

**LOUISIANA DEPARTMENT OF
TRANSPORTATION AND
DEVELOPMENT**

**LA 1/LA 415 CONNECTOR
EA REEVALUATION
FPN H005121
SPN H.005121**

**WEST BATON ROUGE PARISH,
LOUISIANA**



APRIL 2023



LA 1/LA 415 CONNECTOR FONSI RE-EVALUATION

I. GENERAL INFORMATION

A. Original Approved Environmental Document:

EA with FONSI – LA 1/I-10 Connector West Baton Rouge Parish, Louisiana
State Project Number 700-61-0113
Federal Aid Project No. CBI-6103(501)
Approved on March 11, 2007

B. Re-evaluation Purpose:

A shift in alignment and scope of the project has resulted in a need to re-evaluate the existing Environmental Assessment (EA) with Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI).

II. CHANGES IN APPLICABLE LAWS/REGULATIONS:

The 2007 EA with FONSI was prepared in accordance with the Safe, Affordable, Flexible, Efficient, Transportation Equity Act – Legacy for Users (SAFETEA-LU), Public Law 109-59. In November 2021, the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA), Public Law 117-58, was signed into law and is the current surface transportation authorization act.

FHWA issued Order 6640.232A in 2012 to comply with Executive Order (EO) 12898, Federal Actions to Address Environmental Justice. Prior to that time, guidance from the United States Environmental Protection Agency was used to achieve compliance.

III. PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The proposed project is a connector to link Louisiana Highway 1 (LA 1) with Louisiana Highway 415 (LA 415) at Interstate 10 (I-10) west of the Mississippi River Bridge, to include a new bridge over the Gulf Intracoastal Waterway (GIWW). The 2007 EA/FONSI recommended moving forward with a build alternative that included a four-lane, primarily at-grade, connector roadway with four-lane bridge over the GIWW referred to as Build Alternative 4 with LA 1 Intersection B. Logical termini provided in the EA/FONSI were I-10 at LA 415 to the north, with two options for connection with LA 1 to the south, one at LA 988 and one at American Way.

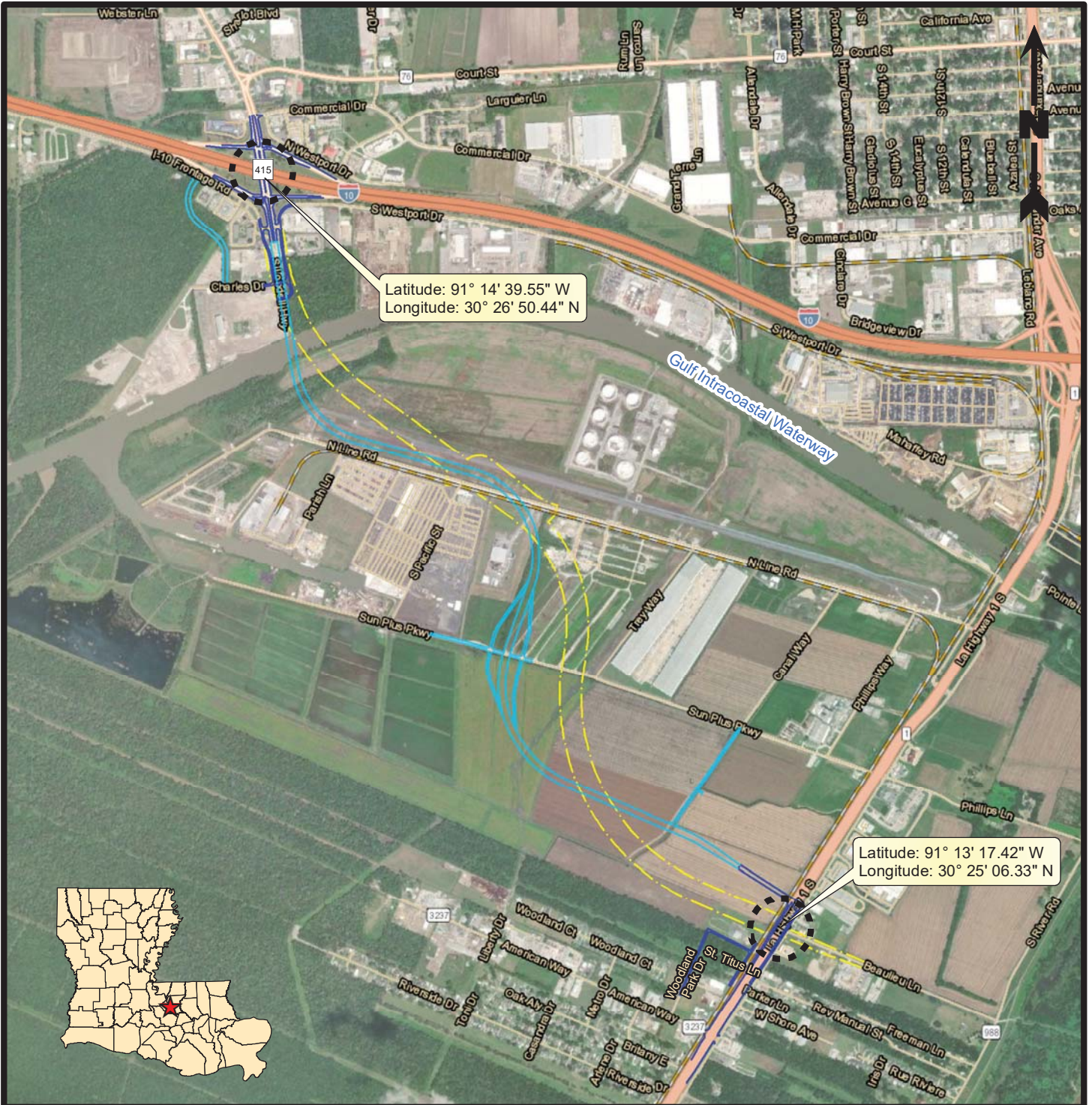
The project's purpose remains to provide system linkage in West Baton Rouge Parish within the Baton Rouge Metropolitan Area. The need remains to provide a direct connection and evacuation route between LA 1 and LA 415 (to I-10). As the only north-

south roadway in West Baton Rouge Parish crossing the GIWW and the only evacuation route for parishes west and along the Mississippi River, LA 1 does not have sufficient capacity to meet existing demand. Establishing a direct connection between LA 1 and LA 415 (to I-10) provides a relief route for the congested local traffic as well as for evacuations.

The proposed project involves construction of a connector roadway with backage road and bridge supporting four, 12-foot travel lanes and paved eight-foot outside and four-foot inside shoulders and a design speed of 45 miles per hour. The new bridge will support a 360-foot main span or spans over the GIWW with a vertical clearance of 73 feet above mean high water (MHW) and a horizontal clearance of 125 feet. A half diamond interchange is proposed with LA 1, with the potential to expand to a full diamond interchange in the future. Control of access (COA) associated with the LA 1 interchange necessitates construction of an access road. The access road will serve to provide access to/from LA 1 for COA-affected businesses and residences between St. Titus Lane and Forest Drive on the west side of LA 1. The interchange at LA 415 and I-10 will remain a full diamond interchange. Modifications to this interchange include two through lanes and two left turn lanes in each direction from LA 415, resulting in the widening of the I-10 eastbound on ramp and I-10 westbound on ramp to two lanes each, and the I-10 eastbound and I-10 westbound off ramps to four lanes each. The backage road maintains access to the 415 South Truckstop and Casino and frontage road businesses and routes traffic behind the truck stop to connect to LA 415 via Charles Drive.

The proposed design requires the LA 415 Connector to initiate ramp up for the GIWW crossing in the vicinity of the 415 Truck Stop and Casino south of I-10. The connector remains elevated until crossing Northline Road and turning south where it drops to an at-grade roadway to the east of Amlon Group's Port Allen Facility. An overpass is proposed at the intersection with Sun Plus Parkway to allow through traffic to continue southeast to either exit at Canal Way or LA 1. The connector ramps up for the LA 1 interchange southeast of Canal Way.

Figure 1 presents the formerly approved Alternative 4 and the proposed modified alignment referred to as the Blue Alternative.



Legend

- Logical Termini
- FONSI Approved Alternate 4
- Interchange Areas
- Proposed Alternative

Reference

Base map comprised of ESRI's World Imagery exported 04/04/23

Alternatives Map

EA Reevaluation
West Baton Rouge Parish, Louisiana

Louisiana Department of Transportation and Development
LA 1/LA 415 Connector State Project No. H.005121



PROVIDENCE

Drawn By	TDJ	04/04/23
Checked By	TDJ	04/04/23
Approved By	KO	04/04/23

Project Number	040-015	1 Figure
Drawing Number	040-015-A003	

IV. PROPOSED DESIGN CHANGES

There were new developments in and adjacent to the proposed required right-of-way (ROW) between 2007 and 2021. To minimize impacts and improve access, the approved alignment shifted to the south with a roadway determined to be primarily elevated rather than at-grade. Additionally, the LA 415 interchange with I-10 has been modified to include additional turn lanes and the connection with LA 1 was shifted north along LA 1, providing a new access roadway just west of LA 1 for residents and businesses that would be affected by the control of access area. To provide maximum flexibility in design and meeting future traffic conditions, adequate additional ROW is proposed to allow for the bridge to be either a single structure or dual structures. Complete line and grade for the project has been provided under separate cover.

The LA 1/LA 415 Connector will be a four lane, divided highway with two lanes in each direction. There will be paved shoulders on each side of the travel lanes. Prior to the LA 1/LA 415 Connector bridge over LA 1, the LA 1/LA 415 Connector pavement will transition to one lane in each direction. The ramps connecting to LA 1 will each be a single lane ramp. There will be two, 12-foot travel lanes in each direction with 8-foot outside shoulders and 4-foot inside shoulders. This is not a design change and is provided as a reminder of the original design.

The bridge carrying the LA 1/LA 415 Connector over the GIWW will remain elevated until it crosses North Line Road and will tie down to grade (ground level) briefly and will be elevated over Sun Plus Parkway. There will be an access roadway with Canal Way prior to the ramps for the LA 1 interchange. This design is a departure from the EA/FONSI approved alternative, Alternative 4. Alternative 4 proposed to be an at-grade roadway south/east of the GIWW with at-grade intersections a Northline Road, Sun Plus Parkway, and LA 1 and LA 988, as well as a flyover ramp from LA 1 northbound to the connector.

The LA 1/LA 415 Connector design speed will be 45 MPH. The ramps connecting LA 1 and the LA 1/LA 415 Connector will have a 40 MPH design speed but will be reduced to 5 to 10 MPH at the 90 degree turns. The local streets near American Way will have a 25 to 30 MPH design speed. The access roadway between the LA 1/LA 415 Connector and Canal Way has an anticipated design speed between 40 to 45 MPH. Alternative 4 proposed a design speed of 45 MPH between I-10 and the GIWW (including the bridge) and 55 MPH for the at-grade roadway south of the GIWW.

V. EVALUATION OF CHANGES IN IMPACTS

Table 1 provides a comparison of impacts between Alternative 4 (EA/FONSI) FONSI and the currently proposed Blue Alternative.

TABLE 1 – COMPARISON OF IMPACTS

Evaluation Criteria	Alternative 4 (2007)	Blue Alternative w/Backage Road	Checked/Analyzed and Updated for EA Reevaluation
Acquired Right-of-Way (acres)	97.9	80.49	Updated total includes construction and drainage servitudes
Navigable Water Crossings	1	1	Confirmed
Average Daily Traffic (ADT) for Connector in vehicles per day (VPD)	2030 ADT =13,868	2042 ADT = 17,316	Updated
Estimated Preliminary Construction Cost ¹ (in millions)	\$47.8	\$195.2	Updated
Relocations (structures impact)			
Residence	0	0	Updated
Commercial	6	0	Updated
Other	0	0	Updated
Environmental Justice Communities	None	None	Updated
Air Quality	None	None	Updated
Noise Impacts (number of affected receptors)	3 Residences	4 Residences, 1 hotel pool area	Updated, the 2007 study did not include the I-10/LA 415 interchange area or backage road. No abatement measures are proposed.
Water Quality	Low	Low	Improvements in area water quality and reduction in groundwater withdrawals noted as change from baseline
Wetlands (acres)	11.6	8.0	Updated total includes servitudes
Floodplains (acres)	6.5	2.73	Updated
Farmland (acres)	85.0	53.4	Updated total includes servitudes
Protected Species	None	None	Confirmed
Section 4(f) Resources	None	None	Confirmed
Hazardous Materials/Waste Sites ²	3	2	Updated
Cultural Resources	None	None	Updated
Aesthetic Impact	Low	Low	Confirmed

Table Notes:

¹ Estimated preliminary cost represents construction only, no other costs are included. The significant difference in cost between Alternative 4 and the Blue Alternative is primarily due to elevated roadway sections (versus at-grade in 2007), inclusion of all potential construction costs (fully itemized costs were not provided in 2007) for the mainline and backage road, current materials costs, and traffic management costs.

² Hazardous materials/waste sites include only those in or immediately adjacent to the ROW. There are three other sites that are in proximity to the ROW with outstanding concerns that warrant their inclusion in reporting but are not expected to impact the project.

VI. COMMITMENTS

Table 2 outlines the commitments from the 2007 EA with FONSI and notes any changes that would occur with the revised alignment.

TABLE 2 – COMMITMENTS FROM 2007 EA/FONSI

ITEM AND AUTHORITY	OVERSITE AGENCY/TIMING	MITIGATION/COMMITMENT	CHANGE RESULTING FROM RE-EVALUATION
Section 404 Permit and wetland mitigation <i>Section 404 of the Clean Water Act as amended</i>	United States Army Corps of Engineers (USACE)/ Pre-construction	The DOTD will obtain a Section 10 and Section 404 Permit through the USACE for impacts to wetlands and the crossing of the GIWW. Mitigation for wetland impacts to roughly 8 acres of jurisdictional wetlands will be accomplished through an acceptable mitigation bank.	About 8 acres of jurisdictional wetlands are expected to be impacted, which is less than the original project amount of 11.6 acres.
Section 401 Water Quality Certification <i>Section 401 of the CWA</i>	LDEQ/ Pre-construction	The DOTD will obtain a Section 401 Water Quality Certification within the Section 404 Permit process.	No
Louisiana Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (LPDES) Storm Water Discharge Permit <i>Section 402 of the CWA</i>	LDEQ/ Pre-construction	The DOTD will apply its LPDES General Permit for the discharge of storm water associated with construction of the project. A Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan will also be prepared.	No
Bridge Permit <i>Section 9 of the Rivers and Harbors Act of 1899 and the General Bridge Act of 1946</i>	DOTD/United States Coast Guard (USCG)/ Pre-construction	DOTD will obtain a bridge permit for the construction and operation of the new bridge.	No
Relocations <i>Uniform Relocation Assistance and Real Property Acquisition Policies Act of 1970 (Uniform Relocation Act)</i>	DOTD/FHWA/ ROW acquisition	Relocations will comply with the Uniform Relocation Act.	With the backage road, no relocations are expected. In 2007, six impacts were expected.
Hazardous Waste	DOTD/LDEQ/ Pre-construction/ ROW acquisition	During final design, further investigation/ assessments may be conducted to assess whether concerns exist that require remediation. Remediation of any sites identified will be conducted if required.	No

VII. PERMITS

No permits have been obtained to date.

The permits required remain the same:

- United States Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) Section 10/404 Permit
- USACE Section 408 Permit, if required for bridge over GIWW
- United States Coast Guard Bridge Permit
- Louisiana Pollutant Discharge Elimination System Permit (for stormwater discharges)
- Section 401 Water Quality Certification

VIII. CONCLUSION

The above referenced EA with FONSI has been re-evaluated in accordance with 23 CFR §771.129. The evaluation has determined that there have been no changes to the project that affect the original environmental determination; therefore, DOTD believes the FONSI remains valid.