

*AHTD JOB 061390*

*CROOKED CREEK  
CHANNEL IMPROVEMENTS*



**LOCATION & DESIGN PUBLIC HEARING INFORMATION**

Open Forum Location & Design Public Hearing  
Geyer Springs First Baptist Church  
August 21, 2014

AHTD Environmental Division  
P.O. Box 2261  
Little Rock, AR 72203

For more information, call (501)569-2281  
or email [environmentalmeetings@ahtd.ar.gov](mailto:environmentalmeetings@ahtd.ar.gov).

Project Area

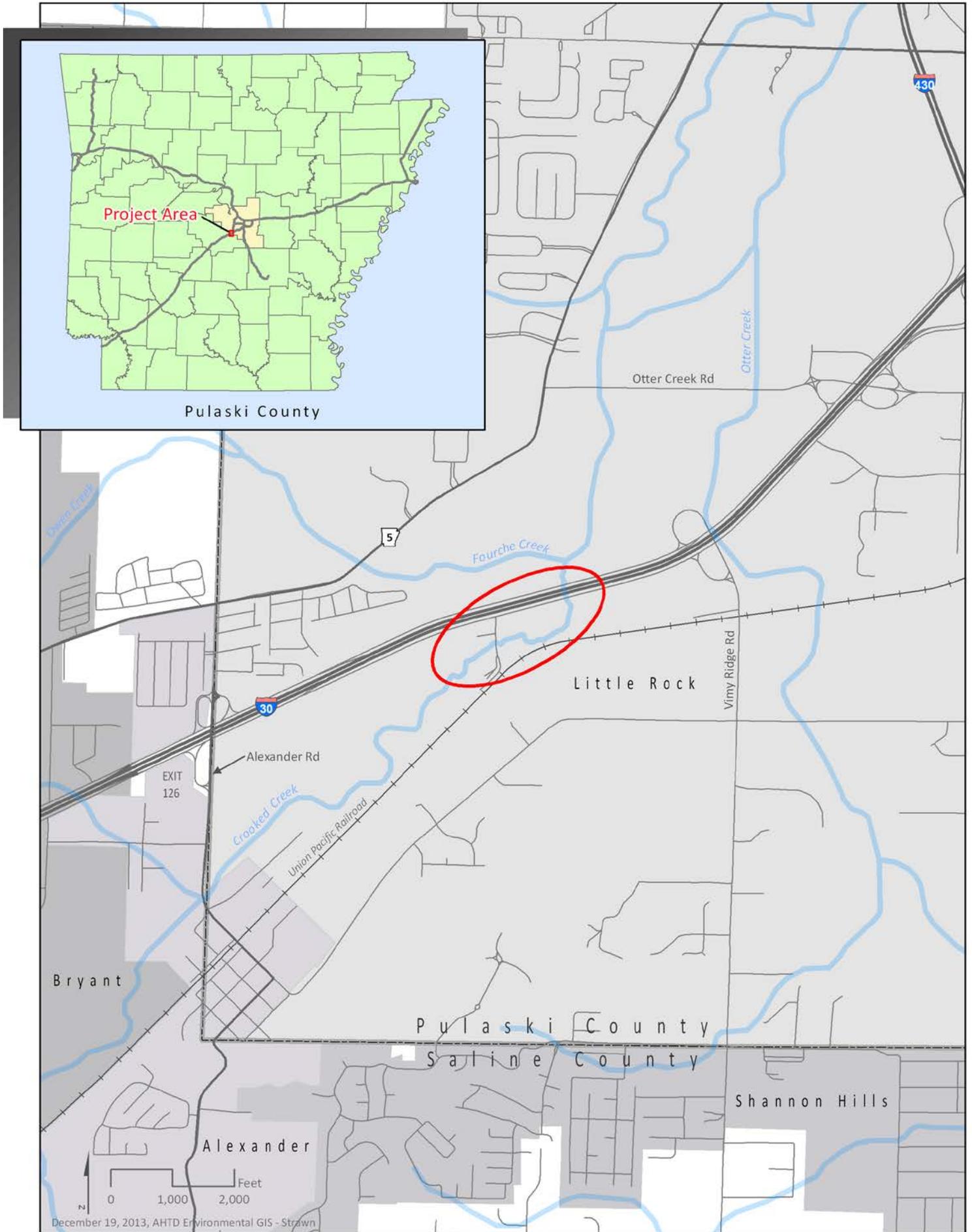


Figure 1

# Location & Design Public Hearing Information

*Welcome to the Location & Design Public Hearing for the Crooked Creek Channel Improvements project. Your attendance and participation are greatly appreciated!*

## 1 What is the Crooked Creek Channel Improvements project?

The Arkansas State Highway and Transportation Department (AHTD), in conjunction with the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), and in cooperation with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, is proposing hydraulic improvements on Crooked Creek to reduce flooding issues on Interstate 30 between Vimy Ridge Road and the Saline County Line in the City of Little Rock. See Figure 1 for the project location.

## 2 What would the project accomplish?

The project would lower the flooding frequency in the project area through hydraulic improvements on Crooked Creek and its floodplain, such as channelization of Crooked Creek, floodplain restoration, berms, and/or flood gates. Both build alternatives under consideration would improve this section of Interstate 30 from a 5-year floodplain to a 50-year flood design.

## 3 What are the alternatives?

### No Action Alternative

The No Action Alternative would provide only routine maintenance for Interstate 30 and no work on Crooked Creek except maintenance at the Interstate 30 bridge. The No Action Alternative would not address the flooding issues on Interstate 30. Road users would continue to experience delays and associated costs when the interstate floods. If development within the floodplain continues, these flood events would likely increase in frequency and duration.

### Alternative 2

Alternative 2 would involve reconstructing 2,068 feet of Crooked Creek immediately upstream of Interstate 30 to a 100-foot wide flat-bottom channel and installing a flood gate on the channel 2,600 feet west of the bridge to prevent water backing up into the frontage road ditches. A three-foot high berm would also be constructed to prevent water from approaching Interstate 30. See Figure 2.

### Alternative 3

Alternative 3 would also construct a flood gate and berm, but also restore the left overbank of Crooked Creek to natural floodplain elevations and only construct the flat-bottom channel at the Interstate 30 bridge, restoring the 100-foot wide channel created when the bridge was built. See Figure 3.

### What is a floodplain?

Floodplains are land areas that become covered by water in a flood event.

### Why would you consider an alternative that does nothing?

The National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) requires decision makers to consider a “no-action” alternative in all NEPA studies. This alternative may not meet the project’s purpose and need, but helps to compare the beneficial and adverse impacts of build alternatives and determine their significance.

### How does a flood gate address the flooding issues?

During flood events, the proposed one-way flap gate will not allow water to backflow and flood the frontage road ditches, but at typical levels will still allow water to drain in the opposite direction from the frontage road ditches to Crooked Creek.

Alternative 2

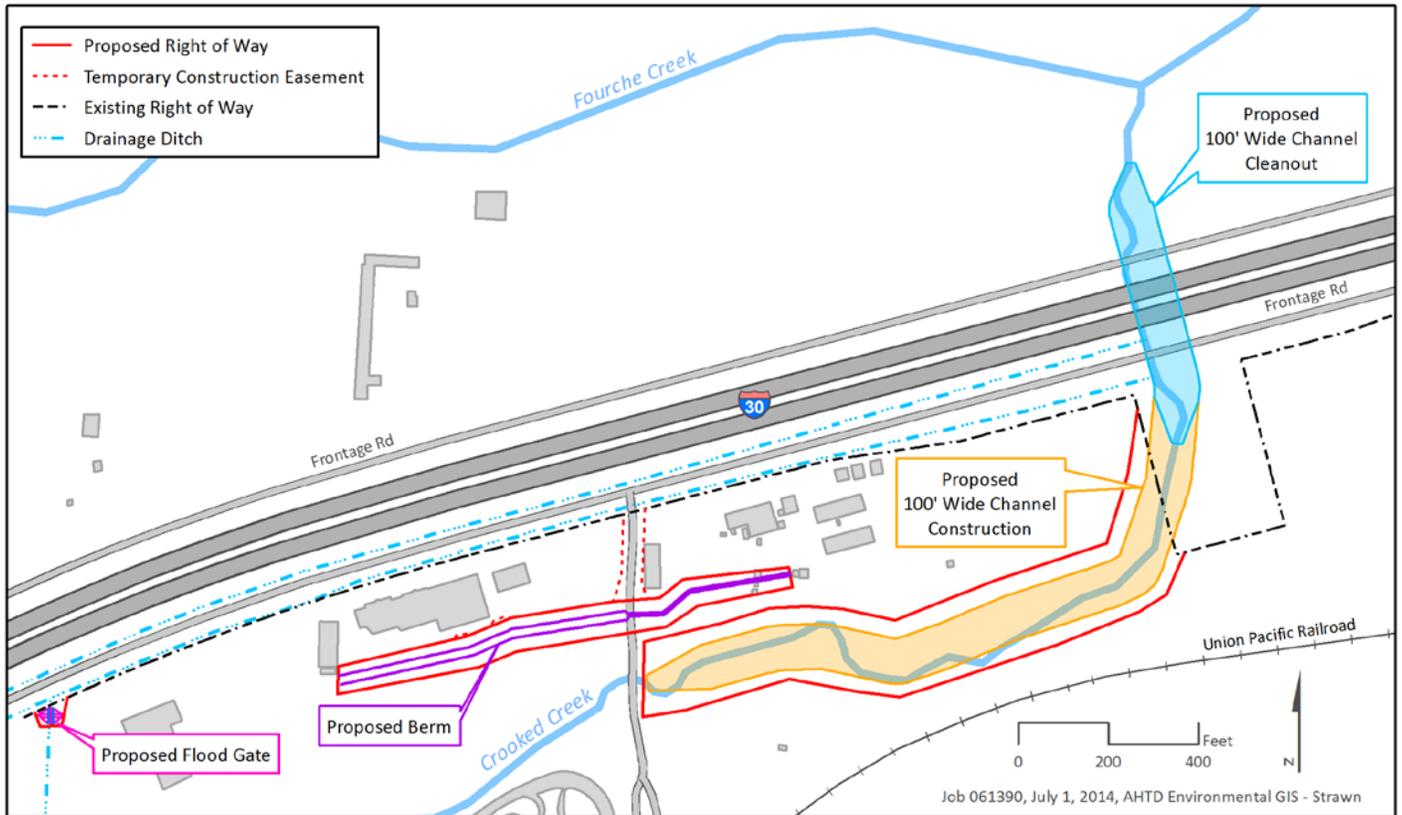


Figure 2

Alternative 3

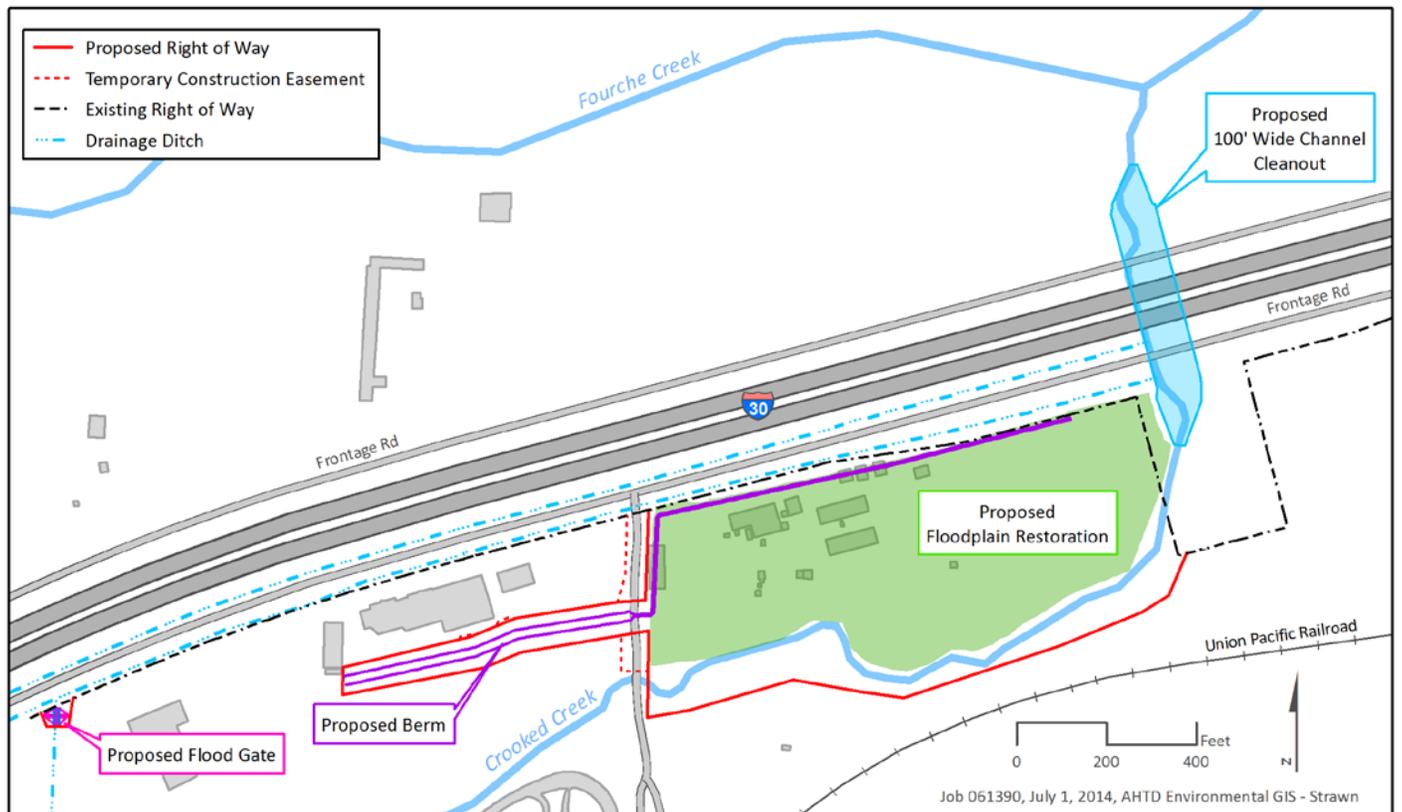


Figure 3

#### 4 What is the project area like today?

The project area around the interstate and frontage road is a mix of transportation and commercial use. Crooked Creek is bordered by a corridor of floodplain forest.

The project is located within the South Central Plains Ecoregion, commonly known as the West Gulf Coastal Plains. The South Central Plains are characterized by rolling plains divided by nearly flat fluvial terraces, bottomlands, and sandy low hills.

Natural vegetation in the project area consists of mixed oak-pine forest and southern floodplain forest. Common native trees on better drained sites include shortleaf pine, southern red oak, white oak, and post oak, while the floodplain forest includes green ash, sweetgum, river birch, sycamore, and American elm. Areas that pond water following flooding also tend to contain willow oak and water oak.

Numerous public and private utilities run along and within the interstate right of way. Noise in the project area is typical of areas along an interstate facility.

#### 5 How would the completed project affect surrounding areas?

The most noticeable effects of the completed project would be the conversion of commercial property to a more natural setting, either through extensive widening of Crooked Creek with Alternative 2 or by restoring the floodplain with Alternative 3. Both would also involve impacts to Crooked Creek.

There would be no noticeable change in access, noise, or to the visual environment for interstate and frontage road users or for businesses not directly impacted by the project. The following table summarizes the impacts associated with the three alternatives under consideration.

**Where do I find out more about the environmental analysis?**

For more detail on these impacts or on other impact areas not discussed here, please ask an AHTD employee at this meeting to view the EA or download a digital copy on the AHTD website.

#### Alternative Impact Comparison

Alternative	Total Cost	Construction Cost	Right of Way Cost	Stream Mitigation Cost	Annual Maintenance Cost	Relocations	Stream Impacts (linear feet)
No Action	0	0	0	0	\$15,000	0	0
Alternative 2	\$2,096,778	\$241,253	\$1,565,000	\$290,525	\$49,000	0	2,070
Alternative 3	\$3,103,750	\$374,806	\$2,645,000	\$83,944	\$15,000	5	643

## 6 What has already been completed on the Crooked Creek Channel Improvements project?

An Environmental Assessment (EA) was approved by the Federal Highway Administration in January 2014 that discussed potential social, economic, and environmental impacts and determined if any of the impacts were significant. Copies of this documentation are available for review at this hearing or online on the AHTD website.

### What were the EA findings?

The EA did not identify any significant impacts to the natural or social environment as a result of either build alternative.

## 7 What is the purpose of this Location & Design Public Hearing?

The AHTD holds public hearings to ensure that the alternative selected and the design of the project is consistent with the goals and objectives of the project and the AHTD. In order to meet this goal, public participation is needed to identify, discuss, and resolve any problems or controversial issues. AHTD personnel are also available in person to answer questions and explain the project and its impacts.

## 8 What should I do if my property is being impacted?

The AHTD Right of Way Division has representatives available at this hearing to discuss how your property is being impacted and what to expect once a Selected Alternative is identified. No one will be required to surrender possession of their property until just compensation has been made. A detailed policy and procedures brochure is available at the Right of Way table at this hearing or through the AHTD Right of Way Division.

The initial step in the acquisition process is the property valuation. Once the valuation is prepared, reviewed and approved, a negotiator will contact the property owner by mail or in person to begin the negotiation process. If negotiations are successful, a Contract to Sell is executed and submitted for payment. Once the AHTD completes the title opinion and the deed is prepared, a closing agent will be in touch to get the deed signed and deliver the check. At this time, the state takes possession of the property.

For those cases where all efforts to negotiate are unsuccessful, the tract is submitted to the AHTD Legal Division to file condemnation. The appraisal amount is deposited in the court and the landowner may withdraw the funds placed on deposit without affecting their right to claim additional compensation.

## 9 What if my business would need to be relocated?

The relocation assistance program is intended to help offset expenses incurred by those who are displaced by federally-aided highway projects. This program provides advisory assistance and payments to help offset those expenses.

### What is a relocation?

Relocations occur when a residence, business, or non-profit is impacted severely enough by a proposed project that they cannot continue to live or do business at their current location. This is usually due to the proposed right of way limits crossing a structure (house or business) or taking a majority of a business's parking.

Relocation assistance, which is separate from the compensation a person receives for real estate, comes in two basic forms — physical assistance and monetary assistance. In order to be eligible for relocation assistance and compensation, a person must be in occupancy at the initiation of negotiations for the property. The type of relocation payments one is eligible for depends on the type of displacee: owner, landlord, tenant, etc.

Relocation assistance and payments will be provided until all displacees have been relocated from the project. If a person is not satisfied with the amounts that have been offered as relocation compensation, an appeal may be filed and the case heard promptly and carefully reviewed by an AHTD Appeals Officer.

Relocation assistance brochures which explain payments and eligibility requirements are available at the Right of Way table at this hearing.

## 10 How do I become involved?

Please register your attendance at the registration table. This will allow the AHTD to keep you informed if there are any additional meetings scheduled to discuss this project.

Gather information, view the displays, and ask questions at your own pace and convenience. Personnel are on hand to assist you by answering questions about the project and providing pertinent information.

If you wish to make an oral statement about the project, you must have your comments recorded on tape at the recording station set up at the hearing. An AHTD employee will be there to record your statement.

Written statements may also be submitted on the attached comment form and left in the drop box at the hearing, or accepted at the office of the Environmental Division through 4:30 p.m., Friday, September 5, 2014.

## 11 What happens after this hearing?

After a review of comments received from citizens, public officials, and public agencies, the next step in the environmental process will be for the AHTD and FHWA to identify a Preferred Alternative based on the information contained in the EA and the comments received.

After the design is finalized, a Finding of No Significant Impact document will be prepared and signed by the FHWA, identifying the Selected Alternative and concluding the NEPA process. Right of way acquisition can then begin.

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### Comment forms can be mailed to:

AHTD Environmental  
Division  
P.O. Box 2261  
Little Rock, AR 72203

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### Where can I get more information after the hearing?

Call: (501) 569-2281 or  
Email:  
[environmentalmeetings@ahtd.ar.gov](mailto:environmentalmeetings@ahtd.ar.gov)

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