



Finding of No Significant Impact for a NEPA Assigned Federal Aid Project

Proposed Action: US 281 at Premont

Project Limits: 0.5 mile north of FM 1538 to 1.0 mile north of CR 431

City: Premont **County:** Jim Wells **State:** Texas

TxDOT CSJ(s): 0255-02-050

In accordance with 23 CFR Section 771.119 and Section 771.121, the Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT) has determined that the US 281 project will not have a significant impact on the human or natural environment.

This Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) for the Preferred Alternative is based on the final Environmental Assessment dated August 2015 and the entire project record. This decision documents the selection of the Build Alternative, presented in the final EA as the Preferred Alternative, which is described as:

The Build Alternative consists of an access controlled relief route around the City of Premont that meets Interstate standards. The Build Alternative includes two northbound and southbound 12-foot mainlanes with 10-foot outside shoulders, 4-foot inside shoulders, and is 5.17 miles long. The mainlanes would accommodate a 70 mph design speed and are separated by a 48-foot grassy median. Mainlane bridges would be located at NE 8th and SE 1st Streets. A mainlane overpass for CR 418 would be provided to allow for east-west access. A local access road would be provided from CR 418 to SE 1st Street to facilitate travel within the area. A diamond interchange would be provided at NE 8th Street to provide Interstate access to and from the City of Premont and accommodate east-west travel within the area.

A Notice of Availability of the draft EA was issued on November 9, 2014.

A public hearing for this project was held on December 11, 2014.

The Build Alternative, as presented at the December 11, 2014 public hearing, was modified to address public concern received at the Public Hearing and a resolution received from the City of Premont. Specific concerns were expressed regarding the location of the interchange on the relief route. As a result, TxDOT conducted additional investigations and developed a new interchange design concept. The design concept was coordinated with local elected officials and is being advanced as the Selected Build Alternative for the US 281 at Premont project.

A Public Hearing Summary and Analysis report and certification that the required hearing was held has been prepared and is available for review on request.

The final EA, the Public Hearing Summary and Analysis report, and reports contained in the file of record have been independently evaluated by TxDOT and determined to adequately and accurately discuss the need, purpose, alternatives, environmental issues, impacts of the proposed project, and appropriate mitigation measures. These documents provide sufficient evidence and analysis for determining that preparation of an Environmental Impact Statement is not required. These documents are incorporated by reference into this decisional document.

Based upon TxDOT's review and consideration of the analysis and evaluation contained in the EA for this project, and after careful consideration of all social, economic, and environmental factors, including input from the public involvement process, TxDOT hereby issues this Finding of No Significant Impact for the US 281 at Premont project from 0.5 mile north of FM 1538 to 1.0 mile north of CR 431.



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TxDOT will ensure adherence and completion of all project commitments described in the final EA, August 2015, Appendix F. TxDOT will ensure that any and all local, state, or federal permit requirements and conditions are met and otherwise complied with.

The environmental review, consultation, and other actions required by applicable Federal environmental laws for this project are being, or have been, carried-out by TxDOT pursuant to 23 U.S.C. 327 and the Memorandum of Understanding dated December 16, 2014, and executed by FHWA and TxDOT.

TxDOT Environmental Affairs Division Director

Date