

AFFECTED ENVIRONMENT

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The "Build" alternatives cover portions of rural and urban Tippecanoe County. From CR 550S to the Wabash River, Lines A and C and CR 350S cross through rural and suburban areas. Farmland, creeks and ditches with bordering wetlands, small forested areas, and the river wetlands describe these rural areas (see Figure 21). Scattered farm houses are very typical along the corridor. With this area's close proximity to Lafayette, there are several residential subdivisions and an apartment complex that account for the suburban character of the area. While there are a few businesses along SR 25 west of existing US 231, there are no major areas of commercial or industrial land use that the alignments cross through.

Lines A and C cross the Wabash River using a corridor between a sewage treatment plant, and industrial plant operated by Lily, and St. Mary's Cemetery which includes an area designated as a Nature Conservancy. This corridor is approximately one-half mile wide.

The significant environmental areas are a large pond between CR 500S and CR 400S and Wea Creek. The pond is surrounded by wetlands and upland forest. Following initial field studies, Line A was shifted to the east approximately 300 feet to miss the pond and its surrounding environment. The crossing of Wea Creek, following field studies, was shifted to the west to bisect Wea Creek once rather than cross both Wea Creek and Elliot Ditch. Although the crossing of Wea Creek is necessary with Line A the shift in the alignment attempts to minimize the environmental impacts upon both waterways.

Line B traverses an area with different land uses. Among existing US 231 north of CR 300S, the area is developed including subdivisions, shopping centers, commercial strip activity, and industrial manufacturing. The environmental concern is Durkee Run. However, an aquatic study demonstrated no fish life in the creek.

North of the Wabash River the area traversed by the "Build" alternatives is a mixture of the Purdue campus recreation areas and fringes, residential subdivisions, farmland, upland forested land, and open water areas surrounded by wetlands. The area is characterized as rural and suburban. There is no commercial activity with the exception at the State and Airport Road intersection. South of River Road the area is comprised of riverine wetlands bordering the Wabash River, farmland, and scattered forested areas. North of River Road up to the campus, an old sand and gravel operation has disturbed the environment. Continuing north, the remainder of the area has been previously described as rural and suburban in nature.

Socially and environmentally significant areas include the upper class residential area bordering McCormick Road from State to Cherry Lane, Blackbird Pond and its surrounding wetlands, and a Classified Woods close to US 52. Following the initial field studies, Line 1 was moved to the east to miss the Classified Woods.

In developing the traffic data for each "Build" alternative (see Purpose and Need section), the urban transportation computer modeling system was used. This system is used by the transportation planning agency for the area, Tippecanoe County Plan Commission, as part of their urban land use and transportation planning process.