

FEDERAL AID PRIMARY 999
NEW MISSISSIPPI RIVER CROSSING
RELOCATED I-70 and I-64 CONNECTOR

FINAL ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT/SECTION 4(f) EVALUATION

Submitted Pursuant to 42 U. S. C. 4332(2)(c) and 49 U. S. C. 303
by the **U. S. Department of Transportation Federal Highway Administration**
and the **Illinois and Missouri Departments of Transportation**

Cooperating Agencies:

U. S. Army Corps of Engineers
U. S. Coast Guard
U. S. Environmental Protection Agency

U. S. Fish & Wildlife Service
Illinois Department of Natural Resources
Bi-State Development Agency

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ABSTRACT: The preferred alternative involves restructuring the St. Louis (MO)/East St. Louis (IL) core-area interstate network to relieve congestion and traffic crashes on the Poplar Street Bridge, which currently carries all interstate traffic across the Mississippi River at St. Louis on the south side of downtown. I-70 will be rerouted on new alignment and over a new eight-lane bridge across the Mississippi River on the north side of downtown, and an I-64 Connector will link I-64 in Illinois to the new bridge. The preferred alternative will cut 3.5 kilometers (2.2 miles) off a through I-70 trip and 2.6 kilometers (1.6 miles) off a through I-64/I-70 trip, as well as better distribute traffic in downtown St. Louis. The existing I-55/70/64 interchange in Illinois will be raised out of the water table, and the substandard Poplar Street Bridge approach interchange in Missouri will be rebuilt to provide a simplified approach and enhanced I-55 access. The existing I-70 segment in Missouri between the new I-70 bridge and the Poplar Street Bridge will be resigned I-44, and I-44 will be signed common with I-55 from the Poplar Street Bridge to the divergence of the two interstates immediately to the south. Both east- and westbound I-70 will have access to and from both Tucker and Fourteenth, major arterials in the least-congested northwest sector of downtown St. Louis. The preferred alternative also includes downtown traffic control measures and a peak-period transit pricing incentive between Illinois and downtown. The preferred alternative's most significant effects include Section 4(f) involvement at the Jefferson National Expansion Memorial and with four National Register-eligible industrial buildings, relocation of 54 businesses involving some 400 jobs, and effects on 16.9 hectares (41.7 acres) of wetlands, 51,000 cubic meters (66,750 cubic yards) of 100-year floodplain storage, and federally- and state-threatened decurrent false aster (*boltonia decurrens*), which will be mitigated. The project is estimated to generate some 21,000 person-years of direct, indirect, and induced employment, pump \$1.2 billion into the local economy, and help stimulate economic development in the core area.