



PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT ACTION PLAN

I-80 Rockfall Mitigation Project
M.P. 1.04 to M.P. 1.45
Townships of Hardwick and Knowlton
Warren County, New Jersey

June 2023

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Intent

The intent of this Public Involvement Action Plan (PIAP) is to establish a public outreach effort to be undertaken by the New Jersey Department of Transportation (NJDOT) during the design and construction phases of the I-80 Rockfall Mitigation Project (the Project) and continually develop the program for public involvement and communication as the Project progresses.

This PIAP establishes a public involvement guideline that is dynamic in nature so it can evolve in the fulfillment of its purpose to keep the public informed and engaged as the Project progresses.

1.2 Project Background

Interstate 80 (I-80) is an east/west interstate freeway that connects the New Jersey Turnpike and New York City to the east with the western part of New Jersey and Pennsylvania to the west. This connection is critical to the recreational and economic viability of residents, commuters, tourists, and the public. The project site is located near the west end of the portion of I-80 in Hardwick and Knowlton Townships, Warren County and is within the Delaware Water Gap National Recreation Area, which is administered by the National Park Service (NPS). The subject rock slopes lie along the north side of the westbound roadway while the Delaware River runs along the south side of the eastbound roadway.

I-80 is a four-lane divided highway with a posted speed of 50 mph through the Project Area. The existing roadway cross section consists of two twelve-foot-wide lanes with a two-foot-wide inside shoulder and a four-foot-wide westbound/six-foot-wide eastbound outside shoulder in each direction. There is no roadside area along the north side of the roadway as it is bordered by barrier curb along the edge of pavement. Along the south side of the roadway, beam guide rail exists for the first 0.07 miles at the west end of the Project Area and barrier curb defines the pavement edge for the rest of the Project Area.

The topography of the area is mountainous. I-80 in this area is located between Mt. Tammany and the Delaware River (see **Figure 1**). The roadway alignment within the project location is oriented northwest to southeast, however, the highway is designated to run from west to east. The elevation of the roadway within the project location is in the 300-foot range.

The existing rock cut areas along the westbound direction of I-80 within the project limits present unique physical and geological hazards. There are large overhangs, steep vertical faces, loose boulders, and rock blocks which have resulted in rock toppling down and landing on the shoulder and roadway lanes along the I-80 roadway (see **Photographs 1-4**).

The Project Area, which is the I-80 segment between mileposts 1.04 and 1.45, has been characterized as having the highest rockfall hazard rating scores (i.e., highest risk) in the state. The proposed project is a combination of four slopes; although these slopes were scored individually, they need to be looked at collectively as all four slopes are part of one contiguous geologic formation. Due to the geometry and complexity of these slopes and their location in close proximity to the highway, they need to be analyzed as an integrated system in order to address the rockfall hazards at this location. As of result

of these high rock hazard conditions, the NJDOT must conduct this project to mitigate the risk of rockfall hitting the roadway and protect the motoring public, while balancing any impact to the surrounding area.

Additional background information for this project can be found on the Project's website: www.state.nj.us/transportation/works/rockfall/.

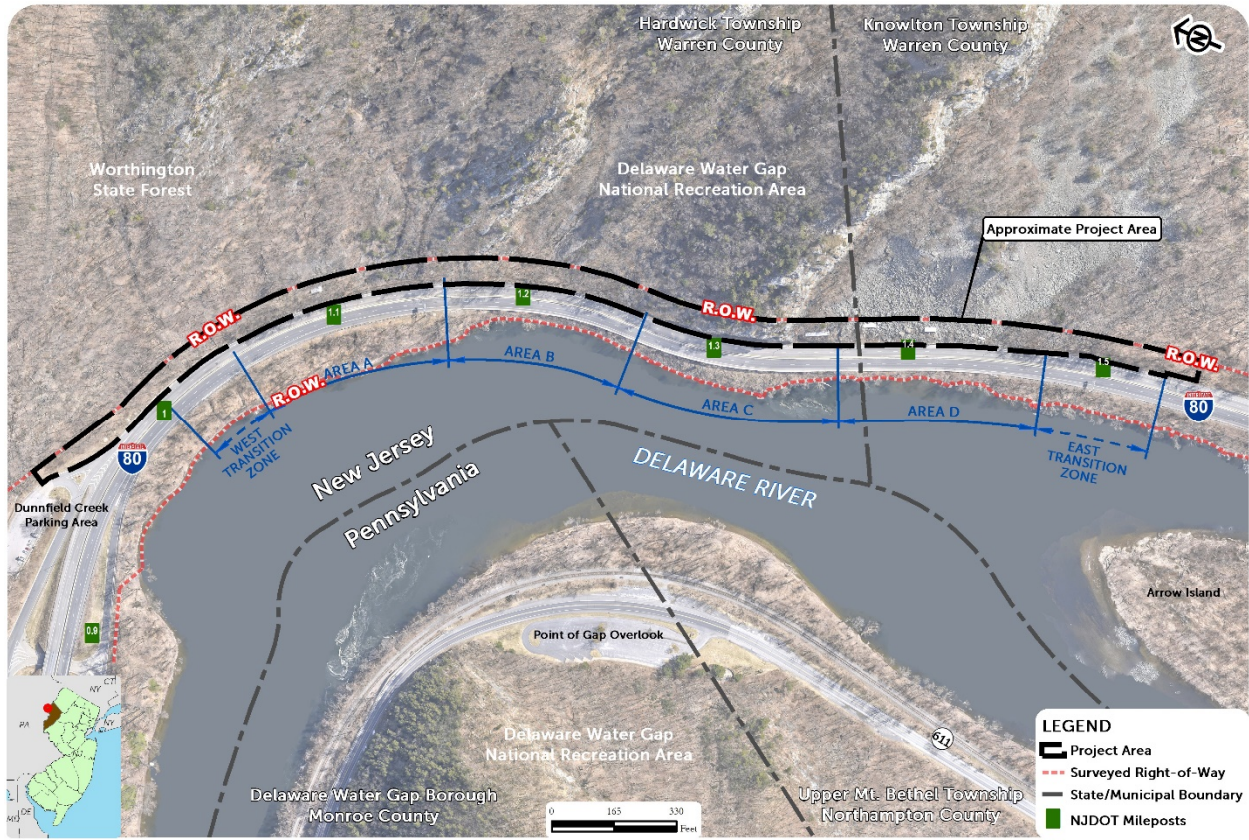


Figure 1: Project Area Map



Photograph 1: Area A, looking southeast.



Photograph 2: Area B, looking southeast.



Photograph 3: Areas C and D, looking southeast (note existing gabion wall).



Photograph 4: Area D, looking east at talus slope.

1.3 Purpose of the Public Involvement Action Plan

Infrastructure improvement projects undertaken by public agencies, or funded by public dollars, are required by law and compelled by ethical practice to inform the affected community or communities of the intended work while considering the communities' needs and concerns in the development of the project. Safe and reliable transportation is critical to economic stability, community health and safety, and a positive quality of life. Temporary disruption to transportation systems, even when in the course of undertaking important and necessary repairs or improvements, may create a hardship affecting residents, commuters, and business operators.

Advance notice of changes to the transportation network, and opportunities to hear and comment on recommendations for alternative solutions for the continuity of transportation during construction, can substantially reduce the potential for adverse impacts resulting from the infrastructure project. The purpose of the PIAP is to provide a guidance document that identifies likely needs and concerns of the affected communities and recommends methods for ensuring active participation and communication between NJDOT and the community.

The PIAP reflects not only NJDOT's good neighbor imperative, but is a tool to help comply with federal regulations pertaining to public involvement. Transportation projects completed in whole or in part by funding provided by the United States Department of Transportation (USDOT) are required to comply with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act and Executive Order 12898 (Environmental Justice). Both Title VI and Environmental Justice are concerned with the full participation and equal treatment of historically disadvantaged populations. Title VI is concerned with protected classes of individuals, and seeks to allow for the full participation of racial and ethnic minorities, communities with limited English proficiency, and others who have been the subject of discriminatory practices of the past. Environmental Justice is concerned with minorities and communities that are economically or otherwise disadvantaged in terms of their ability to participate fully in public decision-making.

"No person in the United States shall, on the ground of race, color, or national origin, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity receiving Federal financial assistance."

This PIAP outlines how NJDOT will inform and seek input from New Jersey and Pennsylvania communities, key stakeholders, and the traveling public regarding the Preliminary Preferred Alternative (PPA), and the construction phase of the Project. Public opinion and comments will be documented and considered in the development of construction phase recommendations.

As it represents a recognized standard for public involvement, the public outreach activities detailed in this PIAP will fulfill the public involvement requirements associated with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) process, as noted in 40 CFR 1506.6, including:

- making a diligent effort to involve the public in preparing and implementing NEPA procedures;
- informing the public via public notice of NEPA-related public meetings, and of the availability of environmental documents to inform people and agencies who may be interested or affected;
- holding public meetings whenever appropriate or in accordance with applicable statutory requirements;

- gathering information from the public;
- explaining where interested persons can get information or status reports on elements of the NEPA process; and
- making NEPA-related documents available to the public pursuant to the provisions of the Freedom of Information Act (5 U.S.C. 552).

In addition, the Project is also subject to review pursuant to Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended (36 CFR Part 800). Section 106 requires federal agencies to consider the effects of their undertakings on historic properties that are listed in or eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places (National Register). As part of the Section 106 process, the NJDOT is required to solicit public input to assist it in carrying out that process. Section 106 consulting parties may include, but are not limited to, the State Historic Preservation Officer, tribal nations, local governments, and others with an interest in history, archaeology, or historic preservation. Section 101(d)(6)(B) of the National Historic Preservation Act requires the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) to consult with any tribal nation that attaches religious and cultural significance to historic properties that may be affected by an undertaking. As part of this consultation process, tribes are provided a reasonable opportunity to identify concerns about historic properties, advise on the identification and evaluation of historic properties, including those of traditional religious and cultural importance, articulate their views on the project effects on such properties, and participate in the resolution of adverse effects.

1.4 Public Participation Principles

The PIAP has been developed to support civic engagement in the Project by emphasizing the following principles:

- The public shall have adequate access to information.

A public project website will be created and maintained by NJDOT. A record of all public meetings will be kept. Approved technical documents will be placed in locations available to the public, and notice of upcoming meetings or events will be posted in locations convenient and accessible to the affected community and users of the infrastructure. Communication from NJDOT will be provided in the dominant languages spoken in the community so that linguistically isolated populations are informed of the Project and have an opportunity to participate.

- The public shall have clarity in the information presented to them.

Technical information and regulatory procedures will be presented in terms that are understandable to the public.

- The public shall be able to participate in a process that is well coordinated.

Good coordination, communication, and collaboration is important in providing the public with the most current and correct information. Meetings will be held at a time that is reasonably convenient to the majority of the population and will be held far enough in advance of the completion of each respective phase of the Project that public input and concerns

affecting the Project's advancement can be given sufficient consideration. Public involvement events will be advertised with sufficient advance notice for members of the public to make accommodations to attend. All Public Information Center (PIC) Meetings shall be held at a facility that is fully accessible for persons with disabilities (ADA compliant).

1.5 Environmental Justice Community Assessment

1.5.1 Community Profile and Environmental Justice/Title VI

The goal of identifying the Project's community composition is to identify Environmental Justice and Title VI communities so that impacts associated with the Project are not disproportionately distributed and the public outreach plan is fair and inclusive.

1.5.2 Land Uses

The majority of the study area is comprised of open space.

The Hardwick Township portion of the study area, which is in the southwestern part of the township, is designated as parks, recreation, open space, and quasi-public space. More than half of the township's property is classified as public property. The residential and farm portions of the township are located in the eastern portion of the township. There are no residences, businesses, community facilities, or critical facilities located within the Hardwick Township portion of the study area.

The majority of Knowlton Township is comprised of forested lands and farmland with small pockets of residential and commercial property. The Knowlton Township portion of the study area is exclusively open space. There are no residences, businesses, community facilities, or critical facilities located within the Knowlton Township portion of the study area.

The majority of the Borough of Delaware Water Gap is comprised of open space, with a small downtown in the northwestern portion of the Borough that includes commercial and residential property. However, only the portion of the Delaware River that is considered to be part of the Borough is located within the study area. There are no residences, businesses, community facilities, or critical facilities located within the Borough of Delaware Water Gap portion of the study area.

The majority of Upper Mt. Bethel Township is comprised of agricultural land, with smaller single-family residential areas spread throughout. There are also pockets of commercial and industrial land uses within the Township, mostly located along the main roadways. However, only the portion of the Delaware River that is considered to be part of the Township is located within the study area. There are no residences, businesses, community facilities, or critical facilities located within the Upper Mt. Bethel Township portion of the study area.

1.5.3 Community Facilities

Community facilities include public or publicly funded schools, libraries, child care centers, health care facilities, police stations, and fire stations among other services. There are no community facilities located within the study area. However, emergency services (e.g., police, fire, and ambulance services) rely on I-80 and the local roadways to provide services.

The closest designated trauma center hospitals are located across the river in Pennsylvania and include Lehigh Valley Hospital – Pocono, a level 3 trauma center located in East Stroudsburg, Pennsylvania, approximately 4.5 miles from the Project Area and St. Luke’s University Hospital – Bethlehem, a level 1 trauma center located in Bethlehem, Pennsylvania, approximately 44 miles from the Project Area. Morristown Medical Center is a level 2 trauma center located in Morristown, New Jersey, approximately 48 miles from the Project Area. In addition, Hackettstown Medical Center, located in Hackettstown, New Jersey, is approximately 24 miles from the Project Area and Newton Medical Center, located in Newton, New Jersey, is approximately 27 miles from the Project Area. These two hospitals are not designated trauma centers.

As local emergency services rely on I-80 in part to provide services, access through the Project Area during construction is important. As the project advances, the NJDOT Office of Emergency Management would lead consultation with local communities and emergency services in order to develop a traffic management plan. An Emergency Services Task Force would be established to work with multiple levels of regional and local emergency services representatives. In addition, a full-time Traffic Control Coordinator (TCC) would be provided and be responsible for the maintenance and protection of traffic during construction. The TCC would monitor and coordinate with local emergency services throughout the duration of the construction of the Project.

1.5.4 Community Demographics

There are no people that reside within the study area boundary. The study area within Hardwick and Knowlton Townships includes open space and transportation land uses only; the study area within Upper Mt. Bethel Township and the Borough of Delaware Water Gap includes the Delaware River only. The demographic study area (summarized below) includes the census block groups that overlap with the study area.

Hardwick Township

Based on the United States Census Bureau 2020 American Community Survey, it was determined that Hardwick Township has an estimated population of 1,519 (736 Male and 783 Female), which is composed of 91.3% White, 1.1% Black or African American, 1.1% Asian and 4.7% Hispanic. It is estimated that there are no Limited English Proficiency Households in Hardwick Township. Approximately 11.4% of the population lives below the poverty line.

Knowlton Township

Based on the United States Census Bureau American Community Survey 2020, it was determined that Knowlton Township has an estimated population of 2,941(1,410 Male and 1,531 Female), which is composed of 88.7% White, 2.0% Black or African American, 1.7% Asian and 4.3% Hispanic. It is estimated that there are 15 Limited English Proficiency Households in Knowlton Township consisting of 1.4% Other Indo European.. Approximately 2.3% of the population lives below the poverty line.

1.6 Public Involvement Action Plan Goals

Public participation is required so that the community's issues and concerns are addressed in the study and consequently achieve community ownership of the proposed project. Public participation is a critical element in the successful implementation of the NJDOT transportation program.

The PIAP Goals include the following:

- To promote an ongoing public partnership between the NJDOT and the community so that the transportation benefits are considered within the context of the communities directly impacted by the Project.
- To allow for early, frequent and continuous consultation with the public by committing to public notification of the affected parties and provide opportunities for citizen feedback during development of the identified solutions.
- To assist in building public support for both agreements on the problem definition and identification of possible solutions along with the selection of the PPA.
- To identify early in the process any potential "fatal flaws" that would prevent the advancement of the Project or its ability to adequately address the identified problem(s).

This PIAP is intended to establish a public involvement process that is dynamic in nature so that it can evolve with the progress of the Project through Concept Development, Preliminary Engineering, Final Design and Construction.

1.7 Public Involvement Action Plan Implementation

Although the PIAP is organized by the project phase, it will be implemented in such a manner that the public views the Project as one seamless process. The PIAP is organized by project phase (i.e., Preliminary Engineering, Final Design, and Construction) for its integration with the engineering effort to facilitate the schedule of contingent activities. The PIAP will be amended as necessary as the Project advances through the project phases.

1.7.1 Concept Development

The Concept Development phase was concluded in 2011 and the Project was then advanced to the Preliminary Engineering phase. The major objectives of the Concept Development phase are to identify and compare reasonable alternatives and strategies that address the Purpose and Need Statement.

1.7.2 Preliminary Engineering

As part of the Preliminary Engineering phase, alternatives are developed and evaluated, leading to the selection of the PPA. The environmental document is prepared as part of this phase.

1.7.3 Final Design

During Final Design, the design of the selected PPA will be completed, taking into consideration the input obtained through the public involvement effort to provide an improvement solution that satisfies the project Purpose and Need.

1.7.4 Construction

Notifying the public about regional traffic patterns and potential delays due to construction activity will be important prior to construction of the identified solution. Providing this information in a timely manner will facilitate the formation of positive public perception towards NJDOT, the Project and the Townships of Hardwick and Knowlton and Warren County.

1.8 Public Involvement Action Plan Publication History

Since the PIAP is organized by the project phase and is dynamic in nature, it is periodically updated to reflect the progress and methods being employed for public outreach.

2.0 KEY ELEMENTS DURING CONCEPT DEVELOPMENT

The Concept Development phase involves drafting a well-defined and well-justified Purpose and Need Statement focusing on the primary transportation need to be addressed. Concept Development phase elements include, but are not limited to: data collection, coordination with NJDOT Subject Matter Experts/local stakeholders, risk identification, development of a reasonable number of feasible and practical conceptual alternatives, and investigation of all aspects of a project. These aspects may include environmental, right-of-way, access, utilities, design, community involvement, and constructability.

Comments and concerns received by the public, elected officials and special interest groups during the Concept Development phase were assessed and documented as noted below in the Concept Development report.

The Concept Development phase was concluded in 2011 and the project was then advanced to the Preliminary Engineering phase.

2.1 Project Team

The I-80 Concept Development Project Team was comprised of professionals from NJDOT and HNTB Corp., Inc., including civil engineers, geologists, and community relations specialists.

The NJDOT Project Manager, or designee, served as the overall Project Lead and was responsible for coordination between NJDOT and the Consultant Team, as well as guiding the work of the Consultant Team. The NJDOT Project Manager also acted as a liaison to FHWA staff throughout the Project.

HNTB Corp., Inc. was the lead consultant to NJDOT for Concept Development and, therefore had direct responsibilities for the execution and performance of the technical services for this project phase.

2.2 Local Outreach

As part of the Concept Development phase, the Project Team discussed the community outreach plan required for the Project on several occasions. Below is a summary of these discussions. (Note that many of the approaches considered during the Concept Development phase were later revised and expanded upon during the Preliminary Engineering phase as the scope of the Project also changed.)

1. The activities noted below need not be undertaken until the Preliminary Engineering phase of the Project, perhaps just before the environmental document is completed.
2. Officials' Briefings with both Hardwick and Knowlton Townships are recommended during Preliminary Engineering phase and then again before construction begins.
3. The Warren County Engineer, Knowlton Township Emergency service providers, Delaware River Joint Toll Bridge Commission officials, NPS personnel from the Delaware Water Gap National Recreation Area, and Hardwick Township officials, should be invited to the Officials' Briefing.
4. A Public Information Center is not anticipated based on the currently anticipated scope of work for the Project.
5. Should the traffic impacts prove more extensive than anticipated, the outreach effort may need to be expanded. If a short-term or overnight detour into Pennsylvania is required, the outreach effort would be expanded into the affected towns in Monroe and Northampton Counties.

In addition, it had been discussed that further investigation may indicate that New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection (NJDEP) Division of Parks and Forestry, Worthington State Forest, may need to be included in the Officials' briefing and the Pennsylvania Department of Transportation (PennDOT) may need to be contacted if an overnight detour is necessary.

2.3 Presentations to Key Stakeholders

Presentations for key stakeholders occurred during project milestones or to discuss specific concerns or topics in order to provide stakeholders with project information and to provide an opportunity for any questions to be addressed. The NJDOT sometimes utilized an independent facilitator, as needed. The Project Team was responsible for maintaining minutes of meetings that clearly documented the public outreach efforts. The minutes identified the issues raised during each outreach session and designated follow-up actions that were required as a result of that session.

During Concept Development, a stakeholder meeting was held with representatives of the NPS on July 6, 2011. At this briefing, NJDOT provided information about the Project and NPS staff provided comment and feedback.

NJDOT's Office of Community Relations initiated telephone contact with officials in Hardwick Township and Knowlton Township; letters were also sent to officials in both townships offering to conduct briefings to share information about the Project and solicit feedback from them. Hardwick Township and Knowlton Township officials declined a briefing citing that the Project was in a remote area of the township and that the Project would not directly impact residents.

3.0 KEY ELEMENTS DURING PRELIMINARY ENGINEERING

The Preliminary Engineering phase will develop and refine a Preliminary Preferred Alternative (PPA) with the detail necessary to secure approval of the environmental document(s) and a Design Exception Report. This will provide the information needed to determine whether the Project can be advanced to the next phase of the Project Delivery Process, Final Design, and then Construction.

The public outreach program described in the following sections has a number of elements collectively combined to inform, engage, and involve the public in the Project. Throughout the Preliminary Engineering phase, and in accordance with this PIAP, the Project Team will be accessible to the public, share information in a complete and understandable way, and record and respond to public comments and concerns in a timely and professional manner.

Key elements of the public outreach program for the Preliminary Engineering phase are summarized in the sections below.

3.1 FHWA Project of Division Interest

As a result of legislation, the FHWA and the NJDOT are required to enter into a Stewardship Agreement regarding the level of responsibility under Title 23, USC. The FHWA must comply with laws and regulations, and also is responsible for improving the efficiency and effectiveness of the transportation systems.

In 2013, FHWA implemented a more systematic Stewardship and Oversight approach for fulfilling its responsibilities in delivery of the Federal Aid Highway Program (FAHP). This approach is intended to be more risk-based, driven by objective data, more consistent from state to state, and to improve the FHWA's ability to add value to projects and programs. The new process is Risk-Based Project Stewardship and Oversight (RBSO). The goal of risk-based project stewardship and oversight is to optimize the successful delivery of projects and assure compliance with federal requirements.

The Stewardship and Oversight Agreement outlines the roles of both FHWA and NJDOT in the accomplishment of these goals and objectives. Part of the stewardship effort includes FHWA project-level oversight. The FHWA utilizes a "Project of Division Interest (PoDI) Evaluation Process" to identify a PoDI. Once agreed that a specific project will be categorized as a PoDI, the New Jersey FHWA Division will then begin to develop the Individual Project Plan (IPP) in coordination with NJDOT's assigned Project Manager. The IPP Individual Project Oversight Plan for each specific project will define the oversight role of the FHWA.

The Project was designated as a PoDI project on November 29, 2019.

3.2 Project Team

The I-80 Preliminary Engineering Project Team is comprised of professionals from FHWA, NJDOT and Dewberry Engineers, including civil engineers, geologists, and community relations specialists.

Dewberry Engineers is the lead consultant to NJDOT and has direct responsibilities for the execution and performance of the technical services for this project during the Preliminary Engineering phase.

3.3 Stakeholder Coordination

Formal meetings and presentations for stakeholders occur at or during project milestones or to discuss specific concerns or topics in order to provide project information and to provide an opportunity for any questions to be addressed. The NJDOT will utilize an independent facilitator if needed as part of a stakeholder meeting. The Project Team will be responsible for maintaining minutes of meetings that clearly document the public outreach efforts. The minutes will identify the issues raised during each outreach session and designate follow-up actions that are required as a result of that session.

The sections below summarize the various stakeholder meetings that have been conducted during the Preliminary Engineering phase. Additional stakeholder meetings will occur during the Final Design and Construction phases of the Project. See Sections 4 and 5 for future stakeholder meetings/activities planned during these phases.

3.3.1 Local Officials Briefings

The NJDOT Office of Community Relations shall facilitate Local Officials Briefings (LOB) during important milestones in the Preliminary Engineering phase of this project. The focus of the LOB will be to continue the dialogue with the Consultant Team, the NJDOT, and local officials to inform them of the current status of the Project, discuss potential next steps, and gather their input. NJDOT may also conduct meetings with local officials to discuss specific concerns or topics. The NJDOT may utilize an independent facilitator if needed. In general, meeting minutes would be taken and circulated for review and the final documents would be distributed to the attendees. The Project Team would be responsible for maintaining minutes of meetings that clearly document the public outreach efforts. The minutes would identify the issues raised during each outreach session and designate follow-up actions that would be required as a result of that session.

See **Table 1** for a summary of meetings held with local elected officials to date as part of the Preliminary Engineering phase of the Project.

Table 1: Local Officials Briefings Summary		
Date	Representatives	Meeting Purpose
May 31, 2017	Warren County Engineer, Mayor Adele Starrs, NJDOT, Dewberry	Project introduction; discussion purpose and need
May 9, 2018	NJ State Senator Stephen Oroho, NJ Assemblyman Hal Wirths, NJ Assemblyman Parker Space, Office of US Senator Cory Booker, Office of US Congressman Josh Gottheimer, Warren County Freeholder Jason Sarnoski, Mayor Adele Starrs, Mayor Kevin Duffy, NPS, FHWA, NJDEP, NJDOT, Dewberry	Project status and update
January 25, 2019	US Congressman Josh Gottheimer, NJDOT Commissioner Diane Gutierrez-Scaccetti, NJDOT Deputy Commissioner Joseph D. Bertoni, NJDOT Chief of Staff Jay Jimenez, Mayor Adele Starrs, Mayor Kevin Duffy, FHWA, NJDOT, Dewberry	Project status and update
July 22, 2020	NJDOT Commissioner Diane Gutierrez-Scaccetti; Office of U.S. Congresswoman Susan Wild, PA; Office of New Jersey Legislative District 24, Senator Steve Oroho, Assemblyman Parker Space, and Assemblyman Hal Wirths; Office of U.S. Congressman Josh Gottheimer; Warren County Freeholder Richard Gardener; Lower Mt. Bethel Township Supervisor Sandra Newman; Portland Mayor Lance Prator; Knowlton Mayor Adele Starrs; Delaware River Joint Toll Bridge Commission Commissioner John Christy; Hardwick Mayor Kevin Duffy; Office of U.S. Senator Bob Casey; PA State Representative Rosemary Brown; NPS; NJTPA; FHWA; NJHPO; Office of PA State Senator Mario Scavello; PennDOT;	Project status update, address key concerns, receive feedback

	PASHPO; Lehigh Valley Planning Commission	
December 3, 2020	Knowlton Township Mayor Adele Starrs, Hardwick Township Mayor Kevin Duffy, Hope Township Mayor Timothy McDonough, Lower Mt. Bethel Township Supervisor Sandra Newman, Portland Mayor Lance Prator, Monroe County Commission Chairman Sharon Laverdure, NJDOT, Dewberry <i>Invited but not in attendance: Warren County, NJ Freeholder Director Richard Gardner; Belvidere Township Mayor Joseph Kennedy; Blainstown Township Mayor Stephen Lance; Independence Township Mayor Robert Giordano; Liberty Township Mayor John Inscho; Northampton County, PA President-At-Large Ronald Heckman; Delaware Water Gap Mayor Larry Freshcorn; Upper Mount Bethel Township Supervisor John Bermingham; Forks Township Supervisor Chairman John O'Neil; Plainfield Township Supervisor Chairman Randy Heard; and Smithfield Township Supervisor Chairman Brian Barrett.</i>	Project status update, address key concerns, receive feedback
July 14, 2021	NJDOT Commissioner Diane Gutierrez-Scaccetti, Warren County, NJTPA.	Project status and update
August 10, 2021	Warren County, Hardwick Township, Knowlton Township.	Project status and update

A Bi-State Leadership Summit was held July 22, 2020 to present up-to-date project details to federal, state, county and local officials and leadership in New Jersey and Pennsylvania. The purpose of the Summit was to present updated information about the status of the proposed project, address key concerns that have been raised to date, and receive feedback from meeting attendees. The Summit served to inform all the representatives about the Project prior to the release of the environmental documents and the public hearing. A summary document and support material were posted to the project website.

Additional LOBs will occur during Final Design and construction.

3.3.2 Agency Coordination

FHWA and NJDOT have coordinated closely with federal and state agencies over the course of the development of the Project. **Table 2** includes a summary of agency coordination meetings conducted during the Preliminary Engineering phase of the Project.

FHWA and NJDOT held inter-agency workshops for the Project on August 12, 2015, November 19, 2015, and August 11, 2016. The workshops included a presentation that provided agencies with an

overview of the project status and provided participants with an opportunity to ask questions and provide feedback.

Over the course of the development of the environmental document, FHWA and NJDOT have held several meetings with NPS and NJDEP in order to present the proposed project and to further develop measures to avoid and minimize potential environmental impacts. These meetings included presentations on the project status and an opportunity for comment and feedback.

In addition, additional consultation with various agencies was conducted in order to identify potential environmental constraints and to develop strategies to avoid and minimize potential impacts.

Table 2: Agency Coordination Summary	
Date	Agency/Organization
September 30, 2014	NPS
August 12, 2015	Inter-Agency Workshop #1: Appalachian National Scenic Trail, Appalachian Trail Conservancy, Delaware River Joint Toll Bridge Commission, NJ Worthington State Forest, NJDEP, NPS, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, and U.S. Coast Guard
October 6, 2015	U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (Site Visit)
November 19, 2015	Inter-Agency Workshop #2: Appalachian National Scenic Trail, Appalachian Trail Conservancy, Delaware River Joint Toll Bridge Commission, NJ Worthington State Forest, NJDEP, and NPS
April 25, 2016	NJ Worthington State Forest, NJDEP, and NJHPO
August 11, 2016	Inter-Agency Workshop #3: NPS
April 24, 2017	NPS and NJDEP
August 23, 2018	NJDEP and NJ Historic Preservation Office
November 8, 2018	NPS
April 9, 2019	NPS
June 3, 2019	NJDEP
October 21, 2019	North Jersey Transportation Planning Authority
December 3, 2019	Pennsylvania Department of Transportation
December 5, 2019	NJ Historic Preservation Office
December 17, 2019	Pennsylvania State Historic Preservation Office
December 19, 2019	NPS
January 13, 2020	NJDEP
February 12, 2020	NJDEP
April 15, 2020	NJDEP
December 17, 2020	NPS
April 12, 2021	Tribes and NJ Historic Preservation Office

April 23, 2021	Tribes and NPS
May 12, 2021	FHWA
May 21, 2021	NJDEP and NPS
August 16, 2021	NPS
May 12, 2022	FHWA

3.3.3 Tribal Consultation

As previously noted, the Project is subject to review pursuant to Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended (36 CFR Part 800). Section 106 requires federal agencies to consider the effects of their undertakings on historic properties that are listed in or eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places (National Register). As part of the Section 106 process, the NJDOT is required to solicit public input to assist it in carrying out that process. Section 106 consulting parties may include, but are not limited to, the State Historic Preservation Officer, tribal nations, local governments, and others with an interest in history, archaeology, or historic preservation.

Section 101(d)(6)(B) of the National Historic Preservation Act requires FHWA to consult with any tribal nation that attaches religious and cultural significance to historic properties that may be affected by an undertaking. As part of this consultation process, tribes are provided a reasonable opportunity to identify concerns about historic properties, advise on the identification and evaluation of historic properties, including those of traditional religious and cultural importance, articulate their views on the project effects on such properties, and participate in the resolution of adverse effects.

Five federally recognized tribes have been notified of the Project and include:

1. Delaware Tribe of Indians of Oklahoma
2. Absentee-Shawnee Tribe of Indians of Oklahoma
3. Shawnee Tribe
4. Delaware Nation, Oklahoma
5. Stockbridge-Munsee Community, Wisconsin

As part of the Preliminary Engineering phase of the Project, FHWA and NJDOT conducted webinars with tribal representatives in order to provide updates on project status and to address comments and questions. Consultation with tribal nations will continue as the Project advances through the Preliminary Engineering, Final Design, and Construction phases.

Based on consultation with FHWA and tribal nations in December 2020, federally recognized tribes will be invited to participated in any LOB going forward. In addition, tribal nations will be notified of any public or stakeholder meetings, and will receive information regarding Section 106 consultation.

See **Table 3** for a summary of tribal consultation meetings that have occurred to date as part of the Preliminary Engineering phase of the Project.

Table 3: Tribal Consultation Summary	
Date	Tribal Representatives
November 28, 2018	Delaware Tribe, Stockbridge-Munsee Community <i>Invited but not in attendance:</i> <i>Absentee-Shawnee Tribe; Shawnee Tribe; Delaware Nation</i>
October 8, 2019	Delaware Tribe, Stockbridge-Munsee Community <i>Invited but not in attendance:</i> <i>Absentee-Shawnee Tribe; Shawnee Tribe; Delaware Nation</i>
December 17, 2020	Delaware Tribe, Delaware Nation <i>Invited but not in attendance:</i> <i>Absentee-Shawnee Tribe; Shawnee Tribe; Stockbridge-Munsee Community</i>
January 26, 2021	Delaware Tribe, Delaware Nation, Stockbridge-Munsee Community
March 4, 2021	Delaware Tribe, Delaware Nation, Stockbridge-Munsee Community
March 23, 2021	Delaware Tribe, Delaware Nation, Stockbridge-Munsee Community
April 12, 2021	Tribes (Delaware Tribe, Delaware Nation, Stockbridge-Munsee Community) and NJ Historic Preservation Office <i>Invited but not in attendance:</i> <i>Absentee-Shawnee Tribe; Shawnee Tribe</i>
April 23, 2021	Tribes (Delaware Tribe, Delaware Nation, Stockbridge-Munsee Community) and NPS <i>Invited but not in attendance:</i> <i>Absentee-Shawnee Tribe; Shawnee Tribe</i>
June 6, 2022	Delaware Tribe, Delaware Nation <i>Invited but not in attendance:</i> <i>Absentee-Shawnee Tribe; Shawnee Tribe; Stockbridge-Munsee Community</i>

Consultation with tribal nations will be ongoing during Final Design in order to further develop avoidance, minimization, and mitigation measures. The Project Team will be responsible for maintaining minutes of meetings that clearly document the public outreach efforts. The minutes will identify the issues raised during each outreach session and designate follow-up actions that are required as a result of that session. Meeting minutes will be distributed by FHWA to the five federally recognized tribal nations.

3.3.4 Informal Presentations to Stakeholders

Informal presentations for key stakeholders will occur during project milestones or to discuss specific concerns or topics in order to provide stakeholders with project information and to provide an opportunity for any questions to be addressed. The NJDOT will utilize an independent facilitator if

needed. The Project Team will be responsible for maintaining minutes of meetings that clearly document the public outreach efforts. The minutes will identify the issues raised during each outreach session and designate follow-up actions that are required as a result of that session.

The NJDOT is open to the continued sharing of information on this project with interested parties. Groups wishing to schedule a meeting or presentation should contact the NJDOT Office of Community Relations to discuss available options.

See **Table 4** for a summary of informal project meetings that have occurred to date as part of the Preliminary Engineering phase of the Project.

Table 4: Informal Presentations to Stakeholders Summary	
Date	Stakeholder
September 25, 2019	NJ Highlands Coalition
November 9, 2019	Sierra Club, NJ Chapter

3.3.5 Public Meetings

Public meetings are held at key milestones during the Project and provide an opportunity for members of the community to ask questions and provide input directly to the Project Team. The NJDOT Office of Community Relations has facilitated two public meetings for the Project. The layout of the public meetings was designed for the exchange of information in an open house format with support staff available to answer questions. Stations were created to display specific information and obtain input directly on specific topics such as existing conditions, purpose and need, rockfall incidents, rockfall hazards, environmental constraints, the Section 106 process, and project alternatives. Comment cards were available at the meetings for public comment. These meetings are summarized below.

A Public Information Center was held on June 14, 2017, from 6:00 pm to 8:00 pm at the Knowlton Elementary School in Delaware, New Jersey. Approximately 50 people attended the meeting. An Open House meeting was held on June 18, 2019, from 4:00 pm to 8:00 pm at the North Warren Regional High School in Blirstown, New Jersey. As no residential property owners live in the Project Area, a mailing list for the June 18, 2019 meeting was generated based on zip codes for municipalities in New Jersey and Pennsylvania that are near the Project Area. Approximately 7,600 postcard invitations were mailed to property owners in the following zip codes: 07825 (Blirstown, New Jersey); 07832 (Columbia, New Jersey); 07833 (Delaware, New Jersey); 18327 (Delaware Water Gap, Pennsylvania); 18343 (Mt. Bethel, Pennsylvania); and 18351 (Portland, Pennsylvania). Postcards were also mailed to project stakeholders. During the Open House meeting, two project videos were displayed continuously on monitors, and a project brochure was also available. Approximately 250 people attended the meeting.

A public hearing will occur once the draft environmental document is complete and has been made available to the public. The environmental document is anticipated in Winter 2023/Spring 2024.

See **Table 5** for a summary of public meetings that have occurred to date as part of the Preliminary Engineering phase of the Project.

Table 5: Public Meetings Summary			
Date/Format	Location/Time	Notification Area	Attendance (approx.)
June 14, 2017 Public Information Center	Knowlton Elementary School, Delaware, NJ 6:00pm - 8:00pm	Knowlton Township, Hardwick Township	50
June 18, 2019 Public Open House	North Warren High School, Blairstown, NJ 4:00pm – 8:00pm	Zip Codes: 07825 (Blairstown, NJ); 07832 (Columbia, NJ); 07833 (Delaware, NJ); 18327 (Delaware Water Gap, PA); 18343 (Mt. Bethel, PA); 18351 (Portland, PA) Project stakeholders (approx. 7,600 postcards were mailed)	250
Spring 2024 Public Hearing	TBD		

3.3.6 Emergency Services Task Force

An Emergency Services Task Force will be created, consisting of state and local emergency services stakeholders from New Jersey and Pennsylvania. The group will meet regularly to discuss and plan for emergency service response before, during, and after construction of the Project. NJDOT’s Office of Emergency Management (OEM) will lead this task force. The Project Team will be responsible for maintaining minutes of meetings that clearly document the public outreach efforts. The minutes will identify the issues raised during each outreach session and designate follow-up actions that are required as a result of that session.

The Emergency Services Task Force will meet on a schedule to be determined by its members and continue for the duration of the Project.

3.3.7 Public Advisory Group

As a way to directly engage with the local community, the Project Team has established a dedicated Public Advisory Group (PAG). The purpose of the PAG is to provide a forum for exchange of information between the Project Team, members of the public, user groups, and key business groups that are representative of the local communities affected by the project. PAG members would be responsible for bringing community-specific issues and concerns to the table as well as sharing information from the project team with their constituents; they would supplement the knowledge of local government officials or their delegates about the Project Area and provide input on ideas, problems, observations, and solutions.

The fourteen municipalities from both NJ and PA who have voiced concern or interest in the project were contacted to participate in the PAG. Each was asked to identify up to three local constituents to represent their community in the group. The following is a participation summary:

Municipality	Participants	Municipality	Participants
Hardwick Township	1*	Knowlton Township	1*
Belvidere Township	0	Blairstown Township	0
Hope Township	0	Independence Township	0
Portland Borough	2	Delaware Water Gap	2
Lower Mount Bethel Twp	1*	Upper Mount Bethel Twp	1*
Forks Township	0	Plainfield Township	0
Smithfield Township	1*	Liberty Township	0

* Note: Same individual is representing these municipalities.

Specifically, PAG members would be expected to:

- Bring to the Project Team’s attention community priorities or recommendations for solutions that are prudent and feasible.
- Share information about the project goals and objectives with their constituents.
- Share the processes and procedures that would be followed in implementing the Project.
- Share with the Project Team what local networks NJDOT should use to establish and maintain a productive dialogue with the local communities.
- Work with the Project Team to raise and resolve community concerns and issues throughout project duration.

The role of the Project Team would be to provide project updates, explain processes and procedures on the various phases of the Project, solicit input from stakeholders and the public, and answer questions during PAG meetings. A third-party facilitator would be engaged to manage constructive discussion. Topic specific sub groups could be formed as needed for more focused issues (e.g., traffic control, aesthetics, etc.).

PAG meeting materials (agendas, presentation slides, recording of presentation and discussion, and summary of questions received) have been posted to the project website at the following link:

<https://www.state.nj.us/transportation/works/rockfall/pag.shtm>

See **Table 6** for a summary of PAG meetings that have occurred to date as part of the Preliminary Engineering phase of the Project. Additional PAG meetings would occur during Final Design and Construction.

Table 6: Public Advisory Group Meetings Summary

Date	Topic	Representatives
September 23, 2020	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Engineering Overview 	Delaware River Greenway Partnership; Delaware Water Gap, PA; AAA Northeast; Knowlton, NJ; Hardwick, NJ; Upper Mt. Bethel, PA; Lower Mt. Bethel, PA; Smithfield, PA; NJ State Police; NJ Motor Truck Association; Appalachian Mountain Club
October 7, 2020	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ROW, Traffic, and Rockfall • Funding • Environmental Process Overview • Public Involvement Overview 	Delaware River Greenway Partnership; AAA Northeast; Knowlton, NJ; Hardwick, NJ; Upper Mt. Bethel, PA; Lower Mt. Bethel, PA; Smithfield, PA; NJ Motor Truck Association; Appalachian Mountain Club
October 21, 2020	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Design and Access • Other Construction Projects in the Area • Project Maintenance Cost • Significant Impacts • Traffic Overview 	Delaware River Greenway Partnership; Knowlton, NJ; Hardwick, NJ; Upper Mt. Bethel, PA; Lower Mt. Bethel, PA; Smithfield, PA; Portland, PA; NJ Motor Truck Association; NJ State Police; Appalachian Mountain Club
November 17, 2020	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PAG Roundtable • Aesthetics 	Delaware River Greenway Partnership; Knowlton, NJ; Hardwick, NJ; Upper Mt. Bethel, PA; Lower Mt. Bethel, PA; Smithfield, PA; Delaware Water Gap, PA; AAA Northeast; Appalachian Mountain Club

3.4 Publicly Accessible Project Website

The NJDOT project website will be used as the web-based communication tool for the Project. From the initial outreach effort that will be required of the Project to the posting of preliminary findings, the website will be used to complement the traditional outreach tools (i.e., mailings, press releases, direct mail, etc.).

The website includes information detailing the Project Area, the purpose and need for the Project, the rockfall hazard management program, rockfall events, existing site conditions, and alternatives. It also includes information about the NJDOT Project Delivery process.

The website also provides public outreach information that will be continually updated, such as a project schedule, summaries of public meetings, and Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs). The FAQs should reflect the most relevant inquiries or public comments received by the Project Team.

Content on the website will be reviewed for effectiveness and adjusted where needs for improvement are identified. Graphics are routinely evaluated from a third-person perspective to consider clarity and availability of the latest information, include public meeting summaries, updated FAQ's. For example, NJDOT received comments from project stakeholders that the resolution/clarity of the graphics could be improved; as a result, NJDOT provided updates to the website that included improving the quality of the graphics.

The Project website is: <https://www.state.nj.us/transportation/works/rockfall/>

3.5 Recording and Responding to Public Comment

3.5.1 Electronic/Written Correspondence

The NJDOT will also organize, track, and evaluate public comments in a spreadsheet tracking log. This includes comments that are received through the Project website, email, or those recorded at public meetings. Comments will be grouped into topics and a reasonable and proportionate response will be made to address each substantive comment received either through email or mail.

The Project Team will utilize a number of public outreach tools and tactics to meet and/or exceed the federal requirements and maximize opportunities for public comment. To date, NJDOT has been recording public comments received and typically responds with a copy of the Project's FAQs as well as providing a link to the project website.

3.5.2 Agency and Elected Officials Meetings

In general, meeting minutes would be taken and circulated for review and the final documents would be distributed to the attendees. The Project Team would be responsible for maintaining minutes of meetings that clearly document the public outreach efforts. The minutes would identify the issues raised during each outreach session and designate follow-up actions that would be required as a result of that session.

3.5.3 Public Information Center/Public Open House

The layout of the public meetings was designed for the exchange of information in an open house format with support staff available to answer questions. Stations were created to display specific information and obtain input directly on specific topics such as existing conditions, purpose and need, rockfall incidents, rockfall hazards, environmental constraints, the Section 106 process, and project alternatives. Comment cards are available at the meetings for public comment.

All written and verbal comments are compiled and summarized in a memorandum to the project file and used as reference for future work. A formal response is not provided to comments obtained at a Public Information Center or Public Open House.

3.5.4 Public Hearing

The opportunity for a public hearing at a convenient time and place after the distribution of the draft environmental documents and during the review period will be coordinated by the Project Team. The hearing will be held in-person for public participation; however, given the challenges of COVID, a virtual participation component will also be developed in conjunction. All applicable COVID protocols will be included for all aspects of the hearing.

Federal regulations require the NJDOT to take into account the effect of proposed projects upon historic resources listed in or eligible for the National Register of Historic Places, referred to as the “Section 106 Process.” The NJDOT is required to solicit public input to assist it in carrying out that process.

Reasonable notice will be given to the public of the public hearing and will indicate the availability of explanatory information. The notice shall also provide information required to comply with public involvement requirements of other laws, Executive Orders, and regulations. Comments from concerned parties will be officially received and recorded by a stenographer. Applicable accommodations in accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act and for English as Second Language requirements will be made available to meeting participants. The purpose of the public hearing is for NJDOT to receive comments on the information provided in the draft environmental document. NJDOT will not respond to any of the comments or take action on the project at the hearing. Comments and/or statements at the public hearing will become part of the public record during the comment period and will also be considered in preparation of the final environmental document. At the Public Hearing, testimony may be given by the following means:

- Oral testimony transcribed by a stenographer (in person or call in), or
- Written testimony

Registration will be required to give oral testimony. Pre-registration is recommended. A pre-registration link will be provided in the hearing announcement, in addition to a call-in number for those wishing to provide public comments virtually. Oral testimony will be limited to five minutes or less, to ensure everyone has an opportunity to speak. Written comments may also be submitted; there is no limit to the length of written comments.

3.5.5 NEPA Documentation

Comments received have been and will continue to be considered throughout the environmental review process.

When the draft environmental documents are made available for public review, all comments received will be evaluated and then documented in a comment log. Responses to the comments will be included as part of the comment log, and the comment log will be made available to the public when the final environmental document is issued. The draft environmental document will be updated, as appropriate, based on comments received. See **Appendix A** for a sample comment resolution log. Note that the actual comment log may be revised.

The draft environmental document will be made available for review at several locations near the project area, in addition to online and at the public hearing. The public will be able to comment on the draft environmental document during the public comment period using one of several methods, including: via email, online at the NJDOT website, via mail to the NJDOT, orally at the public hearing, or by providing written comments at the public hearing. All comments received during the comment period, both oral and written, will be considered for review by the NJDOT and documented in a comment log. Responses to the comments will be included as part of the comment log, and the comment log will be made available to the public when the final environmental document is issued.

3.6 Additional Elements of the Public Involvement Action Plan

The Project Team will also utilize other means and methods to the extent practicable to communicate with and involve the public. Virtual public involvement techniques have recently become more common to safely accommodate large crowds of people. The use of these techniques and tools will be investigated for their appropriate use in the PIAP. However, these tools do not change existing public involvement requirements established by statute, regulation, or executive order, and these tools are not intended to completely replace in-person public involvement opportunities, which remain an important part of a balanced public involvement approach.

The Consultant Team will collaborate with NJDOT to identify which tools will be more effective in reaching the public outreach goals. These additional elements may include:

Project Brochure or Fact Sheets: The Consultant Team will prepare and distribute a project brochure or newsletter-like fact sheet summarizing key elements of the Project important to the community. One brochure or fact sheet will be provided during the public meeting. Brochures and fact sheets have been distributed to the NPS for use at their visitors' center in the area. The NJDOT's project website and email address are made available to provide for additional questions from the public.

Public Notification Materials: Any and all materials that are used to advertise public meetings and or functions (i.e., officials meeting notices, local newspaper advertisements, letters, web postings, newsletters, press releases) will be used to document NJDOT's outreach efforts. Public notification materials include postcard invitations, newspaper advertisements, etc.

Project Email Address: NJDOT established a project email (I80Rockfall@dot.nj.gov), where questions or comments could be provided directly to NJDOT.

Comment/Correspondence Management: NJDOT will review and/or log comments received as part of the public engagement process. Specifically, as noted above, the NJDOT will also organize, track, and evaluate public comments in a spreadsheet tracking log. This includes comments that are received through the Project website, email, mail or those recorded at public meetings. In addition, a comment log (as explained above) will be prepared to record comments and responses regarding the public review of the environmental document. See **Appendix B** for a sample comment/correspondence log. Note that the actual comment/correspondence log may be revised.

Social Media: NJDOT may provide project updates or videos on its Facebook page or by using other social media platforms to advance the communications and engagement goals and objectives of the Project. Facebook and Twitter symbols were included on project materials that were prepared for the June 18, 2019 Open House. The project video also references social media platforms. With the website

design effort, there will be ample opportunities to use existing technologies, like live feeds of major roadways, congestion alerts and other relevant information available.

Covid-19: Due to ongoing issues with the pandemic, virtual public involvement techniques have been required in order to continue to inform the public and receive feedback, while continuing to move important projects forward. The Project Team will continue to use virtual tools, including surveys, social media, visualizations, and online meetings, to share information with the public and obtain feedback. In addition, virtual tools can expand engagement to stakeholders who do not participate in traditional approaches to public involvement.

As noted above, NJDOT will hold a public hearing both in person and virtually for those that prefer to call in to give public comments. All Covid guidelines for public gatherings will be followed.

3.7 Virtual Meeting Guidance

Due to the ongoing issues with Covid-19, NJDOT has issued the below guidance on virtual PICs.

Logistics

- Consultant will host Virtual PIC on their website, with link provided on NJDOT public-facing website.
- Advertisement of Virtual PIC on the websites/social media of NJDOT, County(s), and Local Municipality(s).
- Mail out hard copies of the virtual PIC invitation via U.S. mail to adjacent property owners located within 250 feet of the project limits.
- Mail out hard copies of the virtual PIC invitation via U.S. mail to key stakeholders.
- If needed, mail out hard copies of the virtual PIC invitation via U.S. mail to state historic preservation office(s) and Section 106 consulting parties.

Presentation Format

- PowerPoint presentation with a pre-recorded narration.
- Transcript of narration available in English and Spanish (or other language as deemed necessary for Environmental Justice).
- Frequently Asked Questions available in English and Spanish (or other language as deemed necessary for Environmental Justice).
- Presentation to be limited to no more than 30 minutes.
- Slides to be simple in layout and contain visuals (plans, short video and photos) when appropriate.
- Provide viewer with option to provide contact information for the PIC records or the ability to remain anonymous (in compliance with Sunshine Laws).
- Have viewer identify their interest in project (drop down menu indicating Resident, Business Owner, etc.).
- Provide the viewer with the ability to submit a question, comment or suggestion to the project team. Note that comments will only receive an acknowledgement or response if a name and contact information (e.g., e-mail address or phone number) is provided.

The presentation would include the following content:

- Project Details, including brief background, purpose and need, overview of the project, and description of the proposed improvements, project limits and any constraints.
- If needed: Section 106, including a brief overview of the Section 106 process and identification of all historic resources in the vicinity of the project limits.
- Project Status, including where the project is in the NJDOT Project Delivery Process, anticipated construction schedule, and approximate construction cost and funding source.
- Project Specific, including identification of the time frame that comments will be accepted for the Department's PIC Record Retention.

The following requirements would pertain to virtual PICs:

- The Virtual PIC must maintain a record of the number of attendees or site visitors.
- The Virtual PIC must be ADA compliant. This includes no moving text, no highly contrasting colors, and compatibility with disability-adaptive technology.
- The Virtual PIC and mailer must contain contact information for attendees to request special assistance.
- The Virtual PIC must be compatible with the Google Translate feature, which is used on the NJDOT Public-Facing Website.
- The retention period for Virtual PICs is 10 years. All videos and content provided in the Virtual PIC must be saved in a format that is physically deliverable to NJDOT (e.g., a thumb-drive with files). Public comments must be recorded and saved in the Project file. All content, including videos, is OPRA discoverable.

4.0 KEY ELEMENTS DURING FINAL DESIGN

Upon the conclusion of the environmental document, and after a Public Hearing is held, a formal decision will be made by FHWA regarding the NEPA process. This determination is key to advancing this project to Final Design.

When the Project is transferred to Final Design, the Project Manager will review and revise the PIAP as necessary so that the NJDOT is adequately engaging the public in the project delivery process. The PPA will be further developed and the contract documents necessary to obtain the required environmental documents and permits will be secured. Additionally, bidding the Project for construction will be completed during this phase. Public involvement activities that may be undertaken during Final Design are as follows:

- The PIAP will be reevaluated to evaluate if the identified strategies still adequately address the public involvement effort for the Project.
- NJDOT will hold at least one LOB and PIC to allow local officials and the public to view the selected PPA in its current state.
- NJDOT will continue to maintain a comprehensive, publicly-accessible NJDOT project website.
- NJDOT will continue to maintain a project-specific email address and respond in a timely manner to questions and concerns from the public.

- The PAG will continue to provide a forum for exchange of information between the Project leadership, regulatory agencies, key citizens and citizen groups representative of the community.
- The Emergency Services Task Force will continue to discuss and plan for emergency service response before, during, and after construction of the Project.
- Additional engagement with key stakeholders will occur as needed to solicit input to project design details (e.g., vegetation, aesthetic treatment options, and emergency services).

5.0 KEY ELEMENTS DURING CONSTRUCTION

The Project Manager will review and revise the PIAP as necessary during the construction phase of the Project. It is important to work closely with the local officials and the business community during construction so there is the least impact on traffic and businesses caused by the construction of the Project.

The following steps in the PIAP will be important during the Construction Phase of the Project:

- The PIAP will be reevaluated to evaluate if the identified strategies still adequately address the public involvement effort for the Project.
- NJDOT will conduct a pre-construction meeting and/or PIC to provide for maximum support for the construction schedule and minimal disruption to the community.
- NJDOT will utilize various agencies' websites to provide relevant information such as contact information, construction schedule, expected delays/lane closures, construction progress and to solicit feedback. Notifying the public about traffic patterns and potential delays will be important during construction to facilitate the formation of positive public perception towards both the Project and the NJDOT.
- NJDOT will continue to maintain a comprehensive, publicly-accessible project website.
- NJDOT will continue to maintain a project-specific email address and respond in a timely manner to questions and concerns from the public.
- The PAG will continue to provide a forum for exchange of information between the Project leadership, regulatory agencies, key citizens and citizen groups representative of the community.
- The Emergency Services Task Force will continue to discuss and plan for emergency service response before, during, and after construction of the Project.
- Additional engagement with key stakeholders will occur as needed to solicit input to project design details (e.g., vegetation, aesthetic treatment options, and emergency services).
- NJDOT will review the feedback provided by the public to determine if improvements can be instituted to construction activities.

6.0 PROJECT STAKEHOLDERS

To build community consensus and discuss the context sensitive design issues, it is necessary to work in advance to review issues and identify potential stakeholders. Stakeholders can be an individual, a

group, or an organization that might affect, be affected by, or perceive itself as affected by a decision, activity, or outcome of a project. They can be internal or external to a project or organization.

It is important that NJDOT seek to understand the issues represented by each stakeholder and incorporate concerns, as appropriate, in the development of the PPA. Coordination with stakeholders is done in an effort to achieve community balance, environmental justice and development toward broad-based support of the Project. It also contributes to an effective discussion, collaborative problem-solving, and consensus building during the Project.

Stakeholders may be added throughout the project process as pertinent individuals become evident. A current list of stakeholders is included in **Appendix C**.

Approved By:

Anthony Sytko, Regional Community Relations Manager
Office of Community Relations
New Jersey Department of Transportation

Shivani Patel, Title VI Liaison
Division of Civil Rights and Affirmative Action
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Charles Henry, Project Manager
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Megan Fackler, Director
Office of Community Relations
New Jersey Department of Transportation

APPENDIX A: SAMPLE COMMENT LOG FOR ENVIRONMENTAL DOCUMENTS

Date of Comment	Person that Commented	Chapter/Section	Comment	Response
Add Document Name				
Month, Day, Year	Add name, title and affiliation, as appropriate	Add chapter or section	Add comment	Add response
Add Document Name				
Month, Day, Year	Add name, title and affiliation, as appropriate	Add chapter or section	Add comment	Add response
Add Document Name				
Month, Day, Year	Add name, title and affiliation, as appropriate	Add chapter or section	Add comment	Add response

SAMPLE, FINAL MAY 2014

APPENDIX B: SAMPLE COMMENT/CORRESPONDENCE LOG

Date	Constituent Name	Municipality/County	Issue
Month, Day, Year	Add name, title and affiliation, as appropriate		Add comment

SAMPLE, FINAL MAY VARY

APPENDIX C: PROJECT STAKEHOLDERS

	Elected Official	Federal or State Agency	Federally Recognized Tribal Nation	Section 106 Consulting Party	Interested Party	Public Advisory Group (PAG)
Knowlton Township	X			X		X
Hardwick Township	X			X		X
Blairstown Township	X					
Borough of Delaware Water Gap	X			X		X
Portland Borough	X			X		X
Lower Mount Bethel Township	X			X		X
Upper Mt. Bethel Township	X					X
Smithfield Township						X
Warren County	X			X		
Warren County Historical and Genealogical Society				X		
Monroe County	X					
National Park Service		X		X		
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service		X				
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency		X				
New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection		X				
Worthington State Forest		X				

	Elected Official	Federal or State Agency	Federally Recognized Tribal Nation	Section 106 Consulting Party	Interested Party	Public Advisory Group (PAG)
New Jersey Division of Travel and Tourism		X				
New Jersey Department of State Commission on American Indian Affairs		X		X		
New Jersey Historic Preservation Office		X		X		
Pennsylvania State Historic Preservation Office		X		X		
PennDOT Engineering		X				
Delaware River Joint Toll Bridge Commission		X				
Delaware Tribe of Indians of Oklahoma			X	X		
Absentee-Shawnee Tribe of Indians of Oklahoma			X	X		
Shawnee Tribe			X	X		
Delaware Nation, Oklahoma			X	X		
Stockbridge Munsee Community, Wisconsin			X	X		
Nanticoke Lenni-Lenape Indians of New Jersey				X		
Powhatan Renape Nation				X		
Ramapough Lenape Indian Nation				X		
Lenape Nation of Pennsylvania Tribal Council				X		
New Jersey State Police Troop B Headquarters, Hope Station					X	X
Appalachian Trail Conservancy				X		
Appalachian National Scenic Trail		X		X		

	Elected Official	Federal or State Agency	Federally Recognized Tribal Nation	Section 106 Consulting Party	Interested Party	Public Advisory Group (PAG)
Appalachian Mountain Club Mid-Atlantic Conservation					X	X
New Jersey Motor Truck Association					X	X
Delaware Riverkeeper					X	
Hardwick Township Historical Society				X		
Knowlton Township Historic Commission				X		
USA Climbing				X		
New Jersey Highlands Coalition, Policy Committee				X		
National Parks Conservation Association				X		
Sierra Club, New Jersey Chapter				X		
Morris County Trust for Historic Preservation				X		
I-80 Rockfall Fence and Safety Concerns at the Delaware Water Gap Coalition				X		
Access Fund				X		
Delaware River Greenway Partnership						X
AAA Northeast						X