



## DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

### Federal Highway Administration

[Docket No. FHWA-2026-0497]

### Notice of Intent to Prepare a Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement for the PA Turnpike (I-276)/I-95 Interchange Project Stage 3 Delaware River Bridge: Bucks County, Pennsylvania and Burlington County, New Jersey

**AGENCY:** Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), Department of Transportation (USDOT).

**ACTION:** Notice.

**SUMMARY:** FHWA, on behalf of the Pennsylvania Turnpike Commission (PA Turnpike) and the New Jersey Turnpike Authority (NJTA), is issuing this Notice of Intent (NOI) to solicit comment on and advise the public, agencies, tribes and nations, and stakeholders that a Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement (SEIS) will be prepared to evaluate potential transportation improvement for the Pennsylvania Turnpike (I-276)/Interstate 95 Interchange Project. This SEIS will focus on Stage 3 - Delaware River Bridge Project (the Project or DRB Project; SEIS# EISX-XPA-1775577450) in Bristol Township, Bucks County, Pennsylvania (PA) and Florence and Burlington Townships, Burlington County, New Jersey (NJ). Transportation improvements under consideration include the replacement of the existing Delaware River Bridge (DRB) over the Delaware River and reconfiguration of the approach roadways. Persons or agencies who may be affected by the proposed project are encouraged to comment on the information in this notice and the Additional Project Information Document. All comments received in response to this Notice of Intent Document will be considered and any information presented herein, including the preliminary purpose and need,

preliminary alternatives and identified impacts, may be revised in consideration of the comments.

**DATES:** Comments on this NOI and the Additional Project Information Document must be received on or before [INSERT DATE 30 DAYS AFTER DATE OF PUBLICATION IN THE FEDERAL REGISTER].

**ADDRESSES:** This NOI and the Additional Project Information Document are available in the docket referenced above at [www.regulations.gov](http://www.regulations.gov) and on the project website located at <https://www.paturnpike.com/traveling/construction/site/delaware-river-bridge>.

Hardcopies of the NOI and the Additional Project Information Document are available at the PA Turnpike's Administration Building at 700 S Eisenhower Blvd, Middletown, PA 17057. The NOI and the Additional Project Information Document will also be mailed upon request. Interested parties are invited to submit comments by any of the following methods:

*Website:* For access to the documents, go to the Federal eRulemaking Portal location at [www.regulations.gov](http://www.regulations.gov) or the Project website at <https://www.paturnpike.com/traveling/construction/site/delaware-river-bridge>. Follow the online instructions for submitting comments.

*Mailing address of hand delivery or courier:* Federal Highway Administration Pennsylvania Division, 30 North 3<sup>rd</sup> Street, Suite 700, Harrisburg, Pennsylvania, 17101 or Federal Highway Administration New Jersey Division, 840 Bear Tavern Road, Suite 202, West Trenton, New Jersey, 08628.

*Email Address:* Michelle Goddard, FHWA Pennsylvania Division at [Michelle.Goddard@dot.gov](mailto:Michelle.Goddard@dot.gov) or Sutapa Bandyopadhyay, FHWA New Jersey Division at [Sutapa.Bandyopadhyay@dot.gov](mailto:Sutapa.Bandyopadhyay@dot.gov).

All submissions should include the agency name and the docket number that appears in the heading of this Notice. All comments received will be posted without

change to [www.regulations.gov](http://www.regulations.gov) or the Project website at <https://www.paturndpike.com/traveling/construction/site/delaware-river-bridge>, including any personal information provided. A summary of the comments received will be included in the Draft SEIS and all comments received will be included in an appendix to the Draft SEIS.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:**

*For FHWA:* Michelle Goddard, AICP, Environment Team Leader, Federal Highway Administration, Pennsylvania Division, 30 North Third Street, Suite 700, Harrisburg, PA 17101; email: [michelle.goddard@dot.gov](mailto:michelle.goddard@dot.gov); Telephone: (717) 221-3785.

*For the PA Turnpike:* Lucas Larson, Engineer Project Manager (Environmental), Pennsylvania Turnpike Commission, 700 S. Eisenhower Blvd, Middletown, PA 17057; email: [llarson@paturndpike.com](mailto:llarson@paturndpike.com); Telephone (717) 831-7357.

Persons interested in receiving Project information can sign up at <https://www.paturndpike.com/traveling/construction/site/delaware-river-bridge/news/receive-project-updates> to be placed on the mailing list.

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:** FHWA, as the lead Federal Agency, Pennsylvania Turnpike Commission (PA Turnpike), and the New Jersey Turnpike Authority (NJTA) are preparing a SEIS to evaluate environmental impacts of the construction of a direct connection between I-276 and I-95 in Lower Bucks County, Pennsylvania and Burlington County, New Jersey. The environmental review of the transportation improvement alternatives for the Project will be conducted in accordance with the requirements of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) of 1969, as amended (42 U.S.C. 4321, et seq.), 23 U.S.C. 139, FHWA regulations implementing NEPA (23 CFR part 771) and all other applicable Federal, State, and local laws and regulations. The NEPA process is anticipated to be completed by a combined Final SEIS and Record of Decision (ROD) within two years of issuance of this NOI.

The Project subject to this notice is:

*Project Location:*

The Project limits extend east from the PA Turnpike mainline bridge over Mill Creek through the SR 0013 (Bristol Pike) Interchange, I-95 Exit #42 in Pennsylvania, to the first mainline NJ Turnpike horizontal curve in New Jersey. The total length of the Project study area is approximately 3.2 miles with approximately 1.7 miles of the Project in Pennsylvania and 1.5 miles of the Project in New Jersey.

**Preliminary Purpose and Need for the Proposed Action**

*Background.*

As part of the 2003 Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS), FHWA, PA Turnpike, and NJTA proposed to design and construct a direct connection between I-276 and I-95 in lower Bucks County, Pennsylvania, with the I-276/I-95 Project improvements extending east into Burlington County, New Jersey. Given the size of the I-276/I-95 Interchange Project, the project was broken out into three elements: the Interchange element, the Toll Plaza element, and the Bridge element and then further into Stages. Stage 1 of the Project, which included prerequisite contracts and the two flyover movements connecting I-95 along the east coast, is complete. Stage 2 includes the six remaining interchange ramp movements and associated Pennsylvania Turnpike mainline widening. Select Stage 2 contracts have been constructed, while some are in final design and others have completed preliminary design. The Stage 3 DRB Project builds upon previous studies conducted for the I-276/I-95 Interchange Project between 2003 and 2024.

As identified in the I-276/I-95 Interchange Project's ROD (2003), the Selected Alternative included:

- (1) Modified Plaza West consisting of a mainline barrier toll plaza (conventional full width configuration) that incorporates E-ZPass and would be the new eastern terminus of the Pennsylvania Turnpike Toll System;
- (2) Single Loop A Interchange that includes ramps to make a direct, high-speed, fully-directional connection between I-95 and I-276; and
- (3) Bridge South which introduces a second, parallel structure located adjacent to and just south of the existing DRB and rehabilitation of the existing structure. Thus, both bridges will be used for one-way travel during the design year.

After the I-276/I-95 Interchange Project's ROD was published, certain stages of the Project proceeded through design and into construction. Stage 1 was completed and opened to traffic in September 2018. Stage 1 facilitated a revised routing of I-95 in PA and NJ, thereby making I-95 continuous along the east coast from Florida to Maine. Project Elements involved in Stage 1 included the Modified Plaza West and the Single Loop A Interchange.

Stage 2, which is partially complete, includes:

- construction of the remaining six new interchange ramp movements which do not have the I-95 designation,
- completion of the Pennsylvania Turnpike mainline widening from two lanes in each direction to three lanes in each direction, and
- associated reconstruction work on the Turnpike and I-95/I-295.

In 2021, the PA Turnpike and NJTA identified funding to begin the design phase for the Stage 3 DRB Project which involves the proposed replacement of the existing structure. This project is intended to connect the six lanes of the Pennsylvania Turnpike (I-95) mainline just east of Exit 42 with six lanes of the New Jersey Turnpike 0.8 miles east of the New Jersey state line.

Due to the amount of time that had elapsed since the Project's 2003 ROD, the needs identified in the I-276/I-95 Interchange Project Purpose and Need statement were re-evaluated and found to still be pertinent to the Stage 3 DRB Project, with one of the needs – *Lack of I-95 continuity through the Mid-Atlantic Region* – already satisfied through the completion of an earlier stage of the project. Additionally, a new purpose statement and new need statement was identified due to a fracture in a structural steel component of an existing approach span truss on the Pennsylvania side which was discovered January 20, 2017. The repair of the fracture required the closure of the bridge for 6 weeks, which resulted in a 42-mile detour for travelers to stay on the interstate system. The fracture was successfully repaired and fully inspected, and the bridge continues to be inspected biennially. However, the bridge continues to deteriorate which would further impact traffic in the future if another incident were to occur.

FHWA concurred on the Updated Project Purpose and Need Report on October 31, 2024. The document is posted on the PA Turnpike's DRB Project website under *Environmental Documentation*. FHWA determined that due to the amount of time that has elapsed, the National Register of Historic Places eligibility of the DRB, updated regulations since the 2003 I-276/I-95 Interchange Project's ROD, and the potential design changes to the Selected Alternative, the Stage 3 DRB Project may result in new or changed significant impacts that were not evaluated in the I-276/I-95 Interchange Project's FEIS and ROD. Therefore, pursuant to 23 CFR 771.130(a), FHWA determined that a SEIS is necessary to identify and disclose any new significant impacts and mitigation associated with the I-276/I-95 Interchange Project Stage 3 DRB Project.

The I-276/I-95 Interchange Project's EIS, ROD, and Updated Purpose and Need Report are available on the PA Turnpike's DRB Project website under *Environmental Documentation*.

The preliminary Purpose of the proposed Project is to improve I-276 and I-95 linkage for system continuity; provide additional capacity for the current I-276 and I-95 connections; provide additional I-276 and I-95 capacity; improve study area travel times and reduce delay; and secure a vital link in the regional and national interstate transportation network across the Delaware River. The Needs for the proposed Project include inadequate I-276 and I-95 linkage for system continuity; inadequate capacity for the current I-276 and I-95 connections; inadequate capacity on I-276 and I-95; prolonged study area travel times and delays; and lack of service reliability/redundancy of the existing DRB.

The preliminary Purpose and Need was developed with agency coordination and public input, as described in this NOI (see the Additional Project Information Document for details on the development of the Purpose and Need). Agencies and the public are invited to comment on the preliminary Purpose and Need. The preliminary Purpose and Need may be revised based on comments received during the comment period on this notice. The Purpose and Need statement and supporting documentation, including data and public input summary, will be available in the Draft SEIS. The preliminary Purpose and Need has been discussed with Cooperating and Participating Agencies, including information contained in the Additional Project Information Document.

**A Preliminary Description of the Proposed Action and Alternatives the Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement Will Consider.**

*Preliminary Alternatives*

The preliminary proposed action includes improvements to the DRB and the approach roadways in Pennsylvania (including entrance and exit ramps at the SR0013 (Bristol Pike) Interchange) and New Jersey. Agencies and the public are invited to comment on the Range of Alternatives for the proposed action. The preliminary Range of Alternatives has been discussed with Cooperating and Participating agencies, including

information contained in the Additional Project Information Document. Additional information on the Range of Alternatives is in the Additional Project Information Document. The Range of Alternatives proposed to be considered in the SEIS include:

*No Build*

The No Build Alternative will be retained for detailed study and will serve as a benchmark for comparison with the Build Alternatives. The No Build Alternative would maintain the existing DRB and approach roadways in their current configuration. The existing DRB is approximately 6,571 feet long with a main span of 682 feet over the river channel and carries two travel lanes in each direction. The New Jersey approach roadway is currently three lanes in each direction, as will be the Pennsylvania approach, ultimately. The No Build Alternative would include existing maintenance and any current fiscally constrained projects. This alternative would not affect any social, economic, cultural, or natural resources, but it would not address any of the Project's Purpose or Needs.

*Alternative NSA (North Staged Alternate)*

Alternative NSA consists of constructing a single bridge, in stages, to the north of the existing DRB. The proposed structure will be offset from the existing DRB structure to allow for the existing main river bridge and approach to remain in service during the first phase of construction. A maximum offset of 74 feet between the centerline of the existing and proposed bridges was utilized to develop the horizontal geometry for this alternative. The horizontal offset requires the proposed river piers to be constructed offset from the existing river piers, resulting in an increased span length. Alternative NSA shifts the outside barrier of the proposed DRB 130 feet north of the existing barrier and provides a clearance of 30 feet between the southernmost proposed Stage 1 barrier and the existing bridge.

The proposed alignment impacts the existing structures carrying I-95/I-276 over Green Lane and the East Penn Railroad. Additionally, the proposed widening will impact the existing eastbound entrance ramp and both the westbound entrance and exit ramps at the SR 0013 (Bristol Pike) Interchange. The proposed design includes add/drop lanes at the entrance and exit ramps to accommodate the proposed widening, allowing for adequate acceleration and deceleration lane lengths. It is anticipated that the future configuration of the corridor will include three lanes in each direction through the interchange with acceleration and deceleration lanes extending through the proposed structures over Green Lane and the East Penn Railroad. The proposed structures have been designed to accommodate the future configuration (three through lanes and an auxiliary lane in each direction).

This alternative requires staged construction for the approach span structures and main river span. Temporary pavement will be required to accommodate staged construction. The interchange structure is not impacted by this alternative. Since this structure is not anticipated to be replaced, multiple work zones are anticipated to maintain traffic during construction.

*Alternative NPI (North Partial Impact)*

Alternative NPI consists of constructing a single bridge to the north of the existing DRB. The proposed structure will be offset from the existing DRB to allow for the existing main river bridge and approach to remain in service during construction. A maximum offset of 195 feet between the centerline of the existing DRB and proposed bridges was utilized to develop the horizontal geometry for this alternative. The horizontal offset was established to allow the proposed river piers to be constructed adjacent (in-line) with the existing river piers. This alternative shifts the outside barrier of the proposed bridge structure 230 feet north of the existing barrier and provides a clearance of 70 feet between the southernmost proposed barrier and the existing DRB.

The proposed alignment impacts the existing structures carrying I-95/I-276 over Green Lane and the East Penn Railroad. Additionally, the proposed widening will impact the existing eastbound entrance ramp and the westbound entrance ramp at the SR 0013 (Bristol Pike) Interchange. The proposed design includes add/drop lanes at the entrance and exit ramps to accommodate the proposed widening, allowing for adequate acceleration and deceleration lane lengths. It is anticipated that the future configuration of the corridor will include three lanes in each direction through the SR 0013 (Bristol Pike) Interchange with acceleration and deceleration lanes extending through the proposed structures over Green Lane and the East Penn Railroad. The proposed structures have been designed to accommodate the future configuration (three through lanes and an auxiliary lane in each direction). The Ramp B entrance ramp will also be extended to provide adequate acceleration lane length. This alternative allows for the approach span structures and main river span structure to be constructed in a single stage.

*Concepts Considered but Proposed Not to be Retained for Detailed Study in the SEIS*

The following alternatives were evaluated as part of a comprehensive Alternatives Analysis and are not being retained for detailed study. These alternatives were dismissed as they would result in higher potential impacts to the natural, cultural, and/or socioeconomic environment while providing less benefits than the build alternatives being carried forward into the SEIS. Additional information on the reasons for their dismissal can be found in the Additional Project Information Document associated with this NOI.

Alternative SNI: New Bridge to the South with No Impact to Existing Approach Spans

Alternative SNI consists of constructing a single bridge to the south of the existing DRB. The proposed bridge structure will be offset from the existing DRB to allow for the existing main river bridge and approach roadway to remain in service

during construction. A maximum offset of 195 feet between the centerline of the existing and proposed main river span bridges would be utilized to develop the horizontal geometry for this alternative. The horizontal offset would be established to allow the proposed river piers to be constructed adjacent (in-line) with the existing river piers. This alternative shifts the outside barrier of the proposed bridge structure 230 feet south of the existing DRB barrier and provides a clearance of 70 feet between the northmost proposed barrier and the existing DRB.

#### Alternative SPI: New Bridge to the South with Partial Impact to Existing Approach Spans

Alternative SPI consists of constructing a single bridge to the south of the existing DRB. The proposed bridge structure would be offset from the existing DRB to allow for the existing DRB and approach to remain in service during construction and includes a partial impact to the cantilevered overhang on the existing approach span structure. The partial impact includes the removal of the existing Pennsylvania approach bridge deck that is outside of the limits of the girder. Two lanes of traffic would still be maintained in both directions, and the removal only impacts the first span in Pennsylvania. A maximum offset of 195 feet between the centerline of the existing and proposed main river span bridges would be utilized to develop the horizontal geometry for this alternative. The horizontal offset would be established to allow the proposed river piers to be constructed adjacent (in-line) with the existing river piers. This alternative shifts the outside barrier of the proposed bridge structure 230 feet south of the existing DRB barrier and provides a clearance of 70 feet between the northmost proposed barrier and the existing DRB.

#### Alternative NNI: New Bridge to the North with No Impact to Existing Approach Spans

Alternative NNI consists of constructing a single bridge to the north of the existing DRB. The proposed bridge structure would be offset from the existing DRB to

allow for the existing DRB and approach to remain in service during construction. A maximum offset of 195 feet between the centerline of the existing and proposed main river span bridges would be utilized to develop the horizontal geometry for this alternative. The horizontal offset would be established to allow the proposed river piers to be constructed adjacent (in-line) with the existing river piers. This alternative shifts the outside barrier of the proposed bridge structure 230 feet north of the existing DRB barrier and provides a clearance of 70 feet between the southernmost proposed barrier and the existing DRB. Approach span structures and the main river span structure are located entirely on horizontal tangents for this alternative.

#### Alternative DNI: Dual Bridges with No Impact to the Existing Approach Spans

Alternative DNI consists of dual bridges, one to the north and one to the south of the existing DRB. The proposed bridge structures would be offset from the existing DRB to allow for the existing DRB and approach to remain in service during construction. A maximum offset of 149 feet between the centerline of the existing DRB and baselines of the proposed bridges would be utilized to develop the horizontal geometry for this alternative. The horizontal offset would be established to allow the proposed river piers to be constructed adjacent (in-line) with the existing river piers. This alternative shifts the outside barrier of the proposed bridge structures 150 feet north and south of the existing DRB barrier and provides a clearance of 70 feet between the proposed barriers and the existing DRB.

#### Alternative DPI: Dual Bridges with Partial Impact to Existing Approach Spans

Alternative DPI consists of dual bridges, one to the north and one south of the existing DRB. The proposed bridge structures would be offset from the existing DRB to allow for the existing DRB and approach to remain in service during construction. This alignment could include a partial impact to the cantilevered overhang on the existing approach span structure, though ultimately the two structures do not overlap. The two

structures remain separated by a small margin (approximately 3 feet) for this alternative. Minor impacts may still be required to the existing DRB approach span for construction activities to build the new bridge. A maximum offset of 149 feet between the centerline of the existing bridge and the baselines of the proposed bridges would be utilized to develop the horizontal geometry for this alternative. The horizontal offset would be established to allow the proposed river piers to be constructed adjacent (in-line) with the existing river piers. This alternative shifts the outside barrier of the proposed structures 150 feet north and south of the existing DRB barrier and provides a clearance of 70 feet between the proposed barriers and the existing DRB.

#### Alternative NS: New Bridge to the North with Staged Construction

Alternative NS consists of constructing a single bridge, in stages, to the north of the existing DRB. The proposed bridge structure would be offset from the existing DRB to allow for the existing DRB and approach to remain in service during the first phase of construction. A maximum offset of 113 feet between the centerline of the existing DRB and proposed bridges would be utilized to develop the horizontal geometry for this alternative. The horizontal offset would be established to allow the proposed river piers to be constructed adjacent (in-line) with the existing river piers. This alternative shifts the outside barrier of the proposed bridge structure 150 feet north of the existing DRB barrier and provides a clearance of 70 feet between the southernmost proposed barrier and the existing DRB.

#### Alternative DS: Dual Bridges with Staged Construction

Alternative DS consists of constructing dual bridges in stages. The proposed westbound bridge would be constructed north of the existing DRB. The proposed eastbound bridge would be constructed on the existing alignment. The proposed westbound structure would be offset from the existing structure to allow for the existing DRB and approach to remain in service during construction. A maximum offset of 106

feet between the centerline of the existing DRB and proposed westbound bridge would be utilized to develop the horizontal geometry for this alternative. This alternative shifts the outside barrier of the proposed bridge structure 130 feet north of the existing DRB barrier and provides a clearance of 30 feet between the southernmost proposed bridge and the existing DRB. The horizontal offset requires the proposed river piers to be constructed offset from the existing river piers, resulting in an increased span length.

The alternatives to be retained will be finalized after the consideration of public comments received during the comment period on this NOI and they will be documented in the Draft SEIS. The alternatives may be revised based on the consideration of public comments. The alternatives not retained will also be documented in the Draft SEIS. See the Additional Project Information Document for a more detailed description of the development of the Preliminary Range of Alternatives.

### **Brief Summary of Expected Effects**

The SEIS will evaluate the potential social, economic, and environmental effects resulting from the implementation of the Build Alternatives and the No Build Alternative. FHWA, PA Turnpike, and NJTA will seek input from the public, tribes and nations, and agencies during the SEIS development process regarding the effects of the DRB Project. FHWA, PA Turnpike, and NJTA will evaluate effects on environmental and community resources in accordance with their NEPA guidance and procedures. The following are the most sensitive resources in the Project area and will be evaluated closely by FHWA, PA Turnpike, and NJTA:

- *Wetlands and other Waters of the U.S.:*

Both build alternatives would require dredging and filling of Waters of the U.S. and result in effects to wetlands considered to be jurisdictional which will require a Section 404 Permit from the United States Army Corps of Engineers (USACE).

- *Wildlife and Wildlife Habitat:*

Both build alternatives have the potential to affect wildlife and wildlife habitat. Such effects would be assessed by considering the Project's footprint, vibration (particularly during construction), and stormwater runoff.

- *Endangered Species:*

Both build alternatives include work within the Delaware River, including the construction and removal of temporary causeways, placement of piers, and other construction-related activities. It is anticipated that the proposed work will have potential effects on the federally listed (endangered) Atlantic Sturgeon and Shortnose Sturgeon.

- *Cultural Resources:*

Both build alternatives would result in the removal of the DRB, which is eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places. The Delaware Canal, a National Historic Landmark, is also within the project area. Efforts will be made to avoid or minimize impacts to the canal to the extent practicable. Additionally, based on archaeological sensitivity assessments in PA and NJ, there is potential for both pre-contact and historical archaeology within the project study area. Further investigations and coordination will be conducted when the Preferred Alternative is identified.

- *Navigation:*

Both alternatives would span the Delaware River – a navigable waterway under United States Coast Guard (USCG) jurisdiction. Preliminary coordination with the USCG is underway.

- *Floodplains:*

Portions of both build alternatives are within the 100-year floodplain, or base floodplain, so there is the potential for encroachments on floodplains from the proposed project.

- *Community Effects:*

Both build alternatives would result in potential effects on communities within the Project area. It is anticipated that the effects would be from potential right-of-way acquisitions and relocations, as well as the potential for increased traffic noise.

Additionally, there would likely be temporary effects on traffic, air quality, and noise during the construction of the proposed Project.

The SEIS will evaluate the expected impacts and benefits to the known resources above, as well as the following: Land use and right-of-way, forested areas, Delaware estuary coastal zone, submerged aquatic vegetation, Section 4(f) resources, air quality, transportation, commercial and industrial land uses, hazardous waste sites, visual resources, and recreational trails. The level of review of the identified resources will be commensurate with the anticipated effects to each resource from the proposed Project and will be governed by the statutory and regulatory requirements protecting those resources.

The analyses conducted for the SEIS will identify the potential for effects; avoidance measures; whether the anticipated effects would be ‘adverse’; and the appropriate environmental mitigation measures. Additional information on the expected effects is provided in the Additional Project Information Document available for review in the docket established for this proposed Project and on the Project website as noted in the ADDRESSES section.

Agencies, tribes and nations, stakeholders, and the public are invited to comment on the expected effects. See the Additional Project Information Document for a more detailed description of the Summary of Expected Effects. The Draft SEIS will present the studies to identify effects and the analyses of effects from the retained alternatives.

The 2003 ROD states that preliminary investigations were conducted to determine the feasibility of a bicycle/pedestrian facility on the Delaware River Bridge and that eight (8) substantive issues were identified that prevented incorporation of a multi-modal

component in the proposed action. The ROD stated that “should circumstances change prior to construction, such that the above listed concerns are resolved or nullified, FHWA and the sponsoring agencies could then re-evaluate the incorporation of a bicycle/pedestrian facility pathway along the proposed Delaware River Bridge Element.” As such, the SEIS will address the eight substantive issues identified in the 2003 ROD.

Additionally, the ROD documented that there is “no safe crossing of the canal towpath and Delaware River Heritage Trail across Route 13 in Bristol Township.” While conceptual designs for an improved crossing were documented in the FEIS, further coordination with interested parties to address concerns will occur and any relevant project solution(s) will be included in the SEIS.

### **Anticipated Permits and Other Authorizations**

A Clean Water Act Section 404 Permit decision from the USACE is anticipated July 2028. Other likely Federal and State authorizations include Clean Water Act Section 401 Water Quality Certification, USCG Navigation Permit, New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection (NJDEP) Flood Hazard Area Individual Permit, NJDEP Waterfront Development Individual Permit, compliance with NJDEP Stormwater Management regulations and performance standards, NJDEP Freshwater Wetlands Individual Permit, PADEP Waterway Encroachment Sections 105 and 106, and the PAFBC Aids to Navigation (ATON) Plan. Per U.S.C. 139(d)(10), the Federal permits and authorizations should be completed by no later than 90 days after the issuance of the Record of Decision (ROD). Subject to regulatory review, the Project sponsors, PA Turnpike and NJTA, have committed to obtaining permits within 90 days of the issuance of the ROD.

Section 7 consultation under the Endangered Species Act is expected to be concluded April 2027. Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act is anticipated to be concluded August 2027. The USCG Permit is anticipated to be issued

July 2028. See the Additional Project Information Document for more details on the anticipated permits and authorizations.

### **Schedule for Decision-Making Process**

23 U.S.C. 139 mandates that the Record of Decision for major projects be issued no later than two years from the date the Notice of Intent is published. The Project Schedule for the PA Turnpike Project will follow the two-year requirement. Cooperating and Participating Agencies have reviewed the schedule and agencies with permitting or other authorizations, including the United States Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA), the USACE, the USCG, the Pennsylvania Game Commission, and the Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission (as the Pennsylvania State Historic Preservation Office or SHPO) have confirmed that the schedule is appropriate. Per U.S.C. 139(d)(10), permits and authorizations should be completed by no later than 90 days after the issuance of the ROD. Subject to regulatory review, the Project sponsors, PA Turnpike and NJTA, have committed to obtaining permits within 90 days of the issuance of the ROD. Following the issuance of this NOI, FHWA, PA Turnpike, and NJTA will coordinate with Cooperating and Participating Agencies to develop study documentation and the Draft SEIS.

- The Draft SEIS is anticipated to be issued in Fall 2026.
- The combined Final SEIS and ROD are anticipated in Spring 2028.
- A Section 404 Permit decision from the USACE is anticipated in Summer 2028.

See the Additional Project Information Document for additional schedule details.

### **Description of the Public Scoping Process, Including Scoping Meetings**

The scoping process for this SEIS will include a 30-day comment period initiated on the date the NOI is published in the Federal Register. The public will be able to submit comments by email, telephone, and mail. PA Turnpike and NJTA will post public

materials on the Project website, including a Project overview video, frequently asked questions, and previous meeting materials.

#### *Outreach Conducted to Date*

Prior to the publication of this NOI, the PA Turnpike and NJTA conducted a public survey and held two rounds of public meetings.

#### *Public Survey*

In Fall 2024, the PA Turnpike and NJTA provided the public and public officials with an overview of the project and status update. In addition, the PA Turnpike and NJTA conducted a public survey from November 27, 2024, through January 10, 2025, to solicit input on the proposed Project. Over 1,280 surveys, representing the project area in Pennsylvania and New Jersey, were completed.

#### *Public Meeting Series Round 1*

Virtual Public Officials Meeting February 27, 2025

Virtual Public Meeting March 12, 2025

Public Meeting in Pennsylvania March 19, 2025

Public Meeting in New Jersey March 20, 2025

Public Comment Period March 12, 2025 – April 12, 2025

More than 300 people attended the first round of meetings to learn about ongoing environmental work, the SEIS process, the Project Purpose and Need, the Alternatives Analysis and Preliminary Engineering processes, future public involvement opportunities, and results from the public survey conducted in late 2024 – early 2025.

#### *Public Meeting Series Round 2*

Virtual Public Officials Meeting September 24, 2025

Virtual Public Scoping Meeting October 14, 2025

Public Scoping Meeting (Pennsylvania) October 15, 2025

Public Scoping Meeting (New Jersey) October 16, 2025

Public Comment Period October 14, 2025 – November 14, 2025

More than 200 people attended the second round of meetings which were conducted virtually and in person utilizing an open-house format. Attendees learned about the status of the Project, the SEIS process, the results of the Alternatives Analysis, the Preliminary Range of Alternatives, anticipated environmental effects and permits, future public involvement opportunities, and the Project schedule.

### **Agency Scoping**

FHWA, PA Turnpike, and NJTA identified agencies who would likely serve as Cooperating and Participating Agencies for the SEIS. In March 2024, PA Turnpike, NJTA, and FHWA informed resource agencies, including those likely to become Cooperating and Participating Agencies, on initial scoping activities for the SEIS.

Formal coordination with PA and NJ resource agencies has occurred through PennDOT's Agency Coordination Meetings and through resource-specific meetings involving one or more jurisdictional agencies. A summary of agency coordination is included below.

March 27, 2024

- Introduction of Project, including Project History
- Discussion of Preliminary Project Purpose and Need
- Notice that Cooperating and Participating Agency letters were sent

May 21, 2024 (NJ HPO Field View)

- Held field view and reviewed resources to be evaluated

July 1, 2024 (PA SHPO Field View)

- Held field view and reviewed resources to be evaluated

October 23, 2024

- Discussion of Purpose and Needs
- Review of Agency Coordination Plan

- Announcement of upcoming public involvement activities, including Public Meeting No. 1

February 26, 2025

- Discussion of public comments received from Public Meeting No. 1
- Requested concurrence from Cooperating and Participating agencies on Purpose and Need
- Discussion on gap analysis and resource methodologies

March 2025

- Concurrence from the six (6) Cooperating Agencies on the Project's Purpose and Needs

June 12, 2025

- Pre-Application Meeting with NJDEP
- Overview of the Project, including history, study area, and Purpose and Needs
- Discussion of resources present in the study area, proposed resource methodologies, and potential permits

September 24, 2025 (Formal Scoping Meeting)

- Discussion of preliminary range of alternatives
- Discussion of resources and potential effects
- Discussion of anticipated permits and approvals
- Discussion of resource methodologies

November 17, 2025

- Tribal Consultation Meeting with tribes and nations having ancestral ties to the project area to provide an overview of and request input on the proposed project.

November 2025

- Concurrence from the six (6) Cooperating Agencies on the preliminary range of alternatives.

January 30, 2026

- Coordination meeting with NOAA Fisheries to provide an update on the proposed project and to discuss consultation under the Endangered Species Act and Magnuson-Stevens Act.

February 19, 2026

- Pre-Application Meeting with the NJDEP to discuss the anticipated permits and associated permitting schedule.

In accordance with 23 U.S.C. 139, an Agency Coordination Plan and a Public Coordination Plan have been developed. These Plans establish frameworks for coordination among the Federal, State, and local agencies, tribes and nations, and the public in the development of the SEIS. The Agency Coordination Plan and Public Coordination Plan are available on the PA Turnpike's DRB Project website under *Environmental Documentation*.

### **Public Review**

A 30-day comment period is being held in association with this NOI. Agencies, tribes and nations, and the public are invited to comment on the Environmental Analysis Methodologies, Purpose and Need, and Range of Alternatives for the proposed action. Comments may be submitted according to the instructions in the ADDRESSES section of this NOI. Interested persons can sign up to receive email announcements, notifications, and newsletters on the Project website.

Public hearings will be held during the development of the SEIS, as described below. Generally, the locations, dates, and times for each public hearing will be publicized through the Project website, in the Bucks County Courier Times (PA) and the Burlington County Times (NJ), and via direct mail. Promotional materials for the public hearing will be translated into Spanish, Mandarin and Russian, per the census data for the

project area. Materials will be available at the hearings and oral and written comments will be solicited. Translation services will be available upon request.

### **Joint Public Hearings on the Draft SEIS**

Notice of availability of the Draft SEIS for public and agency review will be published in the *Federal Register* and through other methods which will identify where interested parties can go to review a copy of the Draft SEIS. Due to the bistate nature of the Project, joint public hearings will be conducted in both Pennsylvania and New Jersey by PA Turnpike, NJTA, FHWA, and USACE and announced a minimum of 30 days in advance. PA Turnpike, NJTA, and USACE will provide information on the joint public hearings, including the locations, dates, and times for the hearings through a variety of means including the Project website

<https://www.paturnpike.com/traveling/construction/site/delaware-river-bridge> and by newspaper advertisement in each state.

### **Request for Comment on Alternatives and Effects, as well as on Relevant Information, Studies, or Analyses with Respect to the Proposed Action.**

To ensure that a full range of issues related to the Project is addressed in the SEIS and potential issues are identified, FHWA, PA Turnpike, and NJTA invite comments and suggestions from interested parties. FHWA, PA Turnpike, and NJTA request comments and suggestions on the purpose and need, potential alternatives and effects, and the identification of any relevant information, studies, or analyses of any kind concerning impacts affecting the quality of the human and natural environment. Comments may be submitted according to the instructions in the ADDRESSES section of this Notice. The purpose of this request is to bring relevant comments, information, and analyses to the agency's attention, as early in the process as possible, to enable the agency to make maximum use of this information in decision-making.

**Identification of Cooperating and Participating Agencies, and Information That Such Agencies Require in the Notice.**

Cooperating and Participating Agencies in the development of the SEIS are:

- *Cooperating Agencies:*

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, U.S. Coast Guard, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) Fisheries, Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission (as the Pennsylvania State Historic Preservation Office or SHPO), and Pennsylvania Game Commission.

- *Participating Agencies:*

National Park Service, Delaware Nation – Oklahoma, Delaware Tribe of Indians – Oklahoma, Stockbridge Munsee Community - Wisconsin, Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources, Pennsylvania Fish and Boat Commission, and Burlington County Soil Conservation District.

Beginning in March 2024, PA Turnpike and NJTA convened Cooperating and Participating Agencies in agency coordination meetings to discuss the development of the SEIS, including the preliminary Purpose and Need, preliminary Range of Alternatives, draft NOI and Additional Project Information Document. At a September 24, 2025, agency coordination meeting, PA Turnpike and NJTA described the requirements under 23 U.S.C. 139 and asked for input. No agencies have requested information to be included in the NOI.

*Unique Identification Number.* All environmental documents prepared for the proposed action will reference the following unique identification number: EISX-XPA-1775577450.

Authority: 42 U.S.C. 4321 *et seq.*; 23 U.S.C. 139; 23 CFR part 771.

**David Snyder,**  
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*FHWA Pennsylvania Division.*

**Camille Otto,**  
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