section 106 process is about making sure everyone's opinions and thoughts are made known and considered. Sharing stories about the bridge could help tell the history that the public should know. Brennan shared that when the ownership was transferred to NDOT and Iowa DOT in 2013, he visited the bridge when the toll booth that was still there. He noted that the story about what it was like to work on a bi-state toll bridge and how it connects communities on both sides is important.
 - b. Both Brennan and Stacy Stupka encouraged input from the meeting attendees.
- 6) Section 106 Mitigation Options
 - a. Stipulation Brainstorming - Meaningful Mitigation options
 - i. Should be relevant and commensurate with the resources' significance
 - ii. Offer a public benefit taking into account the views and considerations of the public and community containing the resource
 - iii. Accommodate the needs of all parties, including those who feel the property is important and the agency responsible for its management
 - iv. Think beyond traditional documentation strategies; may still be relevant but should consider broader resource and property type related options as well as offset mitigation that could benefit other resources
 - b. Option 1: Video
 - i. Produce a video similar to the "Bridging Generations – the Story of the Black Hawk Bridge" video (see link in meeting presentation). This is a mini documentary that tells the story of the bridge through the voices of the community. The video is about a half hour in length.
 - ii. Video should have a theme that would be memorialized in a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA). A storyboard would then be developed to help guide narration of the video. The Section 106 process would continue through the development of the video.
 - iii. Iowa DOT helped produce the video that was presented during the meeting.
 - iv. A video does a good job at reaching a broader audience.
 - v. Sara Andre commented that videos are a good mitigation option. They are very wholistic and hit the spot with resources and the community members.
 - vi. Brennan Dolan commented that although videos require a lot of work and consultation, they are well worth it.
 - c. Option 2: Digital Publication
 - i. Local community involvement that details the history and the stakeholders associated with the bridge.
 - ii. Examples provided, see links in presentation materials:
 - 1. Spans Through Time: A story map about the Broadway "John Jordan 'Buck' O'Neil Memorial" Bridge, which spanned the Missouri River in Kansas City.

2. US-30 Cedar River Bridge: A story map about the first steel, continuous welded I-girder highway bridge with floor beams in Iowa. This publication lives online and includes some mini videos.
3. Sioux City's Grand Avenue Viaduct, 1936-2010
- iii. Digital publications can be useful tools for teachers and students as the information is available online. Publications can also be printed.
- d. Option 3: Existing Marker in place Enhancement
 - i. The "Dry Land" bridge marker near the west abutment of the existing bridge, dated 2023, will need to be relocated as part of the project. The marker talks about the existing bridge.
 - ii. The existing marker could be a starting point. Potential enhancements could include adding a picture of the existing bridge to the marker or a panel with pictures adjacent to the marker that include pictures of the existing bridge and text that clarifies that the bridge the viewer would be looking at is a replacement bridge.
- e. Meeting attendees' thoughts regarding mitigation
 - i. Kristen Brown (USACE) liked the idea of a video and having it available as an online resource. She inquired if the project team had garnered general public input regarding these options?
 1. Stacy Stupka noted that public input had not yet been requested.
 - ii. Brandy Harris noted that the design team would follow-up with representatives from the City of Decatur and the Decatur Museum since they couldn't attend this meeting.
 - iii. Michelle Winkleman suggested that mitigation could add to the collection of the Decatur Museum, as they had a recent fire that destroyed and/or damaged exhibits regarding the bridge.
 - iv. Iowa SHPO and Iowa DOT stated that mitigation efforts could be paired with local community interests or events. One suggestion was to pair this effort with Riverfront Days to showcase the mitigation and bring out public support. In past videos, Iowa DOT held a premier that was standing room only.
 - v. Burt County Supervisors suggested the video would be nice, but some people would prefer printed materials.
 - vi. Michael Sothan (NESHPO) mentioned that some level of bridge survey work could be a worthy mitigation effort. He would be agreeable to a video with a story map but stressed inclusion of the state-level significance of the bridge, which goes beyond the local / immediate area. He noted mitigation should be a good steward to community but also help forward preservation.
 - vii. Stacy Stupka noted that Onawa should be included in the mitigation as well as Decatur. Brennan Dolan suggested premiers for a video could be held in both communities.
 - viii. Mark Parker with the Omaha Tribe of Nebraska, suggested that videos and testimonials could be included from elders who might have ancestors who worked on the bridge. A cedar arbor for the new bridge when it opens or during construction was suggested as well. Mark noted that the bridge is a big part of

Meeting Notes *(cont'd)*



the Tribe's everyday life so bringing a little culture to the bridge would be awesome.

- f. Haylee Rose, NE SHPO inquired to who would draft the MOA.
 - i. Stacy Stupka noted that it would be a collaborative effort between NDOT and Iowa DOT to draft the stipulations.

Action Items

Burns & McDonnell

- 1) Prepare and send meeting notes.

FHWA / USACE

- 1) FHWA (Luke Pitts) as lead Federal agency for Section 106 will need to inform USACE Omaha District Missouri River Programmatic Agreement list.

Consulting Parties

- 1) Review and provide comments via email on mitigation options on or before December 29, 2025.

Section 106 Consulting Parties Mitigation Strategies Meeting

Decatur Bridge

STP-51-7(109); CN 32395

NOVEMBER 21, 2025



SAFETY MOMENT

Thanksgiving Safety Tips

- Stay in the kitchen when you are cooking on the stove top
- Stay in the home when cooking your turkey and check on it frequently
- Be sure electric cords are not dangling off the counter
- Keep the floor clear so you don't trip
- Make sure your smoke alarms are working

Agenda

Introductions

Section 106 Review Process

Criteria of Adverse Effect

Project Background

Mitigations Options

Stipulation Brainstorming

Next Steps / Questions

Nebraska Department of Transportation

Iowa Department of Transportation

Federal Highway Administration

History Nebraska – SHPO

Iowa Economic Development Authority - SHPO

Omaha Tribe of Nebraska

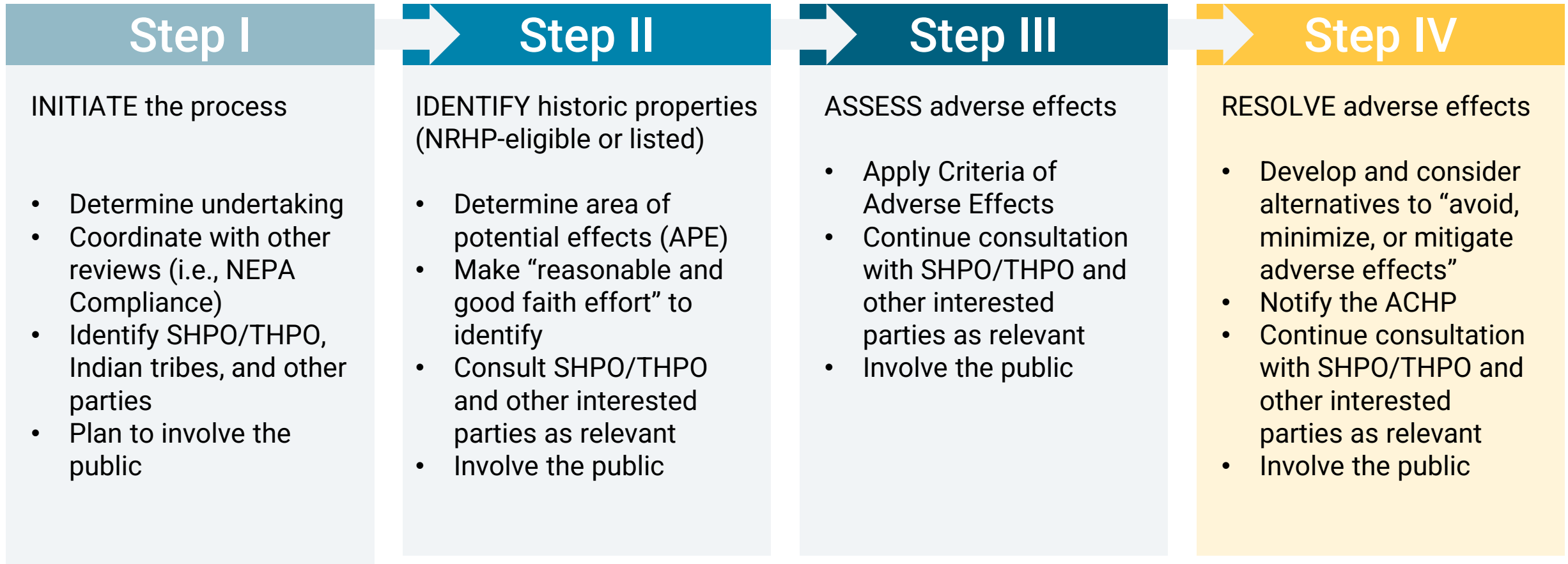
Winnebago Tribe of Nebraska

Cheyenne Nation

U.S. Army Corps of Engineers

Burns & McDonnell

Section 106 Review Process



Criteria of Adverse Effect 36 CFR § 800.5(a)(1)

ADVERSE EFFECT-

is found when an undertaking “may alter, directly or indirectly, any of the characteristics of a historic property that qualify the property” for NRHP inclusion “in a manner that would diminish the property’s integrity”

Examples relevant to subject undertaking

Destruction or damage of all or part of a historic property (NRHP-listed or eligible)

Project Description

Identified as *Decatur Bridge*, the proposed project would improve the Nebraska Highway 51 (N-51) / Iowa Highway 175 (IA-175) Missouri River crossing in Burt County, Nebraska and Monona County, Iowa.



Project Purpose

The purpose of the proposed action is to provide a resilient river crossing connecting Decatur, Nebraska/N-51 and Onawa, Iowa/IA-175 that maintains access to regional commerce, employment, education, health care, and recreation facilities; maintains accessibility to and by emergency services; and provides infrastructure to support current and future travel demand.

Project Need

The project is needed to:

- Maintain safe and reliable connectivity
- Improve the infrastructure condition of the river crossing
- Improve the crossing's resiliency against flooding



Decatur Bridge History

1955

Built “in the dry,” the United States Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) diverted the Missouri River under the bridge.

1970

Bridge began to receive regular structural repairs.

2000

Major Repair: Steel grid deck installed.

2011

Scour from the 2011 flood resulted in a 5-month closure to perform repairs.

2013

Operated as a toll bridge until 2013 when ownership was transferred to NDOT and Iowa DOT.

2017

Major Repair: Floor beam strengthening occurred.

2025

Major Repair: Anticipated late 2025 / early 2026

Built as a toll bridge by the Burt County Bridge Commission between 1951-1956, the Decatur Bridge has been previously **determined eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP).**



Photo: Partially completed bridge & USACE excavation, 1955.



Historic Significance

It was previously determined NRHP eligible under ***Criterion A: Transportation*** “for establishing a first highway crossing of a major waterway and as a major state bridge building initiative” and under ***Criterion C: Engineering***, as a “steel continuous through-truss bridge of an exceptional span length” under the update to the Multiple Property Documentation Form, *Intensive Architectural Survey of Iowa Primary and Secondary Road Bridges Built Between 1942 and 1970* (Baynard et al. 2011)

Stipulation Brainstorming

Meaningful Mitigation options:

- Should be relevant and commensurate with the resources' significance
- Offer a public benefit taking into account the views and considerations of the public and community containing the resource
- Accommodate the needs of all parties, including those who feel the property is important and the agency responsible for its management
- Think beyond traditional documentation strategies; may still be relevant but should consider broader resource and property type related options as well as offset mitigation that could benefit other resources



Photo: A "dry-land" bridge was built on the Nebraska side of the Missouri River in 1951 and the flow of the stream channeled under it in 1956. (Courtesy of the Omaha World-Herald and the Hudleson Studio, Onawa Iowa.)

Initial Input from Stakeholders

Preliminary Option 1: Video

Bridging Generations –
The Story of the Black
Hawk Bridge

[https://www.youtube.com/
watch?v=ENUID_WKYwA](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ENUID_WKYwA)



Search



Bridging Generations - The Story of the Black Hawk Bridge



IowaDOT
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102



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U.S. Department of Transportation
**Federal Highway
Administration**

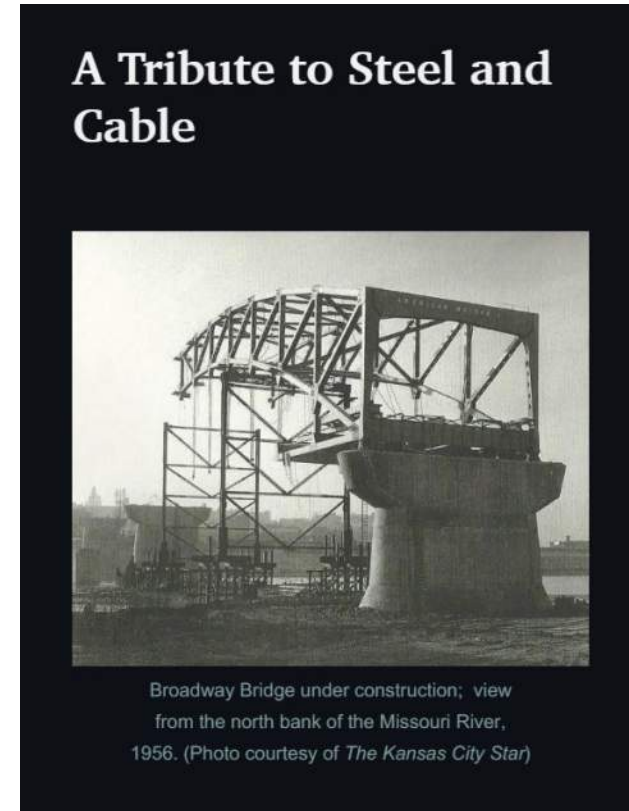
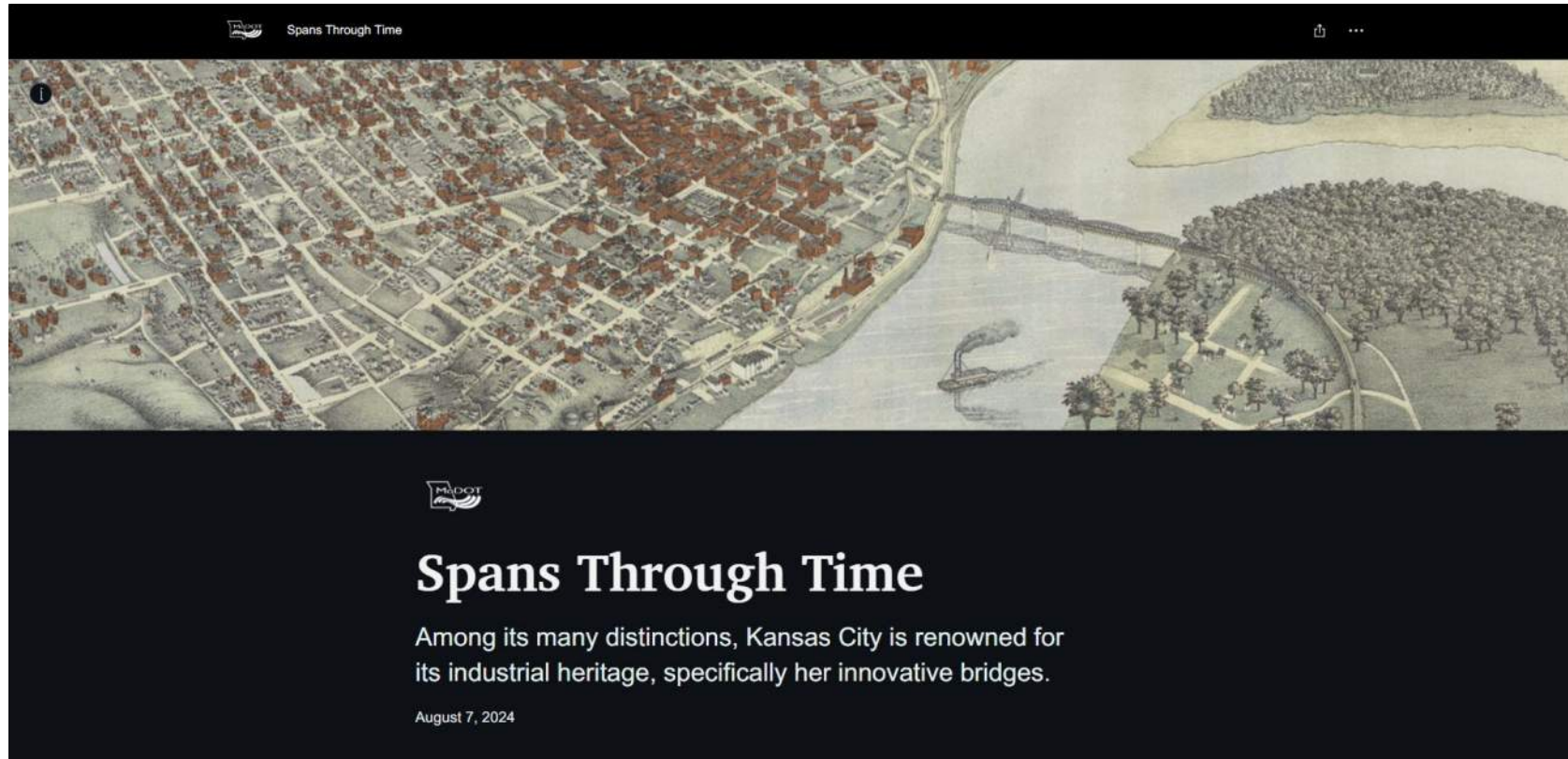
NEBRASKA
DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

IOWA | DOT

Preliminary Option 2: Digital Publication

- Local Community
- Private origins
- Nearby relevant transportation history
- USACE - history

Preliminary Option 2: Digital Publication



[Spans Through Time](#)

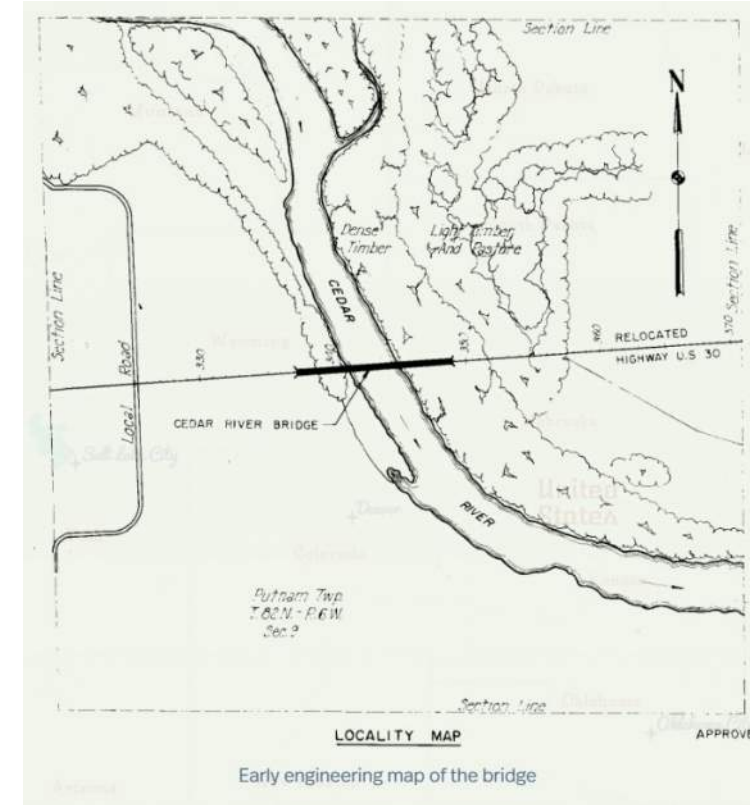
Preliminary Option 2: Digital Publication



US Highway 30 Cedar River Bridge

The first steel, continuous welded I-girder highway bridge with floorbeams in Iowa.

University of Iowa Office of the State Archaeologist
August 19, 2024



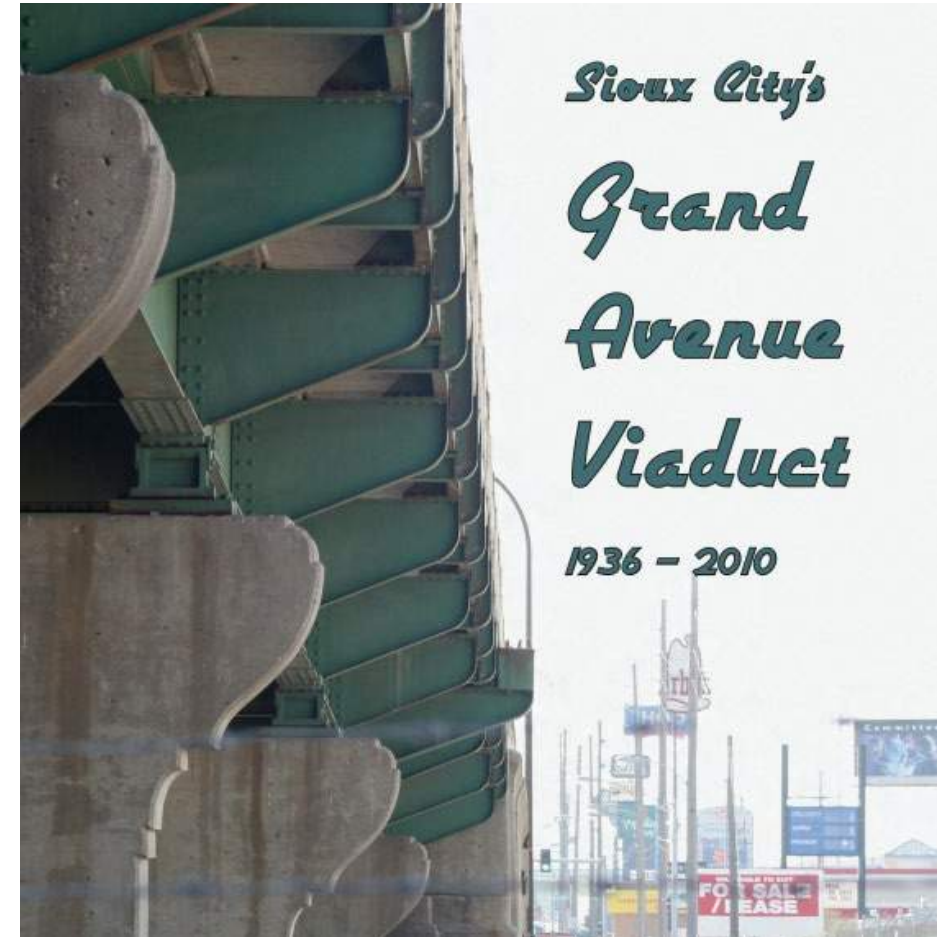
US Highway 30 Cedar River Bridge

Preliminary Option 2: Digital Publication



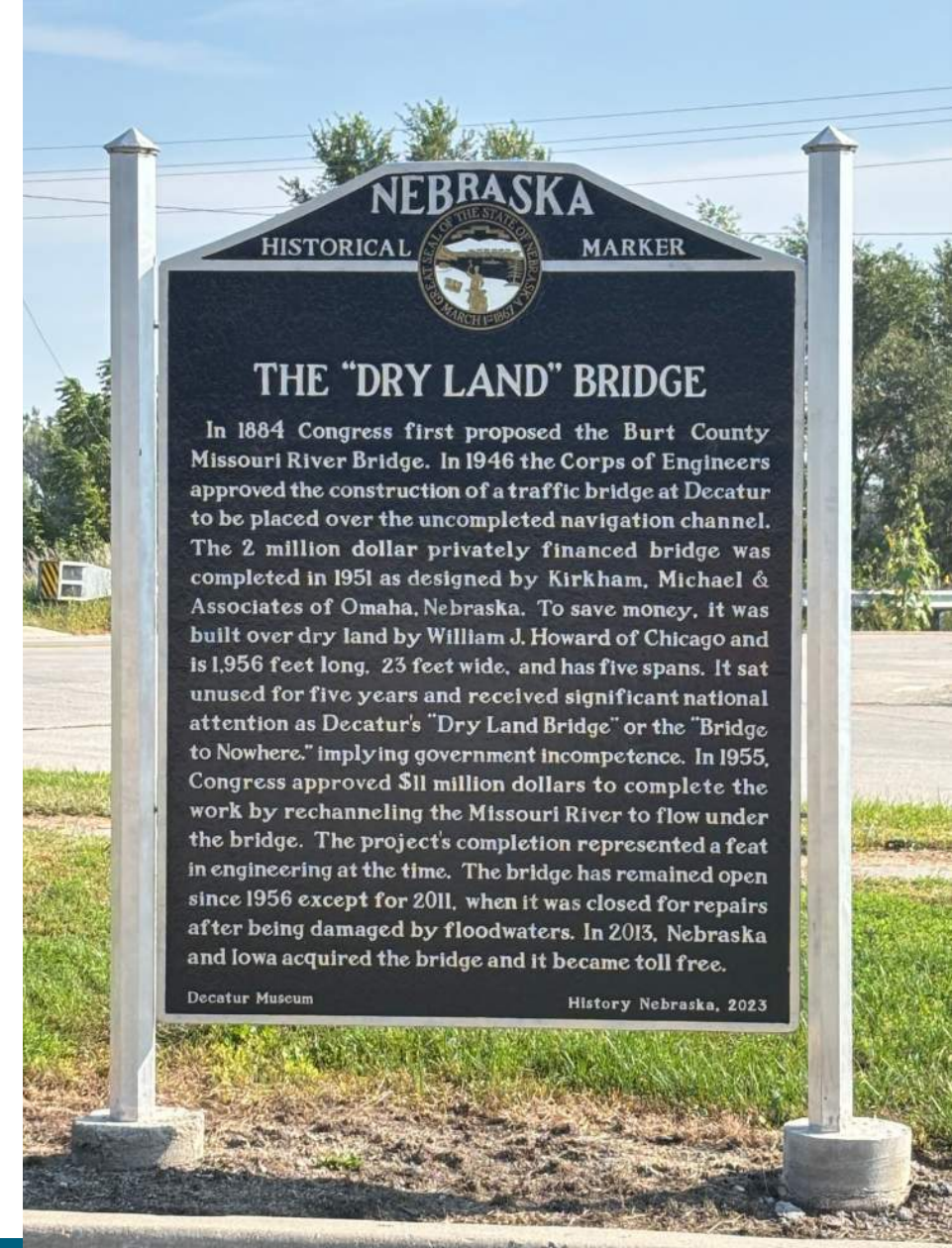
Original photograph for postcard view (opposite) of the new Grand Avenue Viaduct, c. 1938.

<https://iowadot.gov/media/3486/download?inline>

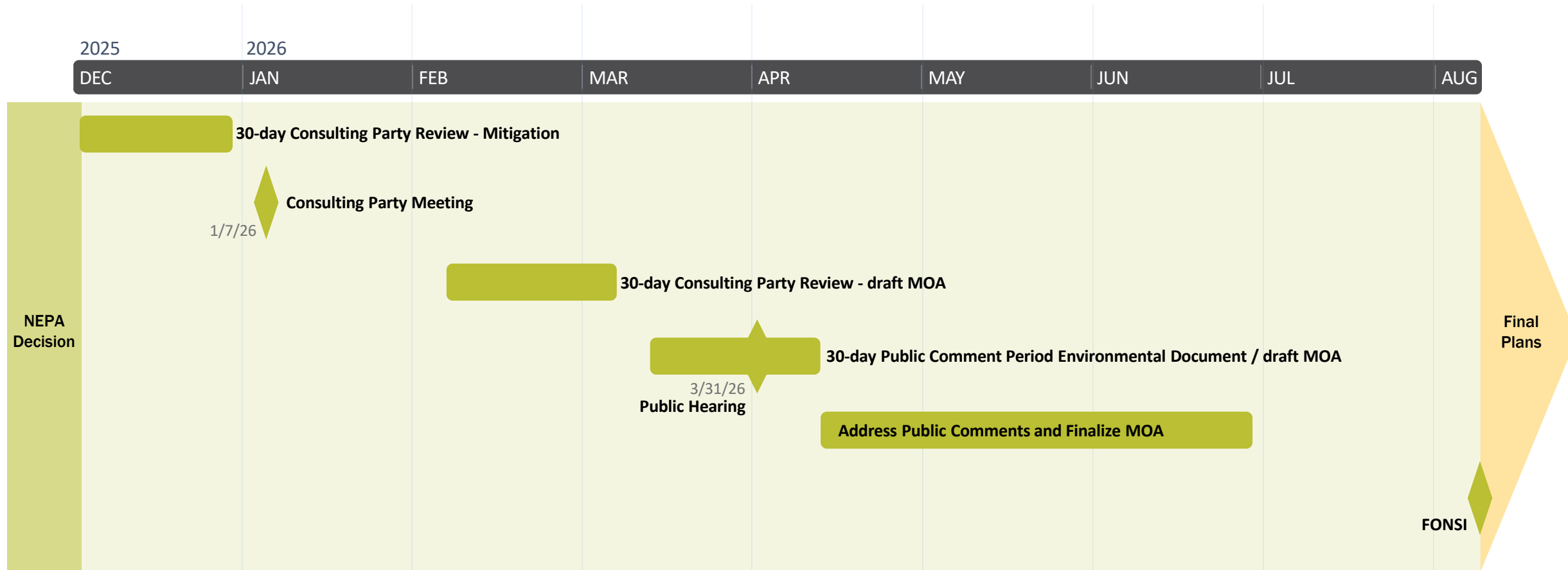


Preliminary Option 3:

Existing Marker In Place Enhancement



Schedule Overview



We are seeking your input!

- Your ideas today regarding appropriate mitigation will be considered during Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) development.
- Meeting minutes and mitigation options will be submitted to attendees via email with 30-day review window.
- After 30 days, a follow-up meeting (targeting January 7, 2026) will be held to finalize selection and to allow for preparation of a DRAFT MOA
- Once the MOA is distributed, you will have 30 days to provide comments and/or to request signatory status.



Email
Brandy Harris
bmharris@burnsmcd.com

Meeting Notes



Meeting Subject: Decatur Bridge Section 106 Mitigation – Consulting Parties Meeting
Meeting Date: Wednesday, January 7, 2026
Time: 1:00 PM
Location: Microsoft Teams
Project Name: Decatur Bridge
Project No.: CN 32395, STP-51-7(109)

Attendees:

Michael Sothan, NE SHPO Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer
Haylee Rose, NE SHPO Review & Compliance: Standing Structures Coordinator
Mariska Molnar, NE SHPO Preservation Archeologist
Sara Andre, Iowa SHPO, Historic Preservation Specialist
Branden Scott, Iowa SHPO Archaeologist
Kirsten Brown, USACE Rock Island District, Section 404
Adam Nebel, USACE Omaha District, Section 408 Program Manager
Brett Harbison, USACE Omaha District, Section 404
Katie Turner, NDOT Cultural Resources Manager
Jon Barber, NDOT Environmental Documents Unit
Anne Bauer, NDOT
Anna Ondracek, NDOT Environmental Project Manager
Danielle Hardesty, NDOT NEPA Specialist
John Coburn, NDOT Project Manager – Project Development Division
Aritree Shreya, NDOT, Project Engineer – Project Development Division
Kevin Domogalla, NDOT District 3 Engineer
Brennan Dolan, Iowa DOT Cultural Resources Team Lead/Tribal Liaison
Janee Becker, Iowa DOT Cultural Resources Manager
Christine Schwienebart, Iowa DOT, NEPA Manager
Jessica Felix, Iowa DOT District 3 Engineer
Brandy Harris, BMCD, Natural and Cultural Resources Lead
Shari Cannon-Mackey, BMCD NEPA Lead
Jessica Kepka, BMCD

Attachments:

Presentation Slides

Meeting Notes:

The purpose of this meeting was to continue Section 106 consultation and determine a preferred mitigation option for STP-51-7(109) Decatur Bridge: CN 32395 to be included in a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA). This proposed project constitutes an “undertaking” subject to Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA) and its implementing regulations, 36 CFR Part 800.

- 1) Self-Introductions were made, see above attendance list
 - a. Katie Turner noted that both Stacy Stupka (NDOT) and Luke Pitts (FHWA) were ill and would not be attending
- 2) Input from Interested Parties

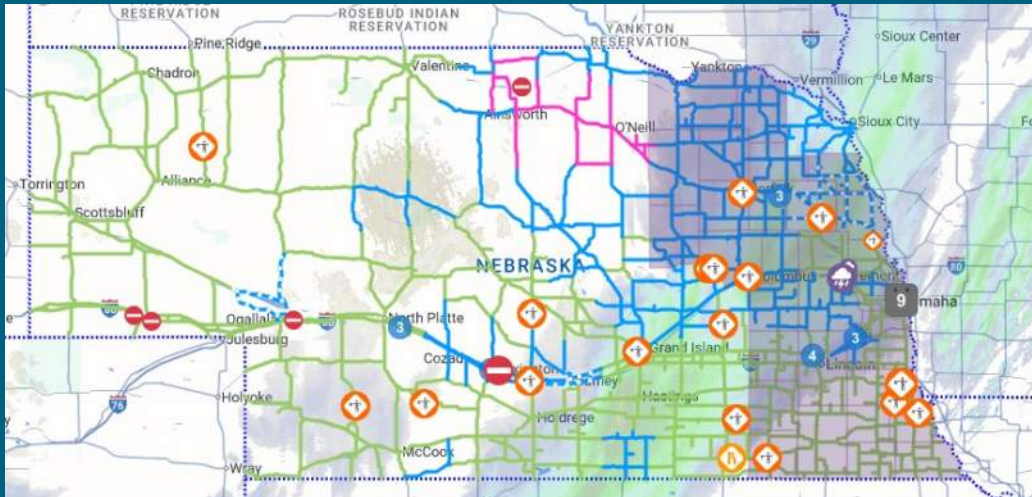
- a. Option 1: Video
 - i. Sara Andre commented that a video is a good mitigation option because it can hit so many different people – tribes, community, etc.
 - ii. Kirsten Brown noted her preference for the video option. She also inquired if the video content could be made into a publication or link to share with schools etc.?
 - 1. Brennan Dolan responded that that is possible
 - iii. Brennan Dolan commented that the nice part about a video is that you don't have to be local to be engaged with it. He noted that the example video is closing in on 10,000 views. What a preservation payoff. He also noted that ballpark costs generally are equal to higher level documentation – past ones have been between \$30-50,000. Brennan also noted that it would be imperative that we have some agency voices captured in the video too, maybe Brennan, Stacy, or Katie.
 - iv. Haylee Rose inquired about community outreach. If showing the video would be a stipulation or just the production of the video on its own?
 - 1. Brennan Dolan responded that the timing is tricky but we could reach out to communities to show the video and could have a stipulation that we could help facilitate a “community debut”.
 - v. NE SHPO representatives took a neutral response to the video option.
- b. Option 2: Digital Publication
 - i. Brennan Dolan noted that story maps get traffic, but views are only in the hundreds compared to a video.
- c. Option 3: Existing Marker in place Enhancement
 - i. Meeting representatives noted that this option is far less accessible than a video or story map
 - ii. Michael Sothan noted that he would see this option in addition to another mitigation option, not as a standalone option. The existing marker would be mothballed and a determination made later to reinstall as part of an expanded display at an appropriate location or to recycle it.
 - iii. Kevin Domagala noted to work with the Village to determine the “thoughtful” placement of it or a replacement display after construction.
- d. Attendee consensus was to support a combination of options 1 & 3.
 - i. Haylee Rose noted the location of marker would need to be moved regardless and that verbiage would be reviewed and approved by SHPO.
 - ii. Brennan Dolan noted that marker casting lead time is usually 9 months.

Section 106 Consulting Parties DRAFT MOA Review Meeting

Decatur Bridge

STP-51-7(109); CN 32395

JANUARY 7, 2026



SAFETY MOMENT

Leverage GIS for Road Safety

- GIS is more than a mapping tool – it's a decision-making engine for safety
- GIS visualizes risks and enables proactive planning



Agenda

Introductions

Review of Proposed Mitigation Options

Next Steps / Questions

Nebraska Department of Transportation

Iowa Department of Transportation

Federal Highway Administration

NE SHPO

Iowa Economic Development Authority – SHPO

Iowa OSA

Omaha Tribe of Nebraska

Winnebago Tribe of Nebraska

Cheyenne Nation

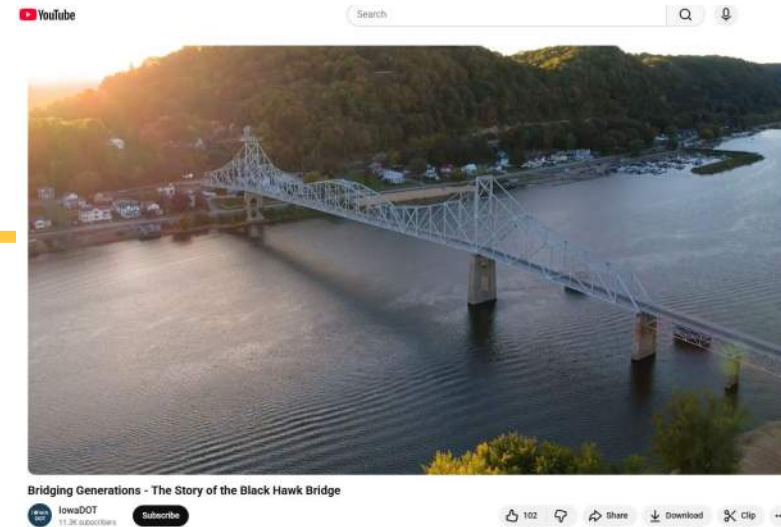
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers

Burns & McDonnell

Interested Parties Input

Option 1 : Video

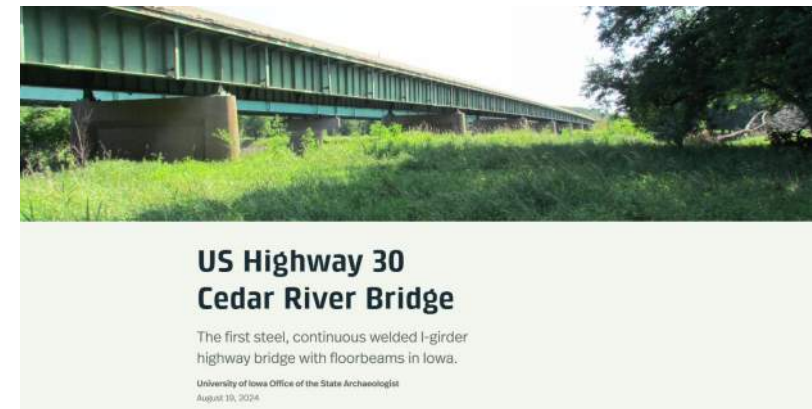
- Sara Andre (Iowa SHPO) - videos are a good mitigation option. They are very wholistic and hit the spot with resources and the community members.
- Kristen Brown (USACE) liked the idea of a video and having it available as an online resource.
- Mark Parker (Omaha Tribe of Nebraska) - videos and testimonials could be included from elders who might have ancestors who worked on the bridge.
- Burt County Supervisors - video would be nice, but some people would prefer printed materials. vi.
- Michael Sothan (NESHPO) mentioned would be agreeable to a video with a story map but stressed inclusion of the state-level significance of the bridge, which goes beyond the local / immediate area.



Interested Parties Input

Option 2 : Digital Publication

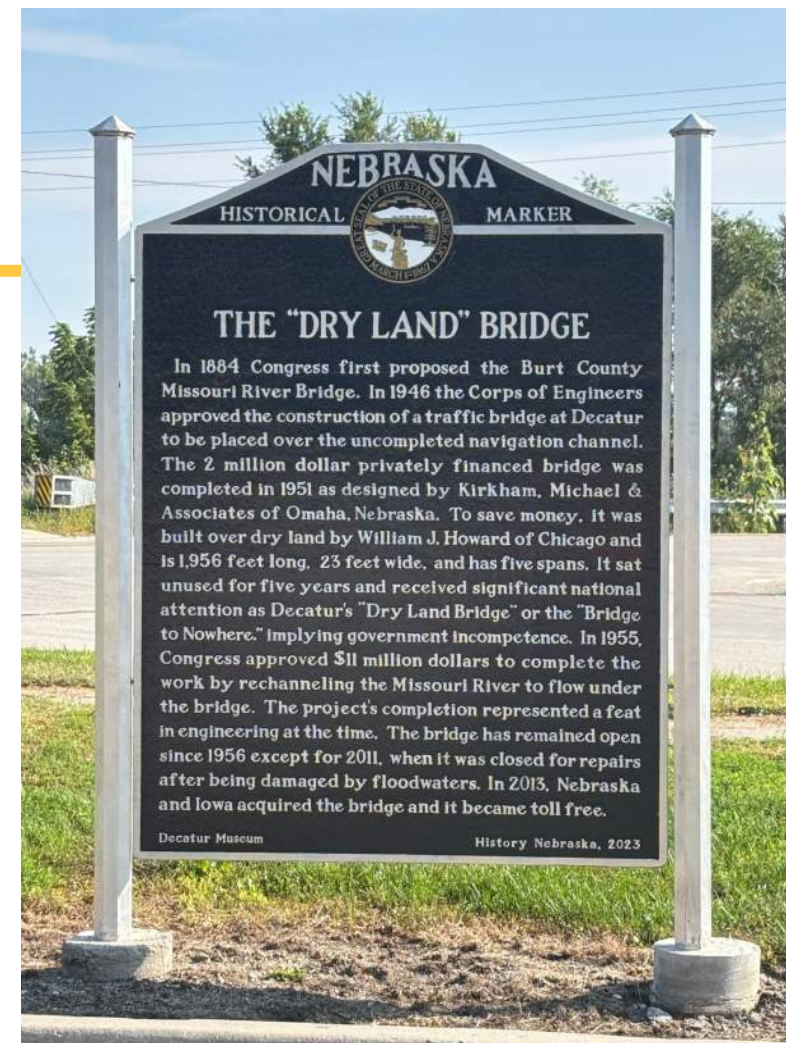
- Digital publications can be useful tools for teachers and students as the information is available online. Publications can also be printed.



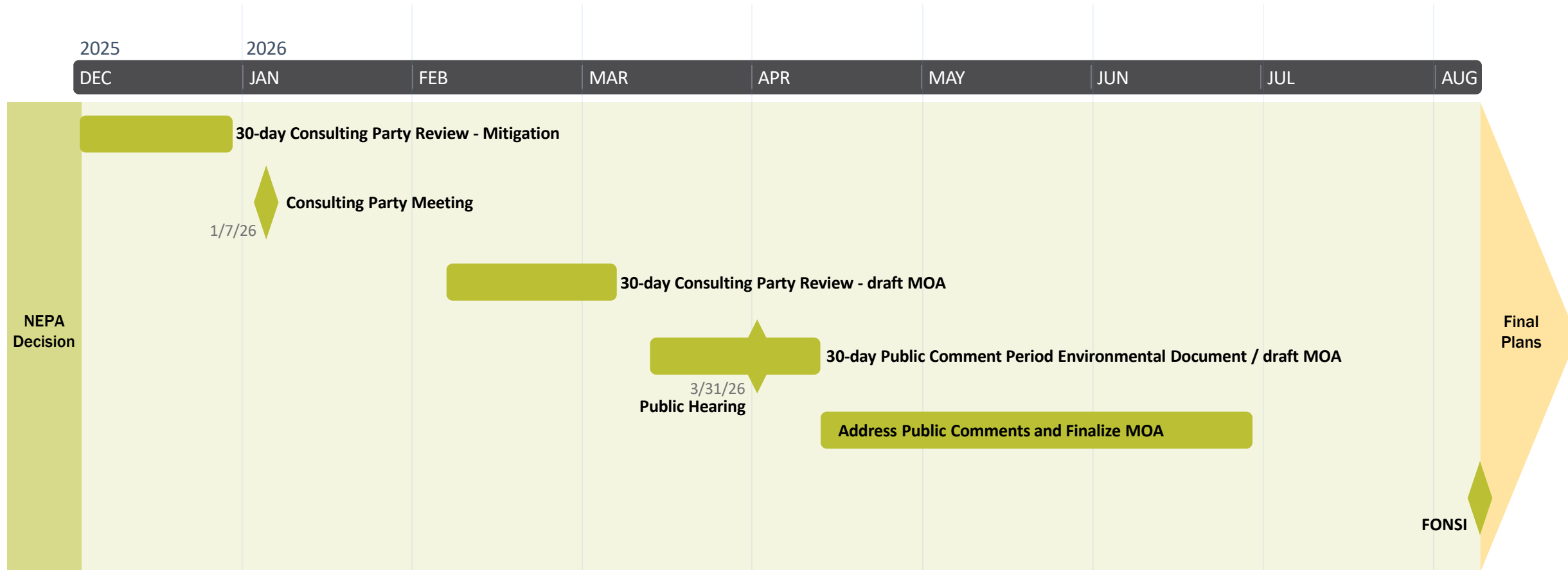
Interested Parties Input

Option 3 : Existing Marker in Place Enhancement

- The existing marker could be a starting point. Potential enhancements could include adding a picture of the existing bridge to the marker or a panel with pictures adjacent to the marker that include pictures of the existing bridge and text that clarifies that the bridge the viewer would be looking at is a replacement bridge.



Schedule Overview



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- DRAFT MOA will be submitted to attendees via email, you will have 30 days to provide comments.



Email
Brandy Harris
bmharris@burnsmcd.com