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1994

U.S. 151
CASCADE TO DUBUQUE
DUBUQUE COUNTY

NHS-151-3(84)--19-57

PROJECT CONCEPT AND ASSESSMENT OF IMPACTS

APRIL, 1994

Prepared By:

IOWA DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
PLANNING AND RESEARCH DIVISION
OFFICE OF PROJECT PLANNING

IN COOPERATION WITH FHWA

For Additional Information, Contact:

Harry S. Budd, Director
Office of Project Planning
Iowa Department of Transportation
515-239-1391

State Library Of Iowa
State Documents Center
Miller Building
Des Moines, Iowa

PROJECT LOCATION AND DESCRIPTION OF PLANNED IMPROVEMENTS

The proposed improvement of this segment of U.S. 151 begins at the north edge of Cascade's corporate limits and extends northeast to a point just west of the U.S. 61 interchange in Dubuque County (Figures 1 and 2A-2D). Overall length is approximately 23.8 kilometers (14.8 miles). This segment is part of a larger, 82-kilometer (51-mile) highway improvement project from Springville in Linn County to U.S. 61 in Dubuque County. Environmental Assessments have been prepared on the other three segments of this project.

Improvements planned within this corridor involve construction of two additional lanes of traffic on the west side of the existing lanes to provide a four-lane divided highway. Access to the highway will be constructed using approximately 400-meter (1/4 mile) intervals between access points. This will require relocation/reconstruction of some existing access points. Estimated project costs are \$56,000,000 for the entire 82-kilometer (51-mile) highway improvement, with about \$12,000,000 estimated for this segment.

This project is being developed as part of Iowa's commercial and industrial highway network, which provides for future four-lane construction of U.S. 151 from the existing four-lane section near Cedar Rapids to Dubuque. Modernization and upgrading within this larger corridor is designed to improve operational safety and capacity of this highway, meet predicted traffic service needs within this corridor, and to improve access to eastern Iowa.

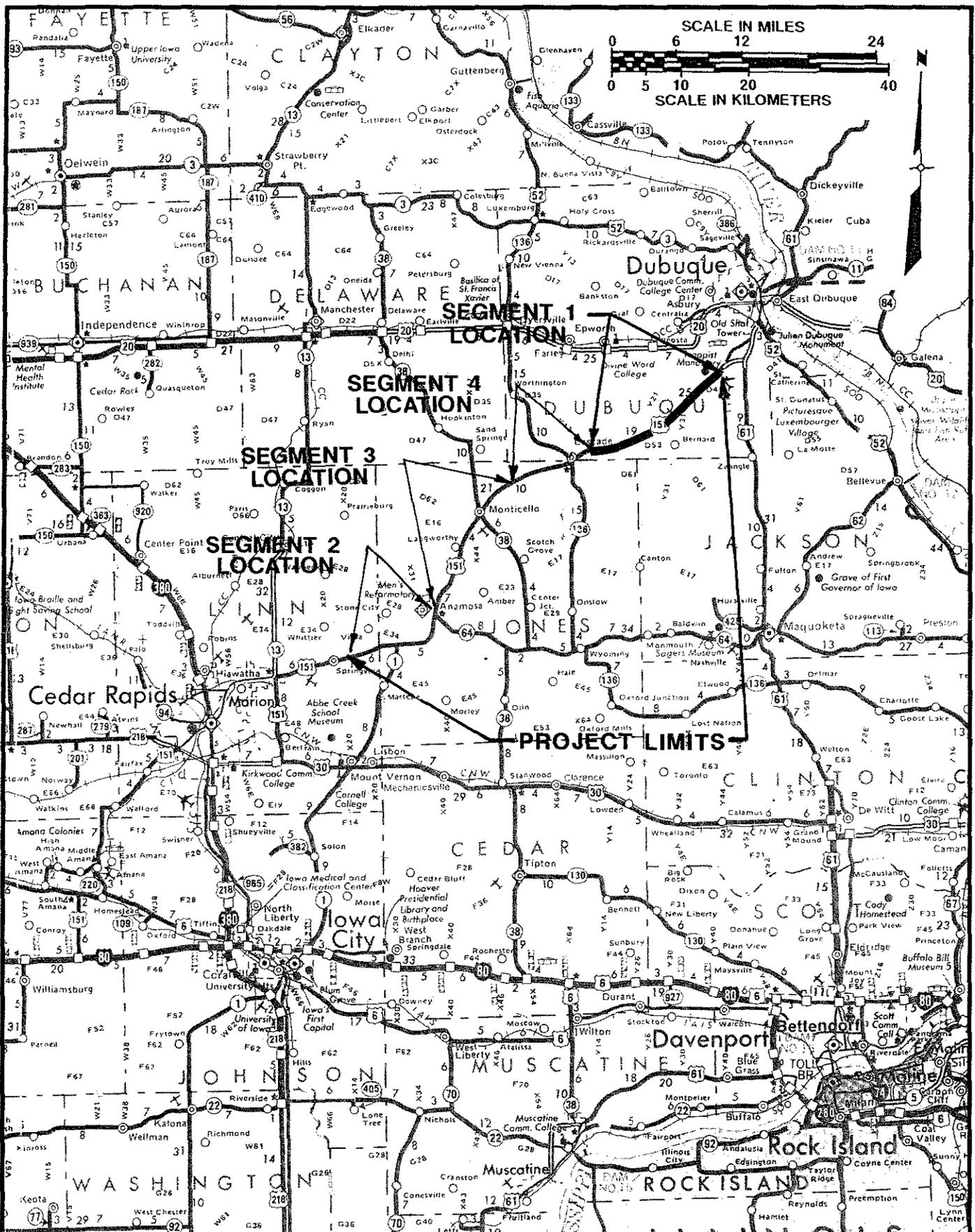
ASSESSMENT OF IMPACTS

Right-of-Way

Acquisition of new right-of-way within the project limits was initiated in 1969-70, with the result that land needed for highway widening and reconstruction of this segment is generally under state ownership. Additional right-of-way will be needed, however, to accommodate new access point locations, drainage culverts, access changes and so on. At some locations where full width, four-lane right-of-way was not purchased earlier, additional parcels will be acquired. Preliminary design indicates these parcels are expected to be incidental amounts totaling approximately 4.8 hectares (12 acres). These parcels border the present right-of-way line and should not result in significant impacts or hardship to affected property owners nor require relocation of any homes or businesses.

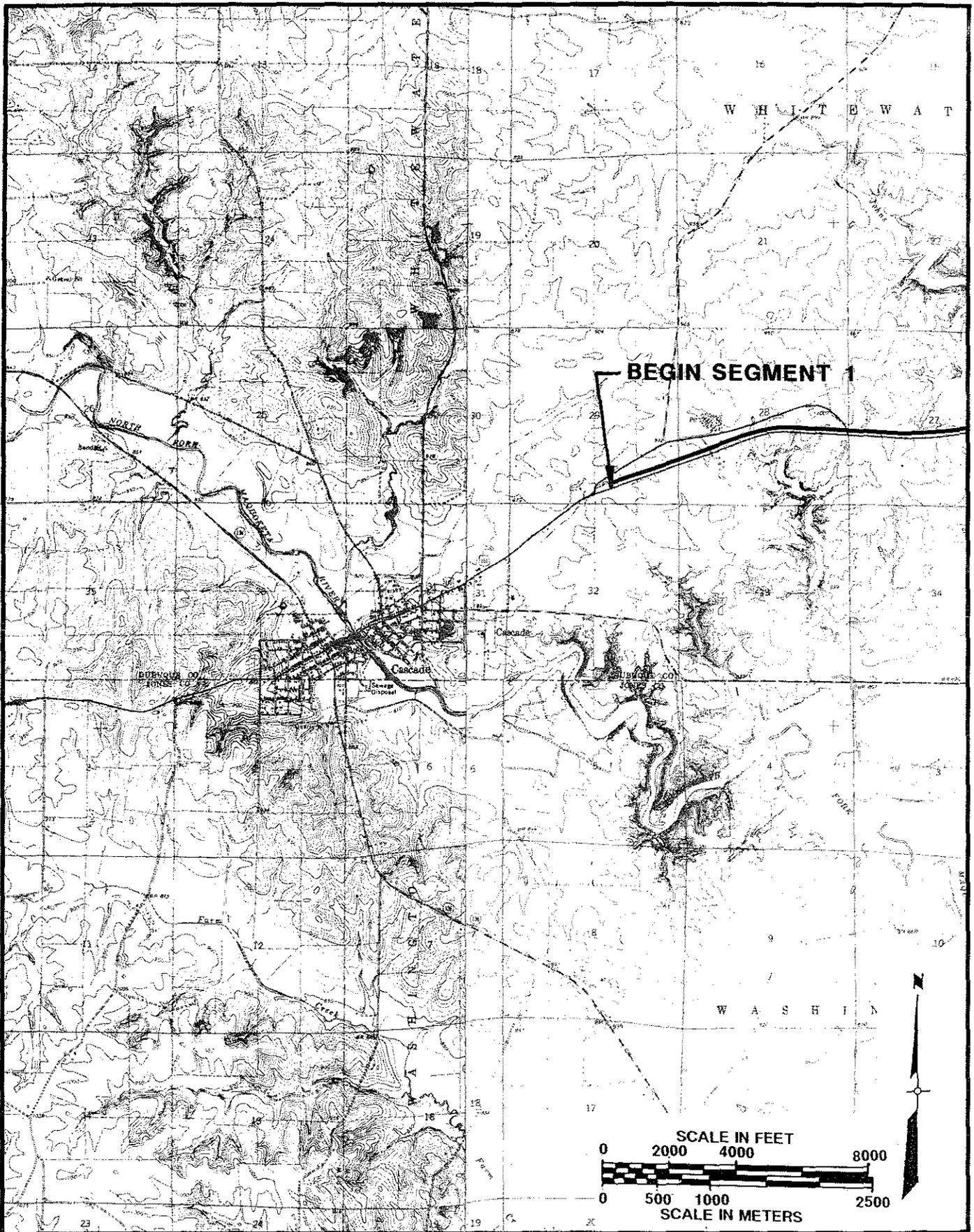
Farmland Impacts

The Farmland Conversion Impact Rating, Form AD-1006, is completed and in the project file. The project was not submitted to the USDA Soil Conservation Service because the project does not require more than 2 hectares (5 acres) of new right-of-way per mile.



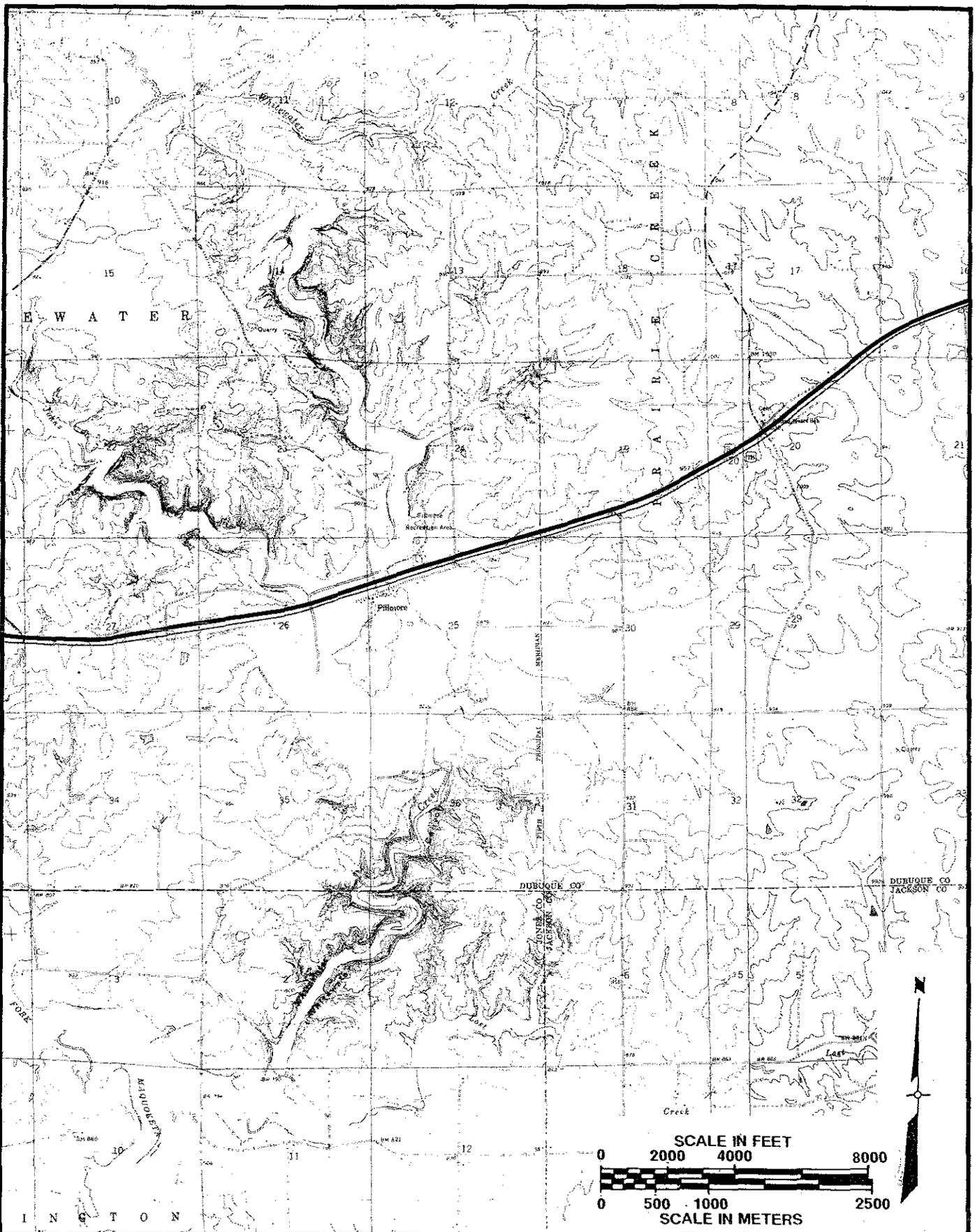
**CATEGORICAL EXCLUSION
SEGMENT 1
CASCADE TO DUBUQUE**
IOWA DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

**FIGURE 1
PROJECT LOCATION**



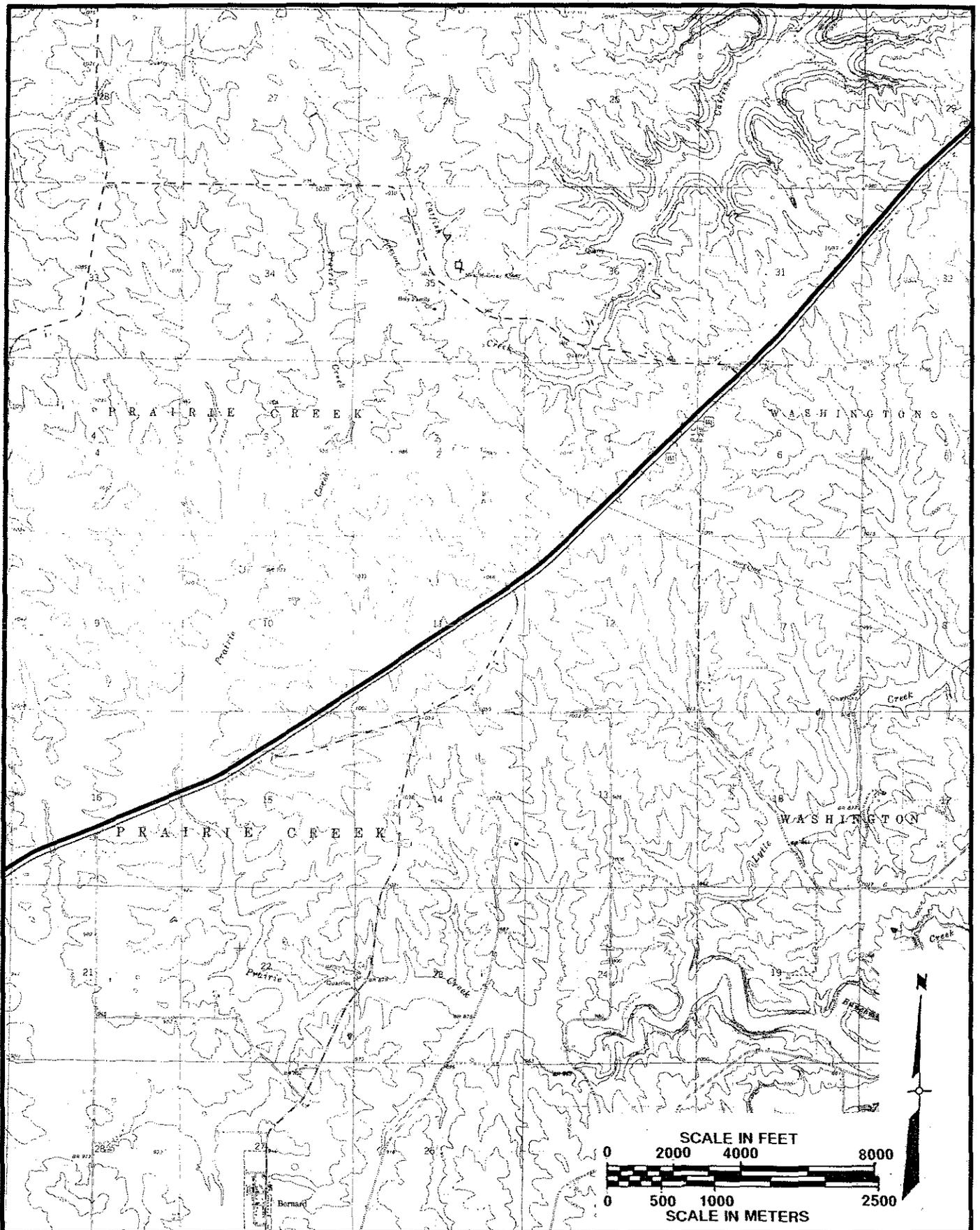
**CATEGORICAL EXCLUSION
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**FIGURE 2A
PREFERRED ALTERNATIVE**



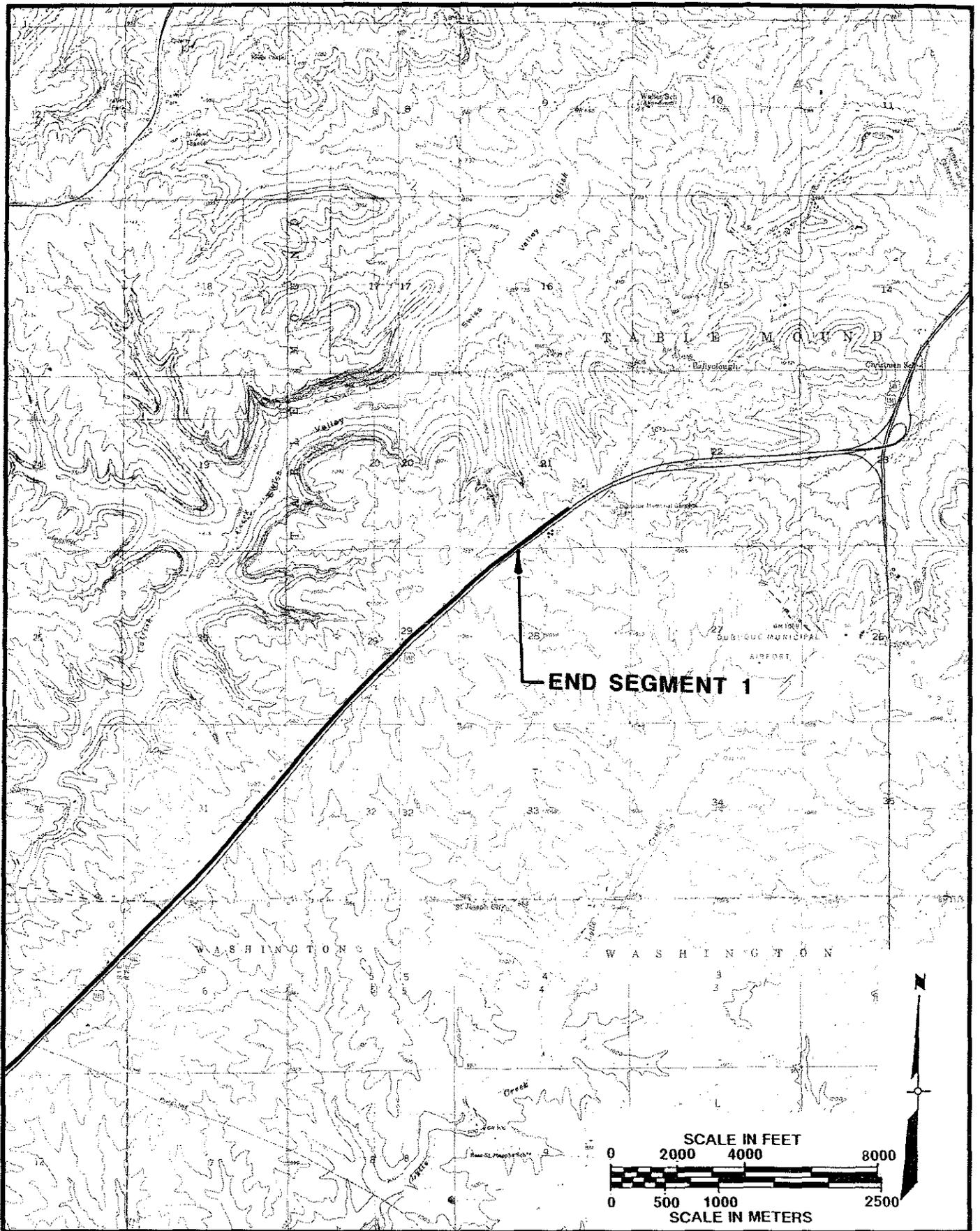
**CATEGORICAL EXCLUSION
SEGMENT 1
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**FIGURE 2B
PREFERRED ALTERNATIVE**



**CATEGORICAL EXCLUSION
SEGMENT 1
CASCADE TO DUBUQUE
IOWA DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION**

**FIGURE 2C
PREFERRED ALTERNATIVE**



**CATEGORICAL EXCLUSION
SEGMENT 1
CASCADE TO DUBUQUE**
IOWA DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

**FIGURE 2D
PREFERRED ALTERNATIVE**

Social and Economic Impacts

Up to 5 farm buildings will be acquired for the new highway construction which is not expected to cause significant social or economic hardships. Farmland that is within the right-of-way and owned by the state is technically out of agricultural production, and therefore, was not included on the Farmland Conversion Impact Rating Form. Some farmers have continued to use the less than 8 hectares (20 acres) within the right-of-way as farmland.

Approximately 4.8 additional hectares (12 acres) will be purchased for right-of-way from 12 different properties. These parcels range in size from .03 hectare to nearly .8 hectare (0.07 to 2 acres). These acquisitions will not cause a significant impact to the owners.

Access to individual properties and public roadways may be temporarily or permanently changed due to construction of this highway. The design concept will allow private access onto the new highway at a spacing of approximately 400 meters (1/4 mile) so that inconvenience and circuitous travel should not be a significant problem.

Wetlands

Several wetlands were identified in this segment. Generally they occur at the bases of hills in drainageways or in association with creeks and streams. Two types of wetlands were identified: forested and emergent. Soil Conservation Service (SCS) wetland maps show several small wetlands near the highway. National Wetland Inventory maps (NWI) are not available for this segment, except one (Dubuque South Quad) which did not show any wetlands within the right-of-way.

Jurisdictional wetlands require a Section 404 permit under the Clean Water Act for placement of dredge or fill material into wetlands by project activities. The number of hectares (acres) of jurisdictional wetlands estimated at this time within the project right-of-way is less than 2 (5). This acreage was calculated based on a cursory field investigation of the wetlands and from topographic and aerial maps. At future phases of the project, detailed delineations are planned to determine exact acreages that would be impacted by the project. Avoidance and minimization of wetlands may be accomplished in part by adjusting ditch depths or other details during early design of the highway. Construction activities will remain outside adjacent wetlands to avoid compacting soils. If work in wetlands is unavoidable, consideration will be given to utilizing special construction techniques to minimize impacts to wetlands and construction fencing to minimize erosion.

Not all wetlands will be avoided completely. Mitigation may be required for wetlands unavoidably impacted by highway construction. Section 404 Permits will be obtained from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (Corps) for wetlands filled by this project before construction begins. It is Iowa DOT's policy to mitigate wetland losses at a ratio of 1:1 in most cases.

Wildlife Habitat and Protected Species

Land use in the project is dominated by agricultural crops interspersed with wooded drainageways, small creeks and streams. Wooded draws provide shelter and travel corridors for deer and other animals between food sources, which is primarily corn.

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) sent a list of threatened and endangered species whose ranges are crossed by U.S. 151. They are listed below:

- Western Prairie Fringed Orchid (*Platanthera praeclara*) - Threatened
- Prairie Bush-Clover (*Lespedeza leptoslachya*) - Threatened
- Northern Wild Monkshood (*Aconitum noreboracense*) - Threatened
- Bald Eagle (*Haliaeetus leucocephalus*) - Endangered
- Indiana Bat (*Myotis sodalis*) - Endangered
- Iowa Pleistocene Snail (*Discus macclintocki*) - Endangered
- Peregrine Falcon (*Falco peregrinus*) - Endangered

The Iowa Department of Natural Resources (DNR) did not find the occurrence of any unique natural communities or threatened and endangered species along this segment from their records which are more specific than USFWS records. Species in the USFWS list above are not expected to be impacted by this project since construction will occur in existing right-of-way.

Hazardous Waste Sites

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Cerclis and RCRA Notifiers List for Linn, Jones and Dubuque Counties indicated sites occur along the project corridor from Springville to U.S. 61. Within the Dubuque County segment, one site occurs, the Williams Pipe Line Company, located on U.S. 151 about 24 kilometers (15 miles) north of Cascade but outside the right-of-way. No other sites were observed during field investigations which could potentially be hazardous due to underground tanks, hazardous chemical use, etc.

Air, Noise, Water Quality

Short-term increases in noise and particulate levels are expected during the period of project construction. No long-term noise or air quality impacts are anticipated as a result of the project. Sedimentation resulting from project activities will be minimized through enforcement of standard construction specification/requirements and pertinent provisions for soil erosion control.

Most of the homes are on the side opposite the widening and would experience a decrease of approximately 1 decibel. (Fifty percent of the traffic would shift further away from the homes.) The worst case would occur for a home located on the widening side of Highway 151 approximately 88 meters (290 feet) from the existing center line of the road.

The two additional lanes would be centered approximately 61 meters (200 feet) from the home resulting in a change in noise levels from 55 dBA to 57 dBA. Even with no widening, the noise would increase to 56 dBA as the traffic volume increases to projected levels in the year 2016.

Noise levels would be higher at the edge of the property closest to the highway. The existing noise level of 57 dBA at the property edge would increase to 61 dBA with widening, or 58 dBA without widening. A 3 decibel change is barely noticeable to the average human ear. These noise levels would not approach or exceed the Federal Highway Administration's noise abatement criteria of 67 dBA (LEQ). Therefore, noise abatement would not be warranted for this project.

Detour Analysis

Construction will be staged so that traffic can be maintained through the project corridor throughout the construction period.

Cultural Resources

Cultural studies for this project were completed for this segment in 1992 and will be completed for the entire project in 1994. Within this segment, 16 archaeological sites were recorded, two of which were recommended for further study by the State Historic Preservation Officer because they could yield more information (see attached letter).

These two sites, 13DB414 and 13DB417, are located about 24 and 8 kilometers (15 and 5 miles) north of Cascade, respectively. Site 13DB414 was a former farmstead. A limestone-lined well associated with this farmstead is within the U.S. 151 right-of-way and may have been dug in the early 19th century. Site 13DB417 is an artifact scatter on a ridgetop near Fillmore.

Phase II testing of these sites determined they are not eligible for the National Register of Historic Places. Final clearance from the State Historic Preservation Officer for these sites was received in January, 1994. Final clearance for the Historic Architectural Survey was obtained in September, 1993 (see attached letters).

If the proposed project work uncovers an item or items which might be of archaeological, historic or architectural significance, or if important new archaeological, historic or architectural data come to light in the project area, project work will be delayed for sufficient time to notify the State Archaeologist in order that the significance of the discovery can be determined.

Section 404/401 and Iowa DNR Permits

Project construction will be in compliance with permit requirements where appropriate.

Public Involvement Activity

A public information meeting was held on January 13, 1993, at the project inception to solicit comments from the public pertaining to the project. The meeting was held in Cascade, Iowa, and approximately 70 persons were in attendance. A farmer whose land is within the right-of-way of T87N, R1E, Section 16, wrote subsequent to the meeting that he wants access to his land to remain where it is currently. He owns 36 hectares (90 acres) and was opposed to any access revisions which would require a frontage road. Several adjacent landowners also wrote in support of keeping the existing access.

On December 8, 1993, another public information meeting was held in Cascade. Approximately 60 persons attended. At this meeting, maps showing accesses and the location of the proposed new 2-lane were displayed. A concern expressed at this meeting focused on the short sight distance at the intersection of U.S. 151 and Sundown Road due to sight-restricting embankments. The comments received at this meeting and subsequent to it are compiled in a document entitled "Information Pertaining to the Public Meeting Held in the Cascade Elementary School Library." This document is available by request at the Iowa Department of Transportation, Ames, Iowa.

Because of the perceived high traffic volumes of the existing 2-lane roadway, the concept of a 4-lane divided facility was generally well received by the public at both meetings.

Comments and Coordination

Early coordination materials were compiled detailing the proposed improvement and forwarded to the agencies and officials listed below:

- * U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
- * U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
- * U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
- Federal Transit Administration
- Federal Emergency Management Agency
- National Park Service
- * U.S. Department of Agriculture Soil Conservation Service
- * U.S. Department of Interior Office of Environmental Affairs
- Iowa Department of Economic Development
- Iowa State Historic Preservation Officer
- * Iowa Department of Natural Resources
- East Central Intergovernmental Association
- * East Central Iowa Council of Governments
- Linn County Conservation Board
- Jones County Conservation Board
- * Dubuque County Conservation Board
- Honorable Mayor Clay Gavin, Cascade, Iowa

Cascade City Council
Honorable Mayor Glen Gabriel, Monticello, Iowa
Monticello City Council
Monticello Highway 151 Committee
Honorable Mayor Ben Bailey, Springville, Iowa
Springville City Council
Linn County Board of Supervisors
* Jones County Board of Supervisors
Dubuque County Board of Supervisors
Linn County Engineer
* Jones County Engineer
* Dubuque County Engineer

* Indicates responding agencies

ACTION CLASSIFICATION - IMPACT RATING

The planned improvements to U.S. 151 will not result in significant impacts to planned growth or land use within the U.S. 151 study corridor and:

- Does not require relocation of residents in the corridor.
- Does not have a significant impact on any natural, cultural, recreational, historic or other resource.
- Does not involve significant air, noise or water quality impacts.
- Will not have significant impacts on existing traffic patterns.
- Does not otherwise, either individually or cumulatively, have any impacts that would warrant a more intensive environmental study.

Accordingly, a Class III Categorical Exclusion classification is appropriate as a basis for location approval and further development of this action. This project will continue to be monitored by the Iowa DOT throughout all development stages and construction to identify other potential effects of the planned action not presently known.

CONCUR: *Daniel M. Mathis*

For the Division Administrator
Federal Highway Administration

R/US151/AA4



State Historical Society of Iowa

The Historical Division of the Department of Cultural Affairs

December 21, 1993

In reply refer to:
R&C#: 930631075

Randall B. Faber
Office of Project Planning
Planning & Research Division
Iowa Department of Transportation
800 Lincoln Way
Ames, IA 50010

RECEIVED

DEC 27 1993

OFFICE OF PROJECT PLANNING

RE: IDOT/FHWA - DUBUQUE COUNTY - NHS-151-5(36)-19-31 - PIN 92-31060-1 -
PHASE II ARCHEOLOGICAL REPORT, SITES 13DB414 & 13DB417

Dear Randy:

We have reviewed the Phase II report for archeological sites 13DB414 and 13DB417. We concur with your consultant that 13DB417 is not eligible for the National Register of Historic Places because it lacks integrity. That portion of 13DB414 which is located within the current project boundaries also appears to not be eligible for the National Register; therefore, we recommend that the proposed project proceed.

Other portions of 13DB414 are still considered potentially eligible for the National Register of Historic Places. If project plans change in the vicinity of 13DB414, please consult with us again.

If during construction the proposed project work uncovers an item or items which might be of archeological, historical or architectural interest, or if important data come to light in the project area, you should make reasonable efforts to avoid or minimize harm to the property until the significance of the discovery can be determined.

Sincerely,

Kathy Gourley
Kathy Gourley, Archeologist
Community Programs Bureau
Historic Preservation Program

/st

cc: Phil Hassenstab, District 2
Brian Parker, FHWA

Handwritten notes:
O MS 12/28
O MS 12/3
O 12/30

Handwritten note:
O STEVE 1-18

Handwritten note:
HRR 1/3



State Historical Society of Iowa

The Historical Division of the Department of Cultural Affairs

July 21, 1993

In reply refer to:
R&C#: 930631075

Randall B. Faber
Office of Project Planning
Planning & Research Division
Iowa Department of Transportation
800 Lincoln Way
Ames, IA 50010

RECEIVED

JUL 26 1993

OFFICE OF PROJECT PLANNING

RE: FHWA/IDOT - NHS - 3(84)--19-31 - PIN 92-31060-1 - PRIMARY - U.S. 151
IMPROVEMENTS - 19.5 MILES FROM CASCADE TO DUBUQUE

Dear Mr. Faber:

We have reviewed the above-referenced project report. We concur with your consultant that 13DB415, 13DB416, 13DB418, 13DB419, 13DB420, 13DB421, 13DB422, 13DB432, 13DB433, 13B434, 13DB435, 13DB436, 13DB437, 13DB438, and 13DB439 are not eligible for the National Register of Historic Places.

Archaeological site 13DB414 represents the remains of the McCabe cabin, a mid-nineteenth century farmstead and stage coach stop. The site has abundant artifactual remains and intact subsurface features. It is potentially eligible for the National Register of Historic Places. Archaeological site 13DB417 is a deeply buried prehistoric site in an upland setting. It, too, is potentially eligible for the National Register of Historic Places.

We recommend that the project be re-designed to avoid sites 13DB414 and 13DB417. If this is not possible, then we recommend that Phase II archeological investigations be undertaken at 13DB414 and 13DB417. The purpose of these investigations is to determine the sites' National Register eligibility.

Sincerely,

Kathy Gourley
Archeologist, Review and Compliance Program
Historic Preservation Bureau
/st

cc: Maruice Burr, District 6
Brian Parker, FHWA

402 Iowa Avenue
Iowa City, Iowa 52240
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Capitol Complex
Des Moines, Iowa 50319
(515) 281-5111

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Box 372
Clermont, Iowa 52135

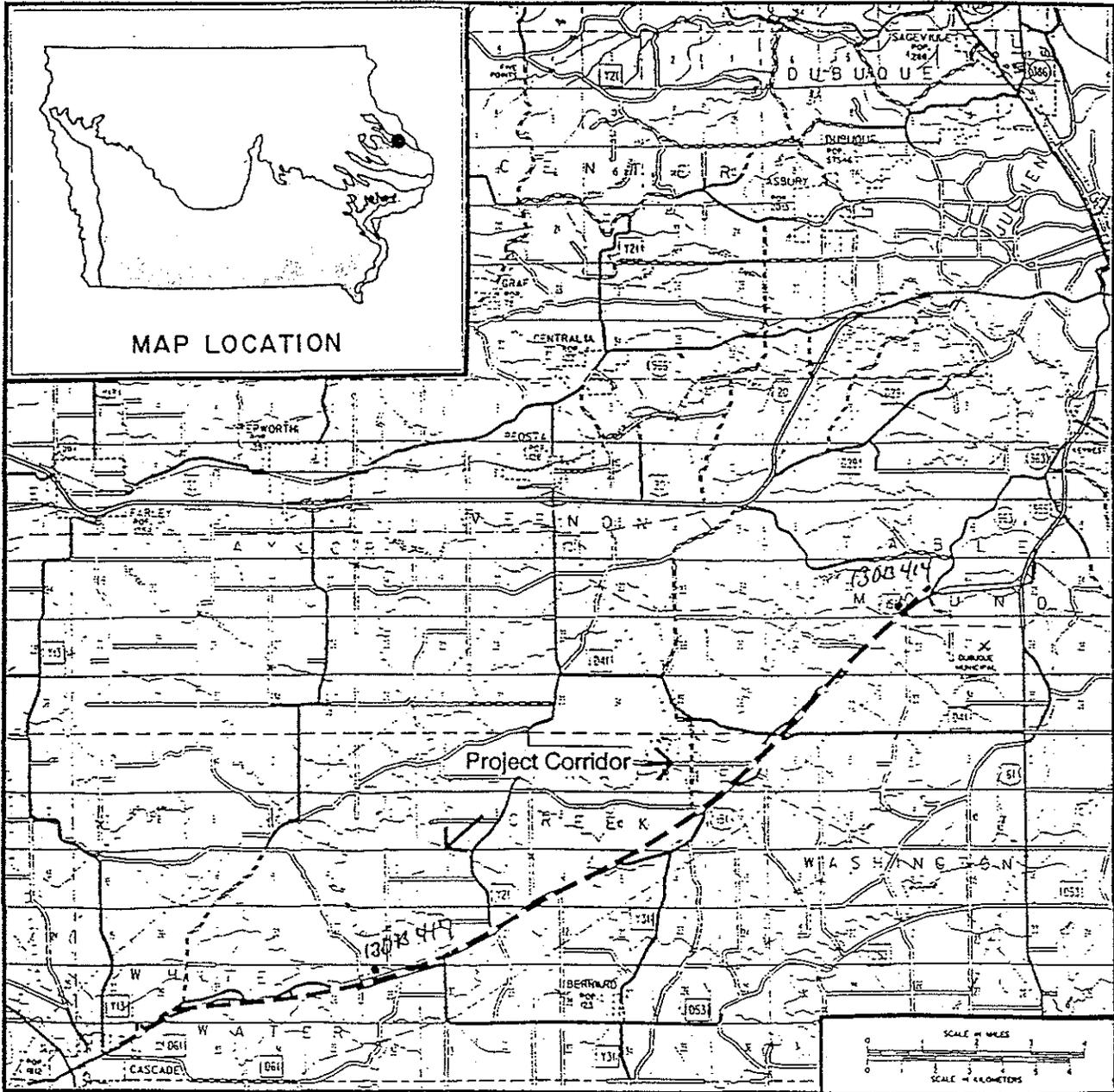


Figure 1. Project location (from General Highway and Transportation Map, Dubuque County, 1991; inset from Prior 1991).



State Historical Society of Iowa

The Historical Division of the Department of Cultural Affairs

September 20, 1993

In reply refer to RC# 930631075

Randall B. Faber
Historic Preservation Specialist
Office of Project Planning
Planning and Research Division
Iowa Department of Transportation
800 Lincoln Way
Ames, Iowa 50010

RECEIVED

SEP 24 1993

OFFICE OF PROJECT PLANNING

RE: FHWA (DOT) - NHS-151-3(84)-19-57, PIN 92-31060-1 - DUBUQUE COUNTY -
PRIMARY - PHASE-I HISTORIC ARCHITECTURAL REPORT FOR CULTURAL
RESOURCES LOCATED IN THE PROJECT AREA OF IOWA 151 FROM THE
CITY OF DUBUQUE TO THE CITY OF CASCADE - COMMENT ON
HISTORY/ARCHITECTURE ONLY

Dear Randy:

We have reviewed the draft report on historical/architectural resources submitted to our Bureau concerning the above referenced project. We provide the following comments and recommendations.

We concur with the consultant's opinion that the farmstead identified as 13-DB-9H in Section 20, T87N-R1E is not eligible for listing in the National Register under Criterion "A", "B", "C" or Criterion Consideration (Exceptions) "A" - "G". As additional future inventory data enlarges our perspective on farmstead significance and surviving authenticity, this property may turn out to be eligible based on the bulk of its buildings representing a tightly defined period of post-World War I farmstead development in which six of the eight buildings cluster in a fifteen year period with few modern intrusions. But it will take time to develop such comparative information and, without it, there is an insufficient basis to reconsider the evaluation that has been made.

With respect to the farmstead in Section 29, T88N-R2E, we concur with the property may be eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places. If the final project alignment will affect buildings associated with this property, we recommend that a Phase-II evaluation of its National Register eligibility--including completion of individual property characteristic forms for the house and barn--be conducted and submitted for review.

402 Iowa Avenue
Iowa City, Iowa 52240

Capitol Complex
Des Moines, Iowa 50319

Montauk
Box 372

Should you have any questions regarding our findings and recommendations, please feel free to contact me at (515) 281-3306.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Lowell Soike".

Lowell J. Soike, Ph.D.
Historian

cc: Dan Fuchs, Federal Highway Administration
Maurice Burr, District 6
Roger R. Osborne, Commission Chair, Dubuque County Historical Society

