

CHAPTER 3 ENVIRONMENTAL CONSEQUENCES

This chapter describes the affected environment and potential environmental consequences to resources in the North I-25 regional study area from the four alternatives (No-Action, Package A, Package B, and the Preferred Alternative) under consideration as part of this Final EIS. Within each resource section, there is first a description of existing conditions within the affected environment, then a description of environmental consequences associated with the four alternative packages, as described in **Chapter 2 Alternatives**.

The alternatives were described in detail in **Chapter 2** as follows:

- ▶ **Section 2.2.1** describes the No-Action Alternative
- ▶ **Section 2.2.2** describes Package A
- ▶ **Section 2.2.3** describes Package B
- ▶ **Section 2.2.4** describes the Preferred Alternative

Environmental consequences are presented in this document as they are anticipated to occur in the Year 2035. While each resource is assessed for impacts related to all improvements within an alternative (e.g. interchanges, structural improvements, safety upgrades, carpool lots, feeder bus, maintenance facilities), only those areas where impacts would occur are discussed. As a result, not every element of an alternative is discussed for each resource. Mitigation measures are also described.

Environmental consequences are broken into the following categories:

- ▶ **Direct effects (or impacts)** are defined as those impacts that are immediately experienced by implementing a federal action.
- ▶ **Indirect effects (or impacts)** are caused by the action but occur later in time or farther removed in distance, but are still reasonably foreseeable. Indirect effects may include growth-inducing effects and other effects related to induced changes in the pattern of population density or growth rate, and related effects on air, water, and other natural systems, including ecosystems.

What's in Chapter 3?

Chapter 3 – Environmental Consequences

- 3.1 Land Use & Zoning
- 3.2 Social Conditions
- 3.3 Economic Conditions
- 3.4 Right-of-Way
- 3.5 Air Quality
- 3.6 Noise & Vibration
- 3.7 Water Resources
- 3.8 Wetlands
- 3.9 Floodplains
- 3.10 Vegetation
- 3.11 Noxious Weeds
- 3.12 Wildlife
- 3.13 Threatened, Endangered, and State Sensitive Species
- 3.14 Visual Quality
- 3.15 Historic Preservation
- 3.16 Paleontological Resources
- 3.17 Hazardous Materials
- 3.18 Parks and Recreation Resources
- 3.19 Section 6(f)
- 3.20 Farmlands
- 3.21 Energy
- 3.22 Public Safety and Security
- 3.23 Construction
- 3.24 Local Short-Term Uses of the Environment and Long-Term Productivity
- 3.25 Irreversible and Irrecoverable Commitment of Resources
- 3.26 Cumulative Impacts
- 3.27 Permits Required
- 3.28 Summary of Direct and Indirect Impacts
- 3.29 Mitigation Summary

1 ▶ **Cumulative effects (or impacts)** result from the incremental impact of the action when
2 added to other past, present, and reasonably foreseeable future actions regardless of what
3 agency (federal or non-federal) or person undertakes such other actions. Cumulative
4 impacts can result from individually minor but collectively significant actions taking place
5 over a period or time. Based on input from scoping meetings, agency meetings, and the
6 analysis of resources, cumulative effects were evaluated for the following resources:

- Land use and induced growth
- Wetlands
- Air quality
- Wildlife habitat
- Water quality

7 Two different geographic areas were used to collect and describe existing conditions and
8 environmental consequences:

9 **Regional Study Area** – Shown on **Figure 1-1** (see **Chapter 1**), the regional study area covers
10 a wide area that includes 38 municipalities and 7 counties. The regional study area was used
11 to collect information about existing and future land use, social and economic demographics
12 and indicators, air quality, traffic and transportation, and cumulative impacts.

13 **Project Area** – This is the area that may be directly affected by project transportation
14 improvements. It generally includes an area approximately 0.25 mile from the edge of any
15 planned linear facility (i.e., roadway/railway) construction and approximately 0.50 mile, or an
16 acceptable walking distance, from a transit station. Information for the linear facility
17 components of the project area was collected on existing conditions and environmental
18 consequences to right-of-way, noise and vibration, water resources, biological resources,
19 visual quality, historic resources, hazardous materials, and parks and recreation resources.
20 Information collected for the transit station components of the project area includes
21 socioeconomic demographics, land use and zoning, development and redevelopment, and
22 pedestrian and bicyclist traffic.

23 **Draft EIS Component Descriptions** – For the Draft EIS, the Package A and Package B
24 environmental resource analysis was described in terms of components of each package.
25 The intent was to identify impacts for each of the components such that this information
26 would be available and could be used during the identification of the Preferred Alternative.
27 For reference, the components associated with Package A are as follows:

- 28 ▶ A-H1 Safety Improvements: I-25, State Highway 1 (SH 1) to SH 14
- 29 ▶ A-H2 General Purpose Lane Highway Improvements: I-25, SH 14 to SH 60
- 30 ▶ A-H3 General Purpose Lane Highway Improvements: I-25, SH 60 to E-470
- 31 ▶ A-H4 Structure Upgrades: I-25, E-470 to US 36
- 32 ▶ A-T1 Commuter Rail: Fort Collins to Longmont
- 33 ▶ A-T2 Commuter Rail: Longmont to FasTracks North Metro
- 34 ▶ A-T3 Commuter Bus: Greeley to Denver
- 35 ▶ A-T4 Commuter Bus: Greeley to Denver Union Station (DUS)

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1 The components associated with Package B are as follows:

- 2 ▶ B-H1 Safety Improvements: I-25, SH 1 to SH 14
- 3 ▶ B-H2 Tolled Express Lanes: I-25, SH 14 to SH 60
- 4 ▶ B-H3 Tolled Express Lanes: I-25, SH 60 to E-470
- 5 ▶ B-H4 Tolled Express Lanes: I-25, E-470 to 70th Avenue
- 6 ▶ B-T1 Bus Rapid Transit: Fort Collins/Greeley to DUS
- 7 ▶ B-T2 Bus Rapid Transit: Fort Collins to DIA

8 The analysis by component was used only to provide information on Packages A and B (and
9 the No-Action Alternative) during the development of the Preferred Alternative. Therefore, the
10 Preferred Alternative itself has not been divided into components. Rather, the impacts of the
11 Preferred Alternative have been identified by transportation mode and geographic area in a
12 similar manner to the components, to facilitate comparison between alternatives.

13 Supplemental resource information on the following topics is presented in **Appendix C** of this
14 document:

- 15 ▶ Land Use
- 16 ▶ Environmental Justice
- 17 ▶ Noise
- 18 ▶ Wildlife
- 19 ▶ Biological Assessment
- 20 ▶ Bicycle and Pedestrian Facilities

21 The following technical reports and addenda for selected resources provide detail to
22 supplement the information presented in this chapter. These reports are not included in this
23 Final EIS, but are available upon request at the CDOT Region 4 Offices in Greeley, Colorado.

- 24 ▶ Air Quality Technical Report and addendum
- 25 ▶ Traffic Noise and Vibration Technical Report and addendum
- 26 ▶ Rail Transit Noise and Vibration Technical Report
- 27 ▶ Historic Resources Survey Report
- 28 ▶ Paleontological Resources Technical Report
- 29 ▶ Water Quality and Floodplains Technical Report and addendum
- 30 ▶ Wetlands Technical Report and addendum
- 31 ▶ Modified Phase I Environmental Site Assessment and addendum

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