

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION**Federal Highway Administration****Environmental Impact Statement:
Talbot and Caroline Counties,
Maryland**

AGENCY: Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), DOT.

ACTION: Notice of Intent.

SUMMARY: The FHWA is issuing this notice to advise the public that an Environmental Impact Statement/Section 4(f) Evaluation (EIS/4(f)) will be prepared for a proposed bridge project in Talbot and Caroline Counties, Maryland.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Ms. Renee Sigel, Planning, Research and Environmental Team Leader, Federal Highway Administration, The Rotunda—Suite 220, 711 West 40th Street, Baltimore, Maryland 21211.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The FHWA, in cooperation with the U.S. Coast Guard, the National Marine Fisheries Service, and the Maryland State Highway Administration, will prepare an EIS/4(f) on a proposal to improve the MD 331 crossing of the Choptank River connecting Talbot and Caroline Counties, Maryland.

The purpose of this project is to provide a dependable crossing of the river which will safely accommodate both vehicular and marine traffic. The existing structure (Bridge No. 20023) is an historically significant swing span bridge which provides the only crossing of the river for thirteen miles. This crossing serves as a vital economic link between the towns of Easton and Preston and is also essential for providing rapid response for fire equipment and emergency services. From a maritime perspective, the bridge controls access to and from the upper twenty miles of the Choptank River, and provides the only access to Tuckahoe Creek.

The alternatives under consideration include the No-Build Alternate, rehabilitation of the existing bridge, several high level fixed span structures on new alignment both north and south of the existing bridge, and a Dual Bridge Alternate utilizing both a new high level fixed span structure and the existing bridge.

Letters describing the proposed action and soliciting comments will be sent to appropriate Federal, State, and local agencies, and to private organizations and citizens who have previously expressed or are known to have an interest in this proposal. A public informational meeting will be held in

the Spring of 1998, followed by a public hearing in the Summer. Public notice will be given of the time and place of both the meeting and hearing. The draft EIS/4(f) will be available for public and agency review and comment prior to the public hearing.

An informal scoping meeting for this project was held in November of 1997. The scoping process includes on-going coordination with a number of agencies and the public including local marinas and the Marine Trade Association as well as presenting at interagency meetings.

To ensure that the full range of issues related to this proposed action are addressed and all significant issues identified, comments and suggestions are invited from all interested parties. Comments or questions concerning this proposed action and EIS should be directed to the FHWA at the address provided above. In addition, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers is reviewing the proposal for a Department of the Army Section 404 Clean Water Act and Section 10 Rivers and Harbors Act permit decision. Any questions or concerns regarding the aquatic environment can be forwarded to: U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Baltimore District, CE NAB-OP-RX, Attn: Keith A. Harris, Chief Special Projects, Permit Section, P.O. Box 1715, Baltimore, MD 21203-1715.

(Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance Program Number 20.205, Highway Research, Planning and Construction. The regulations implementing Executive Order 12372 regarding intergovernmental consultation of Federal programs and activities apply to this program).

Issued: April 1, 1998.

Renee Sigel,

Planning, Research and Environment Team Leader, Baltimore, Maryland.

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DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION**Federal Highway Administration****Driver History Initiative Projects; Fiscal Year 1998 Funding**

AGENCY: Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), DOT.

ACTION: Notice of solicitation.

SUMMARY: This notice solicits proposals from States for projects to evaluate their current citation issuance, conviction process, and driver licensing procedures and policies in meeting the goal of timely, accurate, and complete reporting and recording of traffic convictions within a State and between States.

Where deficiencies are identified, a State is to develop new or revised systems, procedures, and/or policies to improve the reporting and recording of traffic convictions. The FHWA will provide grant funds to the selected States to carry out the projects from funds set aside in the Department of Transportation and Related Agencies Appropriations Act, 1998 (Pub. L. 105-66, 111 Stat. 1425) for driver improvements and enhancements.

DATES: Proposals must be submitted on or before July 8, 1998.

ADDRESSES: Submit all proposals to: Mr. Phillip Forjan, Federal Highway Administration, Department of Transportation, Office of Motor Carrier Research and Standards, HCS-20, Room 3107, 400 Seventh Street, SW., Washington, DC 20590.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Mr. Phillip Forjan, Office of Motor Carrier Research and Standards, (202) 366-4001, or Mr. Paul Claunch, Office of Motor Carrier Safety and Technology, (202) 366-2170, Federal Highway Administration, Department of Transportation, 400 Seventh Street, SW., Washington, DC 20590. Office hours are from 7:45 a.m. to 4:15 p.m., e.t., Monday through Friday, except Federal holidays. Those desiring notification of receipt of their proposal submission must include a self-addressed, stamped envelope or postcard.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:**Electronic Access**

An electronic copy of this document may be downloaded using a modem and suitable communications software from the **Federal Register** Electronic Bulletin Board Service at (202) 512-1661. Internet users may reach the **Federal Register's** home page at: <http://www.nara.gov/nara/fedreg> and Government Printing's Office's database at http://www.access.gpo.gov/su_docs.

Background

Extensive studies and research conducted over a period of years have found that driver error is a major cause of motor vehicle crashes. Driver error is a complex problem with many components including age, experience, time of day, extent of familiarity with the roadway, emotional/physical/mental state, traffic patterns, etc. Improving driver behavior is essential if highway safety is to be improved. Federal, State, and local governments spend millions of dollars annually on training, education, public information, and law enforcement efforts to protect the motoring public by detecting and