

Southwest Trail System (Bicycle and Pedestrian Path) Connecting Hot Springs with Little Rock

ARDOT Job 061562

Overview

Pulaski, Saline, and Garland Counties, in coordination with the Arkansas Department of Transportation and Federal Highway Administration, are studying location alternatives for the Southwest Trail. The purpose is to provide a connection to Hot Springs National Park, the Old River Bridge on the Saline River, the Little Rock Central High School Historic Site, and the Arkansas River Trail System that allows for pedestrians and bicyclists to safely enjoy outdoor recreation while providing an economic stimulus to the local and regional economies.

This public hearing is part of the Environmental Assessment (EA) process. The purpose of the EA is to identify a preferred trail alignment that minimizes the negative impacts to the natural and social environment while addressing the needs of the project to the greatest extent possible.

A Few Details

- The trail is approximately 60 miles long
- The trail is located in Garland, Saline, and Pulaski counties
- A preferred alignment has been identified for review and comment
- There is a summary of the EA and findings in the Public Hearing Packet. This includes information on the build alternative's primary alignment and alignment options carried forward in the EA.
- The full EA document is available on the project website

Study Timeline

After this virtual public hearing begins online July 12, 2020, there will be a 45-day comment period. Comments will be carefully considered, and if needed, the alignments might be revised or additional studies completed. Once public comments have been fully addressed, a summary of the comments and responses, along with any revisions to the preferred alignment, will be submitted to the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) for review and approval – this is referred to as Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI). If the FHWA approves the FONSI, this will complete the environmental studies and there would be an approved Southwest Trail alignment in the fall of 2020. If FHWA determines impacts are too significant, the agency can request additional NEPA studies.

We appreciate your involvement in this study. Please review the maps and other material and provide your written or oral comments.