

## **APPENDIX B:**

### **PUBLIC COMMENTS AND WEBINAR SUMMARIES**

This appendix contains a copy of all public correspondence submitted to the project team between August 2010 and June 15, 2011. Summaries of the three online Question and Answer Sessions during May 2011 follow the comments.

**From: 1MOUNT**

*May 28, 2011*

There is no transportation, economic, or other need for the proposed highway, which is no shorter than existing routes. The proposed route would have devastating effects on the cultural heritage of northwest Georgia and eastern Tennessee, and would negatively affect air and water quality in the area, as well as increasing pressures on the Chattahoochee National Forest. Given the need to cut federal spending to lower deficits, the study has shown that, with a price tag of up to \$6.1 billion, I-3 is cost-prohibitive. In light of the lack of any benefit and the damage it would cause, there is no reason to consider it any further.

**From: A S Williams (Rabun County, GA)**

*March 21, 2011*

My wife and I have a cabin in Rabun County Ga. We travel HWY 441 frequently from Atlanta to Rabun Co. The hwy is lightly traveled. If the interstate that is being discussed is intended to relieve 441 then it is not needed. I can't imagine that the feasibility studies will support the proposed(contemplated) interstate. Not only is it not needed and a waste of tax payer funds, it will cut through the Mts and heavily impact the environment and beauty of the surrounds. Don't do it.

**From: ACASWELL**

*June 11, 2011*

This project looks like an extraordinary boondoggle which will cost the US treasury billions of dollars at a time of fiscal stringency and provide only a marginal increase in travel convenience. I do not question whether there would be some benefits over a portion of the route to be covered, but much of the area under consideration is through rural regions of exceptional beauty and national forests, which most residents adamantly oppose.

I suggest that, if the project is to be carried out at all, it should be in the form of extensions to already existing networks combined with widening of some of these highways. This could be achieved by running a road from Savannah through Augusta and up to Greenville. This could meet up with I40 which should be widened to three lanes.

**From: Alan Price (Rabun County, GA)**

*March 22, 2011*

As a resident of Rabun County, Georgia, I am keenly interested in the continuing studies of an interstate I3 highway connecting parts of Georgia and Tennessee. In a word, STOP. We do not need this highway for any commercial reason that makes sense; we do not need it's deleterious effects upon the scenic beauty of our mountain areas (the very reason I and others moved to North Georgia); and we do not need the expense of funding this massive project. In short, this is a bad idea whose time has not come. Please reconsider this ill-conceived highway and move to other more productive projects.

**From: ALHEN**

*May 22, 2011*

this is needed badly to get traffic away from Atlanta and Chattanooga asap.

**From: ALRJR2001**

*May 27, 2011*

The people of Western North Carolina do not need nor want ANY highway expansion in our region!

**From: Amy Myers (TN)**

*May 27, 2011*

I have lived in west, middle, and east Tennessee, and know a little something about driving around the south. I oppose I-3 and ask you to reconsider the current proposal and to not continue to use money for studies.

**From: Arnold Robinson (Murphy, NC)**

*March 16, 2011*

We do not need nor want an interstate highway cutting through our mountains, this areas only jobs are tourism based, people come here to get away from the interstate! STOP THE INSANITY!!!!

**From: ATONEY**

*May 27, 2011*

This is an unnecessary developmental highway boondoggle that should not be built with Taxpayer money.

**From: AVSAMPSON**

*May 27, 2011*

There is no transportation, economic, or other need for the proposed highway, which is no shorter than existing routes. The proposed route, known as Corridor A ([click here for a map showing Corridor A in deep blue](#)), would have devastating effects on the cultural heritage of northwest Georgia and eastern Tennessee, and would negatively affect air and water quality in the area, as well as increasing pressures on the Chattahoochee National Forest. The study has shown that, with a price tag of up to \$6.1 billion, I-3 is cost-prohibitive. Particularly in light of the lack of any benefit and the damage it would cause, there is no reason to consider it any further.

**From: BARTONFT6**

*April 26, 2011*

We are totally against the propose I-3 highway. It is not needed and would destroy the beauty of the North Georgia Mountains. In a recent survey, 85% of those questioned, did not support such a highway so why isn't anyone listening???? Your number one proposal (through Ellijay, GA) would destroy the Apple Capital of Georgia and destroy our way of life. This highway would severely hurt tourism if that is a main concern for this destructive project. Most people come to our mountains to get away from the very thing you are attempting to build. We will work hard against this project. Only the Real Estate Brokers and Lawyers would benefit from the construction of I-3. Just say NO!!!

**From: BIGCHUCK** (Ellijay, GA)

*March 21, 2011*

The country is broke. So you government trough feeders want to borrow more money from the Chinese to build a worthless road that will destroy the natural beauty of the area and a road that no local people in this area want. Seems to me that you need to find a real job in the private sector of capitalism.

**From: Bill H**

*May 17, 2011*

Do you have any of the proposed route through Georgia worked out? If so, can you please send it to me.

Please look at the route based only on it's merits. Attaching the name "3rd Infantry Division Highway" is just a political move to gain support. Richard B. Russell Dam and Lake was originally named the Trotters Shoals Project by the USACE, but that would not have attracted enough support in Washington to fund it. Interestingly, it was approved at a estimated cost of \$65 million, but to date has cost over \$750 million! Politics should not figure into this decision, but it surely will as politics is what is driving this study.

As a taxpayer, I would ask that our existing roads be worked on before this project is started. Our highways and bridges are not in good shape at present. Is this investment really beneficial? Will transportation powered by gas and diesel remain profitable during the life of this project? Does not Highway 17 through Georgia already cover this route?

**From: Bill Terry** (Nashville, TN)

*May 27, 2011*

I-3 should never be constructed. Period.

**From: Bill Terry** (Nashville, TN)

*May 27, 2011*

This boondoggle should never be built; at all. All earmarked money should be returned to the treasury.

**From: [Blank]**

*June 3, 2011*

I can't believe that a road that would destroy some of the most beautiful scenery in the US, would even be on the drawing board of future transportation needs. At a cost of 6 BILLON, this is unbelievable. Please return this money to the Treasury and use it for a more sensible project, ex put this money toward education.

**From: Bob**

*March 15, 2011*

When this proposal by a Georgia legislator, now deceased, first emerged, it was soundly rejected by the majority of the public that it would profoundly affect. The destruction of our natural environment would be a conservational disaster. It is an unnecessary intrusion at exorbitant cost when our economy cannot even afford to repair our badly-deteriorated infrastructure. The only decision that can be made in good conscience is to find this proposal unjustified and return any remaining funds to the Treasury to be used for legitimate purposes.

**From: Bob**

*May 29, 2011*

3rd Infantry Highway is not needed and a complete waste of tax payer money.

**From: Bob Grove**

*March 15, 2011*

As someone who has been involved since the beginning of the ill-conceived "Third Infantry Highway," I urge you to close the book on this final chapter of your feasibility study. The highway proposal was highly political, proposed by a Georgia legislator who then left his elected position to join a company that would profit from the highway's construction.

As a conservationist, I cannot begin to imagine the ecological devastation that would be wrought by such an intrusive highway. It is not only unneeded with so many alternate routes already in place, but the funding would be astronomical, and at a deficit in our economy that doesn't even allow us to repair our deteriorated infrastructure.

The only decision that can be made objectively and in good conscience is to finally refute the need for such a devastating project. I encourage you to make that decision.

**From: BODYSENSE**

*March 15, 2011*

Any conceivable route from Savannah to Knoxville would have devastating impacts on some of the most precious natural resources in the Southeast, and would permanently destroy the rural character that is one of the primary reasons people love the southern Appalachians. We have wilderness areas and headwaters of the Chattahoochee and Hiwassee (Little Tennessee) Rivers located along the proposed route. Many of the people who live in this area, paid a premium to live away from the Interstate Highways and prefer well maintained 2 and 4 lane highways. In these days of limited budgets, when we can't even afford to maintain the roads and bridges we already have, any thoughts of building more roads and incurring more maintenance obligations are simply insane.

If we truly want to honor the Third Infantry Division, a better way is to post tribute signs along an existing highway and use the saved money to provide better safety equipment to soldiers in the field and more support to our veterans.

**From: BODYSENSE**

*June 2, 2011*

There is no transportation, economic, or other need for the proposed highway, which is no shorter than existing routes.

The proposed route, known as Corridor A , would have devastating effects on the cultural heritage of northwest Georgia and eastern Tennessee, and would negatively affect air and water quality in the area, as well as increasing pressures on the Chattahoochee National Forest.

The study has shown that, with a price tag of up to \$6.1 billion, I-3 is cost-prohibitive. Particularly in light of the lack of any benefit and the damage it would cause, there is no reason to consider it any further.

Now that the congressional requirement to study “the steps and estimated funding necessary” to build a highway has been completed, nearly \$1 million of the original federal earmark of \$1.32 million remains unspent. Rather than being wasted on further “optional sub-studies” that will only confirm what we already know—that I-3 shouldn’t go any further—this money should be returned.

**From: BJRODKEY**

*June 4, 2011*

I am completely against the needless waste of taxpayer money for a highway we don't need. this is clearly just a pork barrel project that panders to lobbyists and developers who will make a killing by screwing taxpayers and damaging the environment. It is clear that the "more roads are always better" flawed strategy that, with high and ever increasing energy costs, is dead on arrival. Look at what such needless spending did for Japan: nothing! It just added to their debt and the same thing will happen here. That this idea is even being considered exposes the corruption in state and local governments in Georgia and other states.

**From: BOOTS4FLO**

*June 3, 2011*

I have submitted my objection on the waysouth web site.

**From: Brad Grant**

*April 29, 2011*

Please reconsider this study of this unneeded and undesired road through our beautiful mountain foothills. It will negatively impact our enjoyment of the area and bring noise & light pollution to one of the last remaining natural areas in the South. There are already existing road routes to get from Savannah to Knoxville and they are not busy enough to warrant this expensive intrusion.

If we truly want to honor the Third Infantry Division, a better way is to post tribute signs along an existing highway and use the saved money, in a time when budget cuts are looming anyway, to provide better safety equipment to our soldiers in the field and more support to our veterans.

Thank you for your time and consideration of the impact on local citizens.

**From: Brent Allison (Athens, GA)**

*March 22, 2011*

As a resident of Athens-Clarke County, GA, I am writing to express opposition to the proposed I-3 project. No one has ever stated any need for a new highway from Savannah to Knoxville, which would actually be longer than existing routes. Until some good reason to build a new highway is identified, we shouldn't be wasting our money studying it.

Furthermore, any conceivable route from Savannah to Knoxville would have devastating impacts on some of the most precious natural resources in the Southeast, and would permanently destroy the rural character that is one of the primary reasons people love the southern Appalachians.

I-3 is unnecessary, wasteful, and destructive, and I don't want it. I ask that this project be shelved at the quickest opportunity.

**From: BSCHRO3000**

*March 21, 2011*

I am opposed to all four routes. I think it is a major waste of tax-payer resources. I don't think we can afford this. I think it will damage the environment AND bring blight and sprawl to the region. I believe this study should end immediately.

**From: BUSCHFAM2**

*June 8, 2011*

Please do not waste our tax money on this highway, I3. It is not needed and will lower our quality of life.

**From: C Morris**

*March 23, 2011*

It appears that there are already 3 viable routes from Savannah to Knoxville with the I-40 route being rather direct. To propose a highway that will cut through an unspoiled rural area seems extraneous. Construction jobs would be created in the short term, but our economy is notably rocky at best and the devastation to the environment and wildlife would be permanent. Those who live in the proposed path choose this area because of the quiet beauty. Each proposal for new construction - from school buildings to strip malls - is met with furious debate and criticism. Why instigate such turmoil if it is not absolutely necessary?

Last night my children and I watched a pair of hawks work on their nest. Yesterday, we had to stop in the middle of the road to allow a flock of wild turkeys to pass. We are blessed as we crest the hills of our hometown and admire the "purple mountains' majesty."

What is the true cost of the "3rd Infantry Division Highway?"

**From: CABINPORCH**

*May 27, 2011*

I urge you to spend any money allocated for creating I-3, or studying the project of building it, to fixing the highways and bridges that already exist. Why build more road through beautiful land and leave the present roads and bridges in disrepair? Please don't support that new highway.

**From: CAIKEN**

*May 28, 2011*

I believe this highway would be destructive to our mountain and high valley environment and without sufficient infrastructure advantage. We should spend massive amounts of money to little or no gain.

**From: CARNEGIERON0 (Murphy, NC)**

*March 15, 2011*

I disagree with those that are opposed to I3. I believe it IS necessary. When US64 through the Ocoee was closed by a landslide last year for about 5 months it greatly affected commerce as truckers had to take a 1.5 detour. With soaring fuel costs this was quite costly. Guaranteed another landslide will happen again. US64 through the Ocoee gorge is only 2 lanes and has a few somewhat dangerous curves. I believe I3 can be built to "blend" with the surrounding mountains. Everyone just loves the Blue Ridge Parkway. If that road were proposed today, everyone would be up in arms, just like they are over I3. We here in Murphy, NC need the road to get to Chattanooga and its airport and the shopping over that way. Just make it happen!!

**From: Carol Green**

*June 3, 2011*

Please add my voice to those calling for a halt to further studies of the 3rd Infantry Division Highway Corridor.

1. Existing routes are sufficient.
2. The cost of even the studies are out of line with our country's economy.
3. The current cost estimate of the highway at \$6 Billion does not include the cost of loss of land, heritage sites, and air & water degradation.

It would be most beneficial to return the unused highway earmark funds of \$1.32 million to the U.S. TREASURY. All other unused highway earmark funds should be likewise returned to the U.S. Treasury where it is urgently needed to help deal with the DEFICIT.

**From: CAROLEYOUNGMCCOLLUM**

*June 1, 2011*

Please do not proceed with I-3! There is no transportation, economic or other need for this hwy and is no shorter than existing routes. It would have a devastating effect on N. Ga, most especially the Chattahoochee Nat'l Forest. It is way too expensive, especially since there is no proven benefit. In this economy, this kind of money could be spent for more useful purposes that benefit the citizens of Georgia. I earn my living from tourism - people who come to this area for beauty and nature. This would greatly impact my life, the life of many others in this area and our families. Please, please stop pursuing I-3!!

**From: Catherine Ashford (Ellijay/Alpharetta, GA)**

*May 28, 2011*

I greatly oppose the proposed highway. In researching this, I do not see anything that justifies the huge expense at a time when we are facing the greatest budget deficit in all time.

Neither Congress nor the federal government have ever identified a purpose and need for such a road.

Three of the four route alternatives in the consultants' study would further pressure sensitive national forests, Wilderness areas and the crown jewel of Appalachia, the Great Smoky Mountains National Park.

Corridor A (which would snake through the Athens, Commerce, Dahlonega and Ellijay areas) represents a "new Northern Arc" that would inevitably bring the gridlock of metro Atlanta to the mountains.

Thank you for your consideration. I do hope no other such expensive ideas and plans are being considered by our elected officials.

**From: Catherine & Elton Ashford**

*June 9, 2011*

I am my family greatly oppose the "new northern arc." American taxpayers cannot afford to spend billions of dollars on highway that neither Congress nor the federal government have ever identified a purpose and need for such a road. Three of the four route alternatives in the consultants' study would further pressure sensitive national forests, Wilderness areas and the crown jewel of Appalachia, the Great Smoky Mountains National Park. Corridor A (which would snake through the Athens, Commerce, Dahlonega and Ellijay areas) represents wasteful spending for a road that would inevitably bring the gridlock of metro Atlanta to the mountains.

**From: CCBC95**

*May 31, 2011*

I do not want I-3 built. It seems to me that this is a waste of time and money. Currently, we have plenty of N/S interstates and do not need another. Please note: I am NOT in favor of i-3.

**From: Charley Kraus, WaysSouth**

*March 27, 2011*

The study seems to be progressing quite well and has reached a point where it has enough substance to it to be able to evaluate the content. It is good to be able to see the study team recognize the issues that we have been worrying over for the past 5 years about the proposal's adverse impact on the southern Appalachian Region. Back in the 1950s, when Interstate system was laid out, its designers recognized the difficulties of pushing a 4 lane highway across the southern Appalachian mountains of north Georgia and western North Carolina and, instead, opted to go around them as best possible using I-16/I-75 on the south and west and I-95/I-26/I-40 on the east and north. The same challenges exist today and the cost would be much greater.

A few thoughts aimed at the completion of the study:

- There has been no Purpose and Need articulated for this project and no justification can be found in the long range requirements documents of the states involved. This in and of itself is the fatal flaw of this project.
- As I know you are aware, every state in this region has a major transportation financing shortfall. This is particularly true in Georgia which would have to bear the largest share of the project cost and responsibility. I think we can say with all reasonable certainty that Georgia has no intent to step up and request more work on the idea. We had, by law, to do the study but, having done that with the delivery of the Phase I Final Report, we all should go on to more productive work.
- It is not likely that today's Congress will pursue more work. People and times have changed.

- Given the above, the FHWA should strongly consider returning the balance of the funding to the respective treasuries. We are concerned that work such as that described in the potential Phase II of the SOW exceeds the authorization language contained in Section 1927 et al of the 2005 SAFTEA-LU Act. Given the direction the study is taking, that is not an issue worth addressing.
- Re the study content itself:
  - Dropping all of the routes east of Option A is appropriate.
  - Continuing with the eastern leg of Option A (north) is questionable given that it must address some of the same issues which caused the dropping of Options B, C, and D.
  - Continuing the northern extension of Option A(north) north past Chatsworth to I-75 is puzzling when it might be simpler to continue a short way further west to I-75 at Dalton.
  - Classifying the potential citizen opposition to Option A at a lower level than the rejected routes is very likely incorrect. This area has a history of vehement and successful objection to roadway proposals they feel to be intrusive or unneeded. Georgia 400 was originally intended to extend northward towards the North Carolina line. Today it stops at Dahlonega and is finished. The proposed Northern Arc around Atlanta has never gotten off the ground and is a source of intense opposition. The reason I-3 (the 3rd ID Highway) seems less opposed is that, until the Option A was created, all the discussed routes were well to the east and received little notice in that particular area. The study should recognize this.

Your WaysSouth Working Group representative, Jim Grode, has provided a detailed set of comments to the WG-3 meeting and reports. Our board members have reviewed them and added our comments where appropriate. We think Jim and all your study team participants have done a commendable job so far on what can best be called an unprofitable subject. We encourage you to complete the activity as quickly as possible so that we can all go on to more promising efforts.

**From: Charley Kraus, WaysSouth**

*April 4, 2011*

Attached is a letter we have sent to Rep. Paul Ryan and others suggesting that the unspent funding from the Section 1927 study of the proposed 3rd ID Highway left over after the delivery of the final report in June be returned to the treasury rather than used for additional work on the project. We think that to continue would be outside of the authorization contained in the Congressional language and, therefore, improper. I think that we all agree that further effort would have to be requested by the states involved and that is not likely, especially here in Georgia. There is much better use for the unspent balance not the least of which is debt reduction.

I hope that the fact that we are stepping out on this issue does not offend you. It is in no way intended to do so. We think that FHWA and your contractor are doing a good job and will wind up “answering the mail” properly. After spending 39 years working with government agencies and programs I am well aware of the drive within the communities never to let a cent of available funding go unused for fear of that fact being used to justify a lower level of funding in the next funding cycle. That is normal and, in this case, we need to avoid it. Having said that, I think it would also be satisfactory if the funding balance were to be diverted to another federal project in Georgia which is currently suffering from financial shortfall although I am not sure that the ‘earmark’ rules will allow that. The money return may be the only answer. We hope you will agree.

**From: Charley Kraus**

*June 3, 2011*

First let me reiterate my earlier comments that you, John and your team have done a commendable job on the study. I think you have taken a fair look at a controversial question and have put a believable set of facts upon the table. I hope that will end it. I have two further points to make.

1. Option A's northern terminus is at two different points along I-75. Although we have no available traffic studies, it is reasonable to assume that any version of this road will dump new traffic onto I-75. Has the study looked at the potential impact to I-75 in the sense that it might cause the need for adding new lanes to that road thus increasing the total cost of the project?

2. With the delivery of the study results to the Congress, the study will have answered the three questions presented in the authorization language (identify a route, the steps to build it and the projected costs). Moving beyond that appears to be beyond the scope of the current authorizing language and, given the general attitude regarding the idea, unwanted and unnecessary. (We should take note of the fact that most or all of the new road in in the state of Georgia where there is no stated GDOT need, no potential funding and no support). In my opinion, your best move would be to declare victory and go on to more promising activities with the funding balance left for the Congress to recover or redirect. However, I recognize that there may be other opinions on the team in favor of moving a little further. Therefore, if that turns out to be the team's desire, I strongly recommend that you seek formal congressional approval before so doing to assure the legality of such a step.

Finally, I appreciate the openness with which the team and you particularly have dealt with WaysSouth. In turn, I trust our inputs have been useful to the process. Thank you.

**From: Christi Sizemore**

*May 27, 2011*

I think that this study is a waste of time, and any plans for the I-3 should be abandoned.

**From: Clyde Holler (Blue Ridge, GA)**

*May 28, 2011*

The I-3 project is a ridiculous boondoggle and a total waste of taxpayer money. The study should be cancelled. There is no need for this road and it is unnecessarily destructive of our national forests and public land.

**From: Clyde Holler (Blue Ridge, GA)**

*May 28, 2011*

This is a ridiculous boondoggle and a total waste of taxpayer money that could be much better spent elsewhere. The study should be cancelled. Not only is there no need for this road, it is unnecessarily destructive of our national forests and public land. This was a poor idea from the beginning and deserves to die before more public money is wasted.

**From: COBRAPG3**

*May 29, 2011*

The proposed highway project should be abandoned and any remaining funds not used to study the project should be returned to the Treasury. This highway would be detrimental to the wildlife; other environmental issues and also to the tourism. The cost of building this highway is far to expensive and the planned route is no shorter than existing routes. This is not a good use of funds at a time when so much is needed.

**From: CQUINN8**

*May 28, 2011*

The proposed I-3 project is an unnecessary use of OUR funds right now. So many things need tending, and with the concern about oil, our future, the last thing we need is another road to haul nuclear waste across the South. It is past time for us to use alternative transport, along with other energy uses. Please redirect these monies for human needs right now, that are many.

**From: CRESSLER**

*March 21, 2011*

I am against the proposal because there is no proven need for an additional interstate in the proposed area. The current system is more that adequate. Also, the disruption of nature which can never be replaced is an unreasonable cost to the public and future generations. This appears to be a political boondoggle to please a select few, not the general public of the area or of the United States

**From: CRJ**

*March 16, 2011*

Any conceivable route from Savannah to Knoxville would have devastating impacts on some of the most precious natural resources in the Southeast, and would permanently destroy the rural character that is one of the primary reasons people love the southern Appalachians.

In these days of limited budgets, when we can't even afford to maintain the roads and bridges we already have, any thoughts of building more roads and incurring more maintenance obligations are simply insane.

If we truly want to honor the Third Infantry Division, a better way is to post tribute signs along an existing highway and use the saved money to provide better safety equipment to our soldiers in the field and more support to our veterans.

**From: D Hutton**

*March 15, 2011*

No one has ever stated any need for a new highway from Savannah to Knoxville, which would actually be longer than existing routes. Until some good reason to build a new highway is identified, we shouldn't be wasting our money studying it.

The required report to Congress shouldn't contain any language that might encourage them to devote any more money or study to this ill-conceived project.

Any conceivable route from Savannah to Knoxville would have devastating impacts on some of the most precious natural resources in the Southeast, and would permanently destroy the rural character that is one of the primary reasons people love the southern Appalachians.

**From: DAN3688**

*March 15, 2011*

The I-3 highway should not be allowed to be built. There is not an economic need and federal government funding is not available in this economic environment for pork barrel projects. The highway itself is longer than existing roads and with the increased gas prices makes transportation of goods over the proposed highway more expensive than alternative routes and alternative modes of transportation such as rail. I urge you not to move forward with this project and use the funding for more needed projects such as reducing the debt or improving education.

**From: DanielAtWork2003**

*March 16, 2011*

I think I-3 is unnecessary, wasteful, and destructive. Not all "development" is good development, and I would prefer our tax dollars be spent on other essential government services. Thank you.

**From: David Henry (Hiawassee, GA)**

*March 15, 2011*

I am writing to express my opposition to the proposed I3 corridor that is currently under consideration. As a PhD candidate in political science I understand that the study must be completed under law. However, that study cannot help but to show that there has been no call or request for such a highway to be built in this area when other highways already exist in the vicinity. Should this highway be approved there will be numerous destructive impacts on the area, many of which cannot be foreseen but which will be permanent.

As a native of Hiawassee, Georgia the idea that the distinct, Southern Appalachian, rural character of this region will be destroyed forever is unconscionable. When one considers the costs versus the benefits, it is clear that all of the destruction to the flora, fauna, and landscape, not to mention the lifestyle, are not worth the benefit of such a highway. I strongly oppose this proposed highway and I thank you for the chance to share that conviction with you.

**From: Dena Maguire (Dahlonega, GA)**

*March 21, 2011*

I am absolutely opposed to I-3. I moved to N. Ga to get away from all the paved highways, chaos and traffic that it brings. I feel it would be devastating to the rural character and destructive to our natural resources. It is also wasteful as it is not needed. I will also express my feelings to Stefan Natzke.

**From: Dena Maguire (Dahlonega, GA)**

*March 21, 2011*

I am strongly opposed to I-3. I moved to N. Ga to get away from all the concrete, traffic and chaos that it brings. Building I-3 is unnecessary, we do not need another thoroughfare through our beautiful mountains. It will destroy the rural character we have. We have so few of the rural communities left. It would not only be a wasteful expenditure but devastating to our natural resources, including trees and wildlife. I will be a strong opponent to this highway.

**From: Dena Maguire (Dahlonega, GA)**

*April 22, 2011*

This is a ludicrous idea. Talk about destroying the beauty of the mountains. It is a wasteful and unnecessary road. Use the money for more worthwhile endeavors.

**From: DGOVUS**

*March 21, 2011*

The whole idea of a new interstate through the mountains of north Georgia is a ridiculous waste of money that we do not have. The idea of spending money to study a damaging proposal that is unneeded and we do not have the money to build is a tremendous waste of taxpayers money.

**From: Donna Born (Jasper, GA)**

*May 28, 2011*

Do not build this road! The United States, the South, and the people who live and work in the proposed Third Infantry Division/I-3 corridor do not need another super highway. Existing roads providing the same access already exist.

The infantry can use the existing roads, for transport of nuclear fuel and nuclear waste. We don't need more nuclear wastes transported through Georgia, North Carolina, or elsewhere in the South, or in the US for that matter. Local governments do not want the road. We do not need a megalopolis from the Savannah River nuclear plant to Oakridge, Tennessee. The Chattahoochee National Forest is a primary watershed for North Georgia. Another superhighway would greatly impact water quality and air quality for all of North Georgia. Once built, the highway would be widened and widened again, as all roads in Georgia are continuously expanded over the years. The impact would be devastating and would impact all of Georgia.

**From: Dora Ditchfield (Dahlonega, GA)**

*April 11, 2011*

A few weeks ago I read in our local newspaper, the Dahlonega Nugget, that a proposed route for the 3rd Infantry Division Highway would include passing through Dahlonega, GA, a place where I have worked and lived for the past three years. I cannot emphasize enough what a disaster this would be for the community. It is an incredibly historic and quaint place, site of the first U.S. gold rush, with people who want to keep its charm, uniqueness, and Appalachian heritage alive. An interstate through, or even close to, the area would turn it into anything but that and destroy this jewel in the North Georgia mountains.

I truly hope that you will keep the community informed of any feedback meetings held on this topic so input can be solicited from residents and stakeholders in the area. It would be a tragedy to the state for Dahlonega to be turned into another interstate exit, full of identical stores and whizzing cars.

**From: Doug Riddle (Roswell, GA)**

*March 23, 2011*

I am against any of options A - D for a new interstate highway from Savannah to Tennessee. The North Ga mountains and southern Tennessee and western N.C. Mountains need to remain as forest, watershed environment, and natural area for benefit to the public. A new interstate highway would be a destructive intrusion thru this region.

**From: E Nichol**

*April 5, 2011*

I am writing to state my opposition to the proposal of creating yet another highway system in our country with the "Third Infantry Highway Corridor." I come from a long line of veterans who served our country in the Army Airforce and Marines in WWII and Korea, and I am insulted by the decision to name this proposal with a military connotation. The proposal would build additional roads through some of the steepest and most remote backcountry of north Georgia, western North Carolina and east Tennessee. What we have in our beautiful nation is a plethora of roads. What we lack are places of solitude, places of undisturbed, natural beauty which are irreplaceable. This area should not be sacrificed, in my opinion, for another road. The proposal also cannot be justified fiscally. It will cost billions at a time when we need to reign in spending. All leftover money from the study of this proposal should be returned to the US treasury.

**From: E Nichol**

*May 29, 2011*

I am outraged that taxpayer money is being spent to even consider a project for which Congress for the government has established neither a purpose or need. Why is the proposed highway called '3rd Infantry Division Highway' to begin with? To surreptitiously appeal to citizen's patriotism? How about instead take the huge waste of money and fund some genuine veterans' needs with it? The project would negatively impact many sensitive National Forest areas which are already receiving too much pressure from the metro Atlanta area. The project would also increase the sprawl of the northern Atlanta metro area, further impacting these areas. We're running out of wild places! We're not running out of roads; and we can always build more--when we need them! This one is not needed. The remaining money that has not been spent on the study of this road should be returned to the treasury.

**From: Ed McDowell (Bonaire, GA)**

*May 27, 2011*

I-3 is a gross waste of funds that we don't have. Please scrap this project.

**From: Ed Strauser**

*May 19, 2011*

Corridor B would be best for the ports of Savannah and Augusta.

**From: Edwin Dale**

*May 27, 2011*

What is the need for this proposed highway? An interstate corridor exists from Savannah to Macon (I-16); from Macon to Chattanooga (I-75); and from Chattanooga to Knoxville (I-40). Note: I-16 from Dublin to Macon is in need of repair. Also, by the time this proposed highway is built the price of gasoline will be so high that truck traffic costs will border on the prohibitive side of the ledger

Improve what you have. Don't build anew when Congress is already cutting the budget when possible. The proposal is a pipe dream and will cost the citizenry of present and future generations tremendously. Further, the environmental costs of a major highway on Coastal Plain, Piedmont, and some higher elevation lands in the Southern Appalachians Mountains will be costly in terms of disrupted ecosystems which currently provide values of clean water, forest areas, and outdoor recreation.

I expect a thoughtful response.

**From: ETVET**

*May 30, 2011*

Please put this ridiculous I-3 project idea to rest, now. It is not needed, would be an environmental disaster, and would cost billions that we do not have. We cannot maintain our current highways and bridges and need to spend billions on repairing infrastructure. If \$6 billion is the estimate for this highway, it will cost \$12 billion. An interstate built through the mountains couldn't be more environmentally damaging, both during construction and operation. More than adequate roads already exist and can be upgraded if needed at much less cost, and faster. No further funds should be spent on this project. Please STOP it now.

**From: F Wright**

*April 5, 2011*

The proposed I-3 is an unnecessary highway. Persons traveling from Georgia to Knoxville can already get there by way of I-75 or the I-85/26/40 corridors, or by many adequate US highways. The environmental and scenic destruction this highway would create is simply not worth it. The north Georgia and Western North Carolina area is treasured by tourists, hunters, fishermen, hikers, and all forms of outdoor recreationists for its beauty and remoteness. Please leave it alone.

How much will this thing cost? Don't spend the money and apply it to deficit reduction.

If the residents of Savannah and Augusta absolutely have to have highway improvement, consider a corridor that runs from those cities and intersects with I-85. Stop I-3 there; do not extend it north of I-85.

**From: GARYSULL614 (Dahlonega, GA)**

*March 17, 2011*

I live in Dahlonega, GA and my family and I am opposed to this project. It is a waste of money and will damage our area.

**From: GENDUN**

*March 30, 2011*

Stop I-3, this is a waste of taxpayer \$\$ and we don't want it. If u want to invest in transportation put the money in hi speed or commuter rail - automobile oriented transport is an inefficient place to put our transportation dollars. There are other reasons for not putting in this road but this in the main one.

**From: Gene Hatfield**

*March 21, 2011*

I believe the 3rd Infantry Division Highway would inevitably be destructive of environmental resources and historical sites. In addition, the cost would not justify the utilization of the highway. The money which would be spent on building a new highway would be much better spent improving existing roadways. Previous experience makes clear that the time required in studying, permitting, approving, obtaining rights of way, and finally constructing would take years and years. In the meantime, no benefit would inhere for the public. This is simply a bad idea. Thank you.

**From: GENTRYL**

*March 22, 2011*

The highway is not needed and would do great harm to the region. Please do not build it.

**From: GOIRISH7312**

*March 21, 2011*

I do not support the building of this highway. I feel very strongly about tremendous damage the construction of this enormous project will do to the southern Appalachian culture and natural animal habitats of this region. I don't believe I ever saw a study that said this route was absolutely necessary to correct transportation or commerce issues and was worth the monetary cost. Yes, we want to honor our military, but we can do that in another way that actually helps them and their families. I have enjoyed all of these regions my entire life, and I based my career as an Interpretive Naturalist on lessons I learned in these areas. I do not see road construction as anything but detrimental. Thank you.

**From: GOPULLMAN**

*March 17, 2011*

I wish to strenuously protest the construction of I-3 on any of the proposed alignments.

An interstate through this region of Appalachia would have disastrous effects on the environment. It would plow through one or more national forests. A new road in this area would adversely impact the Appalachian Trail. One of the routes is close to the Joyce Kilmer/Slickrock Wilderness Area. Some of the alignments would encroach on the Great Smoky Mountains National Park. An interstate highway would pollute watersheds with runoff, and would destroy wildlife habitat.

There is no proven need that this highway needs to be built. And what happened to concern about the deficit and the national debt? We can afford to build a road like this but we can't afford to fund nutrition programs for children and pregnant women? Something is drastically wrong with that picture.

Any highway funds should be used to repair and improve existing roads. Many highways are falling apart. Remember that bridge in

**From: GOPULLMAN**

*May 30, 2011*

I wish to strenuously protest the construction of Interstate 3 through northern Georgia, North Carolina and Tennessee. There is no solid evidence that the road is needed. It would be only a few miles shorter than existing routes. We live in a time of austere budget constraints, both at the federal and state level. How can the government justify spending \$6.1 billion for this road when it's proposing to eliminate Medicare? This highway would be devastating to the environment of the mountains. It would worsen air pollution in the Great Smoky Mountains, which already has the dirtiest air of any park. It would contaminate drinking water. It would have a detrimental effect on the Appalachian Trail, and would fragment wildlife corridors. I have the utmost respect for those who have served their country. However, the Third Infantry Division can be honored by applying the name to an existing highway. Please enter my comments into the official record.

**From: GRACEPLAYS**

*June 9, 2011*

I want to register my opposition to this highway due to the severe and detrimental impact it will have on the few places remaining that aren't overly developed. Please allow some of our natural resources to remain undisturbed.

**From: Green\_John\_26**

*March 22, 2011*

If we truly want to honor the Third Infantry Division, a better way is to post tribute signs along an existing highway and use the saved money to provide better safety equipment to our soldiers in the field and more support to our veterans.

**From: Guynelle Robbins (Rabun County, GA)**

*March 25, 2011*

I am appalled that this proposed highway is even still under study. Our government is broke.

Why are funds being allocated for study of a highway that has not been determined to be needed, that funds are not there to build it, and citizens who live in the area do not want it? I suppose builders and developers have more clout with our government than the regular middle class American who pays taxes.

I live in Rabun County, Georgia and selfishly do not want this pristine area of northeast Georgia to be destroyed with building, which leads to vast amounts of destruction and erosion in this beautiful area. And, once again, for what purpose?

**From: Guynelle Robbins (Rabun County, GA)**

*June 14, 2011*

I watch with amazement that our government can continue to find unnecessary ways to spend money that we as a country do not have. To date I have seen no reason given for the construction of this highway and the destruction that it will create, no matter which route should be chosen. The citizens of the areas involved do not want or need this highway. Please include these concerns in your report. The money allocated for this study needs to be returned to the Treasury and spent on projects of concern to our nation and our people.

**From: H Bartlett**

*March 10, 2011*

Unless there is a need and purpose statement beyond "this is required by SAFETEA-LU", Phase I should be completed with a statement that no need or purpose for the proposed highway has been established; therefore, no Phase II is justified. The rest of the money should be returned to the US Treasury. With the deficit so high and greatly needed programs being cut, it is totally wasteful to do Phase II.

**From: H Bartlett**

*May 27, 2011*

All of the corridors under study contain fatal flaws. The major flaw on Corridor A besides the cost is that the Commissioners of Lumpkin County have long standing opposition to the highway. Georgia's Senators have promised the highway will not go where it isn't wanted.

Corridor A passes too close to National Forest and the fumes and road pollution would adversely affect the forest. As well, there are major mountains in the northern part of the proposed corridor. A number of years ago, the GA DOT proposed a similar highway to connect I-85 east of Atlanta with I-75 west of Atlanta. The public outcry was so massive that the project was dropped. We still don't want a "northern arc" by any name.

I have attempted to contact Rebecca Thompson regarding the inadequate method - the webinars- of obtaining public comment but my e-mails are undeliverable. Not everyone has a computer and free long-distance. Public meetings along the route are needed.

**From: H Ford**

*March 28, 2011*

I am writing to let you know, with all due respect, I am STRONGLY AGAINST the idea of I-3. I feel there are many other possibilities that you are not exploring. Please think OUTSIDE the box for once and do NOT go through with this. I know I am not the only citizen who feels this way. Please do not disappoint us, as the government already has in so many ways.

**From: H L Drum**

*March 15, 2011*

Interstate 3 is a wasteful expenditure of taxpayer funds. It is not needed for national defense, and, in fact, hurts the American economy because of wasteful spending of taxpayer dollars. Please note that I am strongly opposed to Interstate 3 for these and a variety of other reasons, and so are the people of Northeast Georgia and other affected regions. Count me as AGAINST Interstate 3!

**From: Haley Ford**

*March 28, 2011*

I am writing you to inform you that I, among many other people, am STRONGLY AGAINST the implementation of this I-3 project. I feel that the DOT is not exploring other possibilities in this project. Please take the time to hire some NEW engineers or consultants and figure out another way to do this project. Keep in mind that you are a government employee, and the government is here FOR the people. And the people have spoken, WE DO NOT APPROVE OF I-3. Thank you,

**From: HAPPYDESTINY**

*March 18, 2011*

Do not build this wasteful, destructive highway!

**From: HARRIS**

*May 29, 2011*

Please do not insult our intelligence by using 3rd Infantry Highway Corridor. Our family has spent many years in the Armed Forces and this area does not need a senseless Interstate running through the mountains only miles from other Interstates, Does ANYONE look at a map when trying to design/place these roads? I 40 and I 75 are DIRECTLY east and west of proposed I -3.

The beauty of this area would be destroyed by an INTERSTATE cutting through, not only will the wildlife suffer but the water quality as well. Have a look around the money it would cost to cut through mountains would be better utilized improving existing roadways which are in sad disrepair. Just STOP the nonsense and maintain our current roadways.

**From: HERICHEY (Athens, GA)**

*May 27, 2011*

I have been following the I-3 proposal over the last 6 years, and find that it is entirely unnecessary. Existing infrastructure of highways works well enough without having to destroy the wilderness habitat of Northwest, GA.

I live in Athens, GA and do not want to see a new highway coming through Athens, and I especially do not want to have high-level radioactive nuclear waste being transported through my town.

I am avid hiker and backpacker, and utilize the Chattahoochee National Forest for my vacation. Bringing a highway through the National Forest would devalue one of the finest aspects of Georgia. Once, destroyed, it is always destroyed.

The Cohutta Wilderness near Chatsworth is the first Wilderness in the US and econd largest Wilderness Areas in GA. The species living in this area are extremely sensitive to habitat destruction, especially the pink and yellow lady slippers. I want my children and grandchildren to experience wilderness.

**From: HeyJudePeace**

*June 6, 2011*

It has come to my attention that there is currently an ongoing study into "steps and estimated funding necessary" to construct the interstate through Dahlonega from Savannah to Knoxville. My understanding is that construction of the interstate along any route was previously determined to be unfeasible and unnecessary. More importantly, information has been presented to you that this I-3 will be damaging to the mountain ecosystem, air and water quality, the economy and beauty of the area. I do not understand why this is continuing, when it has already been determined to be unwanted and unneeded. I am not opposed to honoring the 3rd Infantry Division, but there must be a better way--cheaper and less devastating to the area. I don't think the 3rd Infantry would want to be remembered for destroying the beauty of NE Georgia's mountains! I trust you will heed the recommendations of the current study group and find another way to honor the 3rd Infantry, without such a "pork barrel" project.

**From: ITEACH000**

*April 5, 2011*

I am opposed to building I-3 for the following reasons.

1. The road is not needed.
2. We are trillions of dollars in debt and do not have the money to build unnecessary highways.
3. The negative impact on the environment and the way of life for residents who would be impacted far outweigh any possible benefits.

**From: J Bishop**

*May 27, 2011*

I would like to know the driving force for this interstate. Who is really pushing this project. What is the purpose? One thing I know for sure is that most all county governments in North Georgia are against this costly project that will cost billions of dollars. I am not against an interstate highway from August, GA. to Savannah Georgia. I have real serious questions of road building in mountain terrain. It would be impossible for a project like this to pass NEPA if passes in fragile mountain areas. The reason people go to the mountains is to get away from cars, and to go to a quiet area. It seems like to me, just improve the existing roads.

**From: J Davis**

*March 15, 2011*

The plan to build I-3 through the North Georgia mountains needs to be stopped, immediately. This area is one of the few treasures of its kind in this country. It holds a heritage unique to these mountains...one that should never be destroyed by development,... one that should be preserved for future generations to treasure. Not only will this proposed highway destroy this pristine area, but it will cost an astronomical amount to build. Our country cannot afford to build a highway at this cost. We are in the middle of a very serious economic slowdown. But, even if we had that kind of money to spend, it should be spent on people...not highways. Development of this area would be a crime. It would only serve to benefit a very small percentage of people, but it would destroy one of God's most precious places, and pollute it. The people in this area DO NOT WANT this highway. Numerous Mayors and City and County officials have publically opposed it. PLEASE recommend another pathway.

**From: J J Richar**

*April 5, 2011*

I am totally opposed to I-3. It is unnecessary and wasteful of tax payer dollars. Highways are no longer cutting edge--they only promote more use of automobiles. A rail plan makes more sense. We need to stop depending upon cars and foreign oil! As a hiker and camper, I'm aware that I-3 would destroy the beauty of many natural areas. Why ruin some of our last natural, undeveloped areas with a highway. Please DO NOT construct this highway!

**From: J. M. Aaronson**

*June 8, 2011*

I cannot believe that you are considering construction of a major highway through a protected wildlife ecosystem. Think of the increased traffic and the resulting increase in wild animal fatalities caused by automobiles. Not to mention how many animals would be displaced during the construction phase. Instead of building more roads, why don't you just improve on the ones we already have in place? Better yet, why don't you put this proposal on a ballot and let the voters decide? I think the generation that will end up paying for this project in the years to come would prefer that their money be spent on trying to preserve the diminishing ecosystems that we still have.

Thank you for making the right choice and NOT proceeding with the I-3 "northern arc" project.

**From: James Ball**

*May 20, 2011*

No offence gentleman; but I have already traveled from Augusta to Savannah, on that portion of the route, and don't believe it to be beneficial to the army. Who's going to take care of it. GA has the Interstate 16, and with the recent cutbacks, there are portions of that that's like riding a roll-a-coster. Believe it would be better putting in a modern rail line, and have it maintained by the GPA.

I've personally seen a military train come into savannah ports from Columbus, GA, so it's possible. Fuel cost would be lower, and wear and tear on military equipment would be practically nil, and less pollution. And it you experience sleeping in the mountain air, far away from the traffic, you would know what I'm talking about.

**From: James Brown (Highlands, NC)**

*May 29, 2011*

I want to state my opposition to the proposal to build a super highway through the southern Appalachians. The primary reason is the utter destruction of one of our country's greatest national parks. It is enough to cut through this magnificent forest, but in doing so, it will also invade once again the domain of the original Americans. We have misbehaved dreadfully in our relations to the American Indians. Haven't we done enough to them and their country?

Way down the list is the idea that it will honor the Third Infantry Division. I am a graduate of The Infantry School at Ft. Benning, Georgia and know something about the infantry. I served in the 50th Armored Infantry Battalion, Sixth Armored Division in Europe after D-Day. You enter upon a slippery slope if you are thinking of honoring one infantry division over another. While the Third Infantry Division established an admirable record, there are many other Divisions and smaller units that served well also.

I urge you to give further thought to this matter and, hopefully, abandon these plans. This highway is completely unnecessary and will destroy so much natural beauty. Thank you for your consideration.

**From: Dr. James Davis**

*May 27, 2011*

The proposed I-3 is a project that will waste millions & millions of taxpayer dollars on a road that is not needed... at a time when our country is DEEPLY in debt. In addition, it will ruin a lifestyle that is unique to the North Georgia Mountains. The people in North Georgia do NOT want this road cutting through our beautiful part of the state. This is exemplified by the numerous North Georgia Mayors, City Council Members, & County Commissioners that have come out as publically opposed to I-3. If Congress wants to honor the 3rd Infantry, they could do that by naming an existing highway after it.

The bottom line is, we don't want it...and even if we did, the country, in good conscience, should NOT spend this money on a highway, when FEMA is starting to run short on funds because of all of the recent disasters. There are THOUSANDS of residents of Alabama, Missouri, & Georgia who do not even have homes, after the recent tornado outbreaks...PLEASE DO NOT BUILD THIS ROAD!

**From: James Fitzgerald (Maryville, TN)**

*June 1, 2011*

With a price tag of up to \$6.1 billion, I-3 is cost-prohibitive as a Georgia Representative's dream of avoiding public complaints of nuclear material transportation through large cities {Savannah to/from Oak Ridge}. Not only is this a waste of my US tax dollars, it would also ruin a now-beautiful north Georgia hills rural area & apple orchards.

Considering the economic & environmental impacts, building this interstate would not be Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient, or Equitable Transportation.

**From: Jane Love (Savannah, GA)**

*May 20, 2011*

I viewed the webinar on May 18. My comments are:

-- I believe the implementation of a project coming out of this study would be more trouble than it is worth. I don't believe that a sufficient transportation need will be found.

-- In addition to my comment on this particular study, I would like to state that Congressional earmarks are a situation in which a federal body contradicts a federally mandated planning process -- i.e. the MPO forum for local decision-making. I support efforts to get Congress out of the earmark habit

**From: Jane Powers Weldon**

*June 8, 2011*

As a Georgia citizen concerned with transportation needs, safety, and preservation of natural features and landscapes, I'm opposed to any development of the proposed I-3 highway, under the SAFETEA-LU act, section 1927, along any of the routes being studied.

Among my reasons are that

- 1)The area to be served by the proposed highway already has several interstate corridors available;
- 2)The proposed highway skirts or bisects several irreplaceable national forests and/or parks that would undoubtedly be damaged by any development;
- 3)The highway's beginning and ending proximity to Oak Ridge National Laboratory and the Savannah River Plant would obviously encourage its being used to transport nuclear materials;
- 4)The citizens and governments in affected Georgia communities have already expressed strong opposition to a new highway.
- 5)There is no evident need for a new route, nor has a need been justified by the federal government and the planners.

**From: Janet McCallen**

*May 27, 2011*

Please convey my opinion that I-3 is not needed, most definitely not wanted, and would be a grossly inappropriate waste of taxpayer funds, especially in this economic climate. Those of us who live in the southern Appalachians have chosen its relative isolation intentionally. To blast away the unspoiled, scenic mountains to create straight roads for long-haul trucks would be a travesty of the worst sort. Further, we need legislation to return the remainder of the study funds to the general fund. Thank you for taking my thoughts into consideration.

**From: Jeanie Hilten**

*May 30, 2011*

This note is to express opposition to the proposed Interstate 3. It is too destructive, too expensive, and does not solve transportation problems in a sustainable way. Waste no more money on I-3.

**From: Jeff Bellflower**

*March 15, 2011*

I-3 is a terrible idea. It is a horrific waste of the United State's taxpayers money to spend time even thinking about it, especially during a time of large deficits and a massive national debt. Here are some reasons why any responsible citizen will immediately slash any funds directed towards studying this road:

- No one has ever stated any need for a new highway from Savannah to Knoxville, which would actually be longer than existing routes. Until some good reason to build a new highway is identified, we shouldn't be wasting our money studying it.
- We understand that the current study of "the steps and estimated funding necessary" to build I-3 is required by law and has to be completed, but once it's done, any money remaining from the Congressional earmark should be returned to the Treasury so it can go to more useful purposes.
- The required report to Congress shouldn't contain any language that might encourage them to devote any more money or study to this ill-conceived project.
- Any conceivable route from Savannah to Knoxville would have devastating impacts on some of the most precious natural resources in the Southeast, and would permanently destroy the rural character that is one of the primary reasons people love the southern Appalachians.
- In these days of limited budgets, when we can't even afford to maintain the roads and bridges we already have, any thoughts of building more roads and incurring more maintenance obligations are simply insane.
- If we truly want to honor the Third Infantry Division, a better way is to post tribute signs along an existing highway and use the saved money to provide better safety equipment to our soldiers in the field and more support to our veterans.

**From: Jeffrey Hall**

*May 18, 2011*

Please do not build this road. It would bring terrible construction and traffic to the beautiful mountains of east Tennessee, southwest North Carolina, and northeast Georgia. Let us as a country keep that relatively remote area as undisturbed as possible. Not many areas like it exist in the whole crowded east. I say save the money and use it to reduce the deficit and debt that captures so much of today's news. Moreover, no need even exists for the road. I-26/I-40 already provides a similar route as little as seventy miles to the northeast. If someone must spend money on transportation, then use it to study high speed rail corridors. That is how tomorrow should move (to borrow CSX's motto). Finally, when do we as a country stop building roads? I don't regard a road as something good, and I say the road building should stop right now. Let's not spend another dime on this silly yet potentially destructive proposal.

**From: Jerry Kendall (Young Harris, GA)**

*May 17, 2011*

Thank you for providing a venue for comments. I must admit I feel blindsided by no indication of I-3 relieving Towns and Union Counties of terrible access to the south and north. I fought a long battle, for the most part through newspaper articles, with opponents of the road in Towns County and the Stop I-3 organization with the information provided on a website. The website has been inactive for quite awhile but I would like to share this very lengthy information with you by email. My son said he saw an indication that you referenced some poll showing 90% opposition in the North Georgia mountains but that sounds like some of the inaccurate and distorted information I opposed for several years such as an "informational" meeting in Hiawassee that was totally misrepresented and

addressed at length by me. Thank you for your consideration for receiving my input. I received early praise from Congressman Norwood and more recently from former Congressman Max Burns for my effort. Thanks.

**From: Jerry Kendall (Young Harris, GA)**

*May 23, 2011*

This is in response to the invitation for input during the Webinar event on May 19. The information I am providing is very extensive both here and in the material attached and it would be easy to write it off as too long and ignore it. I respectfully request, however, that the input be read carefully in view of the stakes of the decision making process for our younger and future generations, indeed, for many who haven't yet been born as addressed in the attached material. I believe you will be able to see that the length of the material provided was dictated almost totally by the extent of hostile attempts by activist opponents to demonize the study and road in attempts to inflame the public against them.

I fought a long and hard but I believe successful battle over a period of some three years against incessant criticisms of the study, road, and anyone in favor of it by activist opponents to inflame citizens against the road and then falsely tout majority or overwhelming opposition to the road in Towns County.

In the absence of a statistically valid poll, I believe any claims by the opponents of overwhelming opposition to the road to be just about as valid as would be my having called together a meeting of opponents of the road and conducting a poll from among those who attended.

Included among the activist opponents, of course, were the Stop I-3 Coalition, now with the clever name change to WaysSouth but the same intent of stopping the road, and especially their valued member Charley Kraus. I believe I successfully refuted most all of their charges as being inaccurate, uninformed, and out of touch. After months of constantly readdressing refuted issues, I placed my writings on the now discontinued [www.deepsouthroads.org](http://www.deepsouthroads.org) website for several years and I am including as an attachment many of these writings for your consideration.

I hope you will take special note of long expressed insistence by Charley Kraus that the distance of a direct route via current roads between Savannah and Knoxville as presented by John Stone of Congressman Charlie Norwood's office is 456 miles. I quickly disputed and presented accurate information from available maps, as Charley Kraus claimed to have done, showing how I established the distance to be some 411 miles, increased significantly by winding mountain roads and "zig zagging" routes between various locations which would be far less prevalent in the case of an Interstate built in as straight a line as possible.

Although I never entered the information on the website, in subsequent years and for my own satisfaction during separate trips to Knoxville and Savannah, I tallied on a destination to destination basis down to tenths of miles the distance along the Stone route and got 412.3 miles. Charley Kraus never acknowledged his significant error, even in the face of my explaining how he appeared to use sideboards on maps rather than adding the individual miles between locations in reaching his erroneous totals. I believe the Stop I-3 Coalition used this very erroneous total and credited it to Charley Kraus on their website long after it was shown to be false.

In all honesty, I believe that, as a result of my extensive responses to the withering criticisms of the opponents, the citizens of Towns County and those along the projected early direct route through our area to be well informed of the issues. Not only were extensive writings placed in Towns County newspapers but, to a lesser extent, telling input in newspapers from Athens to Graham County, North Carolina and in between.

Further, publication in full of a Letter to the Editor in the Athens Banner-Herald resulted in a quite extensive interview on the Athens talk radio station in March, 2006. I have long anticipated reopening the website during expected citizen input after due consideration for our area to bolster the information presented earlier.

Unfortunately, the information I view now seems to leave us totally out of the picture due to “fatal flaws” I believe may have been better determined by Congress after unobstructed input from the feasibility study to allow an informed decision. I never desired anything more than allowing the completion of a complete, unobstructed, and unbiased feasibility study of the pros and cons of a direct route through areas in greatest need of improvements I believe I established in the attached material.

I wonder what “fatal flaws” a group such as the Stop I-3 Coalition would have “helped” officials of the day identify when decisions were made to build vital Interstates such as I-26 between Asheville and Johnson City, I-70 between Denver and Grand Junction, and I-90 between Seattle and Ellensburg, to name just a few though areas likely more sensitive than ours. It’s interesting and noteworthy that Charley Kraus appears in a futile attempt to prove another point to have been favorably impressed after viewing the work done through very difficult terrain on Interstate 70 in Colorado?

In addition to providing the positive elements of an Interstate through our area and refuting the criticisms, I defended and applauded the decisions to provide the roads we already have, probably on many occasions with citizens quietly wondering why a road was provided prior to clear need, likely with less obstruction than today. With opponents criticizing decisions to even look at the provision of I-3, I asked on several occasions opponents of the road to provide a list of the roads we have which they think have proven to be unneeded as this would bolster their efforts to try and hijack the decision making process. I got absolutely no response to this request, I believe because they could see not roads fitting an unneeded category.

Finally, I would like to call your attention to a Sunday Gainesville Times article at <http://www.gainesvilletimes.com/section/6/article/50805/> detailing how the Stop I-3 Coalition, now as WaysSouth, is leading attempts to try and sabotage any provision of I-3 through the Dahlonega area. Again, I wonder why such an organization whose sole reason for being has been to stop even a study and the provision of the road would be involved in efforts to determine the feasibility of transportation service to our underserved area and millions upon millions of citizens far and near.

As one in favor of the road if determined to be feasible, I would never have expected to be involved in any phase of a study other than through citizen input following unobstructed and unbiased evaluation of the proposal. Shame on WaysSouth if they diverted the road away from our specific area through inaccurate, uninformed, and out of touch tactics and now hope to sabotage what has been presented.

But, in all due respect, double shame on the feasibility procedures if the activists are allowed to, in a step by step manner, sabotage the entire project with this intent having been their sole reason for being established. I believe they might be better described as an “obstructive” group instead of an advocacy group as described on the FHWA website. I would compare their inclusion in the procedures as similar to giving a fox a key and unlimited access to the hen house.

Here’s hoping our area of extreme transportation need and in a direct line between Savannah and Knoxville will still receive due consideration through a detailed study of the pros and cons of such a route under specific sub-studies to explore a wider range of issues related to potential alternative alignments as mentioned under Phase II. You will see in the attached information how our area was deprived of vital provision of access due to environmental interference many years ago as related to a proposed extension of Georgia 400 to our area and how this action has deprived our area for decades. In seeing through the years how drastic has been the deprivation of the loss of this road to our area, maybe you can understand my passion in seeking adequate consideration for our area today. At sixty six years of age, I would not expect to receive much, if any, advantage from the provision of this road but I would like for our younger and future generations to receive at least as much consideration for the future as we received from the transportation officials of the past.

Thank you for the opportunity for input on this issue so vital for the future of our isolated area of Northeast Georgia.

**From: Jerry Kendall (Young Harris, GA)**

*June 7, 2011*

I wanted to belatedly thank you for your kind response to me after having been out of town for several days and involved in other time consuming activity. I did want to be sure one point I tried to make is clear to the powers that be in presenting information about the direction of the road.

You mentioned letting the transportation decision-making process work as it was intended but I don't see any indication that serious consideration has been given to a direct line for the road including our area of Towns County in Georgia and Clay, Cherokee, and Graham Counties in North Carolina. I believe these areas were clearly intended to be considered as evidenced by a quite specific route through these counties addressed by John Stone of Congressman Charlie Norwood's office. This route was largely the focus of the "informational" meeting turning out to be everything but what was expected at a meeting in Hiawassee in May, 2005, and addressed at length on several occasions in my commentaries.

I tried to point out that the appearance of the Stop I-3 Coalition being involved in the decision making gives the appearance that their demands that consideration for our area be avoided were successful with all current routes as shown missing these counties. As I pointed out earlier, I believe my ongoing commentaries have made the citizens in my county of Towns especially knowledgeable and to a lesser extent those along the way with information having been published in all of these counties and more.

I can't be sure that an earlier experience I had in disputing false and misleading information through similar commentaries several years prior had an effect but I would like for you to know of this possible success. We had a small number of activists in our county who were successful in inflaming the voters against a much needed elementary school for our county with the proposal being defeated in a referendum. Following that vote but unfortunately too late for an informed decision by the voters, I presented similar information as food for thought and a few years later, a new proposal easily passed with a beautiful new school being built several years after a need was established.

This time, I have tried to inform the public in advance of the issues involved in the decision making which is so crucial now when considering the number of years required to provide a road such as Interstate 3. I can't help but wonder if my efforts have been in vain with the pros and cons of the road for our area being apparently left out of inclusion in the proposed routes to be presented to Congress.

I want to emphasize my writings by including here one Letter to the Editor which was included in whole or in part in several daily and weekly newspapers from such distant locations as Athens, Georgia, to Robbinsville (Graham County), North Carolina and in newspapers serving citizens everywhere in between. I have to believe this letter, which included at least a mention of many but not nearly all of the issues addressed in the lengthy commentary, did have an impact on those who read it by the fact that I was contacted and did about a fifteen minute interview on the Athens talk radio station as a result of its being published in its entirety in the Athens daily newspaper. Following is the letter as submitted and published in whole or in part in several newspapers along the route described by John Stone:

“WEBSITE IN SUPPORT OF INTERSTATE 3 AVAILABLE, March, 2006 Dear Editor,

Most of the spoken and printed words readers of this letter have heard about Interstate 3 have probably come from a comparatively tiny group of activist opponents of the road who desire to deprive the thousands of citizens who would use and benefit from it on a daily basis. When I first heard of the possibility of this road, I felt confident of its

value to our area but expected no involvement beyond following the study with the hope that it would prove the road to be feasible.

It became quickly evident, however, that the activists would not be content to simply speak for themselves individually against the road but to try and inflame others against it, often by inaccurate, distorted, and out of touch criticisms.

I first viewed these criticisms at a Towns County Homeowners Association Meeting in Hiawassee last May. The meeting was advertised only as an informational event, attracting more than 600 citizens, but it turned out to be a bash the Interstate meeting with the appearance of having been organized as such.

The large attendance was then represented as proof in news service accounts that Towns County had rejected the Interstate although no poll was taken of those present nor were the thoughts of the thousands of Towns Countians not attending given consideration. The Towns County Homeowners Association has more recently been an open and outspoken opponent of the road after portraying itself as neutral in attracting citizens to the meeting.

John Clarke, Chairman of the Cherokee/Clay County Chapter of the Stop I-3 Coalition, falsely claimed to represent the Hayesville or Clay County governments at the meeting to gain access to the stage. He then used this access to make the incredibly false claim that the Hayesville bypass was recently upgraded to Interstate specifications to try and influence the crowd against the road. Mr. Clarke and others might consider the fact that credibility is a valuable possession to have but of much greater significance when it is lost and its absence merits scrutiny by citizens.

This was just the beginning of questionable tactics such as throwing darts at a dartboard by these opponents in the apparent hope that some will stick and influence a few more citizens against the road. I feel I have exposed many of these tactics at the [www.deepsouthroads.org](http://www.deepsouthroads.org) website. More importantly, positive outcomes of the road as related to such issues as the attainment of livelihoods, education, medical care, and pleasure are presented.

I have addressed claims that our prosperous mountain towns would shrivel up and die and contrasting claims that we would be overrun with traffic as in major cities, hostility expressed toward advantages our vital trucking industry and those serving in low paying jobs would receive, the positive effect rather than disaster for the Smoky Mountain National Park claimed by the opponents, erroneous mileage totals, hope compared to fear as related to the road, and much more.

Thank you for your time and consideration.”

I believe the time is NOW for those involved in the decision making process to consider and include the pros and cons of Interstate 3 serving our area which is considered to have been vastly underserved, according to John Stone’s comments at the previously mentioned meeting in Hiawassee now more than five years ago.

Please consider my extended thoughts as the decision making process continues.

**From: Jerry Kendall (Young Harris, GA)**

*June 7, 2011*

I didn't expect to be back in touch so soon after my input earlier today if at all but a visit by a sixty seven year old friend prompted this input. The friend is, like me at age sixty six, in total support of Interstate 3 through our area of Towns County for the benefit of our younger and future generations.

He was concerned about a newspaper article he brought to me from the White County (Cleveland, Georgia) News written by Sharon Hall of CNI News Service entitled "I-3 Project, Still Alive, Now Routed Through Dahlonega"

touting opposition to the road based largely on input from the Sierra Club and WaysSouth. This was basically the same article published in the Dahlonega Nugget and Northeast Georgian in Cornelia.

Interestingly, the author quoted former Congressman Max Burns who sponsored some of the I-3 legislation but with comments seemingly making him appear less interested in the project being included without comments pointing out advantages in the Cornelia paper. His comments were totally left out of the Cleveland paper, perhaps due to an editor sympathetic to the opposition. The Dahlonega paper included more complete comments by Mr. Burns, including advantages the road would provide our area, although there is no way to know if all of his comments were included there.

The point I am attempting to make is that those opposing most anything are likely to make every effort to make their thoughts known while those supporting an issue tend to quietly wait for expected unobstructed studies to be made as you have stated the goal to be. Unfortunately, supporters of such issues often find themselves left out of needed projects such as when the drastically needed and desired extension of Georgia 400 thirty or more years ago was stopped by activist opponents. Our area has suffered the loss of untold amounts of money and time since that decision in having to travel the winding mountain roads to destinations to the south. With the second of two sons to graduate from North Georgia College and State University in Dahlonega later this year, I can attest first hand to the advantages Georgia 400 would have afforded my family with the expense of rent in Dahlonega averted if an adequate road had been provided with reasonable daily travel to the school possible.

I was led to believe when fighting the battle for having an unobstructed study to be completed that this would be done with statistically valid polls likely being done upon completion of the study and input from citizens allowed to tweak whatever route was chosen. As stated earlier, it seems inconceivable to me that oppositional groups would be allowed to obstruct such a project. I am hopeful that you will be able to communicate a desire for unobstructed and informed work through the food for thought about the issues I have presented from our area to those who will make vital decisions for the benefit of our younger and future generations, including many who aren't old enough to provide input or haven't yet been born.

It will be a shame if a tiny number of activists are successful in a step by step manner to divert the road away from our area with the clear goal of opposing any changes in direction, such as through Dahlonega, and the ultimate deprivation of the road. As explained in my commentaries, I believe any number of opponents the activists claim to have to indeed be tiny when considering the thousands of citizens who would use the road daily over a period of many decades.

Thank you once again for your time and consideration of my input in favor of thoughtful and informed decision making as related to this project.

**From: JimBloom56**

*June 8, 2011*

There is no justification for the proposed Third Infantry Division Highway: The military travels by air and boat, not by road and 4- lane highways already connect the bases with important transportation hubs; No economic benefit can be imagined for the areas, otherwise why would the citizens and their local governments be opposed? So, if there is no valid justification for the project why proceed to create an ecological threat to the environment of this beautiful area of Georgia? Is it driven by the desire to spend the money because it is available? Or, does some politician want to have a highway named after him or her?

**From: Jo Benson**

*March 15, 2011*

With our national debt double our GNP and the cost of gas approaching \$4 a gallon, why are you considering building more interstate highways? If there were surplus federal funds, shouldn't we be planning for mass rail transit systems or perhaps upgrading our deteriorating bridges and other roadways? The project you are proposing would have a devastating environmental impact on some of the most beautiful regions of the southern Appalachians.

**From: John Geiger, Friends of Georgia**

*February 28, 2011*

I am writing on behalf of the Friends of Georgia (FOG) to request that you to hold public meetings during the I-3 Study. The potential impact of this proposed interstate highway is of great concern to our membership.

We understand that there is currently no plan to hold public meetings about the proposed I-3 during this study. As you know, public input is one of the cornerstones of effective government. Although this is a preliminary study, we believe the failure to hold public meetings improperly limits the opportunities for our members and other citizens to provide input into the entire process.

FOG is particularly concerned about this projects possible impacts on our National Forests and watersheds in north Georgia. The forests of north Georgia are a critically important resource, not only for the residents of our area, but for citizens of nearby metropolitan areas, for whom the forests provide recreation, nature appreciation, and solitude. These forests are also a source of exceptional biodiversity, as well as the origin of much of the fresh drinking water for local communities, Atlanta, and neighboring states.

Meetings should be held after proposed routes and designs have been developed and after the draft report is released. It is especially important that such meetings be held at numerous locations in North Georgia and western North Carolina, as these areas would be most impacted if I-3 were built. At a minimum, public meetings should be held in Clayton, Clarkesville, Dahlonega, Hiawassee, Chatsworth, and Ellijay, Georgia. Providing numerous locations ensures that at least one meeting will be within a reasonable driving distance for most people in the affected region.

Public input should be an integral part of this process and any conclusions reached, from start to finish.

**From: John O'Sullivan (Gainesville, GA)**

*March 22, 2011*

This highway is a bad idea and will have devastating impacts on some of the most precious natural resources in the Southeast. The area is more valuable for recreation than development. The highway will hurt water resources for the needed business developments down stream.

**From: John O'Sullivan (Gainesville, GA)**

*May 31, 2011*

The I-3 is a bad idea as it will destroy important natural environments, hurt future recreation use and damage watersheds.

**From: John O'Sullivan**

*May 31, 2011*

The 3rd Infantry Division Highway is not as important as protecting that natural environment and all of its potential value for recreation and pure watershed protection.

**From: John O'Sullivan**

*May 31, 2011*

Don't waste federal money on new interstates. Not with our grandchildren's \$. Pay down the debt!

**From: Jordan Shenefield**

*April 5, 2011*

I-3 is not needed. There are already alternative interstates from Savannah to middle and east Tennessee. I-16 to I-75 or I-95 to I-26. The cost of building I-3 would be ridiculously prohibitive. (Look at the price of the Linville Gorge cut on the Blue Ridge Parkway.) We don't need to WASTE money on this project.

**From: Joseph Gatins (Satolah, GA)**

*March 11, 2011*

I believe your draft report should be amended to reflect that there likely will be "very strong opposition" to both versions of Corridor A in Georgia -- not just to Corridors B and C. As drafted, Corridor A looms as just another version of the ill-fated "Northern Arc," aimed at trying to shift some of Atlanta's transportation woes into the mountains. NOT a good idea, in my estimation.

**From: JSEAB**

*April 12, 2011*

I have reviewed the various options that you have studied and find ALL of them to be unacceptable. First, there has been no demonstrated need for a new interstate corridor to connect Augusta with Knoxville. Some options will traverse areas of the Chattahoochee Forest and will inflict unacceptable damage to the environment and national scenic trails. Other options go through established, historic communities (eg Dahlonega) and will have a major adverse impact on the residents and the principal industry of the area - tourism. The possible transport of nuclear materials through these communities from Augusta to Oak Ridge is an unacceptable activity. All of the county and municipal governments in N. Ga. have opposed the construction of I-3. It is my belief that existing transportation corridors, including I-40, I-85, I-26, and US441, along with others is very adequate to serve the areas needs. I therefore urge you to reject all options.

**From: Judy & Jim Pierce**

*March 21, 2011*

We have attended several meetings over the past three years concerning i-3 and remain firmly against the project.

No one has ever stated any need for a new highway from Savannah to Knoxville, which would actually be longer than existing routes. Until some good reason to build a new highway is identified, we shouldn't be wasting our money studying it.

- We understand that the current study of "the steps and estimated funding necessary" to build I-3 is required by law and has to be completed, but once it's done, any money remaining from the Congressional earmark should be returned to the Treasury so it can go to more useful purposes.
- The required report to Congress shouldn't contain any language that might encourage them to devote any more money or study to this ill-conceived project.
- Any conceivable route from Savannah to Knoxville would have devastating impacts on some of the most precious natural resources in the Southeast, and would permanently destroy the rural character that is one of the primary reasons people love the southern Appalachians.
- In these days of limited budgets, when we can't even afford to maintain the roads and bridges we already have, any thoughts of building more roads and incurring more maintenance obligations are simply insane.
- If we truly want to honor the Third Infantry Division, a better way is to post tribute signs along an existing highway and use the saved money to provide better safety equipment to our soldiers in the field and more support to our veterans.

**From: Judy Meyer**

*May 31, 2011*

Having traveled from Savannah Ga and Hilton Head SC to our lake cabin in Western NC many times, I can vouch for the need for a direct route to that area. Please continue to look into the best route for this needed highway. So many just always say, "no, no" but this highway is needed, and would also be a vital alternate route in times of any type of disaster.

**From: JUHLIN**

*May 29, 2011*

We need to fix the crappy highways a bridges we have now instead of wasting money and screwing up the environment on a new highway.

**From: Julie Keller**

*March 28, 2011*

There is no need for the proposed highway which would be a huge blow to the economy of the area (which is based on the natural beauty). We have plenty of speedy ways to negotiate the proposed route and it would be a total waste of money.

**From: Julie Mayfield, Western North Carolina Alliance**

*February 22, 2011*

On behalf of the board and members of the Western North Carolina Alliance (WNCA), I write to request an amendment to your proposed public involvement plan for the I-3 study currently underway. WNCA is a 29 year old regional environmental advocacy group with members in the area potentially impacted by I-3, and we have been following the proposal for I-3 since its inception.

Specifically, we are concerned that there is no plan to hold public meetings about I-3 during the course of the current study or after its completion to share the results. As I am sure you are aware, public input is a foundational principle of our government, and we believe the failure to include public meetings in this process improperly and unfairly limits the ability for our members and other citizens to provide valuable input into the study. Even if

citizens show up only to oppose any and all options, which is unlikely, that strong citizen opposition is a factor that should be reflected in the final report.

We therefore request that the Federal Highway Administration conduct public meetings as it prepares the study. We recommend holding the meetings after a draft report, which contains proposed routes and designs, have been developed. We suggest the meetings be held at the following locations at a minimum: Savannah, Georgia; Augusta, Georgia; a location in North Georgia such as Clayton or Dahlonega; a location in upstate South Carolina such as Greenville or Clemson; Murphy, North Carolina; and Knoxville, Tennessee. Providing multiple locations ensures that at least one meeting will be within a reasonable driving distance for most people in the affected region. We would be happy to help you identify and secure a location in the Murphy area if that would be helpful.

We recognize that the study budget likely will not allow for highly sophisticated or involved meetings, but they should at least include a presentation by FHWA of relevant information about the proposed project, some simple handouts citizens can take home with them, and opportunities to provide both written and oral comments.

**From: Julie Mayfield, Western North Carolina Alliance**

*March 20, 2011*

Hello - I am writing to reiterate the position of the Western North Carolina Alliance and our over 1000 members throughout North Carolina, Georgia, and Tennessee that I-3 is an unnecessary highway and would be a waste of taxpayer money in these lean times. The highway would not serve any clear purpose, and no more money or effort should be put toward it when the current study is complete.

**From: K Crafton**

*March 16, 2011*

The proposed corridor through Athens, Dahlonega and Ellijay is a horrible idea. You will ruin beautiful and pristine communities for greed.

**From: K Woodward**

*March 22, 2011*

I support building I-3 from Savannah to Knoxville. It will bring economic prosperity to a very poor region of the country. People will be able to access these places more readily and enjoy nature more. Surely a highway cannot devastate an entire forest?

**From: Kaye Delaney**

*March 21, 2011*

Proposed I-3 is a bad idea. Not only will it destroy local business and the natural beauty of these areas. It will cost a LOT of MONEY. Do not spend your money on transportation that is not needed.

**From: KEELJAM11**

*May 27, 2011*

Please, as a resident and concerned citizen, preserving our natural resources and the beauty of one of the last unspoiled places in the US is of utmost importance. We do not want I-3, we have never wanted I-3, and it is hard to

believe that all these years have passed and I-3 is still being considered. Please do not use our tax money with any more studies...but do use existing railways and other means. We keep ripping up this great nation of ours, there will be nothing left for our children but smog and chain restaurants.

**From: KEKEND1371 (Towns County, GA)**

*April 10, 2011*

I am from Towns County, Georgia & I want to express my support of an interstate in the area. Attending college in Dahlonega, GA, I have had to deal with the treacherous drive over Neals Gap for four years now. I have had one accident on the mountain over this time. Better roads are definitely needed in the Southern Appalachians. While GA HWY 515 has helped better connect the region to the NW Atlanta metro, access to the south to administrative centers such as Gainesville has still seen little improvement. Please take this into consideration in you proposal. Being unable to find a map of proposals, I was curious to the feasibility of a corridor on the northern section stretching from Lavonia, to Cleveland, to Blairsville, to McKaysville, using existing GA HWY 515, then to Cleveland TN using future Corridor K. This would help accomplish the purpose of the route and use existing/proposed corridors in the process. Just curious of the possibilities. Thanks for your time and consideration.

**From: Kris Pagenkopf (Hiawasse, GA)**

*March 21, 2011*

This plan would build this very expensive highway through some of the steepest and most remote backcountry of north Georgia, western North Carolina and east Tennessee. The alternative routes do damage to natural resources and local economies that are so dependent on tourism and a pristine backcountry.

I am concerned about all four alternatives as unworkable, not just the one that runs through North Georgia. We cannot currently afford the billions of dollars that would be required to build this road. This corridor study should end now, with all leftover money returned to the U.S. treasury.

We have much greater transportation infrastructure needs than this proposed highway.

**From: Kris Pagenkopf (Gainesville, FL)**

*May 28, 2011*

I understand that the consultants' studies identifies a "new Northern Arc" as their preferred alternative route, which would link Athens to Commerce to Dahlonega to Ellijay to highway 411 and thence to Interstate 75 to get to Knoxville. I do not understand why we continue to proceed with this project planning when the pressing purpose and need for such a gargantuan and unaffordable interstate highway has never been made clear. American taxpayers cannot afford to spend billions of dollars on a boondoggle at this time of economic uncertainty. Three of the four route alternatives in the consultants' study would further pressure sensitive national forests, Wilderness areas and the crown jewel of Appalachia, the Great Smoky Mountains National Park. I oppose the Interstate Highway 3 (Savannah to Knoxville) project.

**From: L A Green**

*March 15, 2011*

I am so against the I-3 highway. It is not needed and we who have to pay for it do not believe we can afford it. You can't afford it, we can't afford it and it is a bad idea.

**From: L A Green**

*May 27, 2011*

It is not necessary and a waste of taxpayer money. Besides destroying natural habitat for many wild animals. Deer, bear, and all sorts of fauna. What is the big push to build something that is so opposed by the people that will be affected by it. Do not spend our tax dollars on this boondoggle. We do not have the money, Do not borrow more Chinese money to build anything.

**From: L A Green**

*May 27, 2011*

I-3 is not necessary and a waste of taxpayer money. Besides destroying natural habitat for many wild animals. Deer, bear, and all sorts of fauna. What is the big push to build something that is so opposed by the people that will be affected by it. Do not spend our tax dollars on this boondoggle. We do not have the money, Do not borrow more Chinese money to build anything.

**From: L Routt**

*April 6, 2011*

I am strongly opposed to this highway. This is another unnecessary expense for very, very limited benefit. In this time of budget crisis, this is NOT the way to spend money. In addition it would route through pristine Appalachian forests forever destroying this unique environment.

**From: LADDMOSES**

*May 27, 2011*

I am a concerned citizen and avid hiker...please stop this waste of tax payer dollars for I3. We need to be spending / saving dollars elsewhere. Please vote no on this project!

**From: Larry Winslett, Sierra Club Georgia Chapter**

*March 1, 2011*

I am writing on behalf of the Georgia Chapter of the Sierra Club to request that you hold public meetings during the I-3 Study. The potential impact of this proposed interstate highway is of great concern to our membership.

We understand that there is currently no plan to hold public meetings about the proposed I-3 during this study. As you know, public input is one of the cornerstones of effective government. Although this is a preliminary study, we believe the failure to hold public meetings improperly limits the opportunities for our members and other citizens to provide input into the entire process.

The Sierra Club is particularly concerned about this projects possible impacts on our National Forests and watersheds in north Georgia. The forests of north Georgia are a critically important resource, not only for the residents of our area, but for citizens or nearby metropolitan areas, for whom the forests provide recreation, nature appreciation and solitude. These forests are also a source of exceptional biodiversity, as well as the origin of much of the fresh drinking water for local communities, Atlanta, and neighboring states.

Meetings should be held after proposed routes and designs have been developed and after the draft report is released. It is especially important that such meetings be held at numerous locations in North Georgia and western North Carolina, as these areas would be most impacted if I-3 were built. At a minimum, public meetings should be held in Clayton, Clarksville, Dahlonega, Hiawassee, Chatsworth, and Ellijay, Georgia. Providing numerous locations ensures that at least one meeting will be within a reasonable driving distance for most people in the affected region.

We believe that public meetings presenting the conclusions of the current study and soliciting public inputs on this highway are an essential part of the democratic process. The meetings at a minimum should include presentations by FHWA and Wilbur Smith Associates of relevant information about the proposed project and opportunities for the public to provide both written and oral comments. In addition, public inputs should be summarized and addressed in the final report of the study. Public input should be an integral part of this process and any conclusions reached, from start to finish.

**From: LAWSON14**

*May 29, 2011*

This whole project is beyond sensible comprehension. What in the world is it supposed to accomplish?

**From: Leigh Bost**

*May 28, 2011*

Here are 4 good reasons by I 3 should not be pursued:

1. Neither Congress nor the federal government have ever identified a purpose and need for such a road.
2. American taxpayers cannot afford to spend billions of dollars on a boondoggle at this time of economic uncertainty.
3. Three of the four route alternatives in the consultants' study would further pressure sensitive national forests, Wilderness areas and the crown jewel of Appalachia, the Great Smoky Mountains National Park.
4. Corridor A (which would snake through the Athens, Commerce, Dahlonega and Ellijay areas) represents a "new Northern Arc" that would inevitably bring the gridlock of metro Atlanta to the mountains.

**From: LEWY**

*June 2, 2011*

How much longer must we oppose this road to make certain that it is not built? It would create havoc throughout our communities and destroy all past efforts to plan for what growth we may get. The road is not needed or wanted in this part of the country. All efforts need to go toward eliminating the federal deficit. No more wasting federal or state money.

**From: Linda G**

*March 15, 2011*

This project, no matter which route is chosen, smells of rotten pork. Shame.

**From: Linda Wrangler**

*March 16, 2011*

In these days of limited budgets, when we can't even afford to maintain the roads and bridges we already have, any thoughts of building more roads and incurring more maintenance obligations are simply insane.

If we truly want to honor the Third Infantry Division, a better way is to post tribute signs along an existing highway and use the saved money to provide better safety equipment to our soldiers in the field and more support to our veterans. We understand that the current study of "the steps and estimated funding necessary" to build I-3 is required by law and has to be completed, but once it's done, any money remaining from the Congressional earmark should be returned to the Treasury so it can go to more useful purposes.

The required report to Congress shouldn't contain any language that might encourage them to devote any more money or study to this ill-conceived project.

**From: Lindsay Holliday (Macon, GA)**

*May 25, 2011*

Why is this project named the "3rd Infantry Division Highway"? instead of "Savannah Port Cargo Bucks"? Is the military unit name linked to this project in order to excite the flag wavers among us? If so, this is "misdirection", and it does not bode well for your long range public relations for this project. I would appreciate feedback from the FHWA.

**From: LIZFOX1003**

*March 21, 2011*

I am totally opposed to the proposed construction of I-3. None of the four options proposed seem necessary or sensible. The people have expressed their displeasure before, beating back a bad idea. It is just as bad now! I would appreciate being kept informed of any action on this proposal.

**From: LIZFOX1003**

*March 21, 2011*

I cannot believe that our government is in severe financial crisis and the ugly head of I-3 has reared itself again. The people have already spoken against this unnecessary and biologically destructive plan. Each of the four routes seems nonsensical. Thank you for listening to the people's concerns

**From: LULUSMERLYN**

*March 16, 2011*

We understand that the current study of "the steps and estimated funding necessary" to build I-3 is required by law and has to be completed, but once it's done, any money remaining from the Congressional earmark should be returned to the Treasury so it can go to more useful purposes

In these days of limited budgets, when we can't even afford to maintain the roads and bridges we already have, any thoughts of building more roads and incurring more maintenance obligations are simply insane.

If we want to honor the 3rd Infantry Division, a better way is to post tribute signs along an existing highway and use the saved money to provide better safety equipment to our soldiers in the field and more support to veterans.

Any conceivable route from Savannah to Knoxville would have devastating impacts on some of the most precious natural resources in the Southeast, and would permanently destroy the rural character that is one of the primary reasons people love the southern Appalachians.

**From: Lynn Rhoton (Savannah, GA)**

*May 18, 2011*

I would like to know the rationale for looking for a new route from Savannah, Ga to Knoxville, Tenn., when a route already exists. Checking the maps it is approximately 314 miles from Savannah to Knoxville, as the crow flies.

I have checked the maps and find that a route from the Ports Authority to Knoxville Hostel, in downtown Knoxville covering only three (3) Interstate Highways and a mere seven (7) miles of secondary highway most of which is four (4) lane divided. Ga-21 to I-95 to I-26 to I-40. This route is approximately 417 miles, depending on, of course exactly where you leave from in the Ports Authority. I doubt that any other route, including a new one altogether would be any shorter or better than this. Another route, via secondary roads is a bit straighter yet is still just over 400 miles between the cities.

With the current economical situation that the United States is in, being broke, how can we possibly justify the spending of billions of dollars for something that already exists? What are we to gain from that large of an expenditure?

**From: LYNNEHRLICHER**

*March 16, 2011*

I am against this destructive project because of its impact on the precious natural resources of Georgia. If there was a clear need for such a highway, it would be different. But this highway is not needed and will only encourage more urban/suburban sprawl in the final remaining forest areas.

**From: MBB3**

*June 8, 2011*

America's existing road infrastructure severely needs MAINTENANCE, and a proposal for a completely new Interstate makes no economic sense at all. We CANNOT AFFORD the cost in dollars or environmental damage.

Instead, far less money could be spent upgrading the EXISTING Interstate roads that now connect Athens, GA to Knoxville, TN. GA 441, I-85, I-26, I-40 already form an efficient route connecting these cities. No massive environmental damage to the tourist income producing Mountain destinations in Georgia, North Carolina and Tennessee would be done. The mountain communities would be devastated if the beauty of their scenery was "altered" by a massive Interstate Highway project. And no justification for this project exists.

As a Georgia and US taxpayer, I am strongly opposed to have any of my hard earned tax dollars, State or Federal, wasted on the "3rd Infantry Division Hwy". The existing Interstate road system serves all the connection needs between these cities.

**From: M J Stapleton**

*May 30, 2011*

A strong need must be demonstrated for an interstate superhighway from Savannah to Knoxville before wasting a huge chunk of federal funds for a \$1.32 million study, and most definitely before spending \$889,000 of it on so-called Phase II studies for this road. If Republicans preach the US government has a spending problem, how can this unnecessary project even be considered? Rescind the Section 1927 earmark now. A study has conclusively shown that the 3rd Infantry Division Highway, commonly known as I-3, will have unacceptable costs and impacts, and no further efforts to construct I-3 should be considered or funded. It is insane to start this project when a shorter interstate route from Savannah to Knoxville currently exists. Where is the evidence that routes I-95 to I-26 to I-40 won't be satisfactory for the next twenty years? Scarring this landscape of mountains, forests and headwaters of Southern rivers with a superhighway is not environmentally sound for future generations.

**From: M P McMahon (GA)**

*March 30, 2011*

Although many residents in the North Georgia Mountains region would not realize this, but the construction of I-3 and the ultimate use of the Freeway, would produce an economic windfall to the communities that the Highway will go through, as this will connect the North Georgia to the Port of Savannah, and the immense commerce that port brings to the state.

The project, if implemented, will create construction jobs and will in turn those construction jobs will require lodging, food and other necessities, which will generate sales locally and sales tax revenue for the Municipalities and Counties, then once built, it opens the area to more businesses, creating more jobs. So it is in the areas long term benefit to have the Third Infantry Division Highway built.

**From: MAMMALOGIST**

*March 23, 2011*

I have just looked at the area for the proposed I-3 highway, and all I can think is how incredibly unnecessary another road is! People do NOT have difficulty getting around so I fail to see the reason for spending precious time and money on this.

What is most disturbing is how much this project would destroy what makes the south "The South"--small rural towns and abundant wildlife. Highways are horribly noisy and nothing you do will diminish that noise and the disturbance to people and wildlife. People need quiet places in nature to retreat from the pressures of urbanized life. Although I am opposed to building any additional roads in this area, I am particularly dismayed by the plans to put such a road next to our national forests--our treasures!! That will ruin everything about those forests that makes them great and draws tourists. No one wants to go to such a place and hear highway noise. No one. Tourism will plummet. This is a horrible idea and should be abandoned!

**From: Marc Hoecker**

*May 27, 2011*

Please stop spending precious transportation dollars on building more highways that we don't need and have absolutely no hope of solving any traffic problems. Georgia and Tennessee are so far behind on having any transit options and alternatives to driving. This money is much more wisely spent investing in true alternatives that provide transportation choice and improve economic activity, real estate values, and quality of life. Never in my life did I want to grow up to become a taxi driver. However, virtually every citizen in Georgia by default must be a taxi driver. Honor the 3rd Infantry Division in other ways. They deserve to be honored. Building this highway is not the way to do it.

**From: Marian & Thomas Fitzgerald (Maryville, TN)**

*June 3, 2011*

Thank you for accepting public comments on the proposed I3 highway from Savannah, GA to Knoxville, TN. This project has never made sense to us, since there are two complete, serviceable Interstate Highway connections between these termini already.

A modicum of reason seems to have prevailed during the study period, and Corridor B through the rugged mountains of North Carolina and Tennessee has apparently been removed from consideration. We applaud that decision: such a highway would have been far too costly to the environment and our pocketbooks. However, it seems clear that the route still being considered (Corridor A) would also create unacceptable damage to the north Georgia mountains and to the nation's taxpayers. We wholeheartedly disapprove of spending \$6 billion from the public coffers on this unnecessary highway. If shortcuts/bypasses are needed around Atlanta and Chattanooga to improve traffic flow on I75 (which well may be the case), then let's build those, at costs more acceptable to the citizens than the enormous price tag for all those miles of proposed new Interstate through the southern mountains.

We hope the idea of I3 will be permanently rejected as unwise and unfeasible, since your study has shown that it will have unacceptable costs and impacts. We urge Congress to pass the legislation necessary to release any leftover funds earmarked for this and other dead-ended projects, so this money can be returned to the U.S. Treasury and spent for infrastructure improvements that we really need.

Thank you for your consideration.

**From: Marianne Skeen (Decatur, GA)**

*June 7, 2011*

I am writing to register my strong objections to the 3rd Infantry Division Highway project.

I commend the Phase I study group for eliminating the most onerous routings that were considered for this project, however there still seems to be no overriding mandate for such a huge highway project which would cost billions of taxpayer dollars. This highway project would still negatively impact a number of communities and natural areas in North Georgia with increased traffic/pollution and possible transport of nuclear materials. The need does not appear to outweigh the negative repercussions of such a project. A number of local governing bodies have passed resolutions against this project. At a time in our country's history when budget cuts are imperative, it seems foolish to expend any more funds to evaluate a highway project that has so many negative outcomes. I hope that the Phase II study is abandoned and that any remaining funds be returned to the US Treasury.

Thank you for the opportunity to express my opinion.

**From: Margit Blekfeld-Sztraky**

*May 30, 2011*

I certainly appreciate the thought and consideration that has been placed on the creation of I-3, however I respectfully request further studies be avoided and the plan be dismantled. The proposed route, known as Corridor A will negatively affect air and water quality in the area, as well as increasing pressures on the Chattahoochee National Forest. I have lived here for over 25 years, own farmland and understand the effects of pollution first hand, water as well as air. I have seen the effects of "progress" without regard to the long-term consequences to the environment.

Please do not allow this to happen again. Honor the 3rd Infantry with sustainable solutions, signage or other recognition, not with asphalt and pollution.

**From: Martha Woodham**

*May 19, 2011*

Given the astronomical price of the interstate, what would it cost to put in a rail system? I would like to see comparisons of road versus rail.

**From: MARTYCGDIR**

*March 15, 2011*

No one has ever stated any need for a new highway from Savannah to Knoxville, which would actually be longer than existing routes. Until some good reason to build a new highway is identified, we shouldn't be wasting our money studying it.

We understand that the current study of "the steps and estimated funding necessary" to build I-3 is required by law and has to be completed, but once it's done, any money remaining from the Congressional earmark should be returned to the Treasury so it can go to more useful purposes.

The required report to Congress shouldn't contain any language that might encourage them to devote any more money or study to this ill-conceived project.

Any conceivable route from Savannah to Knoxville would have devastating impacts on some of the most precious natural resources in the Southeast, and would permanently destroy the rural character that is one of the primary reasons people love the southern Appalachia.

**From: Mary Davidson**

*May 27, 2011*

We do not need yet another highway screwing up our landscapes. The demolition required to build this highway will ruin nature for decades to come, never mind how much the noisy machinery will terrify wildlife. Please put this project into the round file forever!

**From: Mary Leone, Georgia ForestWatch (GA)**

*June 9, 2011*

As the Obama Administration's administrative official working on this project, I urge you to drop support for the "I-3" 3rd Infantry Division Highway from Savannah to Knoxville project in its entirety. Do not spend any more taxpayer money for a "road to nowhere" that will only create new transportation and environmental problems. If you have to spend the money, put it to use repairing and maintaining transportation systems and infrastructure already in place. Why destroy our precious natural resources while what we have already developed is in a state of decay?

Furthermore, it is foolish to continue expanding development into wilderness areas that supply water, fresh air and recreation areas for city-dwellers in already stressed urban areas.

It saddens me to know that this project has made as much progress as it has given that neither Congress nor the federal government have ever identified a purpose and need for such a road. Beyond that, the environmental and community impacts would be appalling:

- Corridor A (which would snake through the Athens, Commerce, Dahlonega and Ellijay areas) represents a "new Northern Arc" that would inevitably bring the gridlock of metro Atlanta to the mountains.
- Three of the four route alternatives in the consultants' study would further pressure sensitive national forests, Wilderness areas and the crown jewel of Appalachia, the Great Smoky Mountains National Park.

American taxpayers cannot afford to spend billions of dollars on a destructive, regressive project at this time when projects to enhance sustainable quality of life are desperately needed.

The money spent on the Section 1927 planning study alone for such an ill-advised project is an unconscionable waste of taxpayer dollars. The over-budgeting for planning studies for this and other similar projects leaves another issue that needs to be addressed. It will take an act of Congress to re-appropriate the remaining funds for other purposes.

Your voice in this matter is very important, and I urge you to be a voice of reason. Support efforts to stop all work on this project immediately.

**From: Matt Mills (Lawrenceville, GA)**

*April 5, 2011*

Please do not build this highway through the mountains in Georgia. A Savannah to Knoxville Interstate-type highway is not necessary. The roadway threatens the National Forest, and the small increase in tourist business is not worth the widespread environmental and scenic damage this highway will cause.

Please do not build this road.

**From: MATTPOTS (Clarkesville, GA)**

*May 27, 2011*

I live in Clarkesville, Ga. and I am against the 3rd Infantry Division Highway project in every way. We do not need or want this highway.

**From: MCONRAD95**

*May 31, 2011*

As a citizen of the area I am against the building of a highway through the mountain area and am against governmental wasteful spending on further studies of I-3. Increased traffic in the area would have a major impact on the area's wildlife, flora & fauna, as well on the small farmers of the area.

**From: Melanie Mayes (Knoxville, TN)**

*June 3, 2011*

I'd like to note my opposition to any continuation of the I-3 highway, in the form of additional studies or consideration. There is no transportation need for this highway. It is not any shorter than any existing routes. Further, it would take decades to complete, and would cost a very large fortune. It is incredibly obvious that our

country simply doesn't have the funds for this now, and will not have the funds in the near future. It should be immediately dropped.

Of course, any route through the mountains, as this one would have to be, would be incredibly destructive to the fragile ecology of the mountains. Further, the rural communities of the area would be negatively impacted and their way of life pushed out for fast food restaurants. Like I-40, would undoubtedly be geologically unstable and would have rockslides, at an even higher cost.

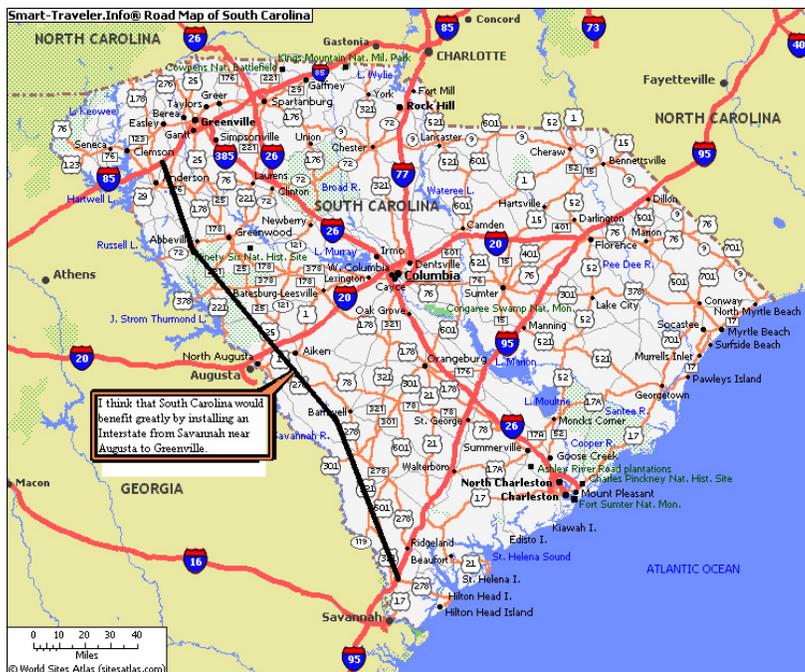
Finally, I can assure you that Knoxville doesn't need another interstate. We already have too much traffic and the attendant air pollution. Please don't push another interstate on us.

Further, nearly \$1 million of the original earmark remains unspent. Since the road is unnecessary and prohibitively expensive, these funds should be returned to the treasury to serve a better purpose, such as repairing some of the roads that we already have. If Congress finds honoring the 3rd Infantry Division is important, they should consider using the funds to actually help the members of the military and their families, rather than spending it on a useless token that provides no real benefits to our deserving service members.

**From: Michael Webb (Martinez, GA)**

*April 13, 2011*

Possible South Carolina Interstate:



You need to take this Interstate, 3rd Infantry Division Highway Corridor, on the South Carolina side of the Savannah River. I have a map sketch (attached) for a new interstate from I-95 at Savannah to I-85 Greenville.

As I understand this corridor is to be built in Georgia. Georgia have been widening State Route 25 for the last few years & interstate parallel it would make it irrelevant. That is why I think it should be built in South Carolina.

This would;

1. Increase the Economic Flow of Capital all the cities along the interstate, new Industries would have an advantage and build in the cities along the New S.C. Interstate.

2. Travel Industry; Add enormous traffic on this interstate.
3. It would relieve the traffic flow through Columbia (I-90 to I-26 to I-85) and from the beach to the Mountains.
4. People in Georgia would more likely use the S.C. Interstate instead of using Hwy 25 / Hwy 1. This should take 90% or more of the traffic from Georgia, as of now if from Augusta and other areas, we

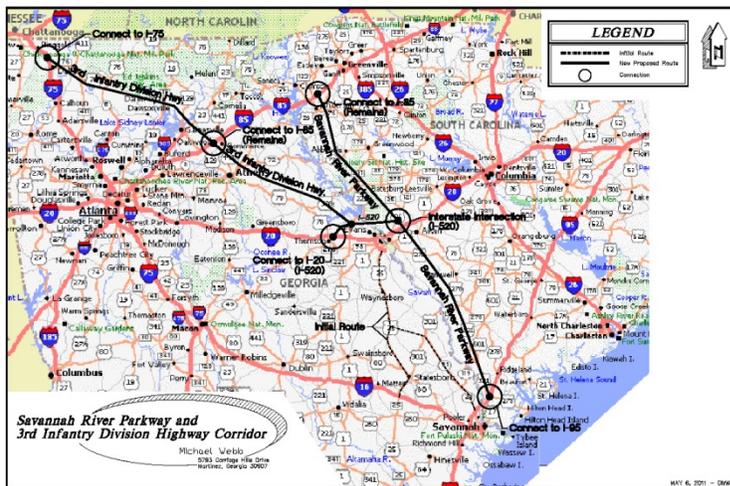
Additional:

5. Also a rail system could be built adjacent to my proposed interstate to have a railway from Savannah-Augusta-Atlanta-out west.
6. Savannah Harbor needs to be expanded
  - Build a dock to receive Oil Tankers
  - Build a pipeline
    - from dock down Highway 17 to Hardeeville, SC.
    - SRS (could parallel the new interstate)
  - Build Oil Refineries at SRS - SRS has Permanent Security forever

**From: Michael Webb (Martinez, GA)**

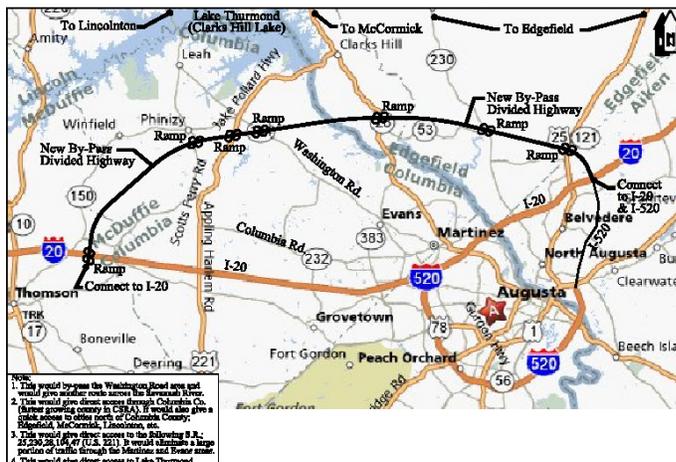
*May 16, 2011*

Possible South Carolina Interstate:



I have studied the layout of the 3rd infantry division highway corridor route and I think another route should be considered. I wrote to Governor Campbell, former SC governor, about my idea (Interstate on the S.C. side of the Savannah River) years ago and I lay out (below) my points. I see no reason for an interstate to be built to parallel U.S. Hwy 1 & S.R. 25; 1. Those highways have had recent improvements 2. I think it would be a waste of money

because I feel it wouldn't benefit the cities economically.



### Savannah River Parkway

Should be built on the South Carolina side; Direct route from Savannah to Augusta to Anderson/ Greenville (I-85)

- Land availability and cost would be cheaper
  - Would increase Economic Flow of Capital; to all the cities along the Savannah River, Georgia cities included.
  - Increase the Travel Industry to Mountains, Beaches, Lakes and many cities
  - It would relieve the traffic flow through Columbia (I-90 to I-26 to I-85)

Additional:

- Could build a rail system along interstate from Savannah to Augusta.
- Expand Savannah Harbor & receive Oil tankers
  - This will give an Economic boost to Savannah, Ga.
- Build an Oil Pipeline (along Interstate to SRS) & Oil Refineries at Savannah River Site (SRS).
  - SRS has permanent security.
  - This will give an Economic boost to Augusta, Ga.

### 3rd Infantry Division Highway Corridor

- Should be built across the north part of Georgia; from Augusta, Ga. (Through Columbia County - between Augusta & Lake Thurmond) to Athens to Dahlonega to Ellijay to Dalton and then Chattanooga (I-75).
  - Land availability and cost would be cheaper
  - Increase the Economic Flow of Capital; to all the cities along the interstate from Augusta & Athens and into Tennessee.
  - Increase the Travel Industry to Mountains, Beaches, Lakes and many cities
  - Direct route to the Augusta & Athens Medical Districts.
  - Relieve traffic through Atlanta on I-20 & I-85. This would help the traffic backups on I-285, I-20, I-75, I-85 and more.
- Could make the interstates a toll road
- When the D.O.T. builds a by-pass - Schools should not be built on them (example: Waynesboro, Ga.). I thought the purpose to build a by-pass is to avoid the slowdowns.

**From: MICHELLE32851**

*May 30, 2011*

Please do NOT desecrate our mountains by putting a Highway through them. Why spoil all the natural beauty with concrete/asphalt and more pollution.

**From: Mike Bales**

*May 28, 2011*

I wish to voice my opposition to building Interstate 3. This is such a beautiful area and what we don't need is more roads and building. Please use the highway funds for projects to improve existing roads.

**From: Mike Mattison**

*March 19, 2011*

I disagree intensely with the proposal to build Interstate 3 through Georgia to Knoxville. I've reviewed the project information and reports. This project is simply far too destructive, wasteful, invasive, and irreversible to consider. And there are no reports showing any "need" for this highway. Further, this highway is nothing more than a government stooge project pushed by greedy politicians and their money grubbing industry lobbyists. Very few regions –in the world- possess such a deep treasury of natural beauty, outdoor recreation, complexity of flora and fauna, and extraordinary cultural history and heritage – as does this region of the southern Appalachian Mountains. Nothing would be as destructive as an interstate highway.

And now, Senators whine about cutting federal budgets, but lobby for this new I-3 in our back yards. Please STOP wasting our funds to "study" I-3, when we're already burdened by failing infrastructure. Stop I-3, end this nonsense now. Thank you.

**From: Mike Mattison**

*March 19, 2011*

Thank you for your time to consider my objections to the proposal to build Interstate 3 through Georgia to Knoxville. Please include my comments in your public comment files.

I've reviewed the project information and reports. This project is simply far too destructive, wasteful, invasive, and irreversible to consider. And there are no reports showing any valid "need" for this highway. Further, it appears this highway is nothing more than a "pork project" pushed by greedy politicians and their money grubbing industry lobbyists. This very expensive effort would only enrich the highway contractors in Georgia with the equipment and capability to perform this very specific type of road construction. Of course, I'm certain their lobbyists would show their appreciation if the proposal wins support from the politicians. And sure, if we really built every highway to serve the "convenience" of the trucking, concrete, tire, freight, steel, equipment, labor, and commercial industries - we would be buried in highways.

Very few regions –in the world- possess such a deep treasury of natural beauty, outdoor recreation, complexity of flora and fauna, and extraordinary cultural history and heritage – as does this region of the southern Appalachian Mountains. And it is very disturbing that this highway is conveniently planned to destroy lands which are the heritage and home to those who have among our nation's lowest education and literacy skills, and are politically disconnected.

We cannot afford this poorly thought project. We cannot waste yet more tax dollars to "study" this project. If we are to spend funds, it must be on those critical infrastructure projects, many of which have been neglected for over 40 years.

There are too many reasons AGAINST this highway project. And there are far too many reasons to use our tax funds on far more important and critical projects. Please do NOT proceed with any further wasteful "naval gazing" on this project. We don't need it, and we don't want it.

**From: Mikey Satterfield** (Dahlonega, GA)

*April 2, 2011*

I am a Dahlonega/Lumpkin County native. I don't want an interstate running through my county. My vote is NO!

**From: MODIUS**

*March 22, 2011*

3rd Infantry Division Highway? This name seems to imply it is needed to move the division around strategically. Seems like there are better ways do honor the 3rd infantry - other than politicizing the division while trying to wrap the American flag around this wasteful roads project.

No one has ever justified any need for a new road from Savannah GA to Knoxville TN. Until some good reason to build a new highway is identified, we shouldn't be wasting our money on it.

**From: Molly Ford**

*March 28, 2011*

In no way do I approve or think that ANY of the proposed (4) routes are a good idea. Not now, not ever. Doing so would not only be costly, at billions of dollars, but the damage to natural resources and local economies would be devastating. We live here because of the beauty and because there are NO highways! People visit us contributing to our local well-fair to get away from the city and highways. Any funds that have been available for this project should be returned to the US treasury. Lastly, no one wants nuclear materials going through their backyard. Please do not in any way think this is a reasonable project. The north Georgia people do not support it!  
Thank you.

**From: MONSIEURENBLEU** (Murphy, NC)

*May 28, 2011*

My wife and I moved here, Murphy, NC, to leave "civilization" behind. That is, expressways and noise, sprawl, and crime. I would encourage you to review the effects of the addition of major highways to rural areas and subsequent increases in criminal activity. Not to ignore the beauty of this special area, a major expressway will have a negative impact upon the stillness of the forests and the wildlife with loss of habitat and a marked increase in pollution from vehicle traffic. Finally, my income tax this year was horrible. But, I stepped up and paid the government. When I hear of study upon study and the associated costs, it pains me no end to see tax money wasted and squandered. Plowing an expressway through here would be an obscenity of the highest order.

**From: MTJCT2**

*May 27, 2011*

I am very much opposed to the idea of building an interstate highway from Savannah, GA to Knoxville, TN. There is no known specific need for such a highway other than the commercial development, tax revenues and attendant opportunity to buy more votes that would result. Notwithstanding those benefits, the damage to one of the nation's most scenic and intact ecosystems would be incalculable not to mention the negative effects on the historic and cultural assets of the region. Its cost/benefit ratio is negative. It is not needed. Don't do it.

**From: MTLEONE**

*June 9, 2011*

This is a "road to nowhere" that will only create new transportation and environmental problems. Why destroy our precious natural resources while what we have already developed is in a state of decay? Furthermore, it is foolish to continue expanding development into wilderness areas that supply water, fresh air and recreation areas for city-dwellers in already stressed urban areas. Neither Congress nor the federal government have ever identified a purpose and need for such a road. Beyond that, the environmental and community impacts would be appalling:

- Corridor A (which would snake through the Athens, Commerce, Dahlonega and Ellijay areas) represents a "new Northern Arc" that would inevitably bring the gridlock of metro Atlanta to the mountains.
- Three of the four route alternatives in the study would further pressure sensitive national forests, Wilderness areas and the crown jewel of Appalachia, the Great Smoky Mountains National Park.

**From: MVA62SGN**

*March 16, 2011*

The highway is not needed and is a waste of our money.

**From: MYRA\_KIBLER (Ellijay, GA)**

*June 8, 2011*

I am opposed to the I-3 highway coming through Gilmer County because of the change it would cause to the rural, peaceful, and safe character of the area. I moved to Ellijay for the quiet mountain environment. More traffic, especially trucks with nuclear waste, is counter to the values I came here for. Please do not bring that road here.

**From: Nancy Waldrop (Clayton, GA)**

*March 25, 2011*

How do you sleep at night? You continue to support and promote the construction of I-3, the ill considered notion of punching a new interstate highway from Savannah to Knoxville. Federal highway consultants have now developed four alternative plans for running this dubious and ruinous highway through southern Appalachia. Details of the latest I-3 incarnation are contained in the draft study report, making it clear that planners believe that it would be acceptable to build a very big and very expensive highway through some of the steepest and most remote backcountry of north Georgia, western North Carolina and east Tennessee. One of the proposed routes would come right through my local neighborhood, but I am opposed to ALL of the routes. Why do you insist on destroying the beautiful natural landscape of the mountains, rivers, lakes, forest and wildlife? This highway is neither wanted or needed. It is your greed that is fueling the project. You have been bought by the lobbyists of highway construction. I know they need work, but so do millions of other Americans and what are you doing for them? I am ashamed that there is no integrity in those in power. Again I ask, how do you sleep at night?

**From: NOBLE** (Northeastern Georgia)

*May 27, 2011*

I live in NE Georgia. I urge you to vote NO on any I-3 corridor proposal. Stop any further "studies" and return the 1million dollars leftover to the treasury to spend on "real disasters that have already happened". Tornadoes have already damaged peoples homes, land and environment. We don't need to be spending taxpayers hard earned dollars on unnecessary highway construction disasters.

**From: OBLIO**

*March 16, 2011*

This highway is not necessary. It will only disrupt the natural beauty of the area. A heavy highway will only bring more traffic and more pollution. The current roads do well at keeping vehicles that do not want to deal with the slow pace away. Please do not build a highway through the Appalachians.

**From: Octavius Crawford** (Hartwell, GA)

*April 23, 2011*

My name is Octavius Crawford and I am a recent graduate from the University of Georgia. This topic concerns me as I am native of North Georgia and a former student of the geography program at UGA. My hometown is Hartwell, Georgia in North Georgia on the South Carolina border.

I am personally in support of the proposed interstate being built. I am, however, not in support of one of the proposed corridors that would take the highway near the Chattanooga metropolitan area. It seems counterproductive to construct an interstate that would parallel Interstate 75 in southeastern Tennessee in order to avoid the National Forests in North Georgia. It would be more feasible for the highway to simply join Interstate 75 near the Dalton area.

Furthermore, concerning the topic of avoiding the mountains of North Georgia, the rerouting, or even the elimination, of this proposed interstate would do nothing more to harm the environmental integrity of the forests than the Atlanta metro area already does and will do in the future. In fact, I personally believe that the construction of the highway would alleviate a lot of the traffic strain on the Atlanta metro area. The highway would allow for people traveling to Florida and other parts of the southeastern Atlantic coast to simply bypass Atlanta altogether. I think the benefit of routing this highway through the Chattahoochee National Forest to Augusta and to I-95 would outweigh no construction of the highway which would only allow the Atlanta area to continue and expand north and east in the coming decades and further deteriorate the air quality of the north Georgia mountains. One way or another, air quality will be affected in the mountains of north Georgia, whether it is with the construction of this highway or dispersant of pollutants, such as smog, from the city of Atlanta.

I have followed the evolution of the discussion of the highway since it was proposed in 2005. Personally, I believe there is also a lot of small town and retired people who simply do not want to foresee a change in their environment by allowing people from all parts of the country into the area and giving them the ability to assimilate into the local area and help create some type of economic development in the North Georgia area. As far as tourists go, I think more people would be actually be more apt to tour and sightsee the mountains due to the fact the area would be more accessible by a highway and not small winding roads that go out of the way of people traveling over long distances

I hope that my comments will be considered and aid in the discussion in the future concerning the pros and cons of the 3rd Infantry Division Highway.

**From: ONAHIKE2**

*April 6, 2011*

I am against any new roads or interstate type four lane highway going through the Appalachian mountains, our National Forests and our National Parks.

**From: Patricia Harman (Dahlonega, GA)**

*May 29, 2011*

In 2005, Congress passed a transportation funding bill, the Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act which expired on September 30, 2009. Among the earmarks included in SAFETEA-LU was Section 1927, which requires the Department of Transportation to carry out and submit to Congress a study report on the steps and estimated funding necessary to designate and construct a route for the 3rd Infantry Division Highway, extending from Savannah, Georgia, to Knoxville, Tennessee, by way of Augusta, Georgia. The study is now complete, and the Federal Highway Administration either has submitted or soon will submit the required report to Congress.

I request that you reconsider any plans to pursue the I-3 Highway proposal any further. This highway is an extremely expensive duplication of access between Savannah and Knoxville. The existing highways of I-95 to I-26 to I-40 already provide access of nearly identical distance to any of the routes proposed and there are no traffic studies indicating a need for an expanded highway network in the areas under consideration.

Furthermore the estimated costs of up to \$6.1 billion would monopolize Georgia's State Highway budget leaving little for truly necessary repairs and improvements to our already struggling highway system. This is not an expense we can afford as a state in these tight economic times and it is not fiscally responsible. The monies involved in design and construction could be better used elsewhere even if only to reduce deficits.

Indeed the most viable proposed route along corridor "A" through the Augusta, Dahlonega and Ellijay areas would negatively affect many of the environmental areas our mountain communities rely on for recreational tourism with no compensating benefit.

The study has been completed with approximately \$1 million in unspent federal and state funds which were originally set aside for it. By law, this funding may not be used for any other purpose unless Congress passes legislation freeing it up for other uses. Doing so would be a much wiser use for the unspent monies.

**From: Phillip Bonner**

*March 21, 2011*

I am adamantly opposed to the construction of the 3rd Infantry Division Highway (I-3). This highway would pass through some of the most remote and beautiful environment in north Georgia, western North Carolina and east Tennessee, causing inestimable damage and negative impact. I have lived in this area for most of my life, and such a highway is not needed...the land that it would disrupt is certainly needed, as it is. In a time of economic hardship, why spend money on a disruptive highway that will endanger mountains and associated landscape that should be a legacy for our children? If money is going to be spent, spend it on repairing and improving existing highways.

**From: Pierre Howard, Georgia Conservancy**

*June 3, 2011*

The Georgia Conservancy, Georgia's only uniquely statewide environmental advocacy organization, hereby states our strong opposition to the construction of the proposed Interstate 3 highway. The proposed I-3 project would do irreparable environmental harm to some of our state's most environmentally sensitive areas. Further, the need for the I-3 project has never been established. It is our opinion that the earmark for the I-3 study should be rescinded by Congress when it considers the new transportation bill this year.

The Georgia Conservancy considers the proposed I-3 project to be an insidious threat to the environment of our state and a waste of the taxpayers' money. We request the opportunity to comment further on the matter in the future.

**From: POTSNIRON**

*March 23, 2011*

Please refrain from finishing this study and stop work on this whole project. I object for these primary effects:

- Environmental damage during construction
- Effect on wildlife: the movement corridors along the mountain ridges south-west to north-east would be sliced off
- Aesthetics of messing up remote wilderness zones
- commercialization of the wrong kind along the route, also with towering billboards
- worst, in times where we have a federal spending deficit of 40 cents out of every dollar - we cannot spend money on this.

**From: PTCQUALLS**

*March 15, 2011*

Please do not build I3 across north Georgia. I can name a list of quality of life and environmental reasons not to do it. For whatever reasons you can list for building it--and I am sure there are many--if it is done, what will remain will be a diminished state in many ways. It will not be an improvement.

**From: PTCQUALLS**

*March 30, 2011*

Please find some viable alternative to constructing I3 through the mountains of north Georgia. Enough destruction of beautiful resources has already occurred, and, for a whole list of reasons, we must take efforts to not divide any more of these areas with yet another highway.

**From: R Krone (Mineral Bluff, GA)**

*March 21, 2011*

The era has passed when new interstate highways represent a beneficial choice for most Americans. The proposed I-3 would be an intrusion upon some of the most beautiful mountain topography in the southeast. Railroads are capable of handling the freight and improved public transportation can be developed that won't involve cutting swaths of new roadway through the landscape.

**From: R Krone (Mineral Bluff, GA)**

*May 29, 2011*

The justification for new interstate highways is not applicable any more. I am firmly opposed to a new highway through the north Georgia mountains for environmental reasons. I have a home near Mineral Bluff, GA and do not want to see any area nearby further destroyed for motor vehicles. Freight traffic can be accommodated with improvements to the major railroads in the states of Georgia, South Carolina and Tennessee.

**From: R S McDonald**

*March 21, 2011*

The ill-advised I-3 project is another boondoggle we can't afford. Each of the proposed routes outlined in the study would have negative impact on tourism in the communities they would invade. But more importantly, the nation needs to stop spending millions of dollars it doesn't have on projects it doesn't need. If Congress is serious about cutting spending, this is a great place to start.

**From: Rachel Schneider**

*May 27, 2011*

Please stop wasting money on studies and roads most people do not want. We have enough roads in the mountains now and the State is unable to maintain the roads we do have. If taxpayers money is burning a hole in your pocket, consider repaving Hwy. 369 from Gainesville to Cumming and the other hundreds of heavily travelled roads in just as bad a shape or worse. These are a safety hazard. We have enough environmental damage being done to our landscape with the severe storms and extremes of temperature. We do not need to exacerbate the situation by building more roads.

**From: RAYA\_MEAD**

*May 28, 2011*

This is a huge, unnecessary, destructive road project through the southern appalachian mountains, especially in this time of budget shortfalls.

**From: RDBOB**

*April 5, 2011*

Just say NO to I-3

**From: Rick Lingsch**

*June 3, 2011*

Construction of an Interstate highway through the areas under study will result in a dramatic and negative change. The hill and mountain areas are special precisely because they are not easily traversed via high speed expressways. These are precious natural areas that will be detracted by the growth and development that would occur over time with the construction of the highway.

As a resident of Dahlonega, GA I am opposed to these plans. The money would be better spent improving the existing major transportation corridors. We do not want or need a major highway cutting through the areas being studied. Save the public funds or redirect them to improving and enhancing our existing infrastructure.

**From: RIDGEWRITER**

*May 29, 2011*

What a waste of our money. We don't need the road. Why destroy some of the most beautiful sections of the eastern states and pave over it with toxic materials? Spend the money where we need it; education and the elderly. Or better yet...Don't spend it! Help the economy by not spending it.

**From: RILEYBRIAR05**

*March 16, 2011*

No one has ever stated any need for a new highway from Savannah to Knoxville, which would actually be longer than existing routes. Until some good reason to build a new highway is identified, we shouldn't be wasting our money studying it. We understand that the current study of "the steps and estimated funding necessary" to build I-3 is required by law and has to be completed, but once it's done, any money remaining from the Congressional earmark should be returned to the Treasury so it can go to more useful purposes. The required report to Congress shouldn't contain any language that might encourage them to devote any more money or study to this ill-conceived project. Any conceivable route from Savannah to Knoxville would have devastating impacts on some of the most precious natural resources in the Southeast, and would permanently destroy the rural character that is one of the primary reasons people love the southern Appalachians.

**From: RINICAT84**

*March 22, 2011*

I-3 is unnecessary, wasteful, and destructive, and that I don't want it. For real, I live in north Georgia, and there is no need for this road. Existing roads work very nicely, I have never found bad traffic north of Gainesville. Find something useful to do with that money.

**From: Robin Richardson**

*June 1, 2011*

I would like to get more information on the new route being considered ("through" Dahlonega, GA) and why other routes are not acceptable. I have searched the internet but maps are too small to view and the information is a bit vague. What exactly is proposed & why? With this information I hope to have a better understanding and will have the ability to discuss it intelligently on my website.

**From: Robin Richardson**

*June 2, 2011*

Thank you for the information and links.

Have those proposing the routes actually taken a thorough look at the areas affected (by any route suggested) or basically used maps and general information? There are many waterfalls that would be affected by taking this route. Although I think this could be good for Dahlonega (a tourist town), I think that the cost would be higher than taking other routes.

Why is the route taking Hwy 441 (through the very north east edge of GA) not considered as a good choice? There has been a great deal put into that route over the last few years making much (if not all) of it a 4 lane. Hwy 441

looks to be a more direct route (to I-40 - to Knoxville). I would think that this would save a great deal of money. This would also be the way I would take to get to Knoxville, it's faster and more direct - even from Dahlonega.

Also, according to the link you sent the 3rd Infantry Division Hwy Corridor has not "been designated as a future Interstate", yet I've heard that this will be I-3 (which is an interstate). Could you please explain? I've looked for the definition of a highway corridor and can't seem to find an explanation, could you please furnish this?

**From: Rogers**

*March 15, 2011*

I am opposed to any new highway construction that passes through or that will impact existing National Forest or wilderness areas. Please do not proceed with any 3ID alternatives.

**From: Sandy Steele (Dahlonega, GA)**

*June 3, 2011*

I speak for many citizens of Dahlonega, Georgia, who emphatically do NOT want I-3 routed through this clean, natural, environment in North Georgia and nearby Appalachian forest. There is NO pressing need for a route from Savannah to Tennessee. Construction and resulting traffic would pollute the environment and its inherent flora and fauna. I-3 is an abominable WASTE of tax payer money at a time like this (especially when 60 miles south, in Atlanta, there is more need for grid lock traffic relief both surface streets and interstate). Lastly, cease and desist with the wasteful money spent on further "studies."

**From: SCISSON**

*June 9, 2011*

The proposed I-3 interstate is a terrible idea. The route from Dahlonega to Ellijay, particularly, is especially beautiful and it would be disastrous ecologically to build this highway. I feel this idea needs to be killed permanently and the money that has been appropriated for the feasibility study should be removed and used where it would be more beneficial. This road would be astronomically expensive to build and we don't need or want it.

**From: Sharon Coogle (Blue Ridge, GA)**

*June 8, 2011*

It is extremely ludicrous to me that we are spending money to study building a road that promotes the burning of fossil fuels; that would be detrimental to local communities, watersheds and landscapes; that would abet urban sprawl and that would be horrifyingly expensive to build when we cannot afford to maintain existing roads and bridges. I urge you to shut down this study and abandon the fantasy that we should build a new interstate highway through southern Appalachia.

**From: SHELLEDL**

*May 31, 2011*

It does not seem logical to move forward - there is no transportation, economic, or other need for the proposed highway, which is no shorter than existing routes. And, the proposed route, known as Corridor A, would add to the increase in community separation and segregation - essentially have devastating effects on the cultural heritage of northwest Georgia and eastern Tennessee, as well as increasing pressures on the Chattahoochee National Forest.

**From: SMITH2705 (GA)**

*April 2, 2011*

As a resident of Georgia, I generally oppose any new highways through the Appalachian Mountains in north Georgia. I oppose any route that passes through Great Smokey Mountains National Park. I oppose any route that transects the Appalachian National Scenic Trail. I oppose any route that damages Cherokee National Forest, Nantahala National Forest or Chattahoochee National Forest. These areas have been designated for the purpose of preserving places of natural beauty, I would ask that these designations be respected. The proposed option of a route passing south of these areas through Dahlonega, Ellijay and Chatsworth, GA would be a fair compromise and better alternative.

**From: SOLOVEGREN**

*May 28, 2011*

I believe that I-3 is a waste of taxpayer money and should never be built, or even studied. It will be environmentally destructive to the Appalachian Mountain region. Use existing corridors through the mountains, not new cuts through this sensitive area.

**From: SONGBIRD00004**

*May 27, 2011*

NO I-3 for the Earth and its people!

**From: SOUDGM**

*March 15, 2011*

My wife and I are unequivocally opposed to the construction of the I-3 Corridor because it is a wasteful use of taxpayer dollars, an unnecessary and destructive intrusion into some of America's most beautiful and pristine land, and an unconscionable outlay of funds at a time when the U.S. economy is hurting.

**From: Southern Oaks**

*April 8, 2011*

Suggest the planning phase go back to Charles Norwood's notes for I-3. The most beneficial route for the State would be to follow the highway 17 route and connect with route 441 north of Toccoa. This route would be more help to areas needing road improvements and be a quicker route to I-40. This route would also reduce traffic flow on the Atlanta corridors.

**From: SPOGATZ**

*April 5, 2011*

This roadway is not needed. It destroys natural forest and does not benefit anyone that would be near the road. The damage to the tourist trade along the route would mean many of the small communities off this path would cease to exist. Just say NO!!!!

**From: Sue Harmon**

*March 27, 2011*

Below is the message I sent to all my elected representatives who might have a chance to vote on legislation related to this issue. While I appreciate all the hard work you and your staff have put into the proposed corridors, I do hope that this issue can soon be put to rest and our beautiful back country and local economies can be protected and more federal tax dollars can be saved in the process.

As one of your constituents, I am hopeful you will listen to my concerns about the proposed I-3 Interstate currently under study by the Federal Highway Administration.

- All four proposed corridors (A,B,C,D) will disrupt vibrant local economies built upon tourism that is dependent upon the last vestiges of pristine backcountry left in our region. We already have enough roads to sufficiently access and service these areas without further loss of wilderness, which can never be replaced.
- The cost involved is prohibitive and not affordable.
- The possible (maybe probable) transport of nuclear materials along the proposed Interstate-3 raises considerable safety concerns for both the land and the people of our beautiful Appalachian mountains.

I urge you to vote to stop this study and have all funds being used for this purpose to be returned to the treasury for further protection of our forests and wild lands in the Southeastern United States.

**From: Sue P Harmon**

*March 27, 2011*

I am hopeful you will listen to my concerns about the proposed I-3 Interstate currently under study by the Federal Highway Administration.

- All four proposed corridors (A,B,C,D) will disrupt vibrant local economies built upon tourism that is dependent upon the last vestiges of pristine backcountry left in our region. We already have enough roads to sufficiently access and service these areas without further loss of wilderness, which can never be replaced.
- The cost involved is prohibitive and not affordable.
- The possible (maybe probable) transport of nuclear materials along the proposed Interstate-3 raises considerable safety concerns for both the land and the people of our beautiful Appalachian mountains.

I hope that this study will now stop and all funds being used for this purpose to be returned to the treasury for further protection of our forests and wild lands in the Southeastern United States.

**From: Sunshine Mountain Farms**

*March 15, 2011*

I don't see the need for an Interstate highway through the southern Appalachians. It would be environmentally destructive and extremely expensive. Investing money in mass transit like high speed rail makes much more sense and would reduce our dependence on fossil fuels rather than continuing to build massive highways so we can burn more gasoline. Please do the right thing and stop this ill-conceived project!!!

**From: Susan Caster**

*April 4, 2011*

We do not need a new highway from Savannah to Knoxville; to build I-3 would be a dreadful waste of tax payer's money. In these days of limited budget I can not believe that money is even being spent to "study" a useless project like this. It is an insult to the Third Infantry Division to put their name on such an ill conceived project that would destroy the southern Appalachians, waste limited resources (that could be better spent maintaining current roads,) and destroy valuable natural resources (no matter which route.) Please put an end to the idea of I-3 forever!

**From: Suzan Satterfield** (Norcross, GA)

*May 28, 2011*

I'm a resident of Norcross, GA and I oppose building the I-3. I frequently travel to both Savannah (my home town) and Knoxville. The roads to both are efficient and in great shape. I-3 would destroy more environment, particularly our beautiful fragile Appalachian mountains. There's no valid proof that I-3 would help economic development. In fact, it would most likely destroy local businesses. It would decimate the charm of any small town it runs through. This road is a boondoggle and should not be built. Just because federal money is available doesn't make it right or necessary. Stop the I-3 now and let's concentrate on more important matters.

**From: T Colkett**

*March 22, 2011*

Gentlemen: I feel that all four alternatives to the 3rd Infantry Division Highway are unworkable and harmful both to the communities directly affected and the environment in general.

This study should end now! The highway would destroy the quality of living and economies of the communities through which it passes as well as destroy the pristine nature of the back-country areas which are so vital to our national heritage. There are sufficient highways in existence and we shouldn't be wasting money on such a fruitless and wasteful project.

**From: T C Patton**

*May 6, 2011*

I strongly oppose any version of I-3 that would pass through Western North Carolina. This route is not needed and would simply duplicate the already existing I-40, I-26, and I-77 routes that cross WNC. Any new interstate through the mountains of Western NC would be tremendously destructive to the environment, not to mention being hugely expensive. Instead of building another highway, you should focus on improving rail transportation to get interstate tractor trailer loads off these mountain highways.

**From: T C Patton**

*March 18, 2011*

I-3 is an unnecessary, overly expensive boondoggle that should not be built on any alignment. The environmental damage done to the mountainous terrain of NC, SC, GA, and TN would be irreversible, ruining many of the very reasons (hiking, fishing, camping, hunting, and beautiful views) that make this area into such a huge tourist destination.

Please do not build any of the corridors currently under consideration. The money would be far better spent making desperately needed improvements to existing roads in the region, making them safer for residents and tourists alike.

**From: Ted Doll and Wayne Jenkins, Georgia Forest Watch**

*February 22, 2011*

The Board of Directors and membership of Georgia Forest Watch ([www.gafw.org](http://www.gafw.org)) urge you to hold public meetings during the 1-3 Study. The potential impact of the proposed interstate highway concerns us deeply.

We understand that there is currently no plan to hold public meetings about the proposed 1-3 during this study. As you know, public input is one of the cornerstones of effective government. Although this is a preliminary study, we believe the failure to hold public meetings improperly limits the opportunities for our members and other citizens to provide input into the entire process.

The mission of Georgia Forest Watch is to promote forest management that leads to naturally self-sustaining forests and watersheds in the National Forests of Georgia. We have actively contributed to the wise management of Georgia National Forests since our founding over 25 years ago. We have advised the US Forest Service on hundreds of forest management proposals, and as a result, the citizens of Georgia today enjoy a natural environment that would otherwise have been clear-cut and exploited. The forests of north Georgia are a critically important resource, not only for the residents of our area, but for citizens of nearby metropolitan areas, for whom the forests provide recreation, nature appreciation, and solitude. Importantly, the forests are a source of exceptional biodiversity, as well as the origin of much of the fresh drinking water for local communities, Atlanta, and neighboring states.

Meetings should be held after proposed routes and designs have been developed and after the draft report is released. It is especially important that such meetings be held at numerous locations in North Georgia and western North Carolina, as these areas would be most impacted if I-3 were built. At a minimum, public meetings should be held in Clayton, Clarkesville, Dahlonega, Hiawassee, Chatsworth, and Ellijay, Georgia. Providing numerous locations ensures that at least one meeting will be within a reasonable driving distance for most people in the affected region. Georgia Forest Watch volunteers would be glad to help secure appropriate meeting space for such gatherings.

We believe that public meetings presenting the conclusions of the current study and soliciting public inputs on this highway are essential parts of the democratic process. The meetings, at a minimum should include presentations by FHWA and Wilbur Smith Associates of relevant information about the proposed project and opportunities for the public to provide both written and oral comments. In addition, public inputs should be summarized and addressed in the final report of the study. Public inputs should inform the conclusions of the study concerning the advisability and value of the proposed highway.

**From: TEDGAR**

*June 8, 2011*

I strongly oppose spending one more dime on a project that has no purpose. Return the remainder of the study monies to the Treasury. In these tough economic times, I'm sure that there is a better use for taxpayer dollars. The last thing we need in beautiful northeast Georgia is a new highway. It looks like 3 of the 4 proposed routes would compromise the beauty of our National parks. Let's spend money on fixing existing infrastructure.

**From: Terri Karycki (GA)**

*March 30, 2011*

I moved to the northeast Georgia mountains 5 years ago because of the tranquility of the mountains and nature contained therein. My family also enjoys the many diverse activities our area and the Appalachian area has to offer. We have plenty of highways and do not want or need Corridor K or I-3. Please don't kill the environment that is so

precious to those of us who live and play in these mountains. Money would be better spent on road improvements / expansion of existing highways in this area. Thank you.

**From: Tom Johnson** (Atlanta, GA)

*March 23, 2011*

I'm writing to express my concern over the proposed I-3 linking Savannah to Knoxville. This road will do untold damage to some of the most beautiful parts of the SE. This will hurt natural resources and tourism alike. I've seen all 4 alternatives and they are all unacceptable. If nothing else, the tremendous cost of construction for such a road should be enough to stop it. The US cannot afford such a project. Please cease all study and consideration of this road.

**From: Tracy Zuckerman** (Roswell, GA)

*March 23, 2011*

Please do not consider putting a superhighway through North Georgia. This area should be preserved and appreciated for generations to come. The urban sprawl has spread enough from Atlanta in all directions. A highway here would only make this worse. We are already fighting for water rights and over the environmental stresses, sewage and run off problems and litter from too rapid growth around Atlanta please don't subject our North GA Mountains to these same issues.

**From: Vicki Miller**

*March 26, 2011*

No one has ever stated a need for a new highway from Savannah to Knoxville, which would actually be longer than existing routes. Until some good reason to build a new highway is identified, we shouldn't be wasting our money studying it. Also, any route from Savannah to Knoxville would have devastating impacts on some of the most precious natural resources in the Southeast, and would permanently destroy the rural character that is one of the primary reasons people love the area and come here. Once this study is done, any money remaining from the Congressional earmark should be returned to the Treasury so it can go to more useful purposes.

**From: Walter Smith**

*June 3, 2011*

I am writing this letter to express my opposition to further feasibility study for Interstate 3 (the 3rd Infantry Division Highway Corridor). As such, please include my comments as public feedback for the study. Although my concerns with this project are many, my primary concern lies with the need for the project itself. The project corridor as currently proposed, for example, would be only marginally shorter than existing interstate routes between Knoxville and Savannah, and with a potential cost of up to \$6.1 billion, the economic costs of the project alone far outweigh any economic benefits, especially in our current economic climate.

As a taxpayer and resident of the study region, I (like many of my fellow citizens) have serious concerns about the effects of the roadway on our local communities, especially since multiple past studies have shown interstate highways to be largely detrimental to local economies by way of diverting traffic around existing business areas, effectively killing them off. In addition, many of our local economies in the southern Appalachian region are now largely reliant or are becoming increasingly reliant on ecotourism as a business model for economic growth. Interstate 3 would have innumerable negative effects on air quality, water quality, wildlife populations, viewsheds,

and other natural features throughout the Appalachian region that are currently attractors for tourists to our region and a fuel for our economy; for example, virtually every potential corridor highlighted to date for the highway would eradicate idyllic, scenic routes currently used as a boon for tourism for local communities by their attraction of leaf-watchers, motor enthusiasts, cyclists, and others. These visitors to our region (and contributors to our local economies) are attracted to these roads for their quiet, idyllic, and scenic attributes - not out of a desire to travel a four-lane highway corridor at high speed through substantial rock cuts and treeless stretches with speeding transfer trucks. If Interstate 3 is built, these visitors will go elsewhere, leaving our local economies behind and destroying numerous small businesses already established on the basis of this tourism economy within the project corridor.

There is no clear need for Interstate 3, and in the interest of taxpayers within the study corridor and in the greater interest of our nation's economy, I urge you, the planning committee, and members of Congress to defund the project and instead allocate funds to a more useful purpose (even for deficit reduction) - not for the construction of a new roadway with an extravagant price tag, little need, and potentially devastating local economic and environmental impacts. If Congress wishes to honor the deserving troops of the 3rd Infantry Division, let them do so by dedicating existing routes through the region, via signage. This would be remarkably more cost-efficient and honor the division with a scenic, attractive corridor worthy of bearing their name rather than an unsightly, exorbitantly expensive interstate highway.

**From: Wayne Jenkins, Georgia ForestWatch**

*June 8, 2011*

Georgia ForestWatch is a north Georgia based conservation non-profit with hundreds of members across the state of Georgia. Our primary work is focused on protecting the health and other values of the national forests of Georgia. The 650 thousand acres of the Chattahoochee-Oconee National Forest that lay across the northern tier of our state and the many small rural communities embedded in this forest would be devastated both environmentally and socially by the construction of a large highway through the area. The unique qualities of our area, small town feel, steep mountainous terrain, comparatively clean air and abundant streams and sensitive areas, make the construction of any road a challenge, but a large- scale highway would do untold harm. With the north/south running arteries out of Atlanta; I-75, 515 and 400, a transportation corridor running east and west, across the south trending mountain ranges would be a disaster.

ForestWatch believes that the 1.3 million dollars appropriated for this study was a terrible waste for the American tax-payer. We understand that the folks commissioned to do the present study will not make the final decisions on the various proposals and routes. They also have not examined the potential impacts and negative outcomes a large highway through the area would have. We therefore wish to share our concerns at this time.

The preferred route described in the study, known as Corridor A, would have devastating effects on the cultural heritage of northwest Georgia and eastern Tennessee, and would negatively affect air and water quality in the area, as well as increasing pressures on the Chattahoochee National Forest. Effects on sensitive and rare habitats and crucial drinking water resources could be horrific.

There is no transportation, economic, or other need for the proposed highway, which is no shorter than existing routes. The swath that such construction would cut across the mountains would detract from the unique scenic values that play such an important role, now more than ever, in the local economies dependent upon tourism, outdoor recreation and summer/and retirement development. The short term jobs created by the project and the wealth created for the contractors will do little to help these local communities once the road is built. As has been demonstrated time and again, large highways actually harm small downtown businesses by attracting competition and concentrating it around exit and access points.

The study shows the construction of I-3, with a price tag of up to \$6.1 billion, would be cost-prohibitive. Particularly in light of the lack of any benefit and the damage it would cause, there is no reason to consider it further. What an insult to the American tax-payer and especially the local communities which would be affected by this highway to waste even more tax dollars on this boondoggle. It would be better to improve our existing roads, spend the funds on a shift to alternative energy, or address Atlanta's transportation challenges.

Now that the congressional requirement to study "the steps and estimated funding necessary" to build a highway has been completed, nearly \$1 million of the original federal earmark of \$1.32 million remains unspent. Rather than wasting the remaining funds on further "optional sub-studies," this money should be returned to the Treasury where it can be put to a useful purpose. We have all had to tighten our economic belts. Here is an opportunity for Congress to show fiscal prudence to the hard working folks of north Georgia, by showing the good judgment to change directions when a project does not make sense..

Please keep ForestWatch apprised of your progress and any decisions or new developments related to this proposal.

Thank you very much.

**From: WEBECRUZIN143** (Lumpkin County, GA)

*March 31, 2011*

As a resident of Lumpkin County, I strongly oppose any 3rd Infantry Division Highway proposed route, but most strongly, route 1. This proposed road will destroy the Chattahoochee National forest and other natural areas in the North Georgia Mountains, and it not needed. In this time of government debt, even doing a study on this type of unnecessary road creation is an abomination!

**From: WEBECRUZIN143** (Lumpkin County, GA)

*May 27, 2011*

As a resident of Dawsonville, in Lumpkin county, and within 2 miles of the proposed path of I-3, I would be personally negatively impacted by this terrible idea. However, the impact to the surrounding natural resources and wildlife would be IMMEASURABLE! There is no need for yet another highway to maintain in North Georgia, not to mention the detriment to the residents who moved here for the rural, natural beauty. STOP wasting our taxpayer dollars on ridiculous propositions like this one!

**From: WEBJON2**

*May 28, 2011*

Stop I- 3 we don't need it in our county

**From: Wilbert Griffith**

*May 27, 2011*

Thank you for accepting comments about Federal Highway Administration proposals for I-3. The proposed route, known as 'Corridor A' would have devastating effects on the cultural heritage of northwest Georgia and eastern Tennessee as well as increasing pressures on the Chattahoochee National Forest while negatively affecting air and water quality in the area. We don't want I-3 built and suggest any additional "optional sub-studies" would be a huge waste of money.

**From: WILKAT1**

*March 21, 2011*

Any time a new interstate is proposed, there is going to be major resistance by those displaced or lives disrupted. This project goes way beyond those "inconveniences". Anyone who has spent time in N.Ga or S/W NC or E.TN knows how devastating this would be to the environment, the character and quality of life in this region. People here don't view this as "progress". For us, it's the opposite. If this is about moving nuclear waste to Oak Ridge.....find a better way. You can devise transportation that is considerably safer than conventional trucks for a whole lot less than building this interstate. If this is about creating jobs.....fix the crumbling infrastructure we have now.....but leave us alone!

**From: Will Lance (Atlanta, GA)**

*May 31, 2011*

Please do not do any more studies on I-3 and please do not build the thing. The federal government can honor veterans by placing memorials along some existing major highways (like I-75) but please, particularly in this recession, do not use more money that is borrowed from China to build a highway that is not needed.

Some say that I-3 could help with bypassing Atlanta traffic for trucks; but with energy prices going up companies should be increasingly considering shipping by rail rather than truck. This is because it is much more efficient and also is not as susceptible to high traffic times of day. Further, any trucks going from Savannah up toward I-75 really should be going more at night if they want to avoid traffic. And if any I-3 were ever built it would likely not take long for it too to become congested as other Atlanta roads are now; because if I-3 were built, the area it would be built in would soon itself become part of sprawl choked Metro Atlanta and clogged with traffic like other areas are. That is if gasoline is still cheap enough to use for so many cars by the time I-3 ever were ever built.

Our federal and state governments need to finally learn restraint and stop building our nation so far into debt. The U.S. already has by far the best road system in the world. No one is catching up with the U.S. when it comes to roads. But nations like China and the E.U. are far surpassing us when it comes to freight and passenger trains as well as with education. The U.S. needs to quit thinking roads, roads, roads and start thinking about streamlining our infrastructure so that we can efficiently criss-cross this nation by train. As gas prices rise the U.S. is going to be more and more hamstrung by its oil dependence if we do not start really infesting in alternative forms of transportation (such as trains). Quit building so many damn roads and ruining our environment while also draining whatever oil fields we still have access to. Put that money in trains and in education so that the next generation will hopefully be MUCH smarter than its predecessors and will find a better, more efficient, sustainable way to get around than by only the ubiquitous automobile.

**From: Will Lance**

*May 31, 2011*

This message is in regard to I-3. Please, please, please do NOT build it. It is a ridiculous waste of money even to propose it and much more so if any of it is ever built. It's time that the U.S. had a federal train administration and not just a highway administration. Other countries like China and the E.U. are much better set for the likely expensive energy prices of the future than is the U.S. And why is that? It is because they have long invested in trains as well as highways so as gasoline prices go up their citizens can still opt to take a train to their destination. Their prices will likely fluctuate with rising energy prices as well, but not near so bad as do the gas pump prices, because each trip a train makes is shared by many more people than is one car. They get to share the cost and thereby reduce it per

person. Please don't do any further studies on I-3. Our North Georgia mountains are already under siege by sprawl type development. Put that money into our schools. Please

**3<sup>rd</sup> Infantry Division Highway Corridor Study  
Public Question & Answer Webinars  
May 17, 2011, 12:00-1:00 pm and 6:30-7:30 pm  
May 18, 2011, 10:00-11:00 am**

Three online question and answer sessions were held during May 17 and 18, 2011. The intent of these sessions was to present project highlights to interested stakeholders and to provide a venue for participants to ask questions. Between the three sessions, a total of 50 individuals attended.

**Project Overview**

John Mettelle (Consultant Team) ran the meeting, presenting an overview of the 3<sup>rd</sup> Infantry Division Highway Corridor Study. As required by SAFETEA-LU, the study provides a big-picture look at construction costs and project development steps to create a connecting roadway between Savannah, Augusta, and Knoxville. It is not a project and will not recommend any alignment to be built. No construction funding has been identified.

The study team assembled an inventory of existing data sources and developed control points at Savannah, Augusta, Lavonia, and Knoxville to define the areas which corridors must connect. Four corridors were developed and screened against fatal flaws to eliminate unreasonable options which would have excessive impacts on the environment and major resources. Four design levels were applied to the corridors passing the screening. Costs were estimated ranging between \$560 million for a context sensitive (minimal build) two-lane highway to Dalton and up to \$6.1 billion for an interstate-level route. Signing an existing route with no new construction is estimated to cost less than \$500,000. At the conclusion of the project, FHWA will submit a report to Congress summarizing the study findings.

**Questions from Attendees on Alternatives Considered**

Q: Who decides the control points and their significance?

A: Three Control Points were identified in the law; the Lavonia Control Point added in the FHWA task definition.

Q: Could an east-west corridor be built to connect the control points?

A: This could be addressed through a sub-study on traffic movements. The 14<sup>th</sup> Amendment Project addresses more of an east-west corridor.

Q: With Lavonia being a node, has the new medical campus at I-85 and GA 17 been considered?

A: Specific resources have not been identified at this level of detail.

Q: Do you have a mileage comparison for the existing and proposed routes?

A: Interstates along the eastern study area boundary from Savannah to Knoxville form a route 420 miles long; along the western edge is 460 miles. Corridor A is 435 miles; Corridor B is 365 miles; Corridor C is 370 miles; and D is 385 miles. These are measured along the centerline of the corridor and don't count curves that would be built into a real road. Corridors C and D are shorter but would face more terrain challenges.

Q: Existing highways parallel to the routes are being widened to improve traffic flow. Why is a new route needed?

A: The Expert Working Group (EWG) encouraged the study team to reuse existing roadway segments rather than developing new alignments. Costs account for these segments which are already being improved by the DOTs.

Q: Does the study consider Interstate level design?

A: An Interstate level along the corridor was considered in developing the cost estimates. Sections which already meet Interstate standards were assumed not to require any further upgrades and were not included in cost estimates.

Q: Why are roads considered through small towns instead of interstates?

A: Environmental costs would have to be looked at in more detail if further planning efforts are conducted. A range of costs were provided including Interstate levels through a Practical Solution level which would reduce impacts. At this level, corridors are shown as mile-wide, which allows a lot of flexibility to avoid communities and sensitive environmental resources.

Q: Does the Super-2 option include right-of-way for four lanes?

A: No. It would only acquire enough for a two-lane roadway.

Q: Can the study consider rail alternatives instead of highway?

A: The law requires consideration of a highway corridor.

Q: Would it result in fewer costs and impacts to continue widening US 441 through the National Park rather than building a new alignment?

A: Because conceptual corridors are a mile wide, flexibility exists within each corridor to reuse existing highway or build on new alignments nearby. Corridor C generally follows US 441 but was eliminated because of its impacts to the Great Smoky Mountains National Park. Commercial vehicles are banned from US 441 through the park today.

Q: Is there a way to connect the corridor to Corridor K for a connection to I-75? Would this reduce economic and environmental costs?

A: This option could be explored; it was suggested by the EWG for consideration. Because of the conceptual level of study, it would be premature to say whether it would result in more or fewer impacts. There is certainly that potential.

Q: Where would the alternative pass through Dählonega?

A: At this level of detail, corridors are shown as one mile wide. Within this width, there is a lot of flexibility to adjust a highway to minimize impacts. Development of an actual alignment would occur much further into the project development process, beyond the scope of this study.

#### **Questions from Attendees on Costs and Schedule**

Q: What is included in right-of-way and utility costs?

A: For conceptual, mile-wide corridors, costs include average values for electric, water, and sewer. Contingencies are included to cover other elements which are unknown at this level of detail. Details would be better defined when/if the project advances.

Q: Does the study of cost include wildlife crossings?

A: This is not addressed specifically; however, environmental mitigations and contingencies would be adequate to cover this type of feature. This could be explored during a future planning or NEPA phase.

Q: Do cost estimates reflect future construction years or current year dollars?

A: Current year dollars were employed in both the DOT cost estimating tools used for the study. Factors are included for inflation and contingencies.

Q: Is it realistic to believe there will ever be funding for this project?

A: At this time, the state long range plans do not identify this project. Therefore, it is possible to infer that this project is not a priority for them. To get into these plans, the costs and needs for the projects would have to be assessed.

Q: How long could it take to fast track this project for construction?

A: The corridor is approximately 400 miles long. The project development process would require many steps and

additional studies to examine the project need and divide the corridor into smaller sections. All Departments of Transportation (DOTs) are facing funding shortfalls and the project is controversial, both of which can impact the timeline. The team looked at similar projects to compare timelines, which can take 20 to 50 years or more. Fundamentally, the DOTs have to decide whether to pursue this corridor.

#### **Questions from Attendees on Further Study Topics**

Q: If the optional sub-studies are not listed in the law, how can they be considered?

A: The sub-studies were set up to give FHWA the flexibility to perform extra studies which may be necessary to respond to further questions from Congress.

Q: Why has no project purpose been defined?

A: This is a conceptual study, not a project. The purpose for a project would have to be established through the planning process, which has not occurred yet. It is not included in the Report to Congress for this study but is one of the steps to complete if a transportation project is identified for further development.

Q: Have traffic volumes or urban congestion been considered?

A: The team looked at information readily available from DOTs and MPOs, but a detailed analysis has not been completed. One could be completed in the future as an optional sub-study.

Q: Were studies conducted to explore congestion in Atlanta? Would the corridor provide relief for the congested Interstate system?

A: This has not been studied at this time. Optional sub-studies could be recommended to explore this issue. The Lavonia Control Point was intentionally included in part to focus the study beyond the Atlanta area.

Q: Have economic development studies been completed for cities along the proposed routes?

A: An economic analysis for projected growth potential has not been completed but could be studied in the future. The legislative history of Section 1927 indicates that the highway is intended to connect traditionally underserved, economically disadvantaged areas. This suggests economic development is one of the factors driving interest in this corridor.

Q: Were regional air quality standards and non-attainment areas considered?

A: At this conceptual level, corridors are broadly defined as mile-wide paths. Specific impacts to air quality have not been quantified but could be in the future.

#### **Questions from Attendees on Public Involvement**

Q: Will the team be meeting with the public?

A: If further sub-studies are conducted, public meetings could be included. At this time, recommendations for further sub-studies have not been determined.

Q: Have there been discussions with individual communities which would be impacted?

A: Because this study is occurring at a conceptual level, individual meetings have not been conducted at this time. The corridor is not included in any statewide or regional plans; it would be misleading to hold meetings this early in the process. If the more traditional planning sub-studies are conducted, a public outreach element would be conducted.

Q: Who reviews maps and comments? Can other corridors be suggested?

A: Additional corridors have been suggested by the EWG and public. Suggestions can be submitted via the website or email.

Q: Have public comments been in favor of the project or in opposition?

A: As of the end of April, 112 comments have been submitted through the website. Five have been in favor of the project, plus a few suggesting new alternatives. Other comments have been opposed to the project. Generally, concerns have been expressed about the impacts to resources (Parks, forests, scenic beauty, quality of life, etc), the lack of purpose for the project, and anticipated costs in light of the current economic climate.

Q: Have you considered public opposition which will occur in response to Corridor A, especially in light of the abandoned Northern Arc proposal in Atlanta?

A: The team has heard from the EWG and the public that there are concerns about any corridor through the northern portion of the study area. We recognize any corridor would be controversial. We will acknowledge this fact in the Report to Congress. Controversy often extends the project timeline.

### **Questions from Attendees on Next Steps**

Q: When is the final study to be submitted? What happens next?

A: A draft will be submitted to FHWA by June 18, 2011. This will form the basis for FHWA's Report to Congress.

Q: When will Congress respond to the Report?

A: The timeline has not been defined. Congress' response to the reports it receives is highly variable. They can request additional information or may be satisfied with the content of the report as is.

Q: What items will be in the Report to Congress?

A: The report will cover what was specified in the law – costs and steps necessary to complete. It will also include a summary of comments from the public and the EWG and a description of the study methodology. It will not include recommendations.

Q: What is your final recommendation – kill the project or recommend further planning?

A: The Consultant team will review input from the public and EWG to determine if any steps should be considered for future planning. The Report to Congress will not include recommendations, only costs and steps to complete.

Q: Can the recommendation to Congress be to not pursue further activities?

A: The Report to Congress has to address the steps to complete and costs to construct a highway facility. Input from the EWG and the public will also be summarized in the Report. The Report does not make a recommendation to Congress. Any further action on the corridor would have to be initiated at the state level.

Q: What input will the public have into the FHWA Report to Congress?

A: Public comments will be summarized in the report, but there is not an opportunity for public review prior to submittal to Congress. Congress requires that Reports to Congress be posted on the web, but specifies that this should not happen until 45 days after the Congress has received the report.

Q: How many more EWG meetings are required following the draft report?

A: Four EWG meetings were scoped for the study; four have been held. The intent of the EWG was to guide the study and answer technical questions, not necessarily to review the report.

### **Other Questions from Attendees**

Q: Why is it called the Third Infantry Division?

A: Congress used this title when they authorized the study and designated funds in the law. The Third Infantry Division is based at Fort Gordon.

Q: Is any government agency advocating this project?

A: Not at this time. The State Long Range Plans do not include the project.

Q: Why is the project considered a “high priority project”?

A: This relates to the section of SAFETEA-LU in which funding was designated. There were just under 6,000 (actually just under 5,100) High Priority Projects designated in the law, three of which relate to this project.

Q: Will today’s presentation be posted on the website?

A: There are technical limitations to what can be posted online. To request a copy, please email [3rdInfantry@dot.gov](mailto:3rdInfantry@dot.gov).