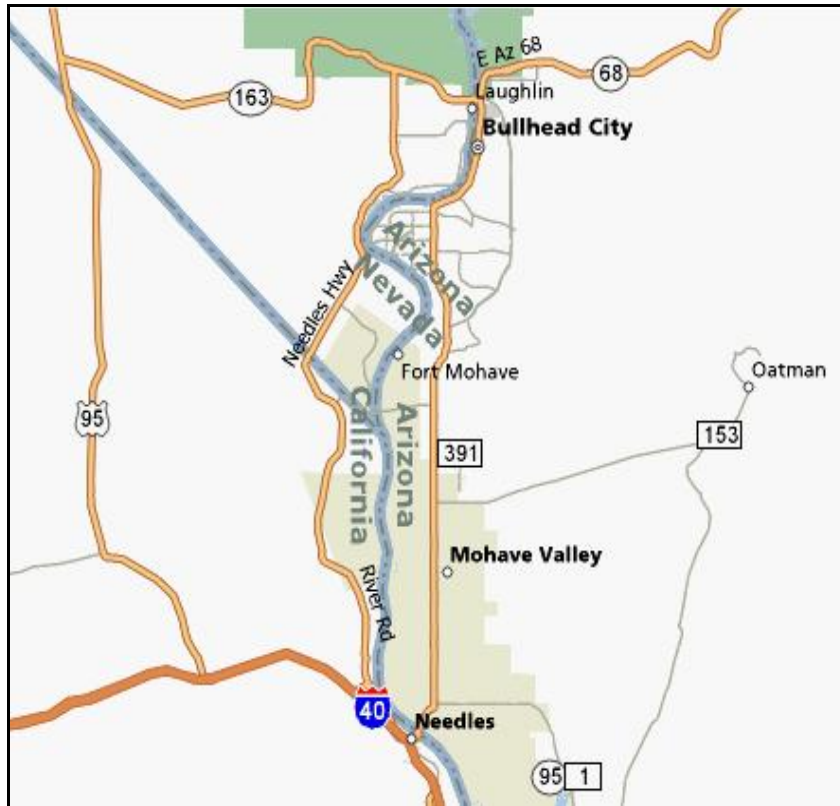


# NEEDLES HIGHWAY PROJECT FACT SHEET



## **THE PROJECT:**

The total project area covers approximately 28 miles of Needles Highway from just south of Interstate 40 (I-40) in the City of Needles to Laughlin, NV. Approximately half of the roadway is in California and half is in Nevada. Needles Highway is a north-south rural arterial between Needles, CA and Laughlin, NV. The portion of the road in California is two lanes in width. In Nevada, the roadway is four to five lanes from SR163 to the beginning of the new improvement (approximately 5 miles north of the state line), four lanes from the beginning of recent improvements (Boy Scout Camp) to Aha Macav, and three lanes from Aha Macav to the state line.

Nevada public works agencies have spent a total of \$30 million on the road. According to San Bernardino County Department of Public Works, the Needles Highway is a safety project to construct passing lanes, realign sharp curves and dips, improve drainage, and add turn pockets from I-40 to the Nevada State line.

## **PROJECT NEED:**

The Needles Highway Feasibility Study was completed for the Nevada Department of Transportation (NDOT). A total of twelve government agencies and private entities, including Clark County, NV, the Town of Laughlin, San Bernardino County, the City of Needles, the Fort Mojave Indian Tribe, and Caltrans, all cooperated in the study process. Collaboration across state lines indicates how important this project is for all parties involved.

The feasibility study identified three possible alternatives for the construction of this project. A fourth alignment, developed during the PA&ED phase, has been developed and is the locally preferred alignment selected by the Fort Mojave Indian Tribe in its NEPA document. The locally preferred alignment would realign Needles Highway to the east of its present location below the bluffs that line the Fort Mojave Indian Reservation agricultural area. For areas outside of the reservation, the alignment would follow the existing alignment.

As the feasibility study indicates, the current capacity in the Needles Highway corridor is not the problem. The project is intended to address safety by improving the current infrastructure. Traffic demands on Needles Highway have decreased almost 25% from 1993 to 2000. The Average Annual Daily Traffic (AADT) in 1993 was approximately 8,000 vehicles per day, which, in 2000 had dropped to approximately 6,000 vehicles per day, likely influenced by the inadequacy of the infrastructure. Additionally, tight curves and rolling terrain vastly reduce the sight lines of motorists slows traffic and creates short stopping distances, all of which are safety hazards.

Needles Highway serves as an important economic corridor in the region. While the highway begins in Needles, CA and ends at Route 163 in Laughlin, NV, it also serves the communities of Bullhead City, NV and Kingman, AZ, the Fort Mojave Indian Reservation, the AVI Resort, Davis Dam, and the Colorado River. The corridor is an important route for recreationalists and those commuting to work. Travelers from southern California use Needles Highway as a route to the Colorado River and to Laughlin, NV. Furthermore, the Laughlin Chamber of Commerce indicates that 300 Needles residents commute to Laughlin for employment in the community's casinos. As noted above, the current capacity is met by the current infrastructure, but future demands cannot be met and must be addressed in advance.

The improvements to the Needles Highway will also allow motorists to travel along a safer roadway. The placement of flood control facilities along the highway, resulting in the cost overruns, was necessary due to the fact that storm waters have adversely impacted the road over the years. Historically, Needles Highway has a tendency to flood as a result of the area's heavy rainfall. Once the flooding occurs, the roadway has to be temporarily closed. With the completion of this project, flooding across this section of Needles Highway should become minimal.

### **PROJECT STATUS:**

The San Bernardino County Department of Public Works (DPW) is in the process of completing an Environmental Assessment/Impact Statement for the Needles Highway Project. The Fort Mojave Indian Tribe has recently completed an Environmental Assessment for their segment of the project.

The first phase of construction on the California side has been identified as that portion between I-40 and the Needles City limits.

### **PROJECT COSTS:**

The project is estimated to cost \$45 million, (report from Associated Engineers to Caltrans). This includes final design, construction and the necessary right-of-way required for construction. Associated Engineers have subsequently revised the estimated cost to approximately \$60 million.

**PROJECT FUNDING:**

Clark County, NV and the Nevada Department of Transportation, allocated \$14 million to complete the project, of which \$7 million was to have been spent on the California segment. The bid for the Nevada portion was \$12.5 million; with additional cost overruns for flood control work the cost increased to \$13 million. The construction on the Nevada portion of the project was completed in November 2006.

Listed below is a summary of the Needles Highway funds programmed in the 2008 RTIP

FUND	ENG	R/W	CON		Prior Yrs.	2008/09 F\	Total
PLH	4,748		1,500		4,748	1,500	6,248
STP Local	380	1,435			380	1,435	1,815
City Funds	39		54		39	54	93
County	96		590		96	590	686
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>5,263</b>	<b>1,435</b>	<b>2,144</b>		<b>5,263</b>	<b>3,579</b>	<b>8,842</b>

(OOO's omitted)

In July 2008 San Bernardino County DPW provided SANBAG with updated data that shows total awarded funds. The difference is due to a PLH (Public Local Highway) 2008 Award, additional STP Local and a decrease in County Funding. The deadline to obligate the STP Local funds is 7/30/09 and the deadline for PLH is 7/30/11.

	CURRENT/obligated			FUTURE/non-obligated			Total Awarded
FUND	ENG	R/W	CON	ENG	R/W	CON	
PLH	5,835					2,076	7,911
STP Local	1,044				1,435		2,479
City Funds	39				54		93
County	96				132		228
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>7014</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1,621</b>	<b>2,076</b>	<b>10,711</b>

(OOO's omitted)

**PROJECT HISTORY:**

- July 1993: Colorado River Regional Transportation Study (Draft Final Report) circulated.
- December 2001: Needles Highway Feasibility Study completed.
- Summer 2005: Clark County, NV, began construction of its portion of Needles Highway.
- November 2006: Grand Opening for completed Nevada portion of Needles Highway.
- July 2007: Needles Highway included as project in NEPA Delegation Pilot Program between FHWA and California DOT (Caltrans).
- September 2008: Fort Mohave Indian Tribe Environmental Assessment completed.
- NOT YET ALLOCATED ABOVE: California Congressman Jerry Lewis, in May, 2009, secured another \$ 3.7 from the SAFETEA-LU request bill that was approved in Washington bringing California based funding well past the \$22 million mark. At the present time, he is requesting a full \$80 million for the project completion.