



US-64 (Memorial Drive)/US-169 Interchange

ENVIRONMENTAL

What are the Environmental Impacts?

[◀ Homepage](#)

[Diverging Diamonds Information ▶](#)

As the project is funded in part by federal funds through the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), the project is required to comply with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and several other federal environmental laws and executive orders. Oklahoma Department of Transportation (ODOT) completed environmental studies of the project area. These studies included:

- Delineation of streams and wetlands
- Identification of floodplain impacts
- Assessment of threatened and endangered species and their habitat
- Identification of archeological and historic resources (cultural resources)
- Assessment of potential hazardous waste sites
- Evaluation of impacts to parks and trails
- Traffic noise evaluation
- Environmental justice data collection

A summary of these findings is presented below. These studies will be documented in an NEPA environmental document, which will be finalized once public input is received from this virtual open house.

Streams and Wetlands: The project will involve work in two unnamed tributaries, which exhibit the characteristics of jurisdictional waterways and one potentially jurisdictional wetland regulated by the US Army Corps of Engineers. The proposed construction activities will be evaluated to ensure that the appropriate Clean Water Act Section 404 permit application is made.

Floodplains: The project area is not located in a floodplain.

Threatened and Endangered Species: Studies indicate potential habitat in the project area for the interior least tern, whooping crane, American burying beetle, piping plover, red knot, and northern long-eared bat. Measures to minimize impacts on the northern long-eared bat, and American burying beetle will be added to the project plans.

Potential habitat for the bald eagle and other migratory birds was also identified. ODOT will perform additional surveys prior to construction to identify any active eagle or other bird nests.

Cultural Resources: The ODOT Cultural Resources Program completed a review of the study area for this project and have examined the State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) determination of eligibility and National Register of Historic Places files and the archeological site files at the Oklahoma Archeological Survey. In accordance with 36 CFR 800.3(a)(1), ODOT and FHWA have defined this undertaking as a type of activity that does not have the potential to cause effects on historic properties. Such undertakings are considered "Screened Exemptions" and the agency has no further obligations under Section 106. SHPO, the State Archaeologist, and Native American Tribes are not consulted for undertakings that are considered Screened Exemptions.

Hazardous Waste Sites: Several sites with Recognized Environmental Conditions (RECs), or known sources of contamination, were identified within ½ mile of the project area. These sites include locations of existing or former underground storage tanks that have documented reports of releases. Based on the review of technical information

obtained from the Oklahoma Conservation Commission, it was determined that there was a low potential for impacts to the project from these sites.

Parks and Trails: The proposed project improvements will be completed within existing ODOT owned right-of-way, but a temporary trail closure on the Creek Turnpike Trail will be required. Section 4(f) of the Department of Transportation Act of 1966 (49 U.S.C. 303) affords protection to publicly owned recreation areas (resources) including city, state and national parks, wildlife refuges, management areas and historic sites. Temporary closure of a recreational trail is considered a temporary occupancy and is afforded an exception to Section 4(f) regulations of the U.S. Department of Transportation Act of 1966 in 23 CFR 774.13. ODOT will work with the City of Tulsa on the duration of the trail closure, anticipates minimal changes and the land will be fully restored.

Noise: ODOT reviewed its current noise policy, and the project is defined as a Type III Project; therefore, a traffic noise study is not required.

Environmental Justice: The project is situated within the Tulsa city limits. The City of Tulsa as a metropolitan area is more racially diverse than the State of Oklahoma as a whole. There is a higher percentage of Hispanic, African American and Asian population in the city. Minority is defined as all but Non-Hispanic White alone. Percent minority is calculated as a fraction of the total population. The Oklahoma state average minority population is 33%. Minority population levels according to 2018 US Census American Community Survey data are broken down by census block groups within and surrounding the study area contain minority populations of 31.65%, 31.83%, and 30.5%, respectively.

Under EO 12898 on Environmental Justice, groups defined as “Low-income” populations include those people whose household income falls below the annual statistical poverty thresholds used by the Census Bureau, which are based on the poverty guidelines developed by the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS). The HHS Poverty Guideline for 2021 defines the poverty line for a household of four as \$26,500.

According to 2018 US Census Bureau data, the block groups within and surrounding the study area have median household incomes of \$53,571, \$100,703, and \$53,357, respectively.

Limited English proficiency (LEP) refers to anyone above the age of 5 who reported speaking English less than “very well.” Percent LEP households is calculated as a fraction of the total households in the census block group. LEP data was derived from the 2017 American Community Survey (ACS) Language Spoken at Home. The block groups within and surrounding the study area contain 1.88%, 0%, and 1.56% LEP households, respectively. The Oklahoma state average is 2% LEP households.

Based on the analysis above, the proposed project will not cause disproportionately high and adverse effects on any minority or low-income populations in accordance with the provisions of E.O. 12898 and FHWA Order 6640.23. No further Environmental Justice analysis is required.

In summary, no major issues were identified in the environmental studies for streams and wetlands, floodplains, threatened and endangered species, cultural resources, hazardous waste sites, parks and trails, noise, or environmental justice. The project has no potentially significant social, economic, or environmental impacts identified by studies although plan notes will be required for threatened and endangered species. The temporary closure of a recreational trail is considered a temporary occupancy and is afforded an exception to Section 4(f) regulations and ODOT will coordinate the closure with the City of Tulsa.