

STATE OF TENNESSEE
DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
PUBLIC MEETING (WORKSHOP)
PROPOSED US-64 (SR-40) CORRIDOR K PROJECT
WEST OF OCOEE RIVER TO SR-68 NEAR DUCKTOWN, TN
COPPERHILL, TN 37317
FEBRUARY 17, 2010

The Tennessee Department of Transportation held a Public Meeting (Workshop) on Wednesday, February 17, 2010 in the gymnasium of the Copper Basin High School, Copperhill, Tennessee 37317 from 5:00 to 8:00 p.m., for discussion of the proposed Corridor K Project from Proposed US-64 (SR-40), west of the Ocoee River to SR-68 near Ducktown, Tennessee, where the following proceedings were had, to-wit:

ASD COURT REPORTING
ANNA S. DOLOS
CERTIFIED COURT REPORTER
(423) 284-3223

□

2

1
2
3
4
5

COMMENTS

MR. TERRY ARP: I'm Terry Arp from Tri-State EMC, Operations Manager. Our co-op is responsible for 18,000 consumers in this tri-state area, several hospitals, nursing homes and other utilities. we feel

6 that this is very important to have this Corridor K
7 open as this is our only means of getting materials
8 for our jobs in case of emergency and power outages.
9 We depend on TVA for technical assistance with some of
10 our substations and they are located in Chattanooga
11 and Cleveland, Tennessee. We feel like that it's
12 unfair to our consumers to be kind of blocked in and
13 having to tell them that we're gonna have to wait
14 extra hours to even get this assistance up here if
15 needed.

16 So any help that we could get from the State
17 of Tennessee and/or the federal government in helping
18 us keep power to our customers who are very important
19 to us would be greatly appreciated.

20 Of course, we have to use this highway in
21 case we have accidents, because the closest trauma
22 unit is in Chattanooga, Tennessee. So as being the
23 person responsible for the employees, I feel like that
24 this is a problem that we can't have in the future.
25 Thank you.

□

1 MR. JIMMY RUSSELL: We need a road big enough³
2 to accommodate the traffic and not be in danger of
3 rockslides all the time which one is now, and I think
4 that's the biggest comment I have. And that should be
5 sufficient, and everything else should just be self
6 evident.

7
8 MS. BARBARA WILCOX: I live in Bradley County
9 and I work in McCaysville, Georgia. So what is
10 usually a 33-mile trip is now 78 miles either way.

11 I'm on the road three and a half hours a day. I don't
12 know exactly what all the options are. I know what a
13 few of them are, and I'm hearing that widening the
14 road by the Ocoee is like a four- to eight-year job
15 which I guess the road would be closed during that
16 time. So I'm not too thrilled about that either just
17 for the record.

18

19 MR. MARK BROADBENT: My wife actually got in
20 touch with the governor's office not long after this
21 started, asking if he was gonna give any kind of
22 government help to help people out here commute back
23 and forth to and from Cleveland and Chattanooga. He
24 said he would apply to FEMA. My wife e-mailed FEMA.
25 The governor of Tennessee hasn't done anything. He

□

1 said he's helping out the small businesses and anybody⁴
2 else who needs it. Okay. I can understand the small
3 businesses needing help, but we've had temperatures
4 that have been down in the teens. My wife has been
5 sleeping in the car, because we cannot afford for her
6 to travel a thousand miles a week to and from
7 Cleveland where she works. And when my daughter is
8 only seeing her mother on Saturday, it's starting to
9 affect my daughter. She's 15.

10 And I want to know, apart from the fact of
11 this road, what are they gonna do to help people out
12 that can't afford to go back and forth every day. My
13 wife can't afford it. That's why she's in Cleveland.
14 It's just wrong really if you think about it. It's
15 the fact that it shows you how important this K road

16 is for people around here, the fact that when you go
17 to Benton on the first meeting in December, you have
18 30 people there. You go to the high school in Copper
19 Basin and it was full. So it shows you it's affected
20 people here. When you went to the meeting last night,
21 there was virtually nobody at the other end, but here,
22 the parking lot is full.

23 So doesn't that show the people that are in
24 high powers of the government that people here are
25 suffering. We really are suffering. It's unreal.

□

1 You get the people in office saying, oh, we're gonna⁵
2 do this and we're gonna do that, but they're going
3 home to their families every night. I see my wife at
4 7:00 on Sunday morning when she gets in the car and
5 goes to work. With the weather we're having, she's
6 actually left on a Saturday. So she's been home for
7 half a day for my daughter to see, but it's got to the
8 point now that -- and my daughter is an American
9 citizen, and she has no faith in the government. She
10 says, They're lying all the time. They're not doing
11 anything to help the people that really need it.

12 If the governor of Tennessee was running
13 again, nobody would vote for him. My wife spoke to
14 one of the assistants who work for the government, and
15 he said, Oh, it's not really important. I'll tell you
16 what's important is the fact that my wife is away all
17 week, we're behind with all the bills, rent and
18 everything. She's sleeping in her car and she's 54
19 years old. What kind of government allows that.

20 we've had no help up here. It took him three
Page 4

21 weeks to get to New Orleans after Katrina, but, yet,
22 nobody cares about this little town that sits on the
23 bottom end of Tennessee that to me is home now. I've
24 lived here for 10 years. why are they turning their
25 back on us? why aren't they trying to say, we'll help

□

1 you the best we can on this? SETHRA has helped us out ⁶
2 more than the federal government. The federal
3 government hasn't done anything for us. SETHRA helped
4 us out because we were freezing. So they provided
5 propane. They've given my wife 8 dollars a day for
6 gas. It isn't enough to get her backward and forward,
7 but it's helping us to keep the car running so that
8 she can keep warm when she's sleeping in it at night.

9 I'm getting to the point where I'm thinking
10 about moving back to Europe. My wife and daughter are
11 both American citizens. They were born here, but I
12 really am thinking about moving back there because the
13 government is turning its back on people and it's not
14 fair.

15 You've got the elderly that have to go to
16 Cleveland and Chattanooga to the hospital, and you've
17 got 100- to 120-mile drive one way. If you're on a
18 pension, if you get one, you can't afford that in
19 fuel, not when gas is 2.57 a gallon around here. Gas
20 prices haven't gone down like they have in the city
21 because the gas stations are losing money. So the
22 people that are not earning the money have got to pay
23 that stupid price. we want help but nobody is helping
24 us. That's it.

25

□

1 MR. CHAD MCNABB: My name is Chad McNabb. I ⁷
2 want to see, first of all, what they're doing now
3 completed so that we can actually get back to
4 Chattanooga. I actually live in North Carolina and
5 work for EMS there. Erlanger is our main hospital
6 that we take traumas to. We can't get there now.
7 we've had to change the way we operate.

8 Looking at all these options, I'm afraid any
9 option that stays close to the existing highway, we're
10 gonna be looking at this problem again, more
11 rockslides in the future, more tractor trailers into
12 the river. I know the environmental groups are
13 against any kind of construction, but I would think
14 they would like to get tanker trucks off the river.

15 It's not just working and the health care
16 issue. It's a lot of things. I mean, my family,
17 their doctors are in Cleveland. They do their
18 shopping in Cleveland. I don't shop a lot, but they
19 do. A lot of friends of mine work in Cleveland and
20 Chattanooga, and we've added an hour drive to an
21 already long drive. So when you add another hour to
22 it, it's just putting a big burden on everyone. I've
23 given my comments on what I think would be the best
24 route for the road. I think any option other than a
25 four-lane is just gonna be a waste of time and a waste

□

1 of money. If you're gonna build a brand new road and ⁸
2 it's still two lanes, what's the use? I know it's
3 more expensive, but in the long-run, it should pay for

4 itself. It would increase business for this area
5 which is, obviously, economically depressed, and I
6 just think the road needs to be completed. It should
7 have been completed many years ago. It's just time.
8 That's pretty much it. Thank you.

9

10 MS. KAY JONES: My address is in Winder,
11 Georgia, but I have interest in Ducktown. I have a
12 subdivision here. It's some commercial property here,
13 and any improvement that comes our way would be
14 wonderful. I prefer Option 8 or 8a simply because
15 it's gonna happen faster and less money to get it done
16 without inconveniencing people any further. And as I
17 understand, there's been money put away for years,
18 just sitting there waiting for a long time.

19 I'm not a -- I didn't grow up around here. I
20 don't know if you want to call it backwardness or
21 complacency or what that's here, but everybody is kind
22 of okay with the way it's always been 50 years ago;
23 keep it the same; don't change anything. Well, it's
24 time. It's time, and that's all I've got to say
25 really.

□

9
1 MR. CHARLES SISSON: I just have been looking
2 at all the options, and I've been familiar with the
3 road for all of my 35, 45, 55 or 65 years. And Option
4 4 is the one that I think would really be good. The
5 ones that go to the left, and I forgot what they were,
6 are pretty good, but Option 4 just seems like the one
7 that I would like. And that's all I've got to say.
8 You can start tomorrow.

9

10 MR. OWEN HENSLEY: Our complaint is that
11 we're 70 years old. We've been traveling this 64
12 route to Cleveland and Chattanooga to do shopping and
13 do our medical and get medical help, and we are
14 definitely in need of somebody to get off the pot.
15 They've been surveying it for 45 years, and that's
16 been enough time to have done anything if we could get
17 this political mess out of the way and get these buddy
18 system jobs taken care of some other way. It's
19 costing us what the highway would have cost to survey
20 it. Done enough surveying on it to build a highway.

21 I've been here all my life, and it's just
22 unreal what we have to put up with to try to get out
23 of this bottleneck corner up here in Tennessee. Same
24 way for North Atlanta and Georgia. We're in a corner.
25 Seems like that people that are back in a corner is

□

1 not seen or heard. It's time that our political
2 officials that we're feeding and looking after them
3 for their big salaries is looking after us to a
4 certain extent.

5 we're fed up with it, and we're gonna do
6 something about it, if we have to get them out of
7 office or whatever. But they better take heed to the
8 people that's concerned that they're not happy.
9 They've got money for everything in the world except
10 something that is really needful. Now, tell them to
11 put that in their pipe and smoke it. I'm fed up with
12 them. I'm fed up with the system. They've got
13 engineering -- no telling how many people that's in

10

14 the engineering department that's family related and
15 they've got to give him a job. He's got to have a job
16 and this one's gotta have a job. I've seen this
17 happening in the churches, in the schools, in the
18 state, in the county and everything plumb to the
19 federal government. It's all buddy system.

20 And if I've said anything untrue, I want
21 somebody to answer my question. Can someone tell us
22 how much it's cost for what they've surveyed on
23 Highway 64? They've got places on Highway 68 that
24 will run you out -- come way over in the other lane to
25 try to get around the curves through there. why

□

1 haven't we got something to help us up here in these ¹¹
2 backwoods so to speak?

3 In my opinion, this slide could have been
4 stopped. I've been going around there for 60 years.
5 I've been telling my wife every time I go around
6 there, That's gonna slide in. I worked in the mines
7 long enough to see rocks that was loose. The last
8 meeting we had up here, I told them that it could be
9 drilled and pinned before it happened, but now it's up
10 yonder. It's hanging up yonder. You can't get to it
11 now, but it could have been fixed.

12 why couldn't someone with education enough
13 could have come up with this? I'm just an old,
14 uneducated country boy. I've seen vertical walls
15 drilled and pinned and wire on them and cables to keep
16 them from moving. They could have fixed this. we'll
17 be bottlenecked up again if we keep traveling this
18 route. I don't care if they widen the curve. It's

Polk Co 2nd Pub Mtg US-64 transcript 021710.txt
19 vertical rock. It's hanging up over our heads, and
20 this is just the beginning. If we have a little
21 earthquake or something, here it comes again. Lots of
22 rain.

23 I'm here tonight to express my opinion on
24 this northern route. In other words, I've been all
25 through these mountains hunting when I was a boy and

□

12
1 also a grown man, and down here at Brushy Creek,
2 that's this creek right here, this existing little
3 creek right here, and if we can bridge that and get up
4 on top of the mountain on the north route, we can have
5 us a good highway right below Parksville Lake.

6 If we can get by the Forest Service and all
7 these environmentalists. The bugs and little flowers
8 and stuff, they value that more than they do a human
9 life. They do really. This country is absolutely
10 crazy. These people are crazy that's running our
11 country. They're talking about the rock. I made a
12 point to just push the rock in the lake down there.
13 Push it in the lake. Oh, we can't do that. It's
14 acidy. Well, what about the rain water that's been
15 raining and washing down over the mountains for years;
16 where did it go? It's the same rock.

17

18 MS. SHIRLEY HENSLEY: But we're having to
19 cover up the rock they said.

20

21 MR. OWEN HENSLEY: Yeah. And here's the
22 whitewater Center. They bought rock in here and
23 dumped them in the river, and they made man made rock.

24 Oh, they used concrete for that. Well, concrete is
25 acidy. It will eat your shoestrings up if you're

□

1 around it enough. I've worked in concrete about all¹³
2 my life.

3 Now, it's time someone done something, and I
4 call them churnheads because that's about the
5 knowledge they've got of a third-grader. I hope
6 somebody reads this and looks it over that's got some
7 common sense. Now, these educated dudes that ain't
8 never been out from under a desk, we know they ain't
9 gonna do nothing, because they don't know.

10 And the Forest Service, that's another
11 government run operation that stinks. Everything you
12 do, you gotta talk to the Forest Service. Well, when
13 I was a little boy, there was about four people that
14 was in the Forest Service, four brothers that I knew
15 well. Now they've got 400 trucks and 5,000 Forest
16 Service people. Take our place down here on the river
17 to put our boat in, block it off and then put a place
18 in down the road where you have to pay. I'll not pay.
19 They can put me in jail and feed me. They stink.
20 They can cut our temper and everything and put some of
21 these big cadoos in the click with their buddies and
22 put them to work. They'll make jobs for them. That's
23 your government control for you. That's what we've
24 been doing. the government is controlling us and I'm
25 fed up with it.

□

1 I spent my time in the military and I've¹⁴
2 served my country and I'm tired of it. Boy I'd like

3 to just talk to them face to face. I'd like to talk
4 to someone that's got some authority, not to this
5 little lady here. She's precious, but I'd like to
6 talk to someone in authority that I think they're
7 churnheads for not showing up here to where we can get
8 some understanding of what's going on instead of
9 looking at some maps. We didn't go to map school.

10 And down here at the whitewater Center, they
11 take our four-lane highway and turn it into sports and
12 sex. That's what our United States dwells on, sports
13 and sex and take our state paid highway that we built
14 and take it from us. Where are you people coming
15 from? What in the world is wrong with yuns? Can't
16 you see or hear? I could talk all night about this
17 corrupt country, not our country. Our country is
18 good. Our leaders stink. Our leaders stink from high
19 heaven. They don't even deserve to live. My name is
20 Owen Hensley. Tell them. Turtletown, 4432 Highway
21 68, and it's bottlenecked up too. There was a wreck
22 on it this morning at 4:00 in the morning, and it
23 didn't get cleared up until 10:00 tonight supposedly.
24 It's probably not cleared up yet, and I've gotta go to
25 a doctor in Chattanooga in the morning. So where am I

□

1 gonna go; swim the river?

15

2 I'd like to bring this up too. In 1986,
3 Alexander and a few more of the representatives for us
4 put 10 cents on the gallon on gasoline to build us a
5 road in '86. Where is all that money? Call me and
6 get in touch with me and tell me where all the money
7 went to for this 10 cents a gallon on gas. And if you

8 want to stay in office and have a job, you better
9 listen to us because we'll get rid of you, and I'll be
10 the one to campaign it against you.

11

12 MR. ZANE CHANCEY: I just like 8 or 8a. I
13 think that's a good route that they've picked out. I
14 go up and down the Ocoee three times a day driving a
15 truck, and I'm looking forward to see the improvements
16 they've done, and I'll be glad to see it open back up.
17 I would like to see a better route so us truck drivers
18 can get away from rafters and daily travel that's down
19 there.

20

21 MR. GENE CHANCEY: I'm Gene Chancey. I'm a
22 truck driver, and I've been driving that river for 22
23 years. Knowing the amount of times we've had to sit
24 down there for hours and hours because there wasn't no
25 place wide enough for us to get around or nothing to

□

16
1 come home. Anything they could do to help us to get
2 back home, we would appreciate it. We don't have no
3 industry in here at all, and 90 percent of the people
4 that lives in East Polk has gotta drive to Bradley
5 County to even buy a pair of shoes or pants or trade
6 cars or anything.

7 If we had a better road -- you know, people
8 don't realize how many people from North Carolina and
9 South Carolina goes through here going to Chattanooga
10 and back for business. When that river goes down with
11 a truck, you can just about figure on four hours
12 before they're gonna get it cleaned up to where you

13 can go about your normal way to work. Thank you very
14 much.

15

16 MR. DENNIS WILCOX: My name is Dennis Wilcox.
17 I'm for a new highway. The option I chose was 8 or
18 8a. The other thing is that I'm kind of disappointed
19 that some of our politicians were not here today.
20 They promised at the last meeting that they would be
21 here and also the Forest Service. They should be here
22 representing, because I know the existing road belongs
23 to the Forest Service and the new road will be on
24 Forest Service property. So they should have had
25 representatives here, and I'm disappointed that

□

1 they're not here.

17

2 But other than that, we need a road
3 desperately. People are hurting on this end of the
4 county. It's not only -- it's for our students that
5 are going to college. It's an economic impact on our
6 community. So I hope our politicians and people can
7 step in and help us. Thank you.

8 RONALD HENSLEY: I'm looking at Option 8. I
9 think they need to get the road opened up where it is,
10 where people can use it, and I think Forest Services
11 got too much control. They're the ones that held this
12 up to start with. Does the Forest Service own our
13 government or does our government own the Forest
14 Service? I live in Turtletown, and I think that it's
15 ridiculous for my dad to have to drive four hours to
16 get to Chattanooga, and then he get's half way to
17 Coker Creek and has to turn around and come back and

18 go to Chatsworth. We can't even get to our courthouse
19 to do paperwork without going to another county or
20 another state. That's unconstitutional. You're not
21 supposed to do that.

22 And is there gonna be a toll road? Are they
23 gonna charge for us to travel this? Like the boat
24 ramp on Parksville Lake right now was paid for by
25 taxpayer money, and they charge us to put a boat in

□

1 and that's not right. And what kind of time frame are ¹⁸
2 we looking at to get a road to where we can have a
3 normal life? I mean, we can't get to doctors. We
4 can't get our mail. We can't get UPS deliveries.
5 There are no doctors around here.

6 Last night they needed to fly five or six
7 people out and they couldn't. A one and a half year
8 old girl passed away last night. She had the swine
9 flu and they needed to get her to Erlanger, and they
10 couldn't make it because that helicopter couldn't fly.
11 They tried to go through Coker Creek and Tellico.
12 They couldn't make it. So she passed away. That's
13 sad.

14 I think they need to get started with this,
15 and I don't think that the environmentalists and the
16 tree huggers should have a say so or even a comment on
17 something where it affects people's lives and their
18 way of making a living. If people up here aren't
19 going to be able to work in these places and deliver
20 stuff, there's not gonna be no taxpayers to be paying
21 money. So why should we pay taxes if we can't get out
22 of our little square box that we're locked into up

23 here?

24 I've ran a business for 30 years. I'm still
25 in business, and I'm having to go in earlier and stay

□

1 later to make less money because the post office truck¹⁹
2 can't get here with my stuff. UPS can't get here
3 anymore, and I'm not guaranteed anything because of
4 the slide. And I think that they need to not worry
5 about the rafters. They're not what controls Polk
6 County. There are people from North Carolina and
7 Georgia that use this every day for doctors. There
8 are so many elderly people that can't make a three- or
9 four-hour trip to get to the doctor. They're just not
10 going.

11 I've talked to several families that's got
12 kids going to Cleveland State that they didn't send
13 them back this semester because they didn't want their
14 17 year old daughter or son going three hours to
15 school. So they held them out. Then they found out
16 that they lost their insurance because they didn't go
17 to school. They pulled that away from them. Their
18 grants and stuff they got will be took away from them.
19 If I had a 17 year old daughter, I wouldn't want her
20 living in Cleveland. I would want her to stay at home
21 as long as she could for safety, but when you start
22 putting them on the road three and a half hours or
23 maybe four hours, that's just ridiculous.

24 And all this could have been prevented if the
25 environmentalists and the Forest Service would

□

1 cooperate with what needs to be done. It ain't what I
2 want. It's what I think is best for the community and
3 for our state. I think the state needs to pay
4 attention to what people want, and I don't understand
5 why the majority don't rule like our United States
6 government was set up where the majority controls what
7 goes on, not to where three or four people can say
8 something and get a project like this stopped.

9 So I would just appreciate you taking the
10 time to listen to me and hope and pray that there not
11 be no more lives lost because of people holding up
12 this project.

13 Oh, and in the '80s there was a 10 cent gas
14 tax added to gasoline here to help build that road,
15 and they did raise the money for it. So is the money
16 still there to do this project now? We would like to
17 have some information on that. Thank you.

18

19 MS. SHIRLEY TAYLOR: I'm just sick of this.
20 I mean, we're up here at the end of the world. We
21 have no way of getting to Cleveland, Chattanooga. We
22 have to go all the way around the mountain to get
23 anywhere, and it's ridiculous. This planning keeps
24 going on for 30, 40 years here. We've been to one of
25 these things 25, 30 years ago. What is the point of

□

1 coming and doing this, because we don't get no show?²¹

2

3 MR. ROBERT TAYLOR: I told Mr. Delaney if they
4 just spent as much money on the road as they did on
5 planning, we might just about have a road by now.

6 when you have to commute back and forth to Cleveland
7 and Chattanooga, it's unreal going down that river,
8 even with the rockslide gone. It's a mess. The
9 rafters take charge of the whole thing, and we're
10 tired of it.

11

12 MS. SHIRLEY TAYLOR: People that work, they
13 have to travel that, but, you know, these people, they
14 don't care because they don't live here.

15

16 MR. ROBERT TAYLOR: We just need to quit --
17 well, we've got a plan to get it going, but we need to
18 get this thing rolling, and I think Option 6 or 7 is
19 the most practical as far as building the road. If
20 you go north of the Ocoee, you have some rough
21 mountains over there you're gonna have to contend
22 with. I understand the environmentalists don't want a
23 road down that way probably on account of the black
24 bear, but we live in a little reserve here in Ducktown
25 called a people reserve and we need a road.

□

22

1

2 MS. SHIRLEY TAYLOR: We're a little more
3 important than these animals.

4

5 MR. ROBERT TAYLOR: We see the bears in our
6 yards. We don't have to go down the road to see them.
7 And deer, deer jumps out in front of us all the time
8 close to where we live. So let's quit thinking about
9 rafters and environmentalists and let's go on with the
10 road.

11

12

MS. SHIRLEY TAYLOR: That's another thing.

13

They could have been working around the clock getting

14

this road fixed so that we could have been using it,

15

but they just lollygagged on it, and now they say it

16

won't be done until the 31st of March and that's

17

because of the rafters. This is ridiculous. This is

18

2010.

19

20

MR. ROBERT TAYLOR: You look at the camera

21

and there's hardly any work going on down there. I

22

asked Mr. Delaney, and he said there's a safety matter

23

involved. I said, Yeah, there's a safety matter

24

involved, because we're going around 68 Highway

25

meeting big trucks and stuff like that. That's the

□

23

1

safety in my opinion. I mean, we don't want any

2

workers hurt, but I work at night. I know they can.

3

4

MR. KEITH SMITH: My name is Keith Smith. We

5

are just more concerned about the economic and family

6

impacts that not having this Corridor K is going to be

7

for our area. With the Highway 64 rockslide, I have

8

two family members that have been completely displaced

9

from other family members as a result of it. Gas

10

costs have increased tremendously for people because

11

of having to go all the different routes that we have

12

to take. There are tremendous dangers going through

13

the areas we have to take, the 68 Highway detour, very

14

dangerous. The roads are now deteriorating because of

15

the excessive traffic of semi-trucks.

16
17 done as soon as possible just simply because of the
18 impact it's gonna have long term in this community.
19 People are now considering moving away because of
20 things like this. One local dentist already has moved
21 away because of this, and we are very interested in
22 knowing what the people in Nashville are going to do
23 to help us to resolve the current issue as it is.
24 Thank you very much.
25

□

1 MR. LANE BISHOP: Basically, my comment would²⁴
2 be that this is a lot bigger thing than just a road
3 from Ducktown, Tennessee over toward Cleveland.
4 People from Georgia and people from North Carolina
5 need this road just to access the marketplace,
6 primarily Cleveland and Chattanooga, and it really is
7 that simple. I know a lot of people have limited this
8 that, well, this is just to get people from Ducktown
9 over to Cleveland. That is not the case at all. It
10 is a lot bigger thing than that, and it encompasses a
11 lot larger area than that including Georgia and North
12 Carolina. I'm just an old country boy now. That's
13 all I know to say.

14
15 MR. KENNY STUART: I've been a resident of
16 Polk County most all my life, and I've been watching
17 this road trying to be built for over 40 years and
18 still haven't gotten it built yet. I went to several
19 meetings and I've read all the data that I could find
20 on it, and the best options I can see for the

21 community and for my business -- I run a trucking
22 company. We haul product in and out that river road
23 every day and have for over 40 years. The best option
24 we can see is Option 4 because it has the least amount
25 of road closure time that I can see. It parallels

□

25
1 some of the other road that's already in place that
2 wouldn't require closing. It's got a reasonable cost
3 to it compared to the rest of them, and we need a
4 four-lane road. A two-lane won't really work. It
5 won't do what we need to do. So we need a four-lane
6 to get the traffic in and out. It needs to be
7 separate from the river gorge which would allow the
8 rafters and the people that use it for recreation, a
9 scenic route would be in place.

10 But we do need a route to allow us to get in
11 and out of here that will allow businesses with proper
12 structure, would allow people that are commuting to
13 Cleveland and places like that the opportunity for
14 jobs. It would also give us an opportunity for
15 industry to come in if you have a good road. Industry
16 will not come in where it has a bottleneck. We must
17 have a clear road in and out of here. We need
18 transportation to attract this industry. So we've
19 gotta have a way to get industry products in, raw
20 materials in and get the finished products out, and a
21 good road to do that.

22 we have some of the greatest people that I
23 know living in this area, and I think we need an
24 opportunity for them to have some good jobs and some
25 good work that they can rely on without having to

□

26

1 leave home to do it. This would allow us that
2 opportunity.

3 Looking at the other options of rebuilding
4 the road and allowing it to be closed for four to
5 eight years on a periodic basis really is not an
6 option at all. I think they would be better off to
7 just leave it alone and do nothing, because when that
8 road starts closing, the routes around it are too
9 costly and too expensive. It's gonna cause us great
10 loss of revenue and loss of income, and a lot of
11 people have lost their jobs. I know folks that have
12 quit their jobs in Cleveland because they can't afford
13 to drive around to get to work and taking the less
14 paying jobs in different areas in order to just
15 survive. So that's really not an option. Closing it
16 for eight years would just about kill the
17 transportation ties and the connections that we have
18 between this end of Polk County, Cleveland and
19 Chattanooga areas.

20 A lot of people come from Chattanooga up here
21 to deliver parts and bring raw materials. Closing
22 that road just kills them. They don't even come into
23 the area anymore for us and, also, with running trucks
24 in and out of there. We deal with a lot of log trucks
25 and other trucks going in and out of that road and

□

27

1 have for many, many years, and closing that road
2 provides a hardship for those people I know because
3 they can't get their materials to the wood yards.

4 So we really need a four-lane highway, and

5 Option 4 seems to be the best one. Although, Options
6 6 and 7 have some merit that could be used also if
7 they provide a four-lane. Option 8 and 8a do not
8 provide what we need because they would close the road
9 for long periods of time and tie in on the Parksville
10 damn road. So we cannot afford those. Option 3 goes
11 around the Kimsey Highway area. I don't see that as a
12 viable option. Getting the trucks and traffic up and
13 across that mountain is just too dangerous. It's also
14 more expensive and it doesn't really provide us the
15 needs that we need to get out of this. It's also the
16 longest and the most expensive route. I don't see
17 that as being a real option. Option 6 and 7 are
18 usable, but Option 4 is the best one.

19

20 MR. KEITH THOMAS: I feel like we need the
21 road. I work for the power company. We serve 18,000
22 customers here, two hospitals, two nursing homes. Our
23 power comes out of Chickamauga and that's Chattanooga,
24 and our substation is up here. So when we have a fall
25 at the substation, TVA has to send one of their

□

1 technicians in, and it takes about an hour and a half²⁸
2 trip. Well, now, it's taking nearly double that,
3 three hours, and you're looking at having several
4 thousand people off for three hours at least; that is,
5 if they can fix the problem automatically. That's one
6 issue.

7 Then I've got kids that's gonna be going to
8 college, and the river is just so dangerous. I've
9 seen so many people lose their lives over that road,

10 and I've seen so many businesses go elsewhere because
11 they couldn't make a living here. And it's just so
12 hard on people that live here. People here want to
13 stay here. They've got family and property. Their
14 homes are here. They drive a long way to commute to
15 work back and forth, and I just would love to see this
16 road. We've been at this a long time. We want it,
17 and we trust these politicians will do the right thing
18 and represent us and see our needs that we do need
19 this road.

20 I like to hunt and fish. I love the
21 mountains better than anybody, and I understand the
22 environmental impact it will have on our mountains.
23 But I also understand that people's lives here are at
24 stake now and incomes and all kinds of things is at
25 stake, and I feel like that's more important than my

□

29

1 getting to go out and enjoy the outdoors. I
2 appreciate all that the state has done, all the hard
3 work that they've put in this. I'm all for them, and
4 I just hope that we can get this thing done before the
5 election time comes up anyway. That's all. Thank
6 you.

7
8 MR. JAMES PROCTOR: We do need a road so that
9 we'll have an option for the next rockslide. We'll at
10 least have an alternative. It was dangerous with
11 trucks. They're on my side of the road. The
12 guardrail, I laughed about this new guardrail they put
13 in with ripples in the road. I call it a redneck
14 guardrail because that's all they'll give us instead

15 of a metal guardrail.

16 Out of the options, I liked 8 or 8a. It made
17 more sense. They were cheaper, and they didn't
18 interfere with the road. It will still be open while
19 they're doing construction. There is no way you can
20 close that road for four to eight years. Too many
21 people will die because they can't get to the doctors
22 they need to get to or the hospitals. We've already
23 lost several lives up here. Helicopters were stuck
24 and couldn't fly. Well, they could fly, but they're
25 not allowed to with patients. So people had to go the

□

1 long way around and didn't make it. We need it now. ³⁰
2 That's all.

3
4 MR. MIKE DAVIS: Well, basically, what I want
5 to say is that I think on the options, which one of
6 these, that the people that's making decisions, think
7 is more feasible? Me, I like Option 8 or I believe
8 it's -- it may have been Option 2. That was the ones
9 that I was more interested in, but which one is more
10 feasible? That's what I want somebody to just tell
11 me. We've got all kinds of options, but for somebody
12 that don't understand this kind of stuff, I just want
13 to know which one is more feasible, which one could we
14 get the best.

15
16 MR. KEITH THOMAS: This is Keith Thomas
17 again, and after listening to all the options we have,
18 I think Option 8 or 8a is the best for the state and
19 for everybody in the community and everything. It

20 looks like it's the best way in my book. Thank you.

21

22 MR. CHUCK TAYLOR: I'm Chuck Taylor. I think
23 Option 8 or 8a either one. From what I've seen,
24 that's the most feasible. You've heard so much
25 elaboration, I don't need to say anymore.

□

31

1

2 MR. ANDREW MORELAND: Andrew Moreland. I'm
3 for Option 8. That's about all I got. The least
4 environmental impact, short and sweet.

5

6 MR. DAVID COOK: Without much to do, my major
7 concern is that they get 64 opened up again. The
8 sooner the better. Obviously, I would like to see a
9 new road. I understand that's many years away, but my
10 primary concern for the present is to get 64 open as
11 quickly as possible. Then after much debate, make the
12 best choice for a new road, an alternate route,
13 obviously, not just repairing 64. Thank you.

14

15 MR. DAVID WOOD: I think that Option 8 would
16 be the best, Corridor 8, because of the fact that it
17 would not impact the national forest land as much as
18 some of the other plans. It's the cheaper and more
19 common sense version, and it would get the traffic off
20 the Ocoee Gorge and make it to where you can have more
21 of a recreational area for the Ocoee Gorge. The Ocoee
22 Gorge brings in millions of dollars to this local
23 economy, and it's one of the biggest employers in this
24 area. If we was to bypass the river to where we could

25 leave the existing road basically to the river people,

□
1 the rafting companies, then it would be a great asset³²
2 to the local economy.

3
4 MS. ELAINE MORGAN: I would say that the
5 option to not do anything or improve the existing road
6 is not an option, and any of the others, to me, would
7 be wonderful. That's about it.

8
9 MR. GREG BARKER: Basically, my opinion is
10 that we should go with Option 4, a definite four-lane.
11 Two-lane options would not be helpful to this
12 community. Dollar wise it makes sense to go ahead and
13 do a four-lane. Option 4 or Option 5 both take into
14 consideration the road that is already there and seems
15 to be less of an impact by taking those routes.

16
17 MR. PARKS WEST: The only thing I was gonna
18 say is that my preference would be Option 4. There
19 are several reasons. One of the main reasons is that
20 it keeps the road away from the lake, instead of
21 coming right down on the lake. On this end of it you
22 have a good road for a pretty good ways down through
23 there, but if you go that way, you get off the river
24 and off the lake. So that's the main reasons for that
25 one. We've gotta have a road. There's no ifs, ands

□
1 or buts, we've gotta have a road I guess that's it.³³

2

3
4 to the mountains. This end of Polk County has been
5 neglected for the past 50, 60, 80 years, really since
6 the copper companies went down. The economic part of
7 it is what we really need here. The safety issues are
8 always a concern. The river road is narrow. The
9 curves are steep. A lot of people when they drive on
10 it that are not used to it do not respect the road;
11 therefore, it's more dangerous.

12 we need something that will entice people to
13 come to our area, to bring the money. If we're a
14 tourist area, we've gotta have them get here.
15 Probably Option 4 is my pick price wise, less impact
16 on the wetlands, and it would bring people into the
17 area. It would open it up to Interstate 75 and bring
18 them on into North Carolina and Georgia. We're gonna
19 pick up 515, and it would just connect the area with
20 the rest of the world. We've been left out for a long
21 time and forgotten, and it's time for somebody to sit
22 up and pay attention. I guess that's it. Thank you.

23

24 MR. JIM BENNETT: I favor Corridors 3 or 6.
25 I think as much as possible it should be completely

□

1 separated from the existing road, and it be turned 34
2 into or continued as a tourist road. I think it ought
3 to be four lanes. Either one ought to be four lanes.
4 I think both of them would open up a lot of new
5 revenue for the county, one on one side of the river
6 and the other one on the other going through areas
7 with very few people. I'm sure that all of them will

8 affect the environment but not nearly as much as the
9 Tennessee Chemical Company. I think it ought to be
10 done as rapidly as possible to take advantage of the
11 federal funds that are currently available to put
12 people to work.

13

14 MS. BEVERLY BENNETT: The reason that it
15 needs to be a four-lane is because of all the 18
16 wheelers, the large trucks and so much traffic.

17

18 MR. JIM BENNETT: This eastern end of Polk
19 County and northern end of Fannin County have both
20 suffered over the years for lack of transportation to
21 the marketplace and we have so many people who go to
22 Cleveland to work and to Atlanta to work, Chattanooga
23 to work. We need to see what we can do about getting
24 some business industry in this area.

25

□

1 MS. BEVERLY BENNETT: And it would take a ³⁵
2 four-lane really to entice that.

3

4 MR. JIM BENNETT: We're essentially educating
5 our young population to go someplace else and benefit
6 the economy where they're moving to, and we're paying
7 the high school taxes for somebody else's benefit.
8 And most of our young people want to live here, even
9 the people who have had to move out over the years.

10

11 MR. RANDY COLLINS: We just need a road extra
12 bad as soon as possible. They need to get on it as

13 soon as they can. All the studies and all that,
14 they've studied this thing for 50 years. If they
15 don't know what to do by now, they need to get with
16 it, because it's like we're on an island here.
17 There's no way in or out. If Tennessee wants revenue
18 off this area, you know, there's a lot of people in
19 North Carolina that use that road going to
20 Chattanooga, and they're all going to Atlanta now
21 instead. A lot of them ain't never gonna come back
22 through Tennessee, and I for one agree with them.

23

24 MS. DEBRA WALKER: I like Option Number 5. I
25 prefer Number 8, but it only has two lanes. Option 5

□

1 has four lanes and that's why I prefer Option 5.

36

2 Thank you very much.

3

4 MR. LARRY WALKER: I'd like Option 8 with
5 four lanes. I like that idea better. If we're gonna
6 spend money, I think we ought to go ahead and spend it
7 now because the population is not getting smaller.
8 It's only gonna increase, and in the future, it will
9 be worth the money. Thank you.

10

11

12

13

14

15

16

17

18
19
20
21
22
23
24
25

□

37

1
2
3
4
5
6
7
8
9
10
11
12
13
14
15
16
17
18
19
20
21
22

C-E-R-T-I-F-I-C-A-T-E

STATE OF TENNESSEE:

COUNTY OF BRADLEY:

I, Anna S. Dolos, Court Reporter and Notary Public, do hereby certify that I reported in machine shorthand the above testimony, and that the foregoing pages were typed under my personal supervision and constitute a true and accurate record of the proceedings.

I further certify that I am not an attorney or counsel for any of the parties, nor a relative or employee of any attorney or counsel connected with the action, nor financially interested in the action.

Witness my hand and official seal this 25th day of February, 2010.

Polk Co 2nd Pub Mtg US-64 transcript 021710.txt

23

Anna S. Dolos

24 Court Reporter and Notary Public

My Commission Expires 7/18/2011

25

□