



US 219 PAVING THE WAY

Volume 4

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Project Alternatives are Refined

PENNDOT and the Greenhorne & O'Mara (G&O) Project Team have been working diligently throughout the spring and summer to develop and refine the alignments for the U.S. 219 Improvements Project. Environmental scientists and engineers walked all four preliminary alternatives. The project mapping was updated based on field observations and surveying. The alignments were then revised to reduce impacts to environmental features.

Many factors are being taken into consideration while creating the best possible alignments for the proposed roadway. These factors include: the location of residences, businesses, and farms; environmental resources; engineering design criteria; bridge heights; stream crossings, local access roads; and possible interchange locations.

Now that these studies are almost completed, the Draft Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) will be written. The Draft EIS will describe potential impacts to the natural, social, and cultural environment associated with each alternative. After the Draft EIS is completed, the document will be distributed to all consulting agencies and made

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Detailed Field Studies Conducted

The U.S. 219 project team conducted environmental surveys this past spring and summer to characterize the plants, animals, and wetland areas within the four alignments. These studies were conducted along the entire length of the alignments. The major types of plants and wildlife observed in different habitats (e.g., croplands, grass fields, hardwood forests, old clearcut areas, wetlands, etc.) were recorded and the information was analyzed. Each wetland within the alignments was identified and mapped. Field investigations were also conducted for protected species identified as Threatened or Endangered by State and Federal agencies. Two species

listed as Threatened by the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, the Upland Sandpiper and the Appalachian Blue Violet (photograph at left), were found during the surveys of the alignments.

The four preliminary alignments were revised based on the findings of the environmental surveys. On-site field meetings with representatives from State and Federal agencies were

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See You at the Somerset County Fair!

PENNDOT and the Project Team will be hosting a booth at the **Somerset County Fair**, August 17th through August 24th. We will present refinements to Alignments B, C, C-1, and D.

We encourage you to visit us at our booth to offer your suggestions and comments on the alternatives.



Project Schedule

✓ Public Meeting to Introduce the Project	April 30, 2001
✓ Preliminary Alternatives Analysis	Fall 2001
✓ Public Meeting to Present Preliminary Alternatives	December 13, 2001
✓ Detailed Alternatives Analysis	Spring/Summer 2002
Public Meeting to Present Detailed Alternatives Analysis	Fall 2002
Draft Environmental Impact Statement	Spring 2003
Public Meeting on Draft Environmental Impact Statement	Spring 2003
Final Environmental Impact Statement	Summer 2003
Pre-Final Design	Fall 2003

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available for any interested citizens for their comment. After agency and public review of the Draft EIS, a preferred alternative will be identified.

This process will take approximately 6 months to a year. Throughout this time, PENNDOT will be requesting input from the public and environmental agencies. This input is critical to the process of selecting the best alignment.

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Detailed Field Studies Conducted

also held to discuss potential environmental issues. Input from these meetings led to further adjustments to the alignments. Final environmental investigations will be completed this August. All information collected during field investigations and meetings will be used to write the Draft Environmental Impact Statement, due out for public comment in Spring 2003.

**Don't forget to visit our Website www.US219.com
Information on historic and archaeological resources - let us know!
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