National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior

Natchez Trace Parkway
Mississippi

✓ SUPERINTENDENT	
ASST. SUPERINTENDENT	
ADMINISTRATION	
✓ MAINTENANCE	
RANGER ACTIVITIES	
✓ RESOURCE MANAGEMENT	
QSC	
ACTION BY:	

WETLAND STATEMENT OF FINDINGS

NATCHEZ TRACE MULTI-USE TRAIL
PROJECT NATR 055898-3016
OLD CANTON ROAD TO RESERVOIR OVERLOOK PARKING AREA
(APPROXIMATELY FROM MILEPOST 103.6 TO MILEPOST 105.8)

NATCHEZ TRACE PARKWAY

MADISON COUNTY, MISSISSIPPI

Recommended: _____ 3/28/08
for Superintendent, Natchez Trace Parkway Date

Concurred: _____ 4/7/08
Water Resources Division Date

Approved: _____ 4/15/08
FOR Southeast Regional Director Date

INTRODUCTION

The National Park Service, (NPS) in cooperation with the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) is proposing to design and construct approximately 2.2 miles of multi-use trail, hereon referred to as the trail, between Old Canton Road and the Ross Barnett Reservoir Overlook parking area, between approximately mileposts 103.6 and 105.8 within the Natchez Trace Parkway (NATR) boundaries. This project is being funded by Federal Lands Highway Program (FLHP) Category II funding for Congressionally Mandated Parkways.

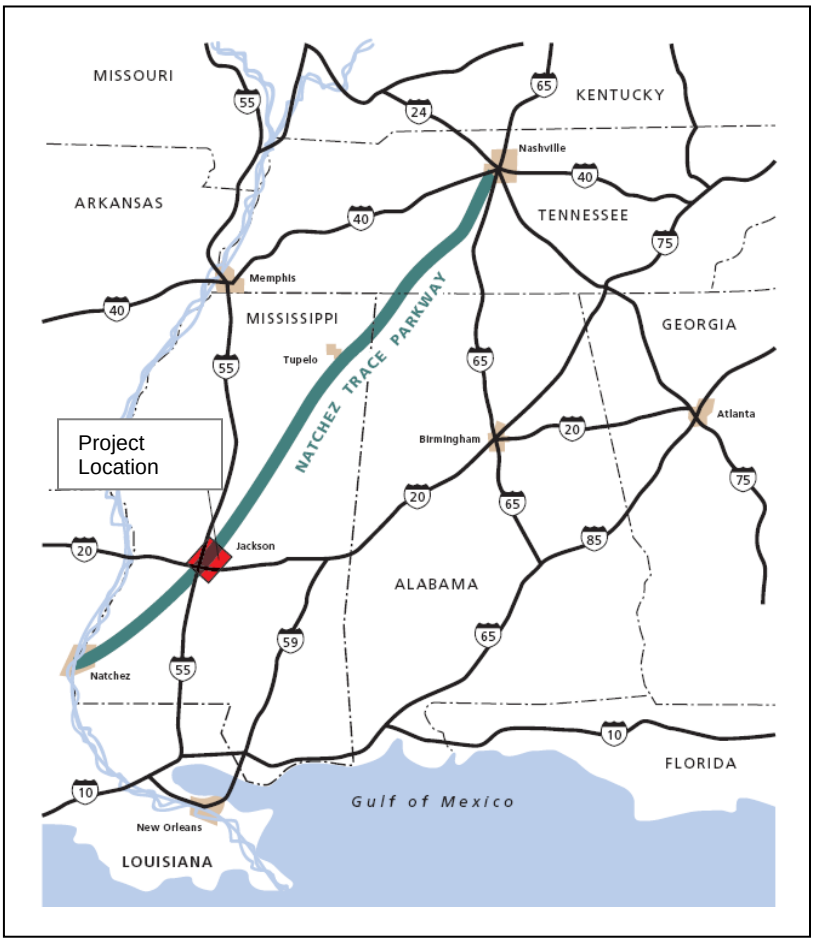

Figure 1. Project location on the Natchez Trace Parkway.

The NPS proposes to construct the 2.2-mile long trail segment along the south side of the NATR motor road (Figure 1). See Sheet No. A3 of the FHWA Plans and Profiles at the end of this document. The FHWA Plans and Profiles are conceptual and subject to change. The plans are not to be used for construction. The trail would follow the conceptual alignment identified in the September 1995 *Multi-Use Trail Study Environmental Assessment, Natchez Trace Parkway, Jackson, Mississippi,* (EA) (NPS 1995), subject to changes identified during design, and approved by the NPS. In a 1996 Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) (NPS 1996) the NPS approved the preferred alternative for building an approximately 21-mile long trail adjacent to the NATR motor road as it passes through the Jackson, Mississippi, metropolitan area (Figure 2).

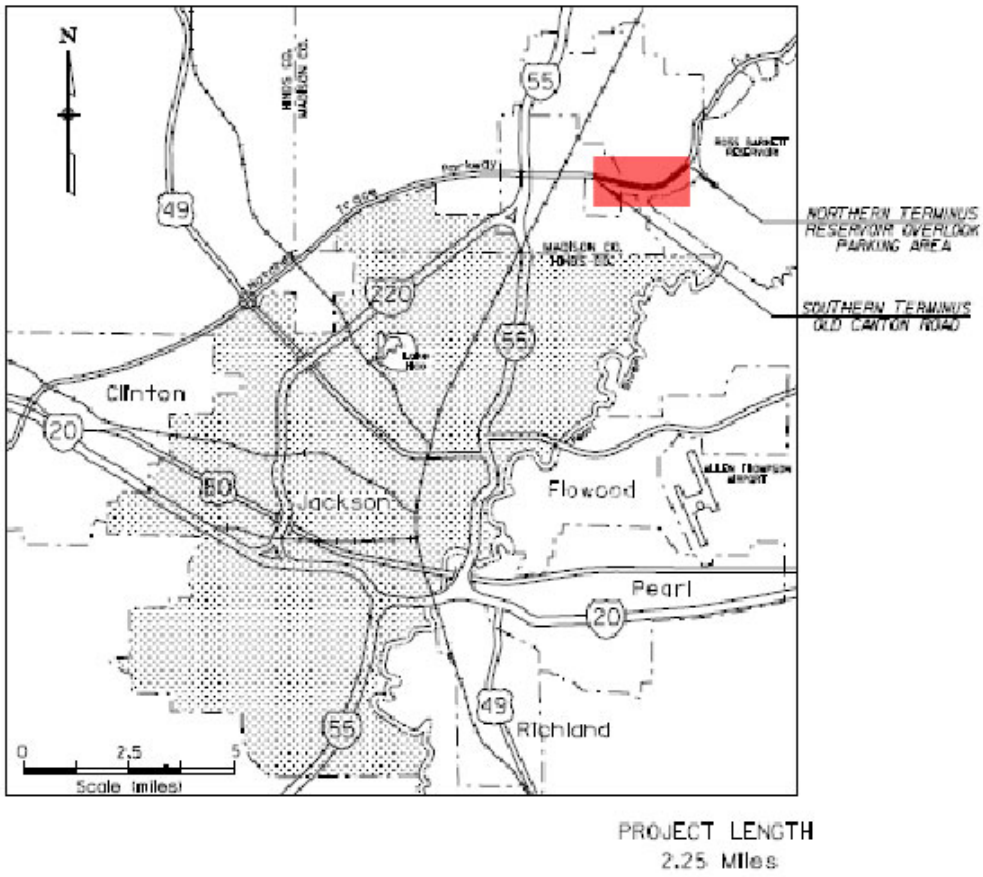

Figure 2. Project location.

The trail profile would closely match the existing ground elevations. See Sheet No. B1 of the FHWA Plans and Profiles at the end of this document. The limits of disturbance to build the trail would vary, depending on the topography. Based on the 70 percent complete trail design there appears to be a total of 2.26 acres of wetland impacts in this project; 2.20 acres of Palustrine Forested Wetland and 0.06 acres of Riverine Emergent Wetland, including 0.0015 of an acre of Palustrine Emergent Wetland. The trail would cross Brashear Creek and two of its tributaries, Culley Creek and its tributary, two unnamed streams, and two drainage ditches. Wetlands along the creeks and streams and the drainage ditch intersecting the NATR at Station 106+60, approximately 1200 feet west of the Reservoir Overlook Parking Area, were delineated in 2007 as riverine emergent wetlands. The wetland at the other drainage ditch running parallel to the NATR from Station 106+60 to the Reservoir Overlook Parking Area was delineated as palustrine emergent. The trail would also traverse 2.2 acres of palustrine forested wetlands. A trail bridge, 127 feet long, 14 feet wide, would be constructed across Brashear Creek. A 4-foot span, 4-foot rise concrete box culvert would be extended by approximately 8 to 10 feet for the trail across the Brashear Creek tributary immediately east of the main body of the creek. A 6-foot span, 4-foot rise box culvert would also be installed at the Brashear Creek tributary approximately 350 feet east of Brashear Creek (approximately station 8+00). See Sheet No. D1 of the FHWA Plan and Profile Sheets at the end of this document.

A triple 10-foot span, 6-foot rise concrete box culvert would be extended by approximately 20 feet for the trail across Culley Creek. A double 6-foot span, 5-foot rise concrete box culvert

would be extended by approximately 20 feet across the Culley Creek tributary. The concrete box culvert extensions would be extensions of existing box culverts under the NATR motor road. See Sheet No. D2 and Sheet No. D3 at the end of this document.

A trail bridge, 200 feet long and 14 feet wide, would span both unnamed streams. See Sheet No. D4 of the FHWA Plan and Profile Sheets at the end of this document. A 36-inch culvert would be installed in the drainage ditch at station 106+72. See Sheet No. D5 of the FHWA Plan and Profile Sheets at the end of this document. The trail through the palustrine forested wetlands and the palustrine emergent wetland would be constructed on lime-treated sub-base, topped by two two-inch lifts of Superpave Asphaltic Concrete Pavement. Culverts would be installed to facilitate water flow past the trail. Additional oversized culverts have been specified where the trail crosses wetlands, as appropriate to facilitate natural drainage and prevent downstream incising.

The 1995 EA included analysis of three alternatives for accommodating trail users within the NATR right-of-way in the vicinity of Jackson, Mississippi (NPS 1995). The preferred alternative, part of which is the 2.2-mile trail segment discussed in this statement of findings (SOF), provides a separate and continuous paved trail within the NATR right-of-way, adjacent to the NATR motor road, connecting to local community trails, and potentially linking neighborhoods, parks, and tourist attractions throughout the greater Jackson, Mississippi, metropolitan area. The trail would maintain the visual qualities and character of the NATR motor road and surrounding landscape, accommodate the needs of a variety of trail user groups, and incorporate sustainable design and construction techniques and materials. The trail would be designed to meet American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (AASHTO) standards and to Architectural Barriers Act Accessibility Standards (ABAAS), thus maintaining a grade of less than 5 percent and accommodating other necessary accessibility requirements.

The 1995 EA assessed the impacts of the three alternatives. Alternative 1 was a no action alternative; no trail would be constructed. Alternative 2, the preferred alternative and the alternative now being designed, was construction of a separate and continuous paved trail on NATR property from approximately milepost 86.6 to milepost 107.9. The trail would be separate from the NATR motor road. Alternative 3 was construction of three separate paved trail segments. The trail segments would be independent of one another.

Alternative 1, the no-action alternative, would have no impact on wetlands. Alternative 2 and alternative 3 would have adverse impacts on wetlands. The extent and level of impacts were not identified in the 1995 EA. The 1995 EA indicated that wetland losses would be mitigated by replacement at a ratio of two to one (2:1).

The 1995 EA indicated that adverse impacts to wetlands would be minimized by the use of temporary erosion control devices during construction, such as silt fences, slope drains, straw bales, inlet protection, plastic lining, loose riprap, sediment traps, diversion berms, and/or diversion channels in areas where there is a potential to impact wetland areas. Permanent erosion control devices, such as loose riprap, paved waterways, and solid sod would be utilized at locations where the need exists.

Alternative 3 would have the same kinds of impacts as alternative 2 in the 2.2-mile multi-use trail project discussed in this SOF. Mitigation to minimize adverse impacts and to compensate for unavoidable impacts would be the same as for alternative 2.

An additional alternative, paving the roadside shoulders of the NATR motor road through the greater Jackson metropolitan area, was considered but rejected. The paved shoulders alternative was rejected for a number of reasons, foremost being the safety of non-motorized recreational users being placed immediately adjacent to vehicle traffic, compatibility with the visual continuity and scenic character of the NATR experience afforded NATR visitors, and the historic design integrity of the NATR landscape experience.

This SOF has been prepared to comply with NPS Director's Order #77-1, which requires such statement to be prepared to document why an alternative with such impacts was chosen, and to meet the other requirements identified in the procedural manual for protection of wetlands (NPS Procedural Manual #77-1: Wetland Protection 1998).

PURPOSE AND NEED FOR THE ACTION

In 1938 the Natchez Trace Parkway was established as a unit of the NPS by Congress to commemorate the historic Natchez Trace – the principal overland link between the Southwest Territory and the Mississippi River and the United States during the late 18th and 19th centuries. The NATR motor road is designed to follow the alignment of the historic Natchez Trace as closely as possible.

In 1968 the National Trails Systems Act of 1968 (16 USC 1241-51) designated Natchez Trace as one of the initial trails to be studied for potential inclusion in the national trails system which would provide ". . . for the ever-increasing outdoor recreation needs of an expanding population . . . to promote preservation of, public access to, travel within and enjoyment and appreciation of the open-air, outdoor areas and historic resources for the Nation."

In 1983 the Natchez Trace Scenic Trail, established by Congress as a result of the Bureau of Outdoor Recreation (BOR) study and recommendations, and the NPS were directed to designate a route.

The 1987 *Comprehensive Trail Plan, Natchez Trace National Scenic Trail / Alabama-Mississippi-Tennessee* (NPS 1987) developed in conjunction with the Natchez Trace Parkway General Management Plan (NATR-GMP) (NPS 1987), identified the Jackson, Mississippi, metropolitan area as one of three high use areas in which the NPS will build multi-use trails on NATR lands, but off of the NATR motor road. The Trail Plan states that; "Bicycling will continue along the entire developed length of the NATR. Bicycle use will be monitored however, and accommodations will be made to separate bicyclists and vehicular traffic where required in heavy use areas."

By the 1990s increasingly heavy volumes of vehicular traffic on the NATR motor road through the Jackson, Mississippi, metropolitan area presented serious safety concerns for bicyclists traveling on the NATR motor road.

To address that concern, the 1995 EA identified two alternative multi-use trail routes and a no action alternative through the Jackson metropolitan area on NATR lands adjacent to the NATR motor road (NPS 1995). The preferred alternative, alternative 2, is a separate and continuous multi-use trail between approximately mileposts 86.6 and 107.9. The preferred alternative includes the segment of the multi-use trail south of the NATR motor road between Old Canton Road and the Ross Barnett Reservoir Overlook parking area, (between approximately mileposts 103.6 and 105.8) that is the subject of this SOF.

In 1999 a Congressional Directive to the NPS directed the NATR to construct a multi-use trail in conjunction with the construction of the NATR motor road (U.S. Congress 1999). A subsequent Congressionally mandated feasibility study prepared by the Eastern Federal Lands Highway Division of the Federal Highway Administration (EFLHD/FHWA) in conjunction with the NPS, identified the Jackson, Mississippi, metropolitan area as one of three metropolitan areas transected by the NATR motor road where a multi-use trail should be built within the NATR boundaries, based on existing and projected future average daily traffic volumes (ADT).

Design Alternatives Considered

The multi-use trail analyzed as the preferred alternative in the 1995 EA would have had a paved surface 8 feet wide (NPS 1995). Because the minimum width of a multi-use trail currently recommended by AASHTO is now 10 feet, the trail design was widened to accommodate that new standard. That design change was addressed in a memo to file from the NATR Superintendent, dated March 27, 2007 (NPS 2007), and is available at the NATR Headquarters.

The separate and continuous multi-use trail between approximately mileposts 86.6 and 107.9 will be constructed in segments at this time to manage construction costs. Design of a 2.2-mile segment of this multi-use trail from the 1995 EA is in progress. By May 2007 the design for this segment, between Old Canton Road and the Reservoir Overlook parking area, the trail portion discussed in this SOF, was at the 30 percent completion level, and an on-site field review of the plans was completed on May 7, 2007. Staffs attending were from the EFLHD/FHWA, NPS-NATR, and NPS-Denver Service Center (DSC).

On May 23 through 25, 2007, NPS and EFLHD/FHWA staff, with staff from Parsons Corporation, conducted a Value Analysis and Value Engineering study (VA/VE) of the multi-use trail design for the 2.2-mile segment of proposed multi-use trail through the Jackson, Mississippi, metropolitan area. However, many of the following recommendations from the VA/VE for this segment will also be applicable to the approximately 21 miles of multi-use trail. It was verified at the VA/VE that the multi-use trail will be located on NATR property, but away from the NATR motor road as much as feasible, and primarily within wooded areas, with intermittent views to and from the NATR motor road. The trail design and construction will be guided by the AASHTO *Guide for the Development of Bicycle Facilities* (AASHTO 1999), and by the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), superseded by the ABAAS (General Services Administration [GSA] 2006).

On December 6, 2007, in a meeting/teleconference, NPS staff from the Washington Office, Water Resources Division (WRD), met with NPS staff from NATR and the DSC. The NATR and DSC staff explained the justifications for the proposed 70 percent trail design alignment. Staff from WRD suggested some potential design adjustments and techniques to avoid or reduce wetland impacts.

On December 11, 2007, an on-site field review of the 70 percent design plans was completed by staff from the EFLHD/FHWA, staff from NPS-NATR, and NPS-DSC. Consideration has been given to potential realignment of parts of the trail, to avoid or reduce impacts to wetlands while avoiding impacts to other resources, maintaining the desired NATR trail and NATR motor road character, and complying with other design criteria and the basis of planning and design from the 1995 EA (NPS 1995).

Wetlands in the project area

The project area, the segment of the NATR between Old Canton Road (approximately milepost 103.6) and the Reservoir Overlook parking area (approximately milepost 105.8) is characterized by palustrine forested wetlands and some riverine and palustrine emergent wetland fringe areas interspersed with forested uplands. This area contains a number of utility/access pathways. Maintained, grassed turf areas border the NATR's edge of pavement (Amy S. Greene Environmental Consultants, Inc. [ASGEC] 2007).

The wetlands are heavily impacted by urban development. Many of the wetlands receive urban road and parking lot runoff, some are associated with drainage ditches, though a number of them are associated with intermittent streams and other perennial streams, Culley Creek, Brashears Creek, and associated unnamed streams. All of the wetlands have been impacted by urban development, directly by the construction of roads and housing developments or indirectly through the change in hydrology from water diversion associated with this urban development. This development has also aided in the isolation and fragmentation of these wetlands, further decreasing their function and value.

Invasive and/or exotic species, such as the non-native, invasive species, Chinese privet (*Ligustrum sinense*) and native, invasive species, water oak (*Quercus nigra*), are also common in the forested uplands and the wetlands. Chinese privet is listed as one of Mississippi's ten worst invasive weeds by the Mississippi State University Extension Service, and is abundant throughout the study area. In addition to Chinese privet, the native weedy species switchcane (*Arundinaria gigantea*) was identified in three wetlands, diminishing biodiversity and flora and fauna productivity in those wetlands (ASGEC 2007).

Wetlands have been delineated by an NPS contractor, ASGEC, as required by the 1995 EA, which directed that SOFs would be completed prior to trail construction and appended to the EA (NPS 1995). For purposes of compliance with Executive Order 11990, the NPS uses "Classification of Wetlands and Deepwater Habitats of the United States," (U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service [USFWS], Cowardin et al. 1979) as the standard for defining, classifying, and inventorying wetlands. Field delineation of wetlands was performed at the sites in January 2007 (ASGEC 2007). Vegetation, soils, and hydrology were examined for evidence of wetland characteristics according to the three-parameter approach methodology outlined in the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) Wetlands Delineation Manual (USACE 1987) as required by the USACE for use in the Section 404 of the Clean Water Act permitting process, as well as the Cowardin methodology required by the NPS (ASGEC 2007).

The abovementioned delineation identified wetlands that are classified according to USFWS, Cowardin et al. (1979) as palustrine and riverine systems. Of the 2.26 acres of wetlands being impacted by the construction of the multi-use trails, 2.20 acres of wetlands were classified as Palustrine Forested Broad-leaved Deciduous Wetland (PFO1) and 0.06 acres were classified as Riverine Emergent Wetland (R2EM). A very small area, less than 0.0015 of an acre, of Palustrine Emergent Wetland was also delineated along the NATR. Due to similarities in functions and values, the identified Palustrine Emergent Wetlands were included as part of the Riverine Emergent Wetland discussion. Sheets No. A3-D5 of the FHWA Plans at the end of the document illustrate the location of the trail relative to the delineated wetlands. According to the delineation report, palustrine wetland areas exhibited ponding and saturated soil to the surface in most instances. Field indicators of long-term hydrology within the wetlands included water-stained leaves, oxidized root channels, water marks on trees, sediment deposits, drainage

patterns, inundation, and saturation, as well as morphological features, such as fluted and buttressed trunks (ASGEC 2007). Wetlands were located in NATR roadside ditches, topographical depressions or along open water in Culley or Brashear Creek and associated tributaries.

The FHWA Plans and Profiles are conceptual and subject to change. The plans are not to be used for construction.

Functions and values

This section describes the functions and values of typical Palustrine Forested Wetlands, Palustrine Emergent Wetlands, and Riverine Emergent Wetlands. The vegetation in the project area was described as part of the Wetland Delineation Report (ASGEC 2007). There have not been any fish or wildlife surveys in the project area. The fish and wildlife described below are species that are known to occur along portions of the NATR (Accipiter Biological Consultants [ABC] 2001a; ABC 2001b; NPS 2007b and NPS 2007c) and potentially occur in the project area based on the natural history of the species and scientific literature.

The palustrine system (Figure 3) includes all nontidal wetlands dominated by trees, shrubs, persistent emergents, emergent mosses or lichens, and all such wetlands that occur in tidal areas where salinity due to ocean-derived salts is below 0.5 parts per thousand. The palustrine system was developed to group the vegetated wetlands traditionally called by such names as marsh, swamp, bog, fen, and prairie, which are found throughout the United States. It also includes the small, shallow, permanent or intermittent water bodies often called ponds. Palustrine wetlands may be situated shoreward of lakes, river channels, or estuaries; on river floodplains; in isolated catchments; or on slopes. They may also occur as islands in lakes or rivers. The erosive forces of wind and water are of minor importance except during severe flood (USFWS, Cowardin et al. 1979).

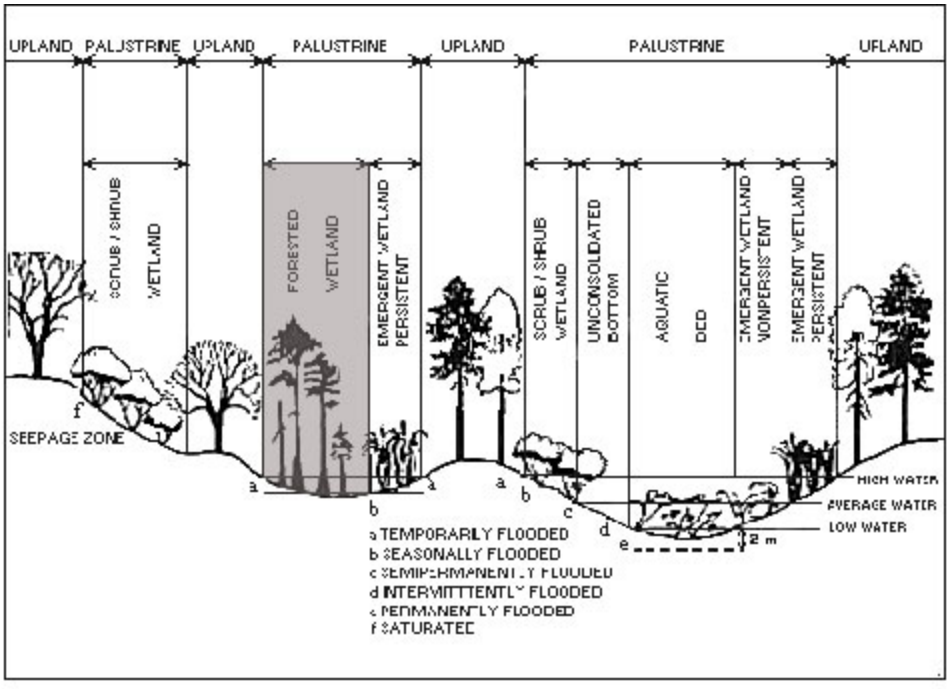

Figure 3. A palustrine forested broad-leaved deciduous wetland.

A Palustrine Forested Broad-leaved Deciduous Wetland (Figure 3) may be saturated or temporarily or seasonally flooded. Saturated means that the substrate is saturated to the surface for extended periods during the growing season, but surface water is seldom present. Temporarily flooded means that surface water is present for brief periods during the growing season, but the water table usually lies well below the soil surface for most of the season. Plants that grow both in uplands and wetlands are characteristic of the temporarily flooded regime. Seasonally flooded means that surface water is present for extended periods, especially early in the growing season, but is absent by the end of the season in most years. When surface water is absent, the water table is often near the land surface.

Palustrine forested wetlands are characterized by woody vegetation that is 6 m (20 feet) tall or taller. Forested wetlands usually possess an overstory of trees, an understory of young trees or shrubs, and an herbaceous layer. In the project area, the overstory of the forested wetlands is dominated by broad-leaved deciduous trees such as green ash (*Fraxinus pennsylvanica*), box elder (*Acer negundo*), American elm (*Ulmus americana*), American sycamore (*Platanus occidentalis*), sugarberry (*Celtis laevigata*) sweet gum (*Liquidambar styraciflua*), and water oak (*Quercus nigra*). The sapling layer is dominated by American elm, water oak, sugarberry, and box elder. The shrub layer includes cat greenbrier (*Smilax glauca*), Chinese privet, groundsel (*Baccharis halimifolia*), and elderberry (*Sambucus canadensis*). The herbaceous layer includes sedge species (*Carex* spp.), Japanese honeysuckle (*Lonicera japonica*), and mint (*Mentha* spp.) (ASGEC 2007).

Palustrine Forested Broad-leaved Deciduous Wetlands, also known as bottomland hardwood forests, provide wildlife habitat in their overstory, understory, and also on the forest floor where small depressions may form as a result of flood water scouring and sediment deposition. Bottomland hardwood forests provide important breeding habitat for a variety of migratory and resident bird species. High water levels may provide high quality habitat for wintering waterfowl, yet diminish habitat suitability for numerous woodpeckers and other woodland species. During periods of low water levels, bottomland hardwoods may be utilized by several wading birds, including the great blue heron (*Ardea herodias*) and the white ibis (*Eudocimus albus*), and acorn-caching species, such as the redheaded woodpecker (*Melanerpes erythrocephalus*) (USACE 2001).

Monitoring of spring migrants using WSR-88D doppler radar along the Gulf Coast has shown that migrants frequently land in bottomland forests along river systems upon arrival and depart these areas during early morning hours (Gathreaux 1999). Often, migrating birds will fly over coastal areas and land inland along forested river systems. If birds are using river systems as landmarks, then associated forested habitats along rivers may be vital for a successful migration for many species. Examples of species found during migration in bottomland forests include black-throated blue warblers (*Dendroica caerulescens*), American redstarts (*Setophaga ruticalla*), Baltimore orioles (*Icterus balbula*), and black-throated green warblers (*Dendroica virens*) (USACE 2001).

Southern bottomland hardwood forests also support a diverse array of nearctic migrants and year-round resident birds during the winter months (USACE 2001). Nearctic migrants account for about 55 percent of the bird community in southern bottomland hardwood forests. Residents and occasional transient species comprise the rest of the community (Dickson 1978). Typical nearctic species in southern bottomland hardwood forests include the ruby-crowned kinglet (*Regulus satrapa*), yellow-rumped warbler (*Dendroica coronata*), white-throated sparrow (*Zonotrichia albicollis*), brown creeper (*Certhia americana*), and yellow-bellied sapsucker

(*Sphyrapicus varius*) (USACE 2001), almost all of which are known to occur on the NATR (ABC 2001a) and potentially occur in the project area. During high water levels, bottomland hardwoods may also support many wintering waterfowl species, including the wood duck (*Aix sponsa*), mallard (*Anas platyrhynchos*), and hooded merganser (*Lophodytes cucullatus*) (USACE 2001).

Southern bottomland hardwood forests also support numerous species of year-round resident birds. Year-round resident species comprise about 35 to 55 percent of seasonal bird communities (Dickson 1978; Zeller and Collazo 1995). Common southern bottomland hardwood forest resident species are the white-breasted nuthatch (*Sitta carolinensis*), the pileated woodpecker (*Dryocopus pileatus*), the downy woodpecker (*Picoides pubescens*), the red-bellied woodpecker (*Melanerpes carolinus*), the tufted titmouse (*Baelophus bicolor*), Carolina wren (*Thryothorus ludovicianus*) and Carolina chickadee (*Poecile carolinensis*) (USACE 2001), all of which are known to occur on the NATR (ABC 2001a) and potentially occur in the project area.

Southern bottomland hardwood forests are renowned for supporting large numbers of breeding bird species. During the breeding season, the number of neotropical migrants breeding in these habitats ranges from 48 to 65 percent of the total breeding bird assemblage (USFS, Pashley and Barrow 1992). While many resident and wintering species are found in a variety of forested habitats, many breeding species either breed exclusively in bottomland forests or have highest densities and/or reproductive success in these areas. Several species are considered forested wetland specialists, including the prothonotary warbler (*Protonotaria citrea)* and the swallow-tailed kite (*Elanoides forficatus*) (Meyer 1995, Petit 1999). The prothonotary warbler is known to occur on the NATR (ABC 2001a) and potentially occurs in the project area. One of the most common neotropical migrants, the Acadian flycatcher (*Empidonax virescens*), is largely restricted to forested wetland habitats during the breeding season in the Southeast (USACE 2001). A species of warbler known to occur on the NATR (ABC 2001a) and potentially occurring in the project area, showing sharp declines throughout its range during the past few decades is the Cerulean warbler (*Dendroica cerulea*). This warbler achieves highest densities and reproductive success in bottomland forests in the Southeast (USACE 2001). Seasonally flooded areas are often characterized by the presence of five species, the eastern wood-pewee (*Contopus virens*), great-crested flycatcher (*Myiarchus crinitus*), yellow-throated vireo (*Vireo flavifrons*), blue-gray gnatcatcher (*Polioptila californicus*), and prothonotary warbler (USFS, Pashley and Barrow 1992); all of which are known to occur on the NATR (ABC 2001a) and potentially occur in the project area.

The Avifauna Inventory (ABC 2001a) and Reptile and Amphibian Inventory (ABC 2001b) studies included two general habitat types, the bottomland hardwood woodland habitat type and the riparian woodland habitat type, which are considered to be part of the bottomland hardwood designation used above. Sixty-five species of birds were found in the bottomland hardwood general habitat, and 80 species of birds were found in the riparian woodland general habitat as part of the sampling for the Natchez Trace Parkway Avifauna Inventory Project (ABC 2001a). A list of species, including bird species, known to occur on the NATR and potentially occurring in the project area is provided in Table 1.

Shallow depressions in bottomland hardwood forests, sometimes known as vernal ponds, seasonal, or temporary wetlands, can provide important habitat for amphibians. These depressions will often fill with water during the spring or fall and dry up during the remaining seasons. Fish are not able to become established due to the temporary nature of the wetland. This makes depressional habitat especially important as breeding and rearing habitat for not only

amphibians, but also crustaceans and insects (USFS, Biebighauser 2003). Approximately one-half of all frogs and one-third of all salamander species rely on seasonal or temporary wetlands for development (USFS, Biebighauser 2003). Three species of amphibians, the spring peeper (*Hyla crucifer*), the northern cricket frog (*Acris crepitans*), and the southern cricket frog (*Acris gryllus*), were found in the bottomland hardwood general habitat and 12 species were found in the riparian woodland general habitat as part of the sampling for the Natchez Trace Parkway Amphibian and Reptile Inventory Project (ABC 2001b). A list of species, including amphibian species, known to occur on the NATR, (ABC 2001b) and potentially occurring in the project area is provided in Table 1.

A complete list of reptiles known to occur on the NATR (ABC 2001b) and potentially occurring in the project area is provided in Table 1.

Mammals occurring in the southern bottomland hardwood forests of Mississippi and potentially on the NATR include opossum (*Didelphis virginiana*), the swamp rabbit (*Sylvilagus aquaticus*), mink (*Mustela vison*), muskrat (*Ondatra zibethicus*), river otter (*Lutra canadensis*), and bats, such as the southeastern myotis (*Myotis austroriparius*), the little brown myotis (*Myotis lucifugus*), the gray myotis (*Myotis grisescens*), the northern yellow bat (*Lasiurus intermedius*), the Rafinesque's big-eared bat (*Corynorhinus rafinesquii*), the Hoary bat (*Lasiurus cinereus*), the northern myotis (*Myotis septentrionalis*), the Indiana Myotis (*Myotis sodalis*) and the silver-haired bat (*Lasionycteris noctivagans*) (Mississippi Museum of Natural Science [MMNS] 2005; NPS 2007b). Many of the bats are on the State of Mississippi's Species of Greatest Conservation Need list (MMNS 2005). A complete list of mammals potentially occurring on the NATR (NPS 2007c) and the project area is provided in Table 1.

The riverine system (Figure 4) includes all wetlands and deepwater habitats contained within a channel, with two exceptions: (1) wetlands dominated by trees, shrubs, persistent emergents, emergent mosses, or lichens, and (2) habitats with water containing ocean-derived salts in excess of 0.5 parts per thousand (USFWS, Cowardin et al. 1979). A channel is "an open conduit either naturally or artificially created which periodically or continuously contains moving water, or which performs a connecting link between two bodies of standing water" (USGS, Langbein and Iseri 1960). Water is usually, but not always, flowing in the riverine system (USFWS, Cowardin et al. 1979).

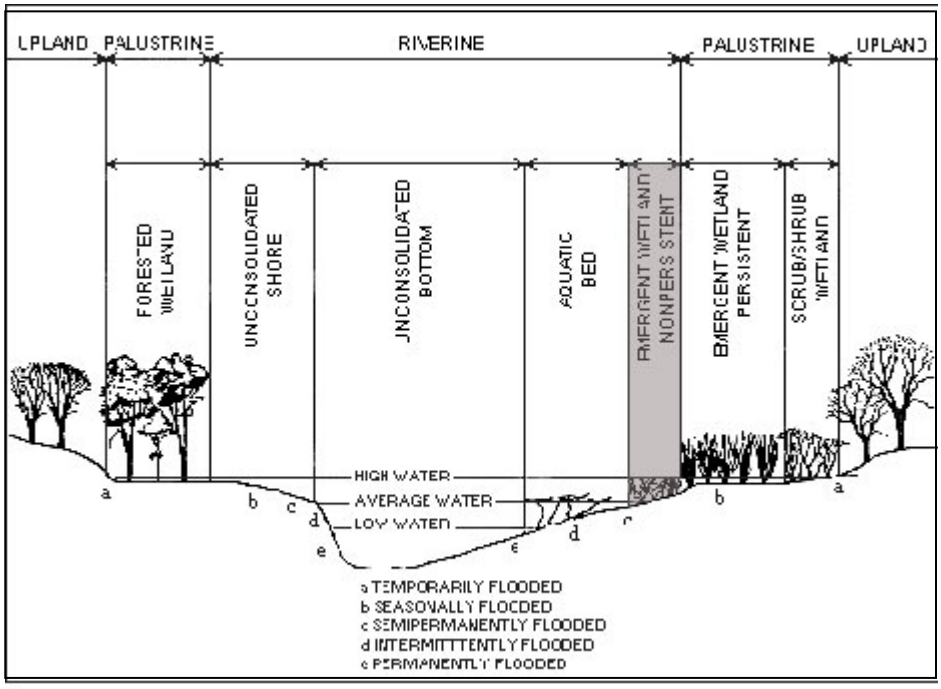

Figure 4. A Riverine Emergent Wetland.

A Riverine Emergent Wetland is semipermanently flooded, which means that surface water persists throughout the growing season in most years. Due to similarities in functions and values, the identified Palustrine Emergent Wetlands were included as part of the Riverine Emergent Wetland discussion. When surface water is absent, the water table is usually often near the land surface. Herbaceous hydrophytic vegetation is usually present for most of the growing season. The dominant vegetation in the project area emergent wetlands were spring cress (*Nasturtium officinale*), vetch spp. (*Vicia* spp.), sedge spp., soft rush (*Juncus effuses*), and maintained grasses (ASGEC 2007).

Riverine Emergent and Palustrine Emergent Wetlands provide habitat for many species of fish and wildlife. Many wading birds, such as herons and egrets are known to occur on the NATR and potentially occur in the riverine emergent wetlands in the project area. Migratory and resident waterfowl may also use this type of wetland during migration or the breeding season.

A complete list of bird species known to occur on the NATR (ABC 2001a) and potentially occurring in the project area is provided in Table 1.

Thirty-one species of reptiles and amphibians were identified as occurring in riverine emergent wetlands on the NATR (ABC 2001b). Some of the more common amphibians include the southern leopard frog, the green frog (*Rana clamitans*), bronze frog (*Rana clamitans clamitans*), the northern cricket frog, and the red-spotted newt (*Notophthalmus viridescens viridescens*). Some of the more common reptiles found in this type of wetland include the red-eared slider (*Trachemys scripta elegans*), the chicken turtle, the common snapping turtle (*Chelydra serpentina*), and the eastern mud turtle (*Kinosternon subrubrum subrubrum*). A complete list of reptile and amphibian species known to occur on the NATR (ABC 2001b) and potentially occurring in the project area is provided in Table 1.

Riverine Emergent Wetlands provide fish spawning and nursery habitat for species, such as small-mouth bass (*Micropterus dolomieu*), large-mouth bass (*Micropterus salmoides*), bluegill

(*Lepomis macrochirus*), and the common carp (*Cyprinus carpio*). A complete list of fish species known to occur on the NATR (NPS 2007b) and potentially occurring in the project area is provided in Table 1.

No federally or state listed threatened or endangered species are known to occur in the project area.

The abovementioned wetlands, the Palustrine Forested Broad-leaved Deciduous Wetlands, the Riverine Emergent Wetlands and the Palustrine Emergent Wetlands, also provide flood storage, reduce flood flows and the velocity of flood waters, reducing erosion and causing flood waters to release sediment. These types of wetlands also aid in nutrient trapping and groundwater recharge/discharge. Wetland vegetation, especially the vegetation in riverine emergent and palustrine wetlands, filters out pollutants from the water, while microorganisms utilize nutrients and break down organic matter, improving water quality. Insects living in the substrate and vegetation of the wetlands are the basis of the food chain for the abovementioned wildlife and fish species. Generally, these types of wetlands also serve as recreation areas for hunting, fishing, and wildlife observation and are economically important to local communities as a source of ecotourism and subsistence.

Locally, the wetlands along this relatively narrow (approximately 800 feet wide) urban section of the NATR have been impacted by development and have limited access, so they no longer provide many recreational opportunities. Hunting and fishing are not allowed in the park. Constructing the multi-use trail would enable the increased use of these wetlands for wildlife and nature observation. The trail would provide opportunities for recreation primarily in the form of bicycling and walking. No motorized vehicles other than authorized maintenance or emergency vehicles would be allowed on the trail.

The wetlands in the project area are heavily impacted by urban development, directly by the construction of roads and housing developments or indirectly through the change in hydrology from water diversion associated with this urban development. This development has also aided in the isolation and fragmentation of these wetlands. As a result, the abovementioned functions and values of these wetlands have been degraded.

Avoidance and Minimization

The NPS in cooperation with the FHWA is proposing to design and construct approximately 2.2 miles of multi-use trail between Old Canton Road and the Ross Barnett Reservoir Overlook parking area, between approximately mileposts 103.6 and 105.8 within the NATR right of way. Design emphasis has been incorporated to avoid wetlands and reduce impacts to wetland resources to a level of approximately 2.26 acres of impact. However, the abundance of wetland resources on both sides of the NATR motor road and the trail preclude the complete avoidance of wetland impacts.

The trail begins just west of Old Canton Road near Jackson, Mississippi (Figure 2). The trail alignment runs adjacent to the NATR motor road for approximately 1200 feet, crossing Brashear Creek and one Brashear Creek tributary. A trail bridge, 127 feet long, 14 feet wide, would be constructed across Brashear Creek. A 4-foot span, 4-foot rise concrete box culvert would be extended by approximately 10 feet for the trail across the Brashear Creek tributary immediately east of the main body of the creek. The trail then turns southeast to run between two wetlands (between Stations 10+00 and 15+00) crossing a narrow section of wetlands to the east (15+5 ±) to avoid wetland impacts and then continues east as illustrated on Sheet No. D1 of the FHWA

Plan and Profiles Sheets at the end of this document. The alignment crosses another Brashear Creek tributary, goes around an archeological site and then crosses another narrow section of wetlands (Between Stations 20+00 and 25+00). A 6-foot span, 4-foot rise box culvert would also be installed at the Brashear Creek tributary (Station 20+29). Additional oversized culverts have been specified in the current trail design where appropriate to facilitate natural drainage and prevent downstream incision. Straightening the alignment and moving the trail closer to the road were considered to minimize wetland impacts, however, this would diminish the visitor experience because the trail would be closer to the road and the vegetation screen between the road and trail is reduced. A straight alignment is also out of character with design standards and character established for the trail, the NATR and NPS landscape design. A total of 0.256 acres of wetlands would be impacted in the area from the beginning of the trail to just past the second Brashear Creek tributary. See Sheet No. D1 of the FHWA Plan and Profiles Sheets at the end of this document.

The trail continues east crossing a wetland for about 1200 feet (Between Stations 28+50 and 41+00). See Sheet No. D2 of the FHWA Plan and Profiles Sheets at the end of this document. The proposed alignment within the large wetland area described on Sheet D2 would be constructed on a sloped area requiring cut and fill, resulting in an expanded construction footprint and impacts to the wetland. The proposed alignment going through the wetlands would also isolate approximately 3.8 acres of wetland from the remaining wetland area. Isolation would adversely impact the hydrology and fragment the wildlife habitat, resulting in diminished wildlife functions. Straightening and shifting the alignment north closer to the NATR motor road were considered to minimize the abovementioned wetland impacts. The area closer to the NATR motor road is flatter, requiring less cut and fill than the proposed alignment, decreasing the construction footprint and wetland impacts. Shifting the alignment closer to the NATR motor road would reduce the fragmentation of the wetlands. However, the proposed alignment would also avoid a large grove of mature oak trees along the road that add valuable tree canopy, nesting, and feeding sources to the wetland ecosystem. The removal of these oaks would be a greater adverse impact to the wildlife functional value of the wetlands than the fragmentation of the wetlands, so it was decided to keep the proposed alignment. In order to minimize hydrological impacts resulting from the fragmentation of the wetlands, flat graded 18-inch culverts would be placed at regular intervals along the trail to allow water levels in this wetland to recede uniformly on both sides of the trail during seasonal flood events.

The trail then turns northeast to run adjacent to the NATR motor road to avoid wetland impacts. The trail crosses Culley Creek and continues adjacent to the NATR motor road for approximately 500 feet (between Stations 46+00 to 50+50) until it curves to the south away from the NATR motor road through some wetlands to cross the Brashears Stand Parking Area access road at a safe distance from the intersection with the NATR motor road, allowing for better visibility and physical response time to oncoming vehicles. A triple 10-foot span, 6-foot rise concrete box culvert would be extended by 20 feet for the trail across Culley Creek. A double 6-foot span, 5-foot rise concrete box culvert would be extended by approximately 20 feet across the Culley Creek tributary. Additional oversized culverts would be installed where appropriate to facilitate natural water flow and prevent downstream incision. A total of 0.826 acres of wetlands would be impacted in the area from the Brashear tributary to Culley Creek. See Sheet No. D2 of the FHWA Plan and Profiles Sheets at the end of this document. An additional 0.436 acres of wetlands will be impacted in the area from Culley Creek to Brashears Stand Parking Area. See Sheets No. D2 and D3 of the FHWA Plan and Profiles Sheets at the end of this document.

After crossing the Brashears Stand Parking Area access road the trail continues east along the southern edge of a wetland (between Stations 58+00 and 65+60). This area is near the Old Natchez Trace. The alignment of the trail along the edge of the wetland avoids impacts to this important cultural feature. The trail, running adjacent to the NATR motor road, will go over Rice Road (Station 69+50). See Sheet No. D3 of the FHWA Plan and Profiles Sheets at the end of this document. Rice Road in the future will be widened to four lanes. The current alignment accommodates this future widening and would retain much of the current vegetative cover, which will provide a much needed noise and visual buffer between Rice Road and the trail. Moving the trail closer to Rice Road would increase construction costs significantly, due to the need for increased grading for the trail as it approaches the Rice Road bridge site. The steeper grades could exceed five percent, the required maximum grade for accessibility. Additional oversized culverts have been specified in the current design where appropriate to facilitate natural drainage and prevent downstream incision. In the area from Brashears Stand Parking Area to Rice Road (Between Stations 57+00 and 69+50), 0.646 acres of wetlands will be impacted. See Sheet No. D3 of the FHWA Plan and Profiles Sheets at the end of this document.

The trail continues northeast, crossing two unnamed streams and bisecting a wetland (between Stations 92+00 and 95+75)) on the east side of the unnamed tributary. See Sheet No. D4 of the FHWA Plan and Profiles Sheets at the end of this document. A trail bridge, 200 feet long and 14 feet wide, will span both unnamed streams. Additional oversized culverts have been specified in the current trail design where appropriate to facilitate natural drainage and prevent downstream incision. An additional 0.096 acres of wetlands will be impacted from bisecting the wetland east of the unnamed tributary. See Sheet No. D4 of the FHWA Plan and Profiles Sheets at the end of this document.

The trail continues northeast, crossing a narrow drainage ditch (at approximately Station 106+53), which has strips of wetlands on each side, as it comes to the termination point at Reservoir Overlook Parking Area. A 36-inch culvert will be installed in this drainage ditch to facilitate natural drainage and prevent downstream incision. See Sheet No. D5 of the FHWA Plan and Profiles Sheets at the end of this document.

The trail through the wetlands along the NATR motor road will be constructed on an eight-inch depth lime-treated sub-base, topped with two two-inch lifts of Superpave Asphaltic Concrete Pavement. Using a more porous fill through the wetland areas to facilitate wetland connectivity was discussed by the interdisciplinary team (IDT) working on this project. It was determined that the porous fill would not be appropriate in this project due to the following reasons:

- The impacted wetlands are primarily underlain by expansive Yazoo clay. The porous rock fill would require a greater height and width of the overall trail footprint than the current trail design and engineering to prevent shrink-swell of the clay from quickly damaging the trail pavement.
- The porosity of the rock fill, even if encased in filter fabric, will be compromised quickly by fallen leaves, silt, and organic matter.
- There are no appropriate rock sources located within a reasonable and cost effective distance from the project area. Therefore, importing rock will add significant expense.
- Construction and maintenance of the rock fill will be more difficult and expensive than for a paved trail with adequate culverts.

- Implementing porous fill and culverts as illustrated in Figure 40, page 37 from Managing Roads for Wet Meadow Ecosystem Recovery would be contrary to the desired natural "laid lightly on the land" visual character, the NPS mission and the multi-use trail overall design character.
- Additional oversized culverts have been specified in the current trail design where appropriate to facilitate natural drainage and prevent downstream incision.

The use of boardwalks to facilitate wetland connectivity was also considered. It was determined that boardwalks would not be appropriate for this project due to the following reasons:

- Boardwalks would need to be 14 feet wide based on the 10-foot trail width and would need to be designed to accommodate maintenance and emergency vehicles. This would be very expensive to construct and maintain, since it would essentially be one long bridge. Elevated boardwalks (Director's Order 77-1 – Best Management Practices 2002) (DO-77-1 BMP's) recommend the same height as width – 14 feet high) would result in the construction of a bridge that would be incompatible with NATR aesthetics. This structure would require enormous approach fills, especially to maintain the five percent accessible grade. Supports for an elevated boardwalk/bridge would have to be very deep to withstand shifting and damage from expansive clay soils. Approach fills and deeply driven piles with spread footings would significantly increase construction and maintenance costs and would severely impact existing wetlands during construction.
- Low boardwalks may be more aesthetically pleasing than elevated boardwalks; however, they would experience the same clogging problem as the porous rock fill due to fallen leaves, heavy silt, and woody and other debris. Boardwalk surfaces made of wood or plastic can be slippery when wet increasing the potential for safety problems.
- Maintenance would be more difficult and expensive than for a paved trail with adequate culverts.
- Implementing boardwalks as per the DO-77-1 BMP's (NPS 2002) would be contrary to the desired natural "laid lightly on the land" visual character, the NPS mission and the multi-use trail overall design character and the visual quality of the NATR.
- Additional oversized culverts have been specified in the current trail design where appropriate to facilitate natural drainage and prevent downstream incision.

Adverse impacts to wetlands would be minimized during and after construction by implementing an erosion control plan, which calls for the use of temporary erosion control devices and permanent erosion control devices, such as filter fabric and loose riprap at culvert ends, and check dams with erosion control mats to minimize erosion and facilitate revegetation at needed locations. Following trail construction through wetland areas, disturbed ground between the toe of the slope and the adjacent forest would be re-seeded and/or re-planted with a mixture of native herbaceous, hydrophytic species, such as rushes (*Juncus* sp.) and sedges (*Carex* sp.), in order to help facilitate wetland restoration. Trail shoulders and side slopes will be planted with a park preferred seed mix to control erosion.

The majority of the wetlands appear to have been formed by water overflowing the banks of flat graded, narrow streams and then lying on the flat overbank floodplains for extended periods of time. Brashear Creek and Culley Creek rise and fall gradually as flood events occur. The trail crosses these streams and other minor tributaries perpendicularly, so that flow rises out of and

recedes back into the streams at the same rate on both sides of the trail without the need to cross underneath the trail thru a culvert. An example of this situation is at Station 95+00 on the trail. However, culverts would be installed where appropriate to facilitate natural drainage and prevent downstream incision.

Some of the wetland areas located further away from the large streams would be crossed by the trail such that the potential exists for water to collect in "pockets" behind one side of the trail as flood waters recede. Flat graded 18-inch and 24-inch diameter culverts would be placed in these areas to allow water levels to recede naturally. For most cases, the headwater depths of ponded water trapped in these pockets do not exceed 2 to 3 feet and outlet velocities would be reduced by stabilizing the culvert outlet with riprap. During large springtime flood events, when streambanks are overtopped and the floodwaters are slowly receding, relatively high tailwater would be acting on these culverts as well, further reducing/controlling the outlet velocities. The wetland areas from Station 30+00 to 40+00 are an example of this situation.

Some of the smaller wetland areas appear to have been formed by local depressions that aren't replenished by swollen streams but by rainfall that collects and has no easy path to drain out. In these cases the trail would either not impact the watershed for these areas (e.g. Station 80+00) or, if it does impact the watershed, a relief culvert would be provided underneath the trail that reconnects the wetland to its watershed (e.g. Station 115+00). Because these areas and their watersheds are relatively small and because the low-lying trail does not change the watershed boundaries significantly, water supply to these wetlands should not be appreciably impacted.

NATR staff has noted that channel improvements and downstream urban development outside of the Natchez Trace Parkway boundaries may have substantial impacts on the frequency and extent of overbank flooding on Brashear and Culley Creeks. This narrow section of the NATR bisects two of the most heavily developed and dynamic urban areas of Mississippi. The storm water impacts across this narrow section of the NATR are heavily influenced by the management practices of the surrounding municipalities, the developmental history of the adjacent lands, and the existing footprint of the NATR. Urban development impacts, which are outside the park's control, may have the most substantial impacts on the future health of wetlands within the park.

The FHWA Plans and Profiles are conceptual and subject to change. The plans are not to be used for construction.

Mitigation

Design emphasis has been incorporated to reduce impacts to wetland resources to a level of approximately 2.26 acres of impact. The NPS will provide compensation through the restoration of approximately 5 acres of wetlands. The restored area will be of the same wetland type as those being impacted by this project and will provide equivalent wetland functions. The Holly Hill Wetland Restoration Area will include approximately 5 acres of Palustrine Forested Broad-leaved Deciduous Wetland that is semi-permanently flooded. Restoration will be funded as part of the construction project.

The Holly Hill Restoration Area (5 acres – Milepost 154) (Figure 5) is currently being mowed to prevent hydrophytic vegetation from establishing, resulting in a degraded wetland condition. The semi-permanent hydrology has prevented mowing except during periods of extended drought. This area will be taken out of the mowing regime. Vegetation from the adjoining forested wetland will encroach and reestablish within the formerly mowed zone. A variety of native species of trees (Table 2) known to occur in bottomland hardwoods along the NATR will

be planted at a density of 400 trees per acre to hasten restoration to a mature bottomland hardwood forest with an interlocking canopy. Native herbaceous species, such as sedges (*Carex* spp.) and rushes (*Juncus* spp.) will also be planted. Given time, the heavily degraded area will mature into a Palustrine Forested Broad-leaved Deciduous wetland that is semi-permanently flooded.

Table 2. Native tree species found in bottomland hardwood forests along the Natchez Trace Parkway.

Scientific Name	Common Name
Acer rubrum	Red maple
Fagus grandifolia	American beech
Nyssa sylvatica	Black gum
Quercus falcata	Southern red oak
Quercus pagoda	Cherrybark oak
Nyssa biflora	Swamp tupelo
Taxodium distichum	Bald cypress
Salix nigra	Black willow

Mitigation Success Criteria

The mitigation would be considered successful if the following conditions are realized at the end of the 5-year monitoring program:

- Mitigation areas contain no more than 20 percent total cover by exotic and nuisance plant species,
- Hydrophytic vegetation has become established, and
- At least a 65 percent survival rate of native trees. To ensure survival of 65 percent, seedlings will be protected with biodegradable mesh tubes. Dead seedlings will also be replaced as needed through the 5-year restoration period.

On-Site Monitoring

Monitoring Methodology

Monitoring would be conducted for the restoration site (Figure 5) by qualified NATR personnel, including immediately after the restoration (after halting of mowing regime and after planting), which will be designated as time-zero. Monitoring surveys will be done after the first growing season or approximately one year after planting to determine the survival of the plantings. If needed, supplemental planting will be done, and another monitoring survey will be done after the second growing season. By this time, plantings should be at the point where they are sustainable. A final monitoring survey would be done after the fifth growing season. Status/documentation of vegetation, photographs, wildlife, and general weather would be documented at the restoration site. A time-zero post construction and planting (as-built conditions) report would document plant densities and describe the conditions of the restoration area after mowing is stopped. The monitoring reports would document the progress of the restoration efforts and monitor the success of the plantings and natural species recruitment. All

reports would be kept on file at NATR headquarters. Any issues that arise or corrective action that needs to be taken would also be included in the monitoring reports. Observations of vegetation would be made along fixed transects in both restoration sites to ensure identical sampling procedures throughout the time zero and the subsequent reporting cycles.

Wildlife Monitoring

During the monitoring program, observations of wildlife would be made in the restoration areas during monitoring surveys through both visual means and inspection of physical evidence.

Photographic Documentation

Photograph stations would be identified in the restoration areas. These locations would be used to document the physical condition of the restoration area during the five year monitoring program.

Monitoring Reports

Monitoring reports would be prepared by the NATR. These reports would provide documentation of the success of the mitigation program and the general condition of the enhanced area.

Monitoring reports would consist of the following information:

1. Narrative description of the enhancement activities performed since the last report,
2. Explanation of maintenance work to be conducted over the next year,
3. List of wildlife species observed,
4. Results of vegetative monitoring,
5. Photographs taken at photo station locations,
6. General weather description, and
7. Description of any remedial action recommendations (if necessary).

These reports would be submitted to the NATR Chief of Resources for review and filed at the NATR.

Long Term Maintenance

Annual inspections of the mitigation areas would occur for the five years of the monitoring program. The inspections would be performed by a qualified NATR ecologist. The mitigation site would be inspected and locations of exotic and/or nuisance species identified to be treated and removed. Notations would be made of any potential problems identified during the inspection. The site would be maintained continually to ensure exotics and nuisance species do not become the dominant vegetation in the mitigation areas. If necessary, the park would actively revegetate with native wetland species. The restoration will begin January-February 2009. It is estimated that it may take 15-20 years before a hardwood stand with a good canopy, providing the same functions and values of the impacted wetlands, would be established.

Figure 5. Holly Hill wetland mitigation area (Total = 5 Acres)

Work Schedule Plan

The following work schedule, Table 3, outlines activities and dates for monitoring program execution:

Table 3. Work schedule plan.

MITIGATION ACTIVITY	DUE DATE
Restoration starts	January-February 2009
Time Zero monitoring report	April 2009
First monitoring report (after first growing season)	April 2010
Second monitoring report (after second growing season)	April 2011
No monitoring would be done after the third and fourth growing season	2012-2013
Final monitoring report (after fifth growing season)	April 2014

Justification for Use of Wetlands

The NPS proposes to construct a 2.2-mile long trail segment along the south side of the NATR. This proposal is consistent with the 1987 Comprehensive Trail Plan (NPS 1987), Natchez Trace National Scenic Trail/Alabama-Mississippi-Tennessee, developed in conjunction with the NATR-GMP (NPS 1987), the 1995 Natchez Trace Parkway Multi-Use Trail Study Environmental Assessment (NPS 1995), and the 1999 Congressional Directive to the NPS directing the NATR to construct a multi-use trail in conjunction with the construction of the NATR motor road (U.S. Congress 1999). The NPS finds that there are no practicable alternatives to disturbing approximately 2.26 acres of wetlands along the alignment of a trail between approximately mileposts 103.6 and 105.8 of the NATR. Wetlands have been avoided to the maximum practicable extent, and the wetland impacts that could not be avoided would be minimized. Unavoidable impacts to wetlands would be compensated for at a ratio of approximately two to one (2:1), which is consistent with the NPS no-net-loss of wetlands policy.

Compliance

Clean Water Act Section 401 and Section 404, and National Pollution Discharge Elimination System (NPDES)

The proposed actions impact waters of the United States as defined by the Clean Water Act and are therefore subject to review by the USACE. Section 401 of the Clean Water Act is a certification by the state that the project impacts to water quality will not exceed the state's water quality standards. Section 404 of the Clean Water Act requires a permit for any activity which may result in the discharge of dredged or fill material into navigable waters. Therefore, Section 401 and Section 404, and NPDES permits would be required for this project. Section 401, Section 404, and NPDES permits would complete the requirements for federal and state permitting for this segment of the trail.

National Environmental Policy Act

The 1995 EA and FONSI, the Section 106 compliance review, and this SOF for Executive Order 11990 will complete the requirements for the National Environmental Policy Act for this project.

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Table 1. List of vascular plants and animals known to occur along the NATR.

Vascular Plants (ASGEC 2007) known to occur in wetlands between Old Canton Road and Reservoir Overlook Parking Area (MP 103.5 to MP 105.8	
Scientific Name	**Common Name**
Acer negundo	Box elder
Baccharis halimifolia	Groundsel tree
Carex spp.	Sedge spp.
Celtis laevigata	Sugarberry
Cornus amomum	Silky dogwood
Fraxinus pennsylvanica	Green ash
Juncus effusus	Soft rush
Ligustrum sinense	Chinese privet*
Liquidambar styraciflua	Sweet gum
Lonicera japonica	Japanese honeysuckle
Mentha spp.	Mint spp.
Nasturtium officinale	Spring cress
Pinus taeda	Loblolly pine
Platanus occidentalis	American sycamore
Quercus nigra	Water oak
Sambucus canadensis	Elderberry
Smilax glauca	Cat greenbrier
Ulmus Americana	American elm
Vicia spp.	Vetch spp.
Avifauna along the NATR (ABC 2001a)	
Scientific Name	**Common Name**
Pelecanus erythrorhycnhos	American white pelican
Phalacrocorax auritus	Double-crested cormorant
Nycticorax violacea	Yellow-crowned night heron
Butorides virescens	Green heron
Egretta caerulea	Little blue heron

Avifauna along the NATR (ABC 2001a)	
Scientific Name	**Common Name**
Bubulcus ibis	Cattle egret
Egretta thula	Snowy egret
Ardea alba	Great egret
Ardea herodias	Great blue heron
Branta canadensis	Canada goose
Dendrocygna bicolor	Fulvous whistling duck
Aix sponsa	Wood duck
Anas platyrhynchos	Mallard
Cathartes aura	Turkey vulture
Coragyps atratus	Black vulture
Ictinia mississippiensis	Mississippi kite
Accipiter striatus	Sharp-shinned hawk
Accipiter cooperii	Cooper's hawk
Buteo platypterus	Broad-winged hawk
Buteo lineatus	Red-shouldered hawk
Buteo jamaicensis	Red-tailed hawk
Falco sparverius	American kestrel
Meleagris gallopavo	Wild turkey
Colinus virginianus	Northern bobwhite
Charadrius vociferous	Killdeer
Scolopax minor	American woodcock
Larus argentatus	Herring gull
Thalasseus maximus	Royal tern
Columba livia	Rock dove
Zenaida macroura	Mourning dove
Coccyzus americanus	Yellow-billed cuckoo
Coccyzus erythopthalmus	Black-billed cuckoo
Bubo virginianus	Great horned owl

Avifauna along the NATR (ABC 2001a)	
Scientific Name	**Common Name**
Strix varia	Barred owl
Otus asio	Eastern screech owl
Chordeiles minor	Common nighthawk
Caprimulgus carolinensis	Chuck-wills-widow
Caprimulgus vociferous	Whip-poor-will
Chaetura pelagica	Chimney swift
Archilachus colubris	Ruby-throated hummingbird
Megaceryle alcyon	Belted kingfisher
Melanerpes erythrocephalus	Red-headed woodpecker
Melanerpes carolinus	Red-bellied woodpecker
Colaptes auratus	Northern flicker
Sphyrapicus varius	Yellow-bellied sapsucker
Picoides pubescens	Downy woodpecker
Picoide villosus	Hairy woodpecker
Dryocopus pileatus	Pileated woodpecker
Contapus virens	Eastern wood pewee
Empidonax virescens	Acadian flycatcher
Sayornis phoebe	Eastern phoebe
Myiarchus crinitus	Great-crested flycatcher
Tyrannus tyrannus	Eastern kingbird
Lanius ludovicianus	Loggerhead shrike
Vireo griseus	White-eyed vireo
Vireo flavifrons	Yellow-throated vireo
Vireo olivaceous	Red-eyed vireo
Vireo gilvus	Warbling vireo
Cyanocitta cristata	Blue jay
Corvus brachyrhynchos	American crow
Corvus ossifragus	Fish crow

Avifauna along the NATR (ABC 2001a)	
Scientific Name	**Common Name**
Progne subis	Purple martin
Petrachelidon pyrrhonota	Cliff swallow
Stelgidopteryx serripennis	Northern rough-winged swallow
Hirundo rustica	Barn swallow
Baeolophus bicolor	Tufted titmouse
Poecile carolinensis	Carolina chickadee
Certhia americana	Brown creeper
Sitta carolinensis	White-breasted nuthatch
Sitta canadensis	Red-breasted nuthatch
Sitta pusilla	Brown-headed nuthatch
Troglodytes aedon	House wren
Troglodytes troglodytes	Winter wren
Thryothorus ludovicianus	Carolina wren
Thryomanes bewickii	Bewick's wren
Regulus satrapa	Golden-crowned kinglet
Regulus calendula	Ruby-crowned kinglet
Polioptila caerulea	Blue-gray gnatcatcher
Sialia sialis	Eastern bluebird
Hylocichla mustelina	Wood thrush
Catharus guttatus	Hermit thrush
Turdus migratorius	American robin
Dumetella carolinensis	Gray catbird
Mimus polyglottos	Northern mockingbird
Toxostoma rufum	Brown thrasher
Sturnus vulgaris	European starling
Bombycilla cedrorum	Cedar waxwing
Protonotaria citrea	Prothonotary warbler
Vermivora pinus	Blue-winged warbler

Avifauna along the NATR (ABC 2001a)	
Scientific Name	**Common Name**
Parula americana	Northern parula
Dendroica coronata	Yellow-rumped warbler
Mniotilta varia	Black and white warbler
Dendroica cerulea	Cerulean warbler
Dendroica dominica	Yellow-throated warbler
Dendroica discolor	Prairie warbler
Dendroica pinus	Pine warbler
Dendroica petechia	Yellow warbler
Oporornis formosus	Kentucky warbler
Wilsonia citrina	Hooded warbler
Helmitheros vermivorus	Worm-eating warbler
Limnothlypis swainsonii	Swainson's warbler
Turdus ludovicianus	Louisiana waterthrush
Geothlypis trichas	Common yellowthroat
Icteria virens	Yellow-breasted chat
Setophaga ruticilla	American redstart
Piranga rubra	Summer tanager
Piranga olivacea	Scarlet tanager
Pipilo erythrophthalmus	Rufous-sided towhee
Aimophila aestivalis	Bachman's sparrow
Spizella pusilla	Field sparrow
Spizella passerina	Chipping sparrow
Ammodranus savannarum	Grasshopper sparrow
Passerculus sandwichensis	Savannah sparrow
Melospiza melodia	Song sparrow
Zonotrichia albicollis	White-throated sparrow
Zonotrichia leucophrys	White-crowned sparrow
Junco hyemalis	Dark-eyed junco

Avifauna along the NATR (ABC 2001a)	
Scientific Name	**Common Name**
Cardinalus cardinalus	Northern cardinal
Spiza americana	Dickcissel
Passerina caerulea	Blue grosbeak
Passerina cyanea	Indigo bunting
Passerina ciris	Painted bunting
Dolichonyx oryzivorus	Bobolink
Sturnella magna	Eastern meadowlark
Agelaius phoeniceus	Red-winged blackbird
Quiscalus quiscula	Common grackle
Euphagus carolinus	Rusty blackbird
Molothrus ater	Brown-headed cowbird
Icterus spurius	Orchard oriole
Icterus galbula	Northern oriole
Carpodacus mexicanus	House finch
Carduelis pinus	Pine siskin
Carduelis tristis	American goldfinch
Passer domesticus	House sparrow
Amphibians and Reptiles along the NATR (ABC 2001b)	
Scientific Name	**Common Name**
Chrysemys scripta elegans	Red-eared slider
Rana utricularia	Southern leopard frog
Acris gryllus	Southern cricket frog
Rana clamitans melanota	Green frog
Rana clamitans clamitans	Bronze frog
Terrapene carolina triunguis	Three-toed box turtle
Scincella lateralis	Ground skink
Coluber constrictor priapus	Southern black racer
Acris crepitans	Northern cricket frog

Amphibians and Reptiles along the NATR (ABC 2001b)	
Scientific Name	**Common Name**
Notophthalmus viridescens	Red-spotted newt
Rana catesbeiana	Bullfrog
Eumeces fasciatus	Five-lined skink
Terrapene carolina carolina	Eastern box turtle
Elaphe guttata guttata	Corn snake
Lampropeltis getulus holbrooki	Speckled kingsnake
Sceloporus undulatus	Eastern fence lizard
Anolis carolinensis	Green anole
Plethodon glutinosus	Slimy salamander
Opheodrys aestivus	Rough green snake
Natrix sipedon pleuralis	Midland water snake
Hyla avivoca	Bird-voiced tree frog
Trionyx muticus	Smooth softshell turtle
Hyla versicolor and Hyla chrysoscelis	Gray tree frog complex
Agkistrodon contortix contortix	Southern copperhead
Natrix rhombifera	Diamond-backed water snake
Kinosternon subrubrum	Eastern mud turtle
Agkistrodon piscivorus leucostoma	Western cottonmouth
Coluber constrictor constrictor	Northern black racer
Eumeces laticeps	Broad-headed skink
Deirochelys reticularia	Chicken turtle
Bufo americanus	American toad
Natrix erythrogaster flavigaster	Yellow-bellied water snake
Hyla crucifer	Spring peeper
Elaphe obsoleta spiloides	Gray rat snake
Lampropeltis getulus niger	Black kingsnake
Chelydra serpentina	Common snapping turtle
Hyla squirella	Squirrel tree frog

Amphibians and Reptiles along the NATR (ABC 2001b)	
Scientific Name	**Common Name**
Chrysemys picta dorsalis	Southern painted turtle
Eumeces inexpectatus	Southeastern five-lines skink
Farancia abacura	Mud snake
Natrix sipedon sipedon	Northern water snake
Thamnophis sirtalis sirtalis	Eastern garter snake
Siren intermedia nettingi	Western lesser siren
Heterodon platyrhinos	Eastern hognose snake
Sternotherus odoratus	Stinkpot
Thamnophis sauritus	Eastern ribbon snake
Gastrophryne carolinensis	Eastern narrow-mouthed toad
Alligator mississippiensis	American alligator
Bufo woodhousei fowleri	Fowler's toad
Carphaphis amoenus	Eastern worm snake
Pseudotriton ruber ruber	Northern red salamander
Farancia erytrogramma	Rainbow snake
Macroclemys temmincki	Alligator snapping turtle
Lampropeltis triangulum triangulum	Eastern milk snake
Chrysemys scripta scripta	Yellow-bellied slider
Hyla cinerea	Green tree frog
Graptemys kohni	Mississippi Map Turtle
Crotalus horridus atricaudatus	Canebrake rattlesnake
Diadophis punctatus	Ringneck snake
Pseudacris triseriata feriarum	Upland chorus frog
Elaphe obsoleta obsoleta	Black rat snake
Lampropeltis calligaster rhombomaculata	Mole kingsnake
Ambystoma talpoideum	Mole salamander
Chrysemys concinna	Slider
Virginia valeriae	Smooth earth snake

Amphibians and Reptiles along the NATR (ABC 2001b)	
Scientific Name	**Common Name**
Sternotherus carinatus	Razor-backed musk turtle
Amphiuma tridactylum	Three-toed amphiuma
Mammals along the NATR (NPS 2007c)	
Scientific Name	**Common Name**
Didelphis virginiana	Opossum
Scalopus aquaticus	Eastern mole
Blarina carolinensis	Southern short-tailed shrew
Sorex longirostris	Southeastern shrew
Cryptotis parva	Least shrew
Myotis grisescens	Gray bat
Myotis lucifugus	Little brown myotis
Myotis septentrionalis	Northern myotis
Myotis sodalis	Social myotis
Myotis austroriparius	Southeastern myotis
Lasionycteris noctivagans	Silver-haired bat
Pipestrellus subflavus	Eastern pipistrelle
Eptesicus fuscus	Big brown bat
Lasiurus borealis	Eastern Red bat
Lasiurus intermedius	Northern yellow bat
Lasiurus seminolus	Seminole bat
Lasiurus cinereus	Hoary bat
Nycticeius humeralis	Evening bat
Plecotus rafinesquii	Rafinesque's big-eared bat
Tadarida braziliensis	Brazilian free-tailed bat
Dasypus novemcinctus	Nine-banded armadillo
Sylvilagus floridanus	Eastern cottontail
Sylvilagus aquaticus	Swamp rabbit
Tamias striatus	Eastern chipmunk

Mammals along the NATR (NPS 2007c)	
Scientific Name	**Common Name**
Marmota monax	Woodchuck
Sciurus carolinensis	Eastern gray squirrel
Sciurus niger	Fox squirrel
Glaucomys volans	Southern flying squirrel
Castor canadensis	Beaver
Oryzomys palustris	Rice rat
Reithrodontomys humulis	Eastern harvest mouse
Reithrodontomys fulvescens	Fulvous harvest mouse
Peromyscus leucopus	White-footed mouse
Peromyscus gossypinus	Cotton mouse
Peromyscus polionotus	Oldfield mouse
Ochrotomys nuttalli	Golden mouse
Sigmodon hispidus	Hispid cotton rat
Neotoma floridana	Eastern woodrat
Microtus ochrogaster	Prairie vole
Microtus pinetorum	Woodland vole
Zapus hudsonius	Meadow jumping mouse
Ondatra zibethicus	Muskrat
Rattus norvegicus	Norway rat
Mus musculus	House mouse
Canis latrans	Coyote
Vulpes vulpes	Red fox
Urocyon cinereoargenteus	Gray fox
Procyon lotor	Raccoon
Mustela frenata	Long-tailed weasel
Mustela vison	Mink
Mephitis mephitis	Striped skunk
Spilogale putorius	Eastern spotted skunk

Mammals along the NATR (NPS 2007c)	
Scientific Name	**Common Name**
Lutra canadensis	River otter
Odocoileus virginianus	White-tailed deer
Lynx rufus	Bobcat
Ursus americanus	Black bear
Felis concolor	Mountain lion
Fish along the NATR (NPS 2007b)	
Scientific Name	**Common Name**
Ameiurus natalis	Yellow bullhead
Amia calva	Bowfin
Aphredoderus sayanus	Pirate perch
Campostoma anomalum	Central stoneroller
Campostoma oligolepis	Largescale stoneroller
Carpiodes carpio	River carpsucker
Carpiodes cyprinus	Quillback, Quillback carpsucker
Carpiodes velifer	Highfin carpsucker
Centrarchus macropterus	Flier, Peacock sunfish, Round sunfish
Clinostomus funduloides	Rosyside dace
Cottus carolinae	Banded sculpin
Cyprinella camura	Bluntface shiner
Cyprinella galactura	Whitetail shiner
Cyprinella lutrensis	Red shiner
Cyprinella spiloptera	Spotfin shiner
Cyprinella venusta	Blacktail shiner
Cyprinella whipplei	Steelcolor shiner
Dorosoma cepedianum	American gizzard shad, Eastern gizzard shad, Gizzard shad, Hickory shad, Mud shad, Skipjack
Dorosoma petenense	Threadfin shad
Erimyzon oblongus	Creek chubsucker

Fish along the NATR (NPS 2007b)	
Scientific Name	**Common Name**
Esox americanus	Grass pickerel, Redfin, Redfin pickerel
Etheostoma blennioides	Greenside darter
Etheostoma blennius	Blenny darter
Etheostoma boschungi	Slackwater darter
Etheostoma caeruleum	Rainbow darter
Etheostoma chlorosomum	Bluntnose darter
Etheostoma corona	Crown darter
Etheostoma crossopterum	Fringed darter
Etheostoma derivativum	
Etheostoma duryi	Black darter, Blackside darter, Blackside snubnose darter
Etheostoma flabellare	Fantail darter
Etheostoma flavum	Saffron darter
Etheostoma histrio	Harlequin darter
Etheostoma kennicotti	Stripetail darter
Etheostoma lachneri	Tombigbee darter
Etheostoma lynceum	Brighteye darter
Etheostoma nigrum	Johnny darter
Etheostoma proeliare	Cypress darter
Etheostoma rufilineatum	Redline darter
Etheostoma simoterum	Snubnose darter, Tennessee snubnose darter
Etheostoma swaini	Gulf darter
Etheostoma whipplei	Redfin darter
Etheostoma zonale	Banded darter
Fundulus catenatus	Northern studfish
Fundulus notatus	Blackstripe topminnow
Fundulus olivaceus	Blackspotted topminnow
Gambusia affinis	Mosquitofish, Western mosquitofish

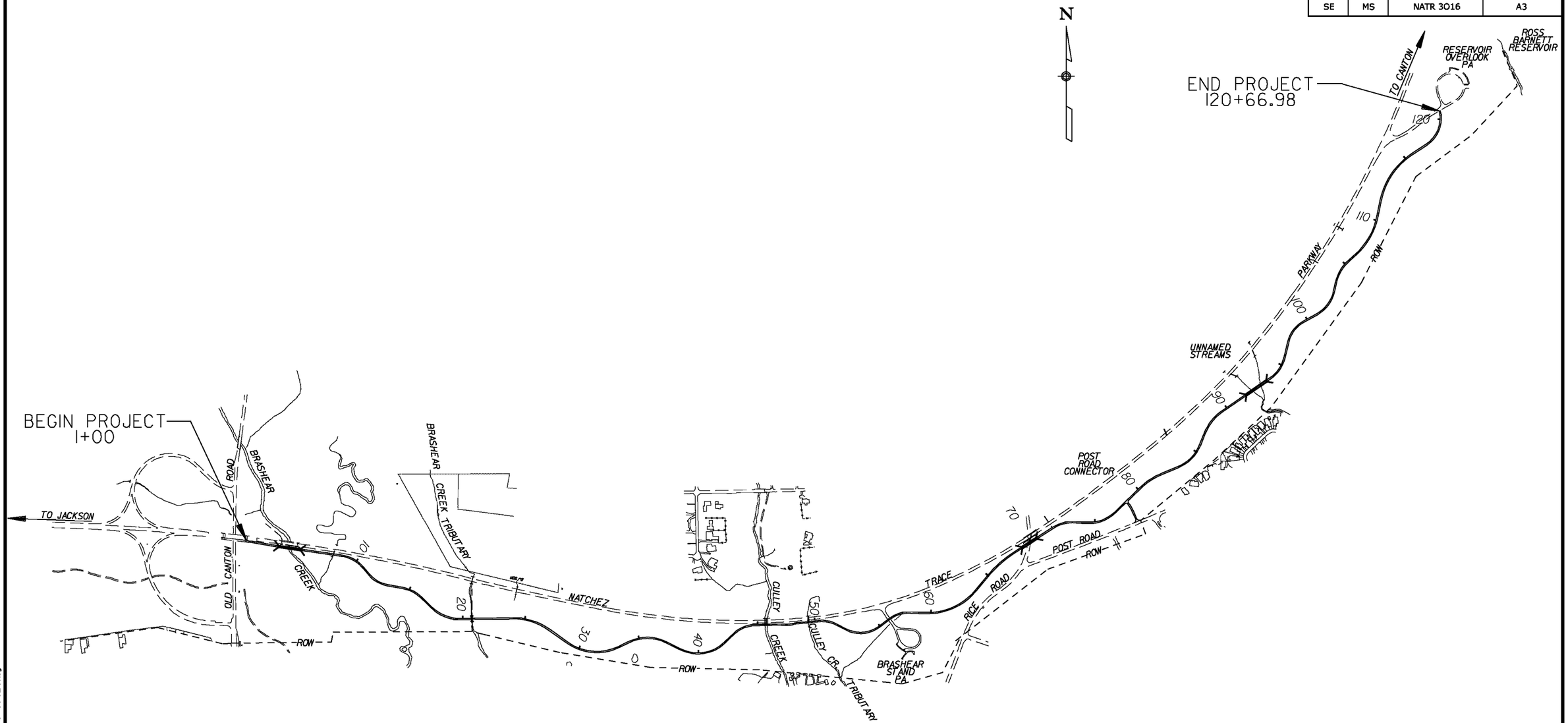
Fish along the NATR (NPS 2007b)	
Scientific Name	**Common Name**
Hemitremia flammea	Flame chub
Hybognathus nuchalis	Mississippi silvery minnow
Hybopsis amblops	Bigeye chub
Hybopsis winchelli	Clear chub
Hypentelium nigricans	Northern hog sucker
Ictalurus punctatus	Channel catfish, Graceful catfish
Labidesthes sicculus	Brook silverside
Lepisosteus oculatus	Shortnose gar, Spotted gar
Lepisosteus osseus	'Longnose gar
Lepomis cyanellus	Green sunfish
Lepomis gulosus	Warmouth
Lepomis macrochirus	Bluegill
Lepomis megalotis	Longear sunfish
Lepomis microlophus	Redear sunfish
Lepomis miniatus	Redspotted sunfish, Scarlet sunfish
Luxilus chrysocephalus	Striped shiner
Luxilus coccogenis	Warpaint shiner
Luxilus zonistius	Bandfin shiner
Lythrurus ardens	Rosefin shiner
Lythrurus bellus	Pretty shiner
Lythrurus roseipinnis	Cherryfin shiner
Lythrurus umbratilis	Redfin shiner
Micropterus punctulatus	Spotted bass
Micropterus salmoides	Largemouth bass
Minytrema melanops	Spotted sucker
Moxostoma duquesnei	Black redhorse
Moxostoma erythrurum	Golden redhorse
Nocomis leptocephalus	Bluehead chub

Fish along the NATR (NPS 2007b)	
Scientific Name	**Common Name**
Nocomis micropogon	River chub
Notemigonus crysoleucas	Golden shiner
Notropis ammophilus	Orangefin shiner
Notropis atherinoides	Emerald shiner
Notropis baileyi	Rough shiner
Notropis leuciodus	Tennessee shiner
Notropis longirostris	Longnose shiner
Notropis stilbius	Silverstripe shiner
Notropis telescopus	Telescope shiner
Notropis texanus	Weed shiner
Notropis wickliffi	Channel shiner
Noturus funebris	Black madtom
Noturus gyrinus	Tadpole madtom
Noturus miurus	Brindled madtom
Opsopoeodus emiliae	Pugnose minnow
Percina caprodes	Logperch
Percina maculata	Blackside darter
Percina sciera	Dusky darter
Percina vigil	Saddleback darter
Phoxinus erythrogaster	Southern redbelly dace
Pimephales notatus	Bluntnose minnow
Pimephales vigilax	Bullhead minnow
Pomoxis annularis	White crappie
Pomoxis nigromaculatus	Black crappie
Rhinichthys atratulus	Blacknose dace, Eastern blacknose dace
Semotilus atromaculatus	Creek chub

FHWA Plans and Profiles

The FHWA Plans and Profiles are conceptual and subject to change.
The plans are not to be used for construction.

REG	STATE	PROJECT	SHEET NO.
SE	MS	NATR 3016	A3



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LOCATION MAP

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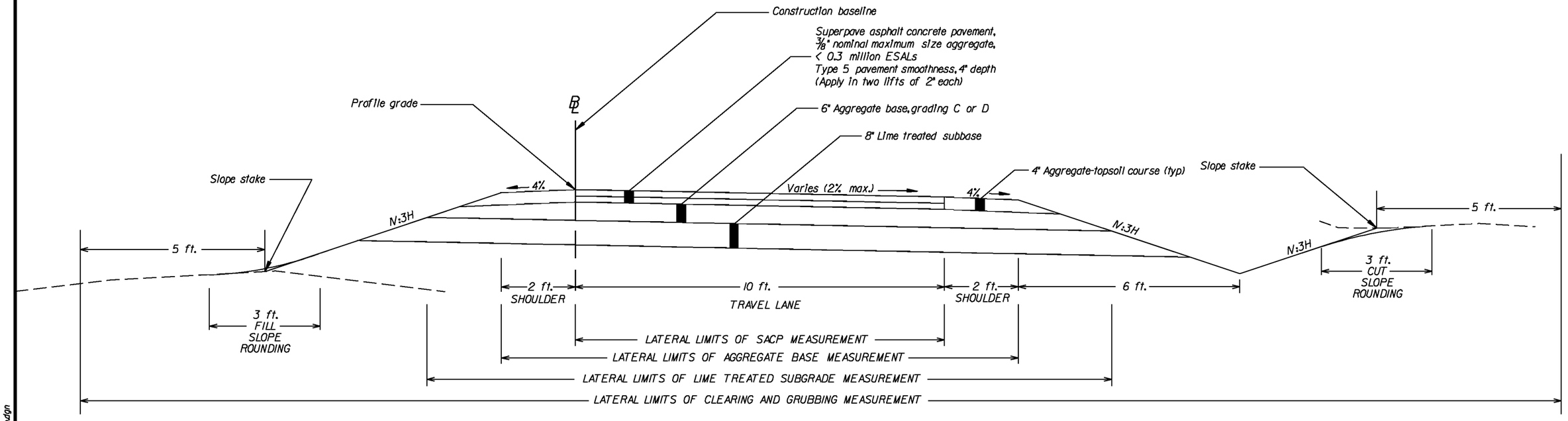
REG	STATE	PROJECT	SHEET NO.
SE	MS	NATR 3016	BI

Notes:

Lime treated subgrade will be paid for under the pay items for subexcavation and lime.

Lime will comprise 6% of the treated subgrade by volume.



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TYPICAL SECTION

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REG	STATE	PROJECT	SHEET NO.
SE	MS	NATR 3016	D1

NOTES:

1. Utilities within the utility corridors at 17+40 and 26+00 must not be damaged.
2. Hatched areas represent wetlands.

Construction Access 2+00 18' x 17'

Install riprap class 3 2+60 to 3+85

Install wall

Install Type 5A inlet, 24" culvert, manhole, and headwall 10+00

Construction Access 9+00 18' x 12'

PC 1+00.00

PT 1+17.35

PC 1+68.55

PT 2+33.46

PT 2+95.02

PC 8+99.07

PT 10+33.33

PC 13+99.45

PT 16+68.63

PC 18+07.17

PT 19+98.95

PC 21+27.67

PT 23+59.51

PC 24+43.40

PT 26+74.51

NATCHEZ TRACE PARKWAY

BRASHEAR CREEK

BRASHEAR CREEK TRIBUTARY

Tie to existing trail eop 2+23 to 2+52 2.5' radius fillet

Extend existing 4's x 4'r box by 8.25'

Install 6's x 4'r box culvert

Install 24" culvert

ROW

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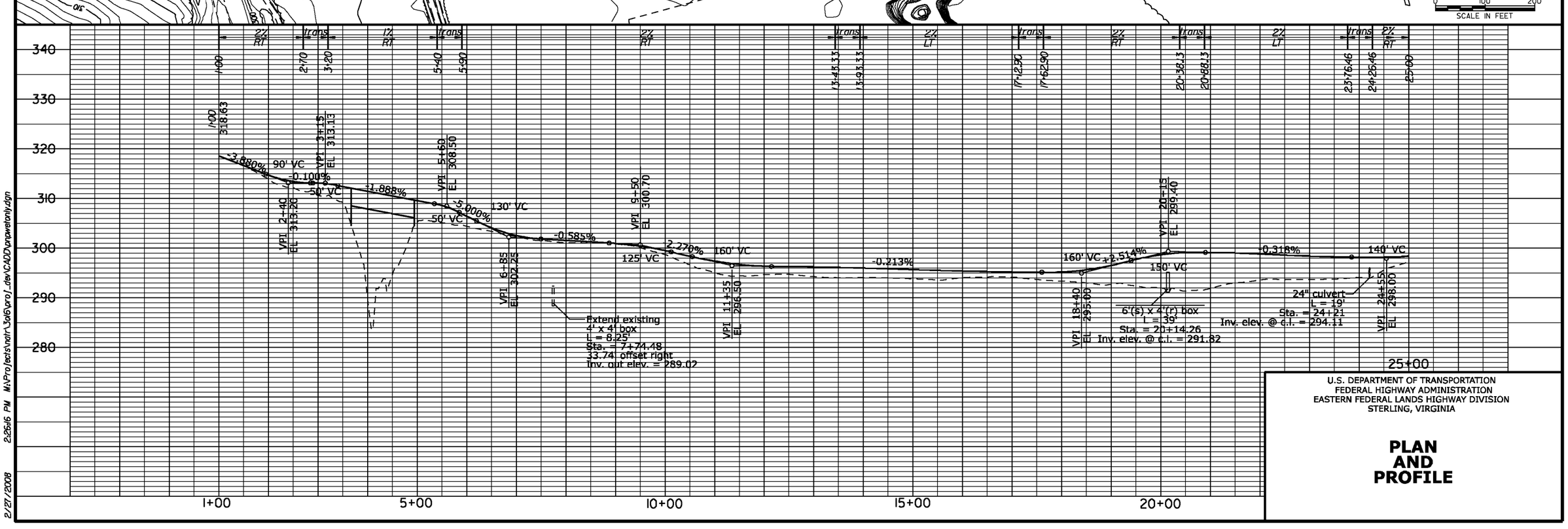

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PLAN AND PROFILE

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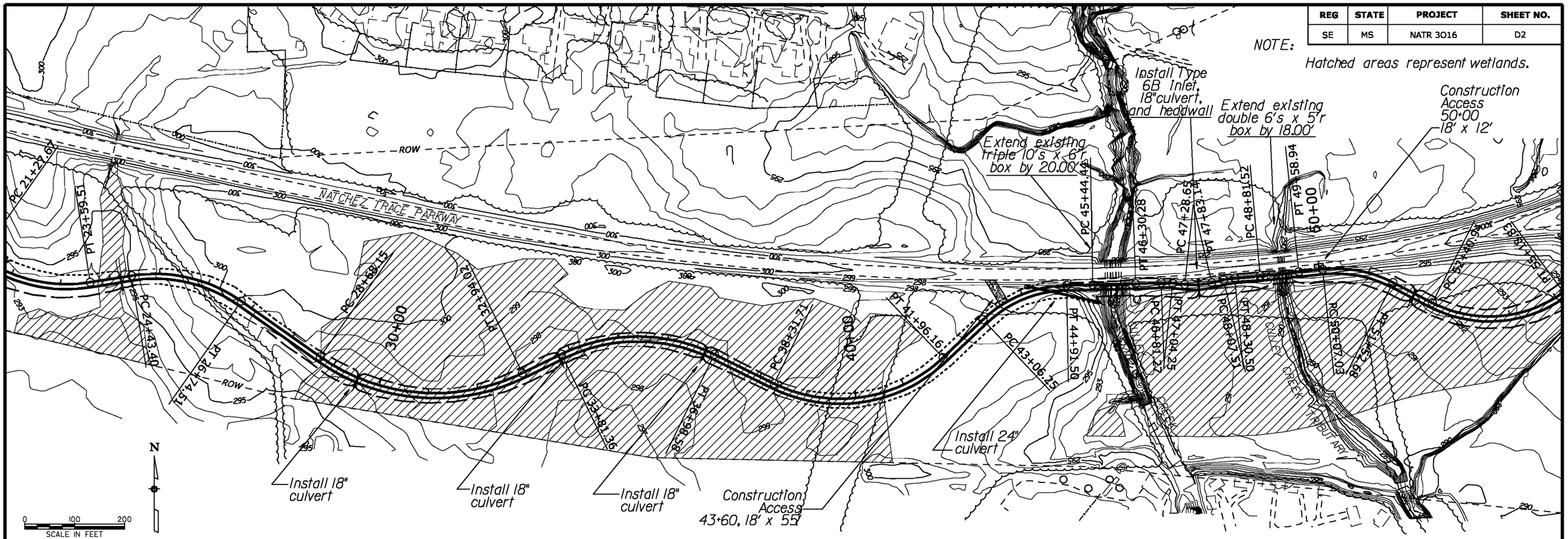
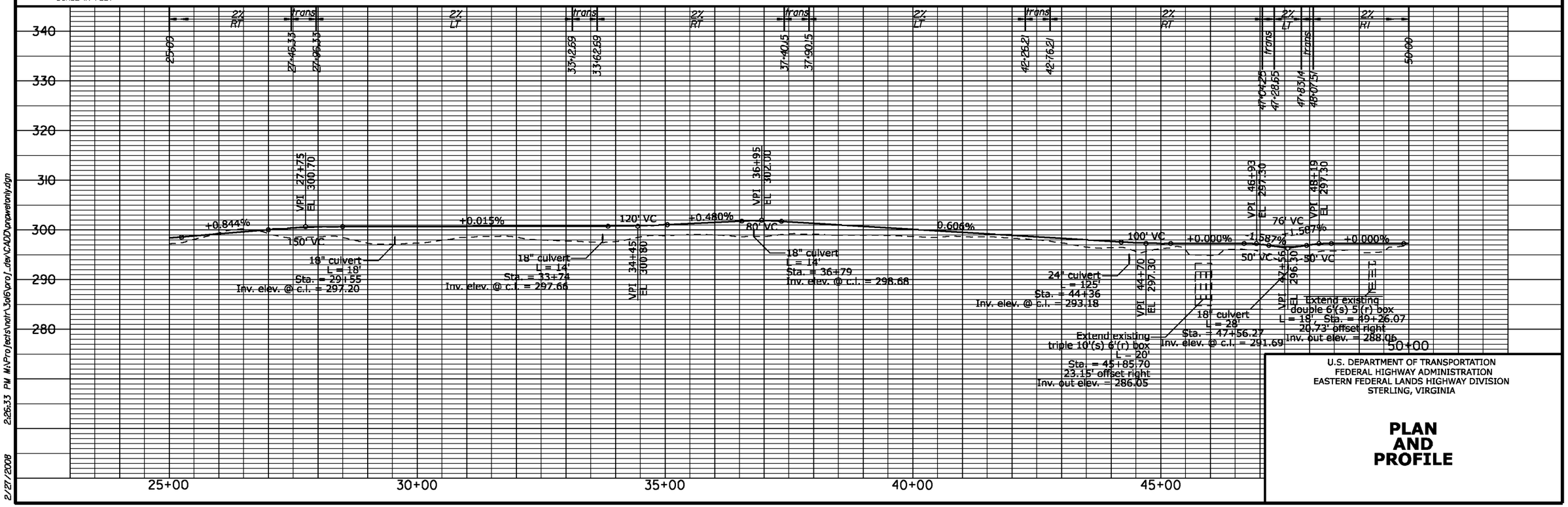
REG	STATE	PROJECT	SHEET NO.
SE	MS	NATR 3016	D2

NOTE:
Hatched areas represent wetlands.





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STERLING, VIRGINIA

PLAN AND PROFILE

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REG	STATE	PROJECT	SHEET NO.
SE	MS	NATR 3016	D3

NOTE:
Hatched areas represent wetlands.

Remove existing field drop inlet. Install 18" culvert to tie between existing 18" culvert and proposed type 7A drop inlet.

Install 24" culvert

Install riprap class 2 60+50 to 68+00

Install Type 5A inlet, 24" culvert, elbow, and headwall

Install 18" culvert

Install bollards (3,each side) signing and striping

BRASHEARS STAND PARKING AREA

NATCHEZ TRACE PARKWAY

POST ROAD

POST ROAD CONNECTOR

Install 18" culvert

Install type 7A drop inlet

Install riprap class 2 60+50 to 65+00

ROW

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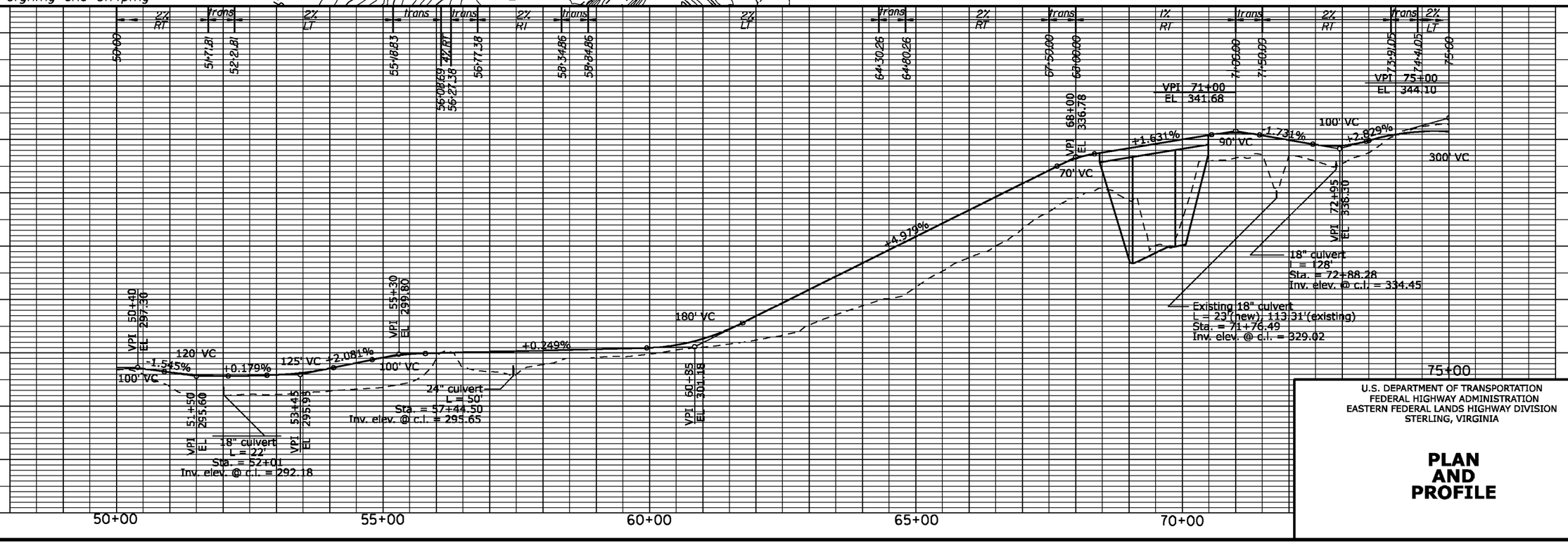
SCALE IN FEET



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PLAN AND PROFILE

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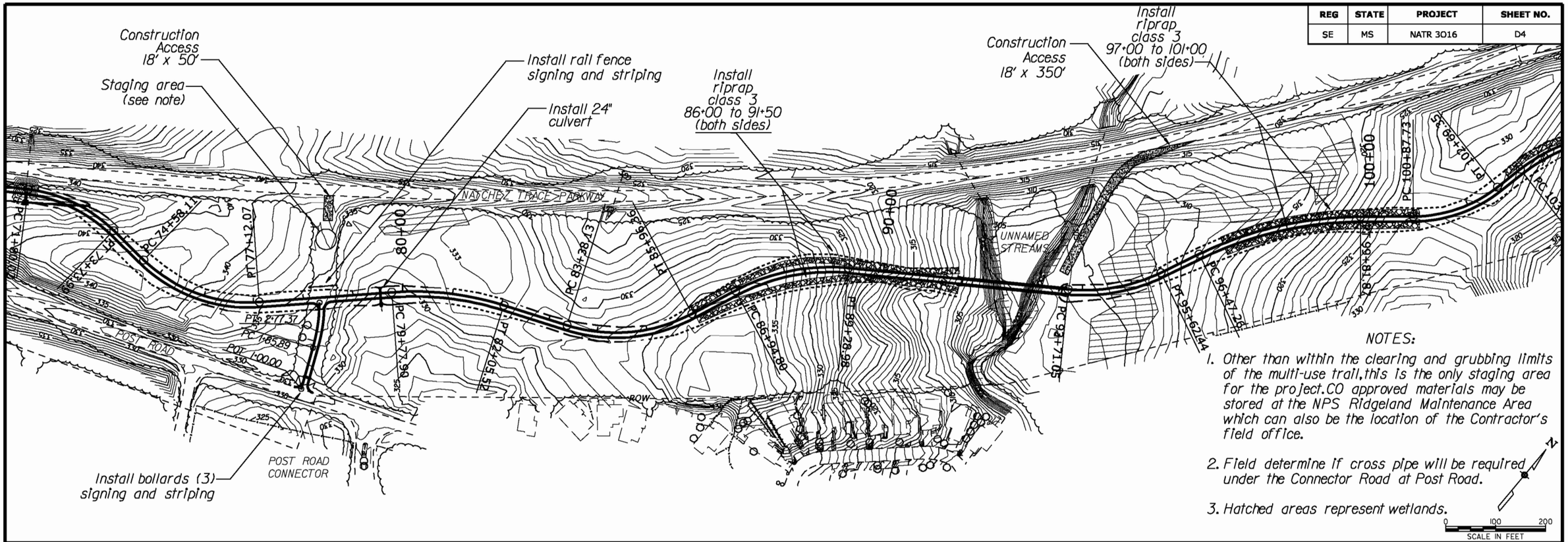
REG	STATE	PROJECT	SHEET NO.
SE	MS	NATR 3016	D4



NOTES:

1. Other than within the clearing and grubbing limits of the multi-use trail, this is the only staging area for the project. CO approved materials may be stored at the NPS Ridgeland Maintenance Area which can also be the location of the Contractor's field office.
2. Field determine if cross pipe will be required under the Connector Road at Post Road.
3. Hatched areas represent wetlands.

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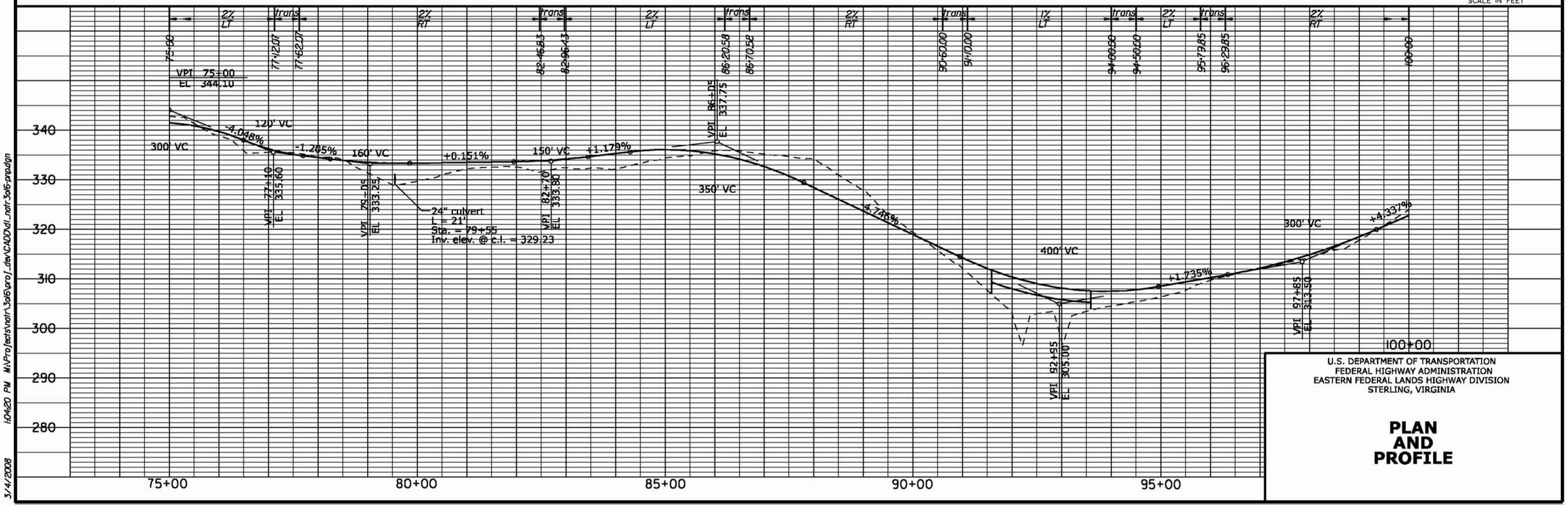
SCALE IN FEET



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PLAN AND PROFILE

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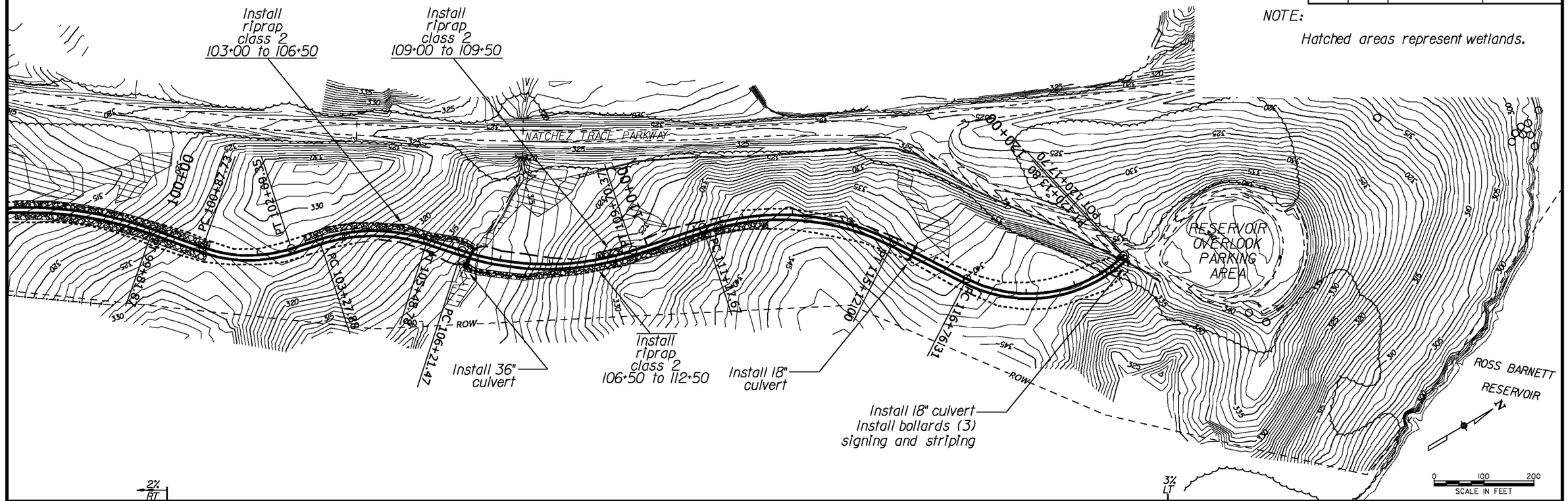
REG	STATE	PROJECT	SHEET NO.
SE	MS	NATR 3016	D5

NOTE:

Hatched areas represent wetlands.



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PLAN AND PROFILE

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