



# TABLE OF CONTENTS

3.27 Managed Land Impacts .....	2
3.27.1 Introduction .....	2
3.27.2 Methodology.....	4
3.27.3 Analysis .....	4
3.27.3.1 Section 1 .....	5
3.27.3.2 Section 2 .....	5
3.27.3.3 Section 3 .....	7
3.27.4 Mitigation.....	9
3.27.5 Summary.....	9

# FIGURES

Figure 3.27-1: Managed Lands within the Study Area .....	3
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# TABLES

Table 3.27-1: Summary of Impacts to Managed Lands .....	5
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## 3.27 MANAGED LAND IMPACTS

### 3.27.1 Introduction

The following substantive changes have been made to this section since the Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) was published:

- Impacts for Alternatives R and Refined Preferred Alternative P (RPA P) have been added.
- Additional managed lands were identified within the working alignments of RPA P and Alternative R. Other managed lands that were previously within the 500- or 1,000-foot buffer of the working alignments are within the working alignment for Alternative R.
- A discussion of the Southern Indiana Sentinel Landscape associated with Crane NSWC has been added.
- A portion of 1 additional Classified Forest is within the working alignment of Alternative R. There were no additional Classified Wildlands within the working alignments for RPA P and Alternative R.
- Trails from the Dubois County, Jasper and Huntingburg plans were added to the analysis. Additional trail systems are within the 500- or 1,000-foot buffer for RPA P and/or Alternative R.

The Mid-States Corridor project encompasses a 12-county Study Area that includes some of the most popular forests, nature preserves and recreational areas in the State of Indiana. This section evaluates the potential impacts of each alternative on managed lands in the Study Area. Managed lands are both public and privately owned lands managed for stewardship, conservation, and preservation. For purposes of this study, managed lands include the following: outdoor recreation facilities, trails, publicly managed lands and private properties whose owners participate in federal, state, and local programs for stewardship, conservation, and preservation of natural and cultural resources. The programs may be directed toward wetlands, habitat, or other conservation management programs. Managed lands located within the Study Area are illustrated in **Figure 3.27-1**. Managed lands within the Study Area include Naval Surface Warfare Center, Crane Division (NSWC Crane), Hoosier National Forest, Morgan-Monroe State Forest and the Martin State Forest. **Appendix GG – Managed Land Appendix** describes and maps each managed land impacted by the proposed alternatives.

Programs that enroll privately-owned lands in government cost-share programs, which commonly focus on conservation, are listed below. These programs are analyzed in this chapter for the areas within the 12-county Study Area where data is available.

- United States Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) – Partners for Fish and Wildlife Program
- United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS)
  - Wetlands Reserve Program (WRP)
  - Grasslands Reserve Program (GRP)
  - Emergency Watershed Protection Program-Floodplain Easement (EWPP-FPE)
- USDA Farm Services Agency (FSA)
- United States Forest Service (USFS)
- Indiana Department of Natural Resources (IDNR)
  - Classified Forest and Wildlands Program (CFWP)

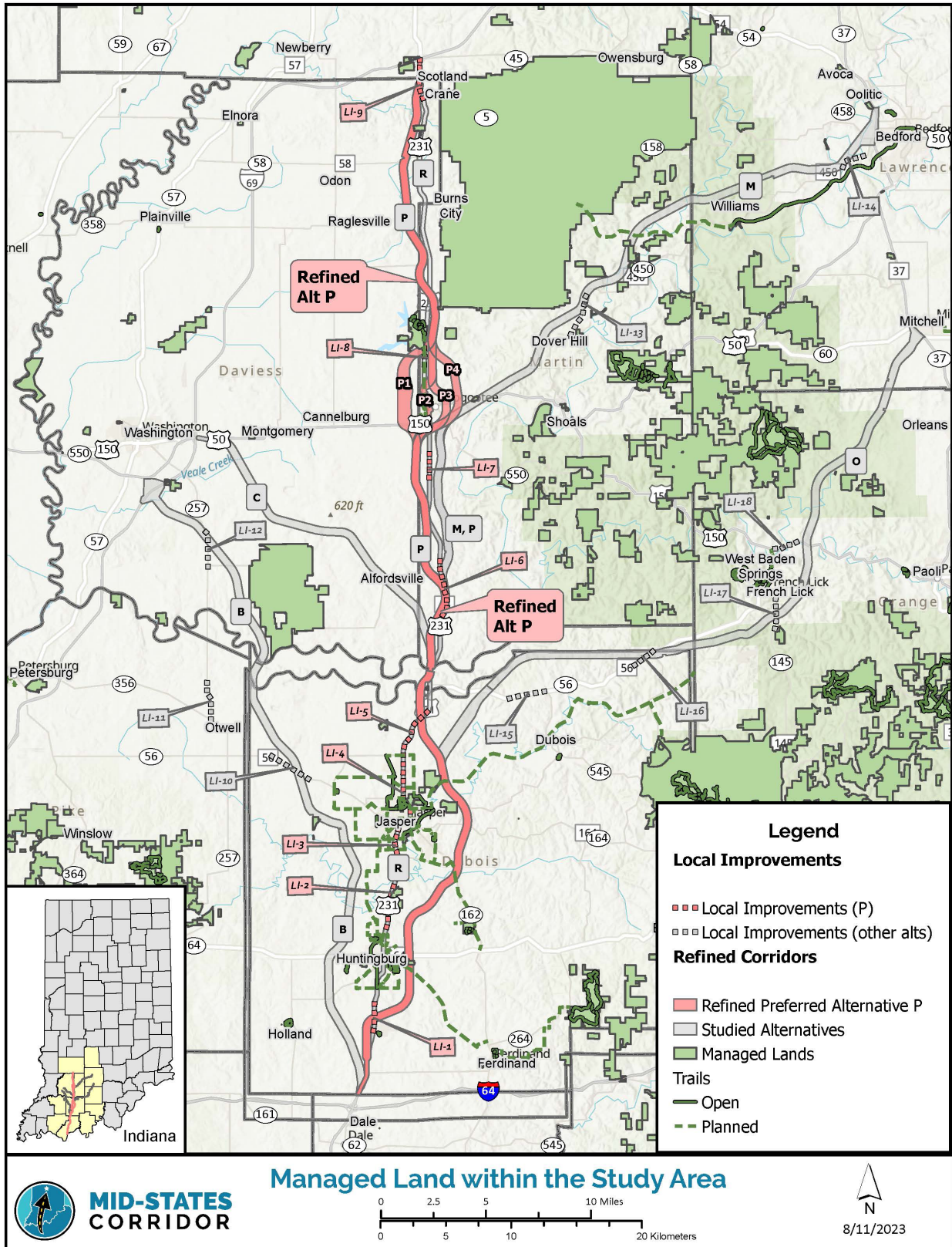


Figure 3.27-1: Managed Lands within the Study Area



### 3.27.2 Methodology

Relevant government agencies were contacted to identify managed lands within the Study Area in addition to those in publicly accessible databases. Properties were identified within the Study Area based on available Geographic Information System (GIS) data, county property data, review of finalized recreation plans and coordination with resource agencies. Managed lands impacts were assessed using GIS intersection and geometry calculation analyses. See **Appendix GG – Managed Land Appendix** for details about data sources.

Coordination with State and Federal natural resources agencies identified the existence of managed lands at multiple points during the development of alternatives. An Agency Scoping Meeting was held on August 20, 2019, to present the 12-county Study Area and recognize agencies' roles in identifying the project's potential environmental impacts, including to managed lands.

Another Agency Coordination Meeting was held on March 3, 2020, followed by a March 4 field tour of alternatives identified in the February 2020 Screening of Alternatives Report. Agency partners were asked to provide input for refining alternatives. During the meeting and field tour, Mid-States Project Team members requested that participating agencies provide the most current GIS coverage of any known managed lands within the 12-county Study Area.

The project team contacted both USFS and IDNR to obtain digital managed land data. USFS's Hoosier National Forest (HNF) District Ranger provided current information on the HNF, including data on its acquisition boundary, ownership and management areas. IDNR's Natural Heritage Data Center Coordinator provided data on holdings, past and present, for the State of Indiana (as of June 2022). This data was characterized as a "living layer" that may change frequently. This data is not an authoritative source of boundaries, and its topology is not set as a parcel management layer. Project staff also searched publicly available data sets from several trusts and conservancies including The Nature Conservancy, Sycamore Land Trust, Central Indiana Land Trust, Indiana Karst Conservancy, and other Indiana land trusts. Properties enrolled in the IDNR CFWP were identified using property data provided by the county governments in the Study Area (Real Property 2018).

A pairwise intersect operation was performed in ArcGIS ArcPro 2.9.5 between all managed land, classified status land and trail data and the alternative working alignments for each alternative to identify resources within the working alignment right-of-way. Additionally, buffers were created at 500-feet and 1,000-feet around the anticipated working alignment limits to identify lands that may be indirectly impacted by the project or directly impacted if future alignment shifts occur.

### 3.27.3 Analysis

The impacts of each alternative on managed lands within the 12-county Study Area are summarized in **Table 3.27-1**. There are potential impacts to some planned trails by all alternatives other than Alternative B. With the addition of trails information since the DEIS in Dubois County, Huntingburg and Jasper, there is an increase in trails impacts for all alternatives other than Alternative B. It should be noted that only Alternative R would impact existing trails in Huntingburg and Martin County. Maps of each impacted area are provided in **Appendix GG – Managed Land Appendix**.





Managed Lands Impacts						
Alternatives**	Managed Lands (acres)		Classified Forest/Wildlands (acres)		Open and Proposed Trails (feet)	
	Low	High	Low	High	Low	High
B	0	0	5	6	0	0
C	5	10	10	19	1,338	1,639
M	32	46	108	128	1,840	2,194
O	5	10	195	212	1,338	1,639
P	10	16	44	58	1,338	1,937
RPA P	10	16	44	55	1,338	2,954
R	28	28	23	23	22,538	22,538

\* Tier 1 Alternative impacts are reported in ranges including all the local improvements, facility types, and bypass variations.

\*\*Facility type 1, freeways, has been removed from consideration. Therefore, no modifications to existing US 231 in Section 1 and existing SR 37 in Section 3 are anticipated. No impacts are anticipated on either of these facilities.

**Table 3.27-1: Summary of Impacts to Managed Lands**

### 3.27.3.1 Section 1

Facility Type 1, freeways, has been removed from consideration. Therefore, no modifications to the existing US 231 roadway in Section 1 and the existing SR 37 roadway in Section 3 are anticipated. No impacts are anticipated to either of these facilities.

### 3.27.3.2 Section 2

The analyses revealed direct impacts to IDNR Managed Lands, Wetlands Reserve Program (WRP) properties and Classified Forest for alternatives B, C, M, O, and P for both expressway and Super-2 options. There would be impacts to multiple planned trails in Dubois County by Alternatives C, M, O, P and RPA P. Alternative R would impact planned trails in Jasper and Huntingburg, as well as approximately 1,600 feet of existing trails in Huntingburg. Alternatives M and R will also have direct impacts to IDNR Managed Lands and WRP properties. Alternative O also impacts WRP properties. All alternatives impact Classified Forests, although the impacts for Alternative O are less than 0.5 acre.

#### Jasper Multi-Use Pathway

This 2.1-mile pathway includes a riverwalk and shelter houses. It offers fishing, boat access, grills, and a playground along the Patoka River. The analysis identified 611 feet of the trail within Local Improvement 3 limits. This trail is planned along and would cross existing US 231 and the development of these Local Improvements would not present a substantially different situation for the development of the trail facility than the existing US 231.

#### Jasper Park and Recreation Department Trails

There are three planned trails within and near the working alignment of Alternative R. A trail is planned to connect Buffalo Trace Golf Course to Jasper Middle School. It will be 1.78 miles long. The analysis identified approximately 800 feet of the planned trail within the working alignment where the trail follows along existing US 231 for a distance before crossing the existing highway. While the trail is planned along and would cross existing US 231, the development of Alternative R could present a more substantial crossing concern than the existing highway. The North End/Riverwalk to Municipal Golf Course is a planned trail that will be 1.26 miles long and will be proximate to, but will have no potential impacts from Alternative R. The final planned trail within the working alignment of Alternative R is the trail connecting the Jasper Youth Sports Complex and the future Jasper Municipal Disc Golf Course (formerly the Ruxer Golf Course, closed in 2020). It will be 2.33 miles long. While the trail is planned along and would cross existing US 231, the development of Alternative R could present a more substantial crossing concern than the existing highway. These trails will not be impacted by any other alternatives. Alternative R would impact approximately a total of 2,500 feet of these trails.



### City of Huntingburg Trails

The Huntingburg Comprehensive Plan targets bicycle and pedestrian trails. It includes both existing and planned trails. Only Alternative R impacts these trails. It impacts approximately 1,600 feet of existing trails and approximately 500 feet of planned trails. Approximately 23,000 feet of additional trails are within 1,000 feet of Alternative R.

### Dubois County Trails

The Dubois County Commissioners' Bike and Pedestrian Master Plan provides for a network of bicycle and pedestrian trails throughout Dubois County. Portions of this plan provide for designation of existing roads as bicycle facilities with no physical alterations other than the addition of signage. This analysis considers only proposed trails for which new construction or physical modifications to existing facilities is planned. Alternatives C, M, O, P and RPA P would impact between approximately 1,300 and 1,600 feet of these proposed trails. Additional parts of this trail system are within a 500- and 1,000-foot proximity of these same alternatives.

### Barnes-Seng (Jasper Marsh) Wetland Conservation Area

This area is owned and managed by the IDNR and consists of approximately 180 acres of deciduous forest intended for wildlife habitat. The analysis identified approximately 1.6 acres of impacts by Local Improvement 2 which is associated with all alternatives except Alternative R, and approximately 1 acre of impacts by Alternative R.

### WRP Impacts

The Wetlands Reserve Program (WRP) is the nation's premier wetlands restoration program. It is a voluntary program that supports landowners to protect, restore and enhance wetlands on their property. The USDA NRCS manages the program and provides technical and financial support to help landowners that participate in WRP. Direct impacts to WRP properties for Alternatives C, M, O, P and RPA P are approximately 10 acres each for expressway facility types. Super-2 Alternatives C, M, O, P and RPA P would impact approximately 4.6 acres of WRP land each. There are no direct impacts to WRP properties from Alternative R. The same WRP property is impacted by Alternatives C, M, O, P, and RPA P, which is located in the Hunley Creek Watershed south of SR 64 near Huntingburg.

### Classified Forests and Wildlands Impacts

Classified Forest and Wildlands Program (CFWP) lands are privately owned and must have at least 10 contiguous acres supporting a growth of native or planted trees, native or planted grasslands, wetlands or other acceptable types of land cover. These must be designated and managed to produce timber, wildlife habitat, and/or watershed protection. These lands are eligible for property tax assessment at \$1 per acre. The program requires that the land be protected from development, livestock grazing, uncontrolled fires, destructive management practices, and other inappropriate activities that threaten natural resource sustainability (Indiana Classified Forest and Wildlands Program, IDNR).

Classified Forests are impacted near the City of Huntingburg at the CR 400 W and CR 400 S crossings. There are also Classified Forest impacts near the City of Jasper for Alternatives C, P, M, O, P and RPA P at the CR 500 N and CR 190 N crossings. Several properties southwest of Haysville are impacted by RPA P and Alternatives P and R. Impacted Classified Forest properties were identified for all alternatives and range from approximately 0.1 to 10 acres for Super-2 facility types, with Alternatives C, M, P and RPA P having the highest impacts of 10 acres each. The expressway facility types impact from approximately 0.1 to 18 acres, with Alternatives C, M, P and RPA P having the highest impacts with 18 acres each. Alternative O has the least amount of impact on Classified Forests with less than 0.5 acre for both facility types. The analysis identified 10 – 18 acres of potential impacts by RPA P, and 3 acres of potential impacts by Alternative R. See **Appendix GG, Table 5** for specifics.

There are no Classified Wildlands impacted in Section 2.



While both Classified Forests and Classified Wildlands are a part of the CFWP and are funded through it, they are different classifications. There are two types of Classified Forest. A native forest contains at least 1,000 timber-producing trees per acre or 40 square feet of basal area per acre. A tree plantation has at least 400 well-established timber-producing trees per acre. Classified Wildlands include wetlands, native woody vegetation, natural or planted grasslands, or areas of open water that average less than four-feet deep or less than two-acres in size.

### 500-foot Buffer Analysis

Additional managed lands within 500 feet of an alternative working alignment include Buffalo Pond, managed by the IDNR Division of Nature Preserves, and Sultan's Run Golf Course, which is privately owned. Both properties are within the buffer of Alternatives C, P, M, O, P and RPA P. In addition, the Fromme Wildlife Habitat Area (managed by IDNR), Jasper Municipal Golf Course and other Jasper parks are within 500 feet of Alternative R. Additional Classified Forests within 500 feet of the working alignment are near Haysville, Huntingburg, and Jasper. One Classified Wildland is within 500 feet of the working alignment of Alternative B near Jasper. Many additional trails in Jasper and Huntingburg are within a 500-foot buffer of Alternative R.

### 1,000-foot Buffer Analysis

An analysis was performed for the areas within 1,000-feet of the proposed working alignments. There are additional lands within 1,000-feet of the working alignments. Classified Forests within 1,000-feet of the working alignments are near the Town of Haysville, City of Huntingburg, the City of Jasper and the Town of Dubois. There are no additional Wildlands within 1,000-feet of the working alignments. Many additional trails in Jasper and Huntingburg are within a 1,000-foot buffer of Alternative R.

### 3.27.3.3 Section 3

Alternative B has no impacts in Section 3. There would be impacts to the planned Milwaukee Road Trail (Alternative M) and to the planned Loogootee Trail System (Alternatives P, R and RPA P). Land impacted includes the Martin State Forest (Alternative M), Daviess-Martin County Park (West Boggs) (Alternatives P, R and RPA P), WRP properties (Alternative M), Classified Forests and Wildlands (all except Alternative B), and Indiana Forest Bank Fee (Gantz Woods) (Alternatives P, R and RPA P). Impacts were identified for Alternatives C, M, O, P, RPA P, and R for both expressway and Super-2 facilities.

#### Milwaukee Road Trails

The Milwaukee Road Trail is a 10.9-mile public trail near Bedford. The trail is open to the public and is for hikers of all skill levels. There are plans to extend the trail from Williams to Indian Springs in Martin County. The analysis identified 502-556 feet of impacts by Alternative M to the planned extension of the trail between Williams and Sulphur Springs.

#### Loogootee Trail System

The proposed plan for the public trail system is to assist with future development of recreational and leisure facilities. The trails are an effort to make Martin County and the Hoosier Uplands Region more attractive for residents and workforce. The plan is not final but is used as a guide to create diverse and universal facilities that for all citizens of Loogootee. The trail will be owned and managed by the Loogootee Park Board and the City of Loogootee (Loogootee, Indiana Parks and Recreation Master Plan 2021-2025). Alternative P has 0 to 294 feet of impacts. There are 4,184 feet of impacts by Local Improvement 8, associated with Alternatives P and RPA P. The analysis identified up to 1,616 feet of impacts associated with RPA P and 14,830 feet for Alternative R for the County Line Trail to West Boggs Park.

#### Chimney Creek Trail

The trail is managed by the Daviess-Martin Joint County Park Board. The analysis identified 26 feet of impacts by Alternative R.



### Martin State Forest

Martin State Forest is located in Martin County northeast of Shoals and consists of 7,863 acres. It is owned by the State of Indiana and managed by the IDNR Division of Forestry. The property features camping, fishing, hunting, picnicking, an arboretum, and several hiking trails. The analysis identified between 27 and 35 acres of impacts by Alternative M.

### Daviess-Martin Co. Park (West Boggs)

The park is owned and managed by Daviess-Martin Joint County Parks and Recreation Department. The park is open to the public. The park features a fishery, a beach area, a playground, camping, and trails. The analysis identified less than one acre of impacts by Alternatives P and RPA P. The analysis identified 14 acres of impacts by Alternative R.

### WRP

Impacted WRP properties were identified for Alternative M and total less than one acre for both the Super-2 facility and the expressway facility. No impacts from the other alternatives on WRP properties were identified in Section 3. There are no direct impacts to WRP properties from RPA P or Alternative R.

### Southern Indiana Sentinel Landscape

The Southern Indiana Sentinel Landscape was created in 2022. The Sentinel Landscapes Partnership is a coalition of government and private organizations that work with willing landowners to advance sustainable land use practices around military installations. Crane NSWC is one of four military anchor properties in the vast Southern Indiana Sentinel Landscape. There are currently no private lands enrolled in this Sentinel Landscape program and thus no impacts from any alternatives on Sentinel Landscape properties were identified in Section 3. Other managed lands in the Southern Indiana Sentinel Landscape are addressed individually within this section.

### Gantz Woods Nature Preserve (Indiana Forest Bank)

Gantz Woods Nature Preserve is located in Daviess County north of Loogootee adjacent to and near US 231. It is owned by The Nature Conservancy (TNC) and managed as part of the organization's Indiana Forest Bank Fee program. The property is open to the public for activities such as birdwatching and hiking. Private forest owners can work with the Forest Bank to receive guaranteed annual payments based on their properties' standing timber or sell properties to TNC. The Forest Bank preserves biodiversity using environmentally sound methods, while also yielding reasonable economic return to landowners. The Forest Bank provides and protects rural viability, landscape and scenery, biodiversity, water viability, soil quality, resilience to natural hazards, and climate regulation with carbon storage. The analysis identified five to six acres of impacts by Alternative P and RPA P and 12 acres of impact by Alternative R. The status of Gantz Woods will continue to be evaluated and coordinated with the property owner during Tier 2 studies.

### Classified Forests and Wildlands

Classified Forest properties are impacted near the cities of Loogootee and Bedford, as well as near the towns of Haysville, Williams, Dubois, French Lick, Orleans, and West Baden. Impacted Classified Forest properties were identified for Alternatives C, M, O, P, RPA P, and R. The impacts associated with Impacts by Alternative C range from 0 to 1 acre. Impacts by Alternatives M and O range from 98 to 212 acres. Impacts by Alternatives P, R and RPA P range from 19 to 40 acres. Alternative O has the highest Classified Forest impacts for both the Super-2 and expressway facility types. Approximately one acre of Classified Wildland would be impacted in Section 3 by Alternative M, and this is the only alternative that will impact Wildlands in Section 3. The analysis identified two acres of potential impacts by Local Improvement 14 which is associated Alternative M, and six acres of potential impacts by Local Improvement 16 which is associated with Alternative O. Impacts to Classified Forests associated with RPA P range from 35 to 37 acres, depending on the Loogootee variation. The analysis identified 19 acres of potential Classified Forest impacts by Alternative R. No Classified Wildlands are impacted by RPA P or Alternative R.





### 500-foot Buffer Analysis

An analysis was performed for the areas within 500 feet of the proposed working alignments. In addition to previously mentioned trails, the West Boggs Park Trails are within 500 feet of Alternative R. Additional lands, not previously mentioned, within 500 feet of the working alignments include the Veale Creek Wildlife Management Area (not open to the public in the proximity of Alternative B). Additional Classified Forest lands within 500 feet of the project were identified in or near the City of Bedford, as well as the towns of Cannelburg, Oolitic, Shoals, French Lick, Orleans, West Baden, Farlen, and Crane.

### 1,000-foot Buffer Analysis

An analysis was performed to identify areas within 1,000 feet of the working alignment. No additional trails were identified. Additional land within 1,000 feet of the working alignment includes Crane Naval Surface Warfare Center (NSWC). Crane NSWC includes 64,000 acres and is one of four Department of Defense anchor properties within the Southern Indiana Sentinel Landscape cooperative management program. Additional Classified Forest properties were identified in or near the city of Bedford, as well as the towns of Cannelburg, Oolitic, Shoals, Dubois, French Lick, West Baden, Farlen, and Crane.

## 3.27.4 Mitigation

Efforts to minimize impacts to managed lands will continue in Tier 2 NEPA studies and subsequent design. These efforts will be based upon consultation with management entities. In addition to avoiding direct impacts, reasonable efforts will be made to avoid construction impacts and effects to managed lands from nearby construction activities. These efforts may include grading, culverts and other measures. Mitigation for direct impacts may include tree planting, expanding existing managed lands and allowing continued use, where feasible. The continued study of impacts will include joint development opportunities to support the existing and planned state and local trail plans.

Several commitments have been added in response to comments on the DEIS regarding activities INDOT will undertake during Tier 2 studies. These include conferring with IDNR for alignment planning near Buffalo Pond Nature Preserve, emphasizing construction techniques to account for presence of copperbelly watersnake; evaluating the ability of the project to support existing and planned state and local trail plans; and conferring with The Nature Conservancy about impacts to Gantz Woods during Tier 2 studies.

Mitigation for impacts to privately-owned properties may entail repaying funding agencies for portions of funds in cost-sharing agreements. If a managed land is publicly owned, a determination will be made as to whether the land is protected under Section 4(f). See **Chapter 4 – Section 4(f) Impacts**. Privately-owned lands are not afforded Section 4(f) protection unless they are historic sites listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

## 3.27.5 Summary

No impacts to managed lands are anticipated in Section 1. Alternative B has the fewest impacts overall. Alternatives O and M have the most impacts to Classified Forests and Wildlands. Alternative M has the greatest impact to managed lands, and Alternative R has the greatest impact to trails both relative to trail continuity and total length of potential trail impacts. Alternative P impacts 10 to 16 acres of managed lands, 44 to 58 acres of Classified Forests and Wildlands, and up to 1,937 linear feet of planned trails. RPA P impacts 10 to 16 acres of managed lands and 44 to 55 acres of Classified Forests. It impacts up to 2,954 feet of planned trails. Alternative R impacts 28 acres of managed lands, 23 acres of Classified Forests, 1,604 feet of existing trails and 20,934 feet of planned trails.

