



**US Army Corps
of Engineers**

New England District

Maine Project Office

675 Western Avenue #3

Manchester, Maine 04351

PUBLIC NOTICE

Date: January 29, 2008

Comment Period Ends: February 29, 2008

File Number: NAE-2008-00154

In Reply Refer To: Jay L. Clement

Or by e-mail: jay.l.clement@usace.army.mil

The District Engineer has received a permit application from the applicant below to **conduct work in waters of the United States** as described below. The Corps is soliciting comments on both the project itself and the range of issues to be addressed in the environmental documentation.

APPLICANT: MAINE DEPT. OF TRANSPORTATION, 16 STATE HOUSE STATION, AUGUSTA, MAINE 04333

ACTIVITY: Fill inland waterways and wetlands between Routes 1 and 161 at Caribou, Maine in order to construct a two lane, controlled access highway on new alignment between the two routes as shown on the attached plans and described as follows:

1. The Corps has determined that the basic project purpose is to enhance regional transportation by improving connectivity and reducing travel times between Route 161 and Route 1 at Caribou, Maine thereby improving public safety and traffic flow/mobility in downtown Caribou. Three alignment options (designated as Alignment Options 4A, 4B, and 4C) are being considered. Wetland/waterway impacts for the three alignment options range from 3.4 to 15.5 acres. Maine DOT has not identified a preferred alternative.
2. Currently the project remains in the planning stage. Maine DOT has presented a preliminary application to assist the Corps, following public comment, in determining which alternative is the least environmentally damaging practicable alternative (LEDPA). Depending on the LEDPA, the applicant will be required to develop a detailed mitigation plan intended to compensate for any unavoidable impacts to wetlands and other aquatic resources. They will also be required to obtain a permit and water quality certification from the Maine Dept. of Environmental Protection (Maine DEP).
3. Compensatory mitigation typically takes the form of wetland or waterway restoration, enhancement, and creation. In some cases, preservation of wetlands and uplands can be accepted as a component of a mitigation plan, in particular if they are under threat and provide important functions and values. Where possible, mitigation should complement local comprehensive planning and conservation goals. Prior to the submission of a final permit application to the Corps and the Maine DEP, the applicant will be identifying mitigation opportunities throughout the general project area. This notice encourages suggestions or recommendations for potential mitigation opportunities from the interested or affected public as well as those agencies that speak to the public interest. These suggestions will be provided to the applicant as we ultimately determine which measures are practicable and serve to help mitigate the project's unavoidable impacts to aquatic resources.

WATERWAY AND LOCATION OF THE PROPOSED WORK: This work is proposed in several unnamed tributaries to Hardwood Brook and Longfellow Brook and in their adjacent freshwater wetlands at Caribou, Maine. The project site is located on the USGS NEW SWEDEN, ME quadrangle sheet at latitude 46.8786867°N; and longitude 68.0109296°W.

AUTHORITY

Permits are required pursuant to:

- Section 10 of the Rivers and Harbors Act of 1899
- Section 404 of the Clean Water Act
- Section 103 of the Marine Protection, Research and Sanctuaries Act).

The decision whether to issue a permit will be based on an evaluation of the probable impact of the proposed activity on the public interest. That decision will reflect the national concern for both protection and utilization of important resources. The benefit which may reasonably accrue from the proposal must be balanced against its reasonably foreseeable detriments. All factors which may be relevant to the proposal will be considered, including the cumulative effects thereof; among those are: conservation, economics, aesthetics, general environmental concerns, wetlands, cultural value, fish and wildlife values, flood hazards, flood plain value, land use, navigation, shoreline erosion and accretion, recreation, water supply and conservation, water quality, energy needs, safety, food production and, in general, the needs and welfare of the people.

The Corps of Engineers is soliciting comments from the public; Federal, state, and local agencies and officials; Indian Tribes; and other interested parties in order to consider and evaluate the impacts of this proposed activity. Any comments received will be considered by the Corps of Engineers to determine whether to issue, modify, condition or deny a permit for this proposal. To make this decision, comments are used to assess impacts on endangered species, historic properties, water quality, general environmental effects, and the other public interest factors listed above. Comments are used in the preparation of an Environmental Assessment and/or an Environmental Impact Statement pursuant to the National Environmental Policy Act. Comments are also used to determine the need for a public hearing and to determine the overall public interest of the proposed activity.

Where the activity involves the discharge of dredged or fill material into waters of the United States or the transportation of dredged material for the purpose of disposing it in ocean waters, the evaluation of the impact of the activity in the public interest will also include application of the guidelines promulgated by the Administrator, U.S Environmental Protection Agency, under authority of Section 404(b) of the Clean Water Act, and/or Section 103 of the Marine Protection Research and Sanctuaries Act of 1972 as amended.

SECTION 106 COORDINATION

Based on his initial review, the District Engineer has determined that the proposed work may impact properties listed in, or eligible for listing in, the National Register of Historic Places. Additional review and consultation to fulfil requirements under Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended, will be ongoing as part of the permit review process.)

Pursuant to the **Endangered Species Act**, the District Engineer is hereby requesting that the appropriate Federal Agency provide comments regarding the presence of and potential impacts to listed species or its critical habitat.

The following authorizations have been applied for, or have been, or will be obtained:

- (X) Permit, License or Assent from State.
- () Permit from Local Wetland Agency or Conservation Commission.
- (X) Water Quality Certification in accordance with Section 401 of the Clean Water Act.

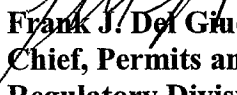
In order to properly evaluate the proposal, we are seeking public comment. Anyone wishing to comment is encouraged to do so. **Comments should be submitted in writing by the above date.** If you have any questions, please contact Jay Clement at 207-623-8367 at our Manchester, Maine Project Office.

Any person may request, in writing, within the comment period specified in this notice, that a public hearing be held to consider the application. Requests for a public hearing shall specifically state the reasons for holding a public hearing. The Corps holds public hearings for the purpose of obtaining public comments when that is the best means for understanding a wide variety of concerns from a diverse segment of the public.

The initial determinations made herein will be reviewed in light of facts submitted in response to this notice. All comments will be considered a matter of public record. Copies of letters of objection will be forwarded to the applicant who will normally be requested to contact objectors directly in an effort to reach an understanding.

For more information on the New England District Corps of Engineers programs, visit our website at <http://www.nae.usace.army.mil>.

THIS NOTICE IS NOT AN AUTHORIZATION TO DO ANY WORK.


Frank J. DeI Giudice
Chief, Permits and Enforcement Branch
Regulatory Division

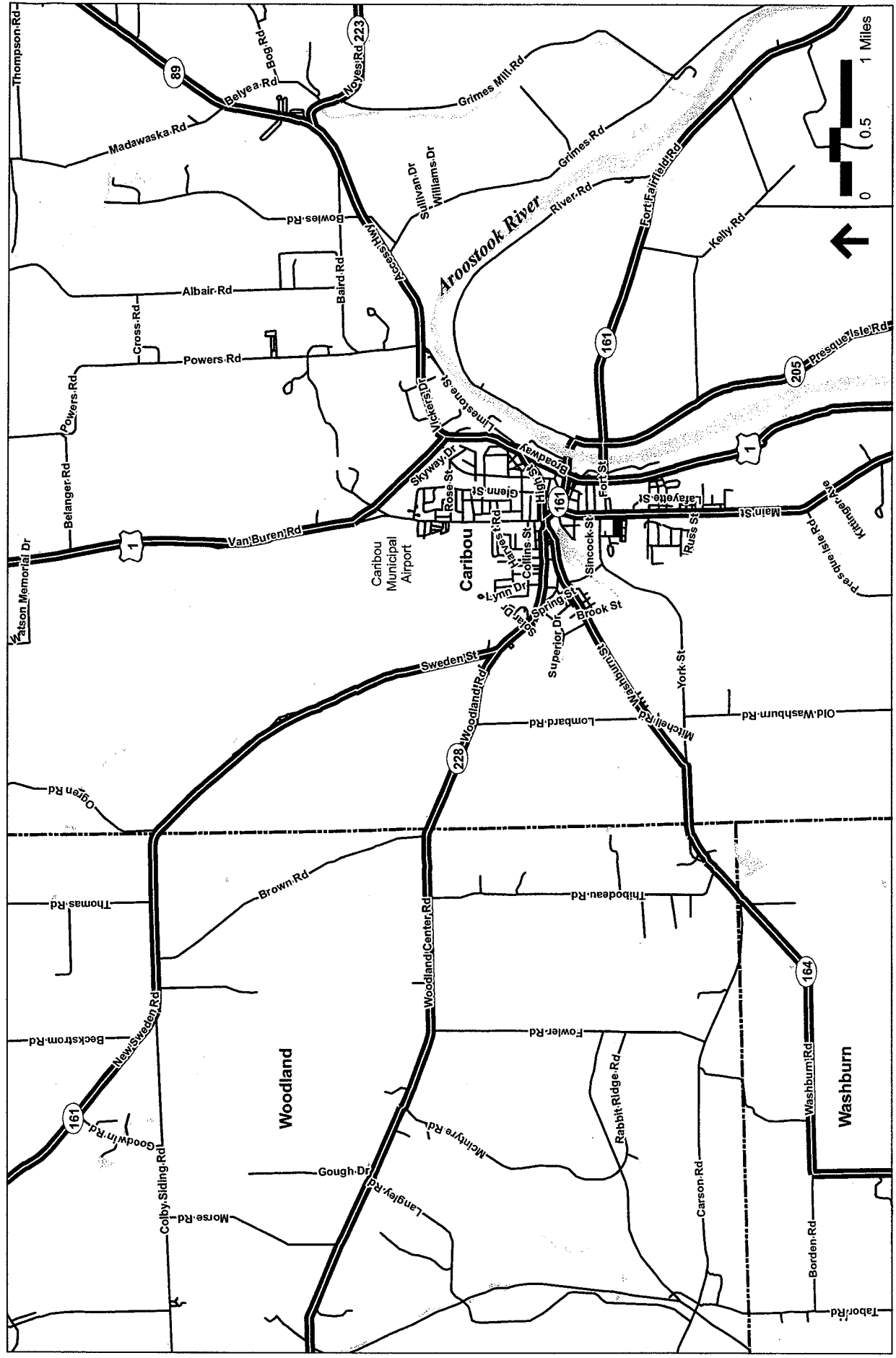
If you would prefer not to continue receiving Public Notices, please contact Ms. Tina Chaisson at (978) 318-8058 or e-mail her at bettina.m.chaisson@usace.army.mil. You may also check here () and return this portion of the Public Notice to: Bettina Chaisson, Regulatory Division, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, 696 Virginia Road, Concord, MA 01742-2751.

NAME: _____
ADDRESS: _____

PROPOSED WORK AND PURPOSE

The work includes the construction of a two lane, controlled access highway on new alignment between State Route 161 at Ogren Road and US Route 1 between North Street and Ouellette Road at Caribou, Maine. Wetland/waterway impacts for the three alternative alignments range from 3.4 acres to 15.5. acres.

The work is described on the enclosed plans entitled "CARIBOU – ROUTE 1-161 CONNECTOR" in four sheets dated "November 2007".



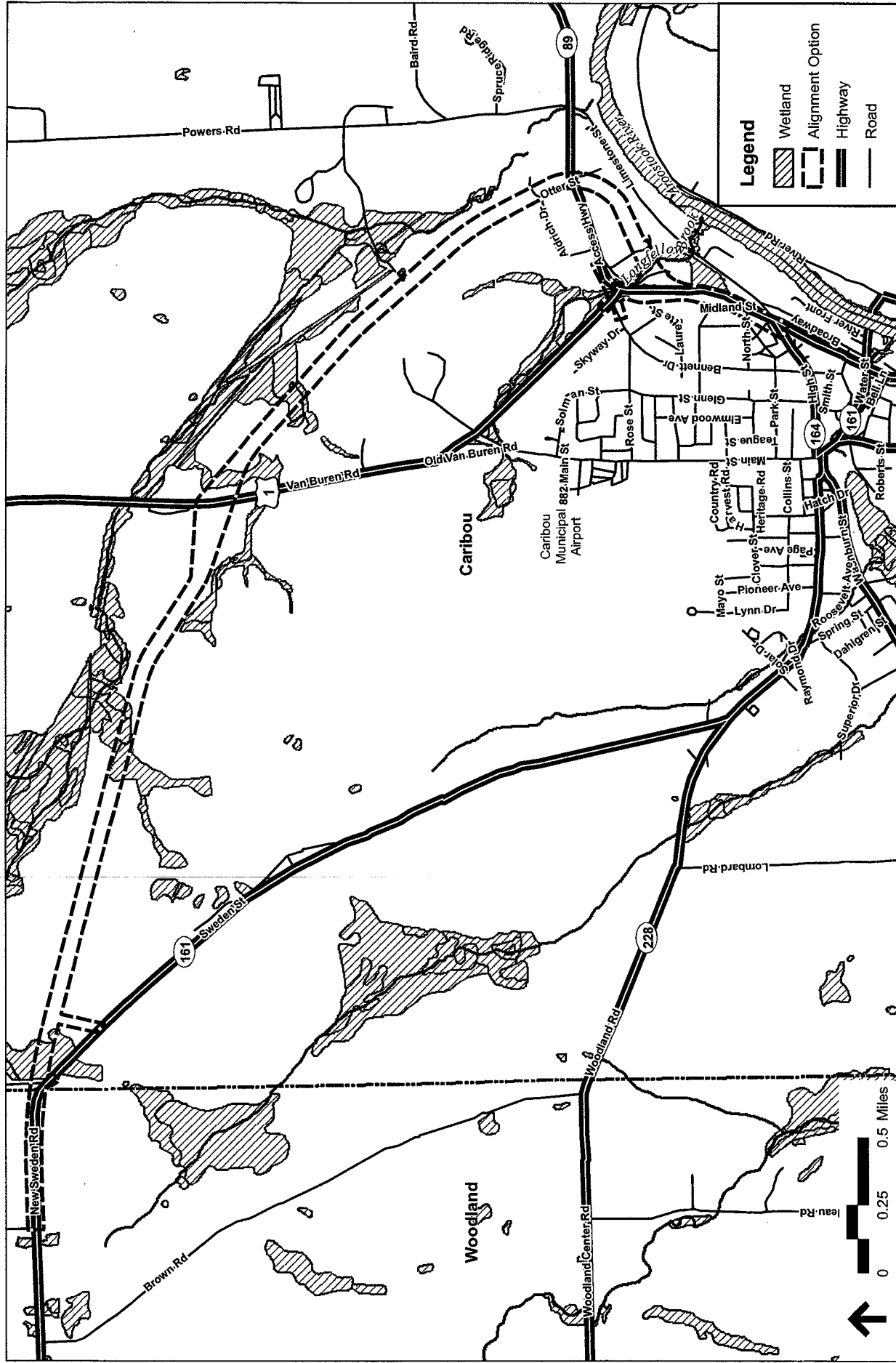
DATE November, 2007
 SHEET 1 of 4

VICINITY MAP
 APPLICATION BY:
 Maine Department of Transportation

AT: Caribou
 IN: Aroostook County,
 Maine



MaineDOT
 16 State House Station, Augusta, ME 04333



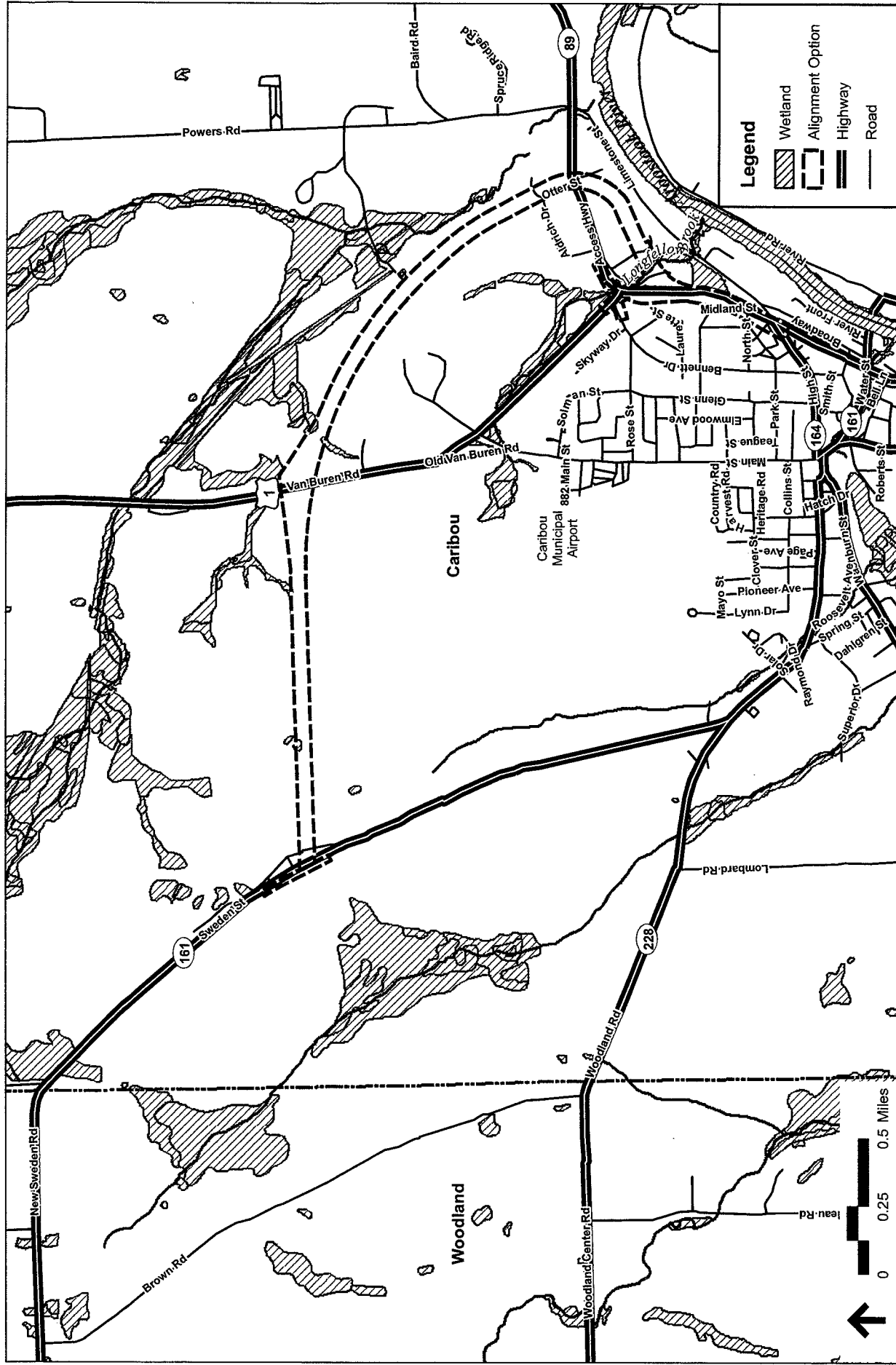
DATE November, 2007
 SHEET 2 of 4

**CARIBOU - ROUTE 1-161 CONNECTOR
 PHASE II ALIGNMENT OPTION 4A**

APPLICATION BY:
 Maine Department of Transportation

AT: Caribou
 IN: Arcoostook County,
 Maine

16 State House Station, Augusta, ME 04333



DATE
November, 2007

SHEET
3 of 4

**CARIBOU - ROUTE 1-161 CONNECTOR
PHASE II ALIGNMENT OPTION 4B**

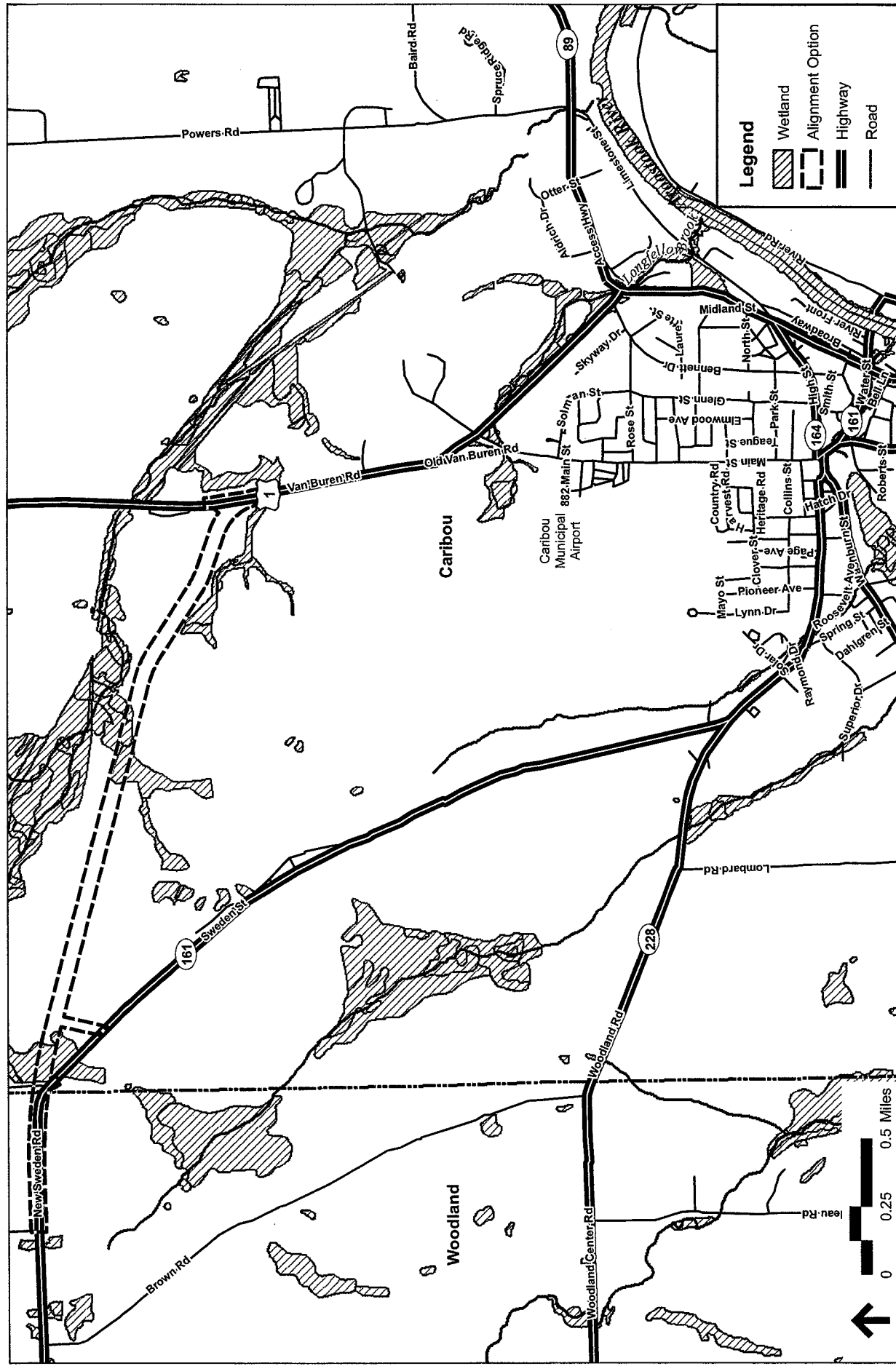
APPLICATION BY:
Maine Department of Transportation

AT: Caribou
IN: Aroostook County,
Maine



MaineDOT

16 State House Station, Augusta, ME 04333



DATE
November, 2007

SHEET
4 of 4

APPLICATION BY:
Maine Department of Transportation

AT: Caribou
IN: Aroostook County,
Maine

MainedOT

16 State House Station, Augusta, ME 04333

Table 12
Summary of Transportation Benefits vs. No-Action Alternative (2030)

| No-Action Alternative | Change vs. No-Action Upgrade/TSM Alternative | Total VHT | Travel Time | Mobility | Downtown Truck ADT | Downtown Total ADT |
|-----------------------|--|--------------------|----------------------|-----------|--------------------|------------------------|
| Alignment Option 4A | -10 vehicle-hours | -70 hours | 9 min. | 39% | 1,240 trucks | 13,730 vehicles |
| Alignment Option 4B | -30 vehicle-hours | -220 vehicle-hours | -0.4 min. | no change | no change | no change |
| Alignment Option 4C | -30 vehicle-hours | -220 vehicle-hours | -0.7 min. (8.3 min.) | +1 % | -280 trucks (-23%) | -3,060 vehicles (-22%) |
| | | | | +1 % | -270 trucks (-22%) | -2,980 vehicles (-22%) |

Note: Shaded entries denote the optimal value for each measure. Entries in bold and italics denote the worst value for each measure.

Figure 11: Ranking of Transportation Benefits

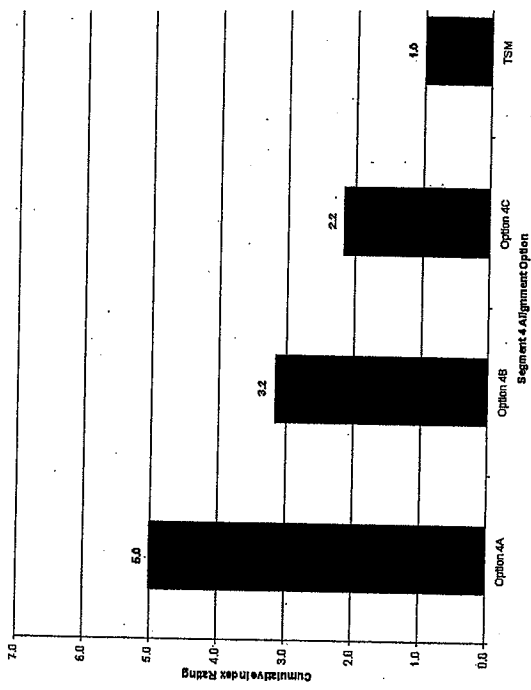


Table 13
Comparison of Key Environmental Impacts

| Alternative | Length of New Highway (mi) | Length of Upgraded Highway (mi) | Aquatic Resources | | Other Environmental Resources | | | |
|---------------------|----------------------------|---------------------------------|-----------------------------------|---|------------------------------------|----------------------------------|---|--|
| | | | Wetland Impacts ¹ (ac) | Number of Stream Crossings ² | Farmland Impacts ³ (ac) | Structures Impacted ⁴ | Historic Properties Affected ⁵ | Section 4(f) Parcels Affected ⁶ |
| Upgraded/TSM | 0 | 1.3 | Unknown ¹ | Unknown ² | Unknown ³ | Unknown ⁴ | Unknown ⁵ | Unknown ⁶ |
| Alignment Option 4A | 5.2 | 0.46 | 30.8 | 2 | 66 | 31 (24 residential) | 1 | 1 |
| Alignment Option 4B | 3.7 | 0.58 | 24.2 | 2 | 32 | 18 (13 residential) | 1 | 1 |
| Alignment Option 4C | 2.8 | 0.16 | 14.4 | 0 | 62 | 11 (9 residential) | 2 | 2 |

¹ Based on width of a two-lane highway, rounded to nearest full acre.

² Based on the full ROW width.

³ Acres-Historic Property Impacts.

⁴ Acres-Construction Cost Estimate.

⁵ The Upgraded/TSM Alternative was not developed because this alternative does not meet the project purpose. As a result, costs and project-related natural and social environmental impacts are unknown.