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3.29 SHORT-TERM USES VERSUS LONG-TERM PRODUCTIVITY

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) now are considered.
- The impacts on the lower end of ranges tend to be lower than in the DEIS, due to the addition of Alternative R in this FEIS.

The chief long-term benefits of the project are defined by the project's Purpose and Need. Its core goals include increased accessibility to major business markets, providing more efficient freight travel in Southern Indiana and increased access to major rail and air intermodal centers. (**Chapter 1**).

The short-term uses associated with construction of the Mid-States Corridor are typical of highway construction. The construction's temporary impacts include noise (**Section 3.12.2.1**), air pollution, especially dust (**Section 3.12.2.2**), erosion and sedimentation (**Section 3.12.2.5**) and local degradation of water quality (**Section 3.12.2.3, 3.18, and 3.19**). Construction equipment and landscape disturbed during construction would be aesthetically displeasing (**Section 3.12.2.8**). Demand for raw materials for highway construction could lead to increased costs of those materials in the short term.

After construction is complete, some residents and businesses will be permanently displaced. Businesses depending on drive-by traffic on local roads could lose customers due to traffic diversion. It is likely that revenue patterns among businesses within the project area will shift, but it is not anticipated to negatively affect the local economies. For example, some businesses may be relocated or permanently closed, but improved traffic patterns will provide new avenues to foster increased local spending at gas stations and restaurants. Likewise, diversion of traffic from some existing business locations will likely increase traffic passing other businesses in the area. It is anticipated that these changes will alter the distribution of transactions in affected communities, but the overall revenue would likely be maintained or increased post-construction. Impacts to local businesses will be further considered in the Tier 2 studies.

These negative short-term effects are minor compared with the positive effects of the proposed project. The long-term effects include a more direct and safer traffic route in Southern Indiana and promotion of economic growth. The long-term benefits of the proposed Mid-States Corridor would outweigh the use of tangible and intangible resources and the short-term impacts associated with construction.

As noted in **Section 3.12.3**, Best Management Practices (BMPs) would be employed during construction to minimize impacts to the environment. Relocation assistance would be available to displaced residents and businesses.

Regarding long-term productivity, use of agricultural land for right-of-way would result in the permanent loss of crop production on that land. Depending upon the alternative selected, construction of the Mid-States Corridor would require between approximately 500 and 2,800 acres of new right-of-way, including approximately 150 to 1,850 acres of farmland available for row crop production, pasture and specialty crops. This represents between 0.01 and 0.14 percent of total farmland within the 12 counties in the Study Area.



Most, if not all, displaced residents would be able to relocate in the general area from which they are being displaced. See **Section 3.5 – Relocation Impacts** for a discussion of replacement housing. In the long run, new residents are anticipated to locate in the project area, as a result of an improved transportation network and jobs created from anticipated economic development. This could result in use of approximately 30 additional acres of land for homes and businesses, as discussed in **Section 3.6 – Indirect and Cumulative Impacts**. Long-term benefits of the project are expected to include a reduction in the costs of production and shipping due to the improved transportation network.

Short-term uses affiliated with construction of the Preferred Alternative, RPA P, will be moderately impactful, compared with the smaller impacts anticipated for the Northwest Family (Alternatives B and C) and the higher impacts anticipated with the Northeast Family (Alternatives M and O). RPA P in the North Central Family will provide higher performance, offsetting the costs and impacts of construction. See **Chapter 2** for an analysis of Alternative Family performance relative to the core goals of the project.

These transportation improvements considered present and future traffic requirements within the context of present and future land use development. The local short-term impacts and use of resources by the project are consistent with the maintenance and enhancement of long-term productivity for the local area and the state.

