



Aroostook County

Transportation Study

Draft Environmental Impact Statement Comment Summary

Army Corps of Engineers

The Corps states that Composite Corridor 1 is most likely to be viewed as the Preferred Corridor because the alignment upgrade is less environmentally damaging than new alignments. The Corps comments that the DEIS focuses on economics and suggests that there be a shift in the focus of the FEIS to transportation. Once the Preferred Corridor has been selected, the Corps will likely recommend that a comprehensive NEPA document be produced and reviewed again by the federal resource agencies. Early mitigation planning is encouraged, and mitigation planning should be coordinated with the Interagency Team.

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency

The EPA believes that Composite Corridor 1 would likely cause the least impact to wetland resources and would avoid fragmentation of agricultural land and habitat. Therefore, they recommend that this corridor should be seriously considered for future study if the FHWA/MDOT decide to advance a project in Aroostook County. The EPA notes that they have concerns regarding potential wetland impacts and mitigation, impacts to water supply and groundwater resources, and secondary impacts. They also stress the need to examine various roadway cross sections that may have less impact than a 4-lane highway.

Municipalities of Aroostook County

Of the ten municipalities that commented on the DEIS, Corridor Hm received the most support with four municipalities identifying Hm as their Preferred Alternative. Composite Corridor 1 received support from three municipalities and two municipalities identified Corridor Km. Only Littleton stated a preference for the No-build Alternative.

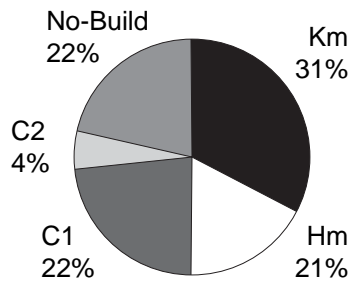
Citizen Comment Letters

Approximately 90 citizen letters were submitted to the MDOT and the FHWA in response to the DEIS and the public hearings held in March. Most comments gave a preference among the five alternatives (Km, Hm, C1, C2, and No-build) presented in the DEIS, and many citizens included the rationale behind their selections.

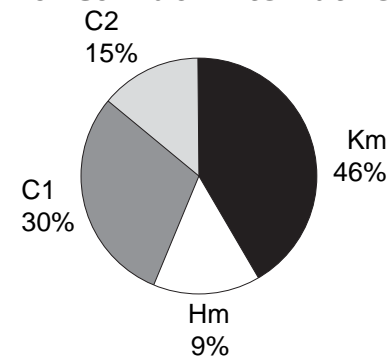
Approximately 70 of the citizen comment letters indicated the author's Preferred Alternative(s). Approximately 35 letters indicated opposition toward a particular alternative. The following charts compare the number of commenters clearly indicating support (or opposition) for a particular alternative to the total number of commenters expressing support (or opposition) for any of the five alternatives.

Corridor Km received the most attention in the citizen comment letters with a total of 36 remarks either for or against it. Composite Corridor 1 also attracted a substantial amount of support and opposition. The alternative receiving the fewest comments was Composite Corridor 2, and C2 was the only alternative to receive a greater number of opposing comments than supporting. Fifteen letters supported the No-build Alternative.

Citizen Support for Corridor Alternatives



Citizen Opposition for Corridor Alternatives



Support

Corridor Km

(21 comments)

Many citizens prefer Corridor Km because they believe it will:

- best provide for all of Aroostook County,
- enhance southeastern Aroostook County economy,
- retain the character of Route 1,
- maintain quality of life,
- limit property acquisition,
- provide an alternative to Route 1, and
- reduce impact to citizens during construction.

Opposition

(15 comments)

Citizens oppose Corridor Km because they believe it will:

- result in adverse impacts to wildlife,
- involve acquisition of Native American land,
- reduce tourism,
- promote property acquisition,
- jeopardize southeastern Aroostook County economy,
- result in noise pollution,
- have unacceptable impacts to farmland,
- incur too high maintenance costs,
- result in unacceptable environmental impacts,
- distress the elderly population,
- decrease property values, and
- benefit a limited region within Aroostook County.

Composite Corridor 1

(15 comments)

Citizens prefer Composite Corridor 1 because they believe it will:

- enhance southeastern Aroostook County economy,
- result in manageable maintenance costs,
- provide safe transportation,
- limit environmental impacts,
- meet the transportation needs of the county,
- best provide for all of Aroostook County, and
- increase tourism.

(10 comments)

Citizens oppose Composite Corridor 1 because they believe it will:

- adversely affect the character of Route 1,
- require unacceptable amounts of property acquisition,
- cause noise pollution,
- provide only limited transportation improvements for the costs
- result in significant impacts to wildlife,
- reduce tourism,
- disrupt daily activities of Route 1 residents and farmers,
- result in population growth,
- reduce property values, and
- risk the safety of drivers and pedestrians.

	Support	Opposition
Corridor Hm	<p>(14 comments) Citizens prefer Corridor Hm because they believe it will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ provide an alternative to Route 1, ■ result in a scenic roadway, ■ provide a cost effective alternative, ■ maintain quality of life, ■ limit the impact to farmland and the environment, ■ retain the character of Route 1, ■ reduce travel time, ■ provide safe transportation, and ■ provide for all of Aroostook County. 	<p>(3 comments) Citizens oppose Corridor Hm because they believe it will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ divide Aroostook County.
Composite Corridor 2	<p>(3 comments) Citizens prefer Composite Corridor 2 because they believe it will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ reduce travel time, ■ limit impacts to town-owned land, and ■ benefit Northern Aroostook County. 	<p>(5 comments) Many citizens oppose Composite Corridor 2 because they believe it will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ result in a significant impact to wildlife, and ■ be too costly.
No-build Alternative	<p>(15 comments) Citizens prefer the No-build Alternative because they believe it will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ retain the character of Aroostook County, ■ eliminate property acquisitions, ■ increase tourism, ■ not impact environmental resources and wildlife, ■ allow Aroostook County to focus on existing road maintenance, and ■ serve Aroostook County's transportation needs. 	<p>No opposition.</p>

Preliminary Results for Corridor Preference

The following table summarizes comments made by local public officials at the public hearings held in March 2002, and in written comments submitted, on the DEIS.

	Hm	Km	C1	C2
LEAD		X		
Aroostook Municipal Association	X		X	
Caribou		X		
Caribou Chamber of Commerce		X		
Castle Hill*	X			
Chapman*	X			
Fort Kent			X	
Houlton Chamber of Commerce		X	X	
Loring Development Authority		X		
Madawaska		X		
Mapleton*	X			
Presque Isle*	X			
St. Agatha		X	X	
Van Buren			X	

*Commented that they would prefer a west bypass of Presque Isle.