



## **Chapter 5. COMPARISON AND EVALUATION OF ALTERNATIVES**

One purpose of the Tier 1 EIS is to identify a preferred Baton Rouge Loop Corridor, including corridor alternatives for the North, South, and East Units.

### ***5.1. Methodology***

Various methodologies exist to evaluate and identify a “preferred corridor” for a project such as the Baton Rouge Loop. These typically include the identification of a set of evaluation parameters and then some form of ranking evaluation. Types of parameters considered typically reflect issues most relevant to a project with the number considered tailored to the complexity and level of analysis. Parameters considered typically are agreed upon by both the engineering, environmental, and public involvement disciplines of the Project Team, as well as the lead and cooperating agencies. Summary matrices simplify the documentation of the chosen quantified evaluation parameters and the qualitative rankings.

The Baton Rouge Loop Project Team consists of Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), Louisiana Department of Transportation and Development, Capital Area Expressway Authority (CAEA), HNTB Corporation, ABMB Engineers, URS Corporation, and Marmillion/Gray. Evaluation parameters were discussed and selected by the Project Team in conjunction with FHWA, LADOTD, and the CAEA. For each individual Unit Corridor Alternative, evaluation parameters were quantified or a “desirability/feasibility” value assigned. Using best professional judgment each Corridor Alternative evaluation parameter was then given a qualitative ranking of High, Medium, or Low on a Unit basis by the Project Team.

### ***5.2. Evaluation Parameters***

The Project Team identified the most relevant environmental resources to be developed land, prime farmland, wetlands, high-risk (100-year) floodplains, and waste sites. Developed land represents both potential residential and commercial displacements and is a major factor of concern and comment by the public and stakeholders. Prime farmland was an issue of concern and comment by the public and stakeholders. Wetlands, 100-year floodplains, river crossings, and waste sites have major design and/or permitting and agency consultation considerations.

While not environmental considerations, estimated capital cost, traffic and transportation improvement, and river crossing feasibility are critical components of the Baton Rouge Loop Project and contribute significantly to the viability of the project.

River crossing feasibility was initially considered applicable to all Project Units. However, after further consultation with the applicable resource agencies and



following corridor alternative refinements and reductions in the North Unit, it was decided that it would only be applied to the South Unit evaluation.

Public and stakeholder input are relevant in keeping with the approach of the Project. This input was based on comments received at Public Meetings and the Project website. Additionally, it considers input from the Stakeholder Committee and Advisory Committee. Agency input is important due to jurisdictional or permitting authority.

The Project Team determined that some resources, e.g. community facilities and Section 4(f) resources are typically avoided in alternative alignment development and have little or no influence on Corridor Alternative preference. In addition, it was determined cultural resources were not a defining factor as they typically can be avoided or impacts adequately mitigated. There are potential Section 4(f) issues associated with Sections S3, N2, and N3. These potential 4(f) issues will be subject to further evaluation during the Tier 2 studies at the alignment level.

### **5.3. Evaluation**

The evaluations of the North Unit, South Unit, and East Unit Corridor Alternatives were independent of each other but utilized the same set of parameters with the same quantification or “desirability/feasibility value” and qualitative ranking approach.

#### **5.3.1. Quantification Matrix**

For the quantification matrix the factor for actual or “desirability/feasibility value” used by parameter is as follows:

- Estimated Capital Cost: \$M – Millions 2008/2009 dollars.
- Traffic & Transportation Improvement: Average Daily Traffic (ADT), Vehicle Hours Traveled (VHT).
- River Crossing Feasibility (South Unit Only): Acceptability to Coast Guard (CG) and Maritime Industry (Maritime) as H, M, L.
  - L - Unacceptable to CG & Maritime,
  - M - Acceptable but not advantageous by CG & Maritime, and
  - H - Fully acceptable to CG & Maritime.

As this affects two sectors of the maritime industry, tow operators, and deep draft operators, a ranking will be applied for each.

- Developed Land: Acres of developed land as a percentage of total Corridor Alternative acreage.
- Prime Farmland Soils: Acres of prime farmland soil as a percentage of total Corridor Alternative acreage.
- Wetlands: Acres of wetlands as a percentage of total Corridor Alternative acreage.



- 100-year floodplain: Acres of 100-year floodplain as a percentage of total Corridor Alternative acreage.
- Waste Sites: Number for each of the waste site types.
- Public/Stakeholder Input on Corridor Alternative: H, M, L.
  - L is most controversy or undesirable,
  - M is neutral, and
  - H is least controversy or preferred.

This desirability/feasibility value must also consider the input received from all sources including special purpose meetings, public meetings, public officials, and other sources such as newspaper editorials, website comments, and polls relative to the overall public/stakeholder pool.

- Agency Input on Corridor Alternative: H, M, L.
  - L is most controversy or undesirable,
  - M is neutral, and
  - H is least controversy or preferred.

### **5.3.2. Qualitative Ranking Matrix**

For the qualitative ranking matrix, all evaluation parameters are ranked high (H), medium (M), or low (L). Generally, H is best/most desirable and L is worst/least desirable.

Within any Project Unit, not all evaluation parameters will have the full range of rankings. For some parameters, all Unit Corridor Alternatives may have the same ranking or there may be no H or L ranking. This can be applicable when the resource quantification or feasibility range does not vary greatly.

The environmental parameters typically show all three rankings across the Corridor Alternatives. For the waste site ranking, a roll up of the five individual waste site types from the quantification matrix was used.

### **5.3.3. Unit specific Evaluations**

Following is a summation of the Unit Corridor Alternative evaluations with the quantification and ranking matrices. It is noted that each corridor alternative is likely to require one or more displacements. The number and type of potential displacements (commercial or residential) cannot be determined until the Tier 2 EIS when specific alignments and other design details would be developed. Every effort would be utilized in Tier 2 to minimize displacements by utilizing alignment shifts and other techniques.

#### **5.3.3.1. North Unit Corridor Alternatives**

For the North Unit quantification matrix, *Table 5.1*, several issues were relevant. North Unit alternative estimated capital costs were provided based on two scenarios: 1) a new Mississippi River bridge, and 2) no new bridge, and continued utilization of the existing U.S. 190 structure. Cost estimates in



the new Mississippi River bridge scenario had a difference of less than 8%. The difference with no new Mississippi River bridge was approximately 10%. Traffic and transportation improvement had little ADT difference at the Mississippi River crossing, less than 2.5%, but significant difference in ADT at the Amite River crossing at greater than 25.0%.

<b>Table 5.1 North Unit Corridor Alternative Quantification Matrix</b>						
Evaluation Parameter		North Unit Corridor Alternatives				
		NA	NB	NC	ND	NE
		Estimated length (miles)				
		35.0	37.2	36.9	40.2	40.1
E N G I N E E R I N G &	Estimated Capital Cost w new Miss. R. Bridge (Millions - \$2008)	\$1,673.6	\$1,732.8	\$1,730.9	\$1,807.1	\$1,782.5
	Estimated Capital Cost w o new Miss. R. Bridge (Millions - \$2008)	\$1,360.2	\$1,419.4	\$1,417.5	\$1,493.7	\$1,469.1
	<b>Traffic &amp; Transportation Improvement:</b>					
	ADT at Mississippi River	56,631	55,949	55,949	55,268	55,268
	ADT at Amite River	57,437	50,211	50,211	42,986	42,986
	Daily Reduction System Wide VHT	5,246	5,238	5,238	5,230	5,230
Resource Inventory Potential for Impacts:						
E N V I R O N M E N T A L	<b>Land/Land Use:</b>	% TA	% TA	% TA	% TA	% TA
	Developed Land	20.0%	18.5%	18.3%	15.4%	15.5%
	Prime Farmland Soils	56.4%	54.1%	53.4%	55.0%	52.6%
	<b>Natural Resources:</b>	% TA	% TA	% TA	% TA	% TA
	Wetlands	32.2%	32.3%	33.5%	36.3%	35.2%
	100-year floodplain	36.6%	38.6%	40.4%	37.7%	39.9%
	<b>Waste Sites:</b>	#	#	#	#	#
	Solid Waste Facilities	1	1	1	1	1
	RCRA	1	1	1	1	1
	State Hazardous Sites	2	2	2	2	2
LUST	3	4	4	3	3	
Landfills	1	1	1	1	1	
Active Facilities	17	16	16	15	15	
P U B L I C & A G E N C Y I N P U T	Public/Stakeholder Input on Corridor Alternative	M	L	L	M	M
	Agency Input on Corridor Alternative	M	M	M	M	M
% TA: Percent of total corridor alternative acreage.		#: Number of a resource in corridor alternative.				

For the North Unit qualitative ranking matrix, *Table 5.2*, various parameters required some refined scrutiny. Comparing new river crossing alternatives in terms of their relative capital costs, the least expensive alternative is ranked the most acceptable (H), while the other four alternatives are ranked acceptable but to a lesser degree (M). For the no new bridge estimate the lowest was ranked high, two within 5% of the lowest given a medium ranking, and the other two a high ranking as they had a greater than 8% variance. In considering traffic and transportation improvement ranking it was felt that,



while similar, there was enough variance to justify assigning three a medium rank, and two a low rank. Developed land was less than 20% in any alternative but had some difference so alternatives under 16% were considered high rank and the remainder medium. Prime farmland soils were similar for all alternatives but in excess of 50% of total alternative acreage and all were assigned medium rank. Wetlands in all alternatives was similar but the range did facilitate a high ranking for the alternatives less than 33%, and a medium ranking for alternatives greater than 33% but less than 37%. One hundred year floodplains in all alternatives were comparable but the range did make possible a high ranking for the alternatives less than 38% with the remainder a medium ranking. Waste sites across all alternatives have a similar number and all potentially involve the industrial property sites by the US 190 bridge. All were considered to have a low rank.

Evaluation Parameter	North Unit Corridor Alternatives				
	NA	NB	NC	ND	NE
	Rank	Rank	Rank	Rank	Rank
Estimated Capital Cost w new Miss. R. Bridge	H	M	M	M	M
Estimated Capital Cost w o new Miss. R. Bridge	H	M	M	L	L
Traffic & Transportation Improvement	M	M	M	L	L
Developed Land	M	M	M	H	H
Prime Farmland Soils	M	M	M	M	M
Wetlands	H	H	M	M	M
100-year floodplain	H	M	M	H	M
Waste Sites	L	L	L	L	L
Public/Stakeholder Input	M	L	L	M	M
Agency Input	M	M	M	M	M

Public and stakeholder input generally resulted in a medium or neutral ranking across the alternatives. It was realized that there had been some very specific but limited quantity of public controversy on some of the alternatives. When considered in perspective of other public and stakeholder input, two of the North Unit alternatives were assigned a low ranking. Agency input was largely non-existent other than the river crossing issues addressed during alternative refinement, so all alternatives were assigned a medium or neutral ranking.

**5.3.3.2. South Unit Corridor Alternatives**

For the South Unit quantification matrix, *Table 5.3a* and *Table 5.3b*, a number of issues were relevant. River crossing feasibility for the South Unit alternatives varied somewhat between the two maritime groups. For the section S14 Red Eye crossing, the tow operators considered it fully acceptable and the deep draft operators acceptable but not advantageous. For the section S13 Missouri Bend, crossing the tow industry considered it acceptable but not



advantageous whereas the deep draft industry found it fully acceptable. In regards to the section S12 Plaquemine crossing, both maritime groups found it fully acceptable. Traffic and Transportation Improvement generally showed lower values in the South Unit with the exception of those alternatives utilizing the northern I-10 point of access.

Table 5.3a South Unit Corridor Alternative Quantification Matrix SA - SI										
Evaluation Parameter		South Unit Corridor Alternatives								
		SA	SB	SC	SD	SE	SF	SG	SH	SI
		Estimated length (miles)								
		29.1	30.0	36.0	36.9	36.1	36.4	38.3	39.1	44.7
E N G I N I E R N C I E N G &	Estimated Capital Cost (Millions - \$2008)	\$1,612.4	\$1,577.8	\$1,649.6	\$1,615.6	\$1,665.3	\$1,444.9	\$1,561.7	\$1,495.8	\$1,596.5
	<b>Traffic &amp; Transportation Improvement:</b>									
	ADT at Mississippi River	38,883	38,883	38,883	38,883	37,270	38,883	*	*	22,589
	ADT west of I-10	20,006	20,006	5,157	5,157	5,157	5,157	*	*	5,157
	ADT north of LA 30	20,575	20,575	19,364	19,364	19,364	19,364	*	*	23,210
	Daily Reduction System Wide VHT	6,727	6,727	5,246	5,246	5,246	5,246	*	*	(1,499)
	River Crossing Feasibility - Tow Industry	H	H	H	H	H	H	H	H	H
River Crossing Feasibility - Deep Draft	M	M	M	M	M	M	H	H	H	
Resource Inventory Potential for Impacts:										
E N V I R O N M E N T A L	<b>Land/Land Use:</b>	% TA	% TA	% TA	% TA	% TA	% TA	% TA	% TA	% TA
	Developed Land	3.9%	4.9%	3.6%	4.5%	4.6%	5.5%	2.9%	3.5%	2.8%
	Prime Farmland Soils	77.4%	75.9%	80.7%	79.4%	92.0%	78.2%	88.7%	87.8%	89.8%
	<b>Natural Resources:</b>	% TA	% TA	% TA	% TA	% TA	% TA	% TA	% TA	% TA
	Wetlands	60.2%	59.9%	57.6%	57.4%	57.1%	56.8%	54.2%	54.1%	53.2%
	100-year floodplain	62.5%	56.2%	61.7%	56.2%	60.1%	54.6%	47.7%	44.4%	48.4%
	<b>Waste Sites:</b>	#	#	#	#	#	#	#	#	#
	Solid Waste Facilities	1	2	1	2	1	2	2	3	2
	RCRA	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	State Hazardous Sites	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	1
LUST	1	1	1	1	1	1	0	0	0	
Active Facilities	6	6	7	7	10	10	4	4	5	
P U B L I C & A G E N C Y I N P U T	Public/Stakeholder Input on Corridor Alternative	L	L	L	L	L	L	H	H	H
	Agency Input on Corridor Alternative	M	M	M	M	M	M	M	M	M
% TA: Percent of total corridor alternative acreage. #: Number of a resource in corridor alternative. * Initial traffic modeling for these alternatives indicated ADT and VHT would be low and no further modeling was conducted. For purposes of the evaluation these alternatives were assumed to have similar ADT and VHT as alternatives SI, SJ, SK and SL.										

For the South Unit qualitative ranking matrix, *Table 5.4*, various factors necessitated some higher analysis. Cost estimates for the eighteen alternatives had a variance of 31+%. Several factors drove the variance including the Mississippi River crossing cost and the total length of the alignment, which was largely affected by its intersection with I-10. Capital cost estimates within 12% of the lowest cost estimate yielded a high ranking, 12% - 18% a medium ranking, and 18+% a low ranking. It was interpreted that six of the eighteen alternatives, using the Plaquemine crossing, would receive a high ranking for river crossing feasibility because of their full acceptability to the Coast Guard and both maritime industries. For the Red Eye and Missouri Bend crossing locations both were given medium rankings because of the mixed input from the maritime industries.



Evaluation Parameter		South Unit Corridor Alternatives								
		SJ	SK	SL	SM	SN	SO	SP	SQ	SR
		Estimated length (miles)								
		45.6	45.5	45.1	30.7	31.6	37.6	37.5	38.5	38.0
<b>E N G I N E E R I N G &amp;</b>	Estimated Capital Cost (Millions - \$2008)	\$1,577.2	\$1,612.2	\$1,406.2	\$1,791.1	\$1,756.5	\$1,828.5	\$1,843.1	\$1,794.5	\$1,623.7
	<b>Traffic &amp; Transportation Improvement:</b>									
	ADT at Mississippi River	22,589	22,589	22,589	38,883	38,947	38,883	38,883	38,883	38,883
	ADT west of I-10	5,157	5,157	4,106	20,006	20,006	5,157	5,157	5,157	5,157
	ADT north of LA 30	23,210	23,210	22,589	20,575	19,063	19,364	19,364	19,364	19,364
	Daily Reduction System Wide VHT	(1,499)	(1,499)	(1,499)	6,727	5,246	5,246	5,246	5,246	5,246
	River Crossing Feasibility - Tow Industry	H	H	H	M	M	M	M	M	M
River Crossing Feasibility - Deep Draft	H	H	H	H	H	H	H	H	H	
<b>Resource Inventory Potential for Impacts:</b>										
<b>E N V I R O N M E N T A L</b>	<b>Land/Land Use:</b>	% TA	% TA	% TA	% TA	% TA	% TA	% TA	% TA	% TA
	Developed Land	3.4%	3.4%	4.0%	4.0%	4.9%	3.7%	4.6%	4.5%	5.4%
	Prime Farmland Soils	88.9%	89.2%	88.3%	80.7%	79.4%	83.2%	82.2%	82.0%	81.0%
	<b>Natural Resources:</b>	% TA	% TA	% TA	% TA	% TA	% TA	% TA	% TA	% TA
	Wetlands	53.1%	52.8%	52.7%	61.6%	61.4%	59.2%	58.8%	59.0%	58.5%
	100-year floodplain	45.3%	47.4%	44.3%	62.1%	56.8%	61.4%	60.1%	56.8%	55.4%
	<b>Waste Sites:</b>	#	#	#	#	#	#	#	#	#
	Solid Waste Facilities	3	2	3	1	2	1	1	2	2
	RCRA	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	State Hazardous Sites	1	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0
LUST	0	0	0	1	1	1	1	1	1	
Active Facilities	5	8	8	6	6	7	10	7	10	
<b>P U B L I C &amp; A G E N C Y</b>	Public/Stakeholder Input on Corridor Alternative	H	H	H	L	L	L	L	L	L
	Agency Input on Corridor Alternative	M	M	M	M	M	M	M	M	M

% TA: Percent of total corridor alternative acreage. #: Number of a resource in corridor alternative.

South Unit Corridor Alternative	Evaluation Parameter									
	Estimated Capital Cost	Transportation Improvement	Crossing Feasibility	Developed Land	Farmland Soil	Wetlands	100-year floodplain	Waste Sites	Public/Stakeholder Input	Agency Input
	Rank	Rank	Rank	Rank	Rank	Rank	Rank	Rank	Rank	Rank
SA	M	M	M	H	M	L	L	H	L	M
SB	M	M	M	M	M	M	L	M	L	M
SC	M	L	M	H	L	L	L	M	L	M
SD	M	L	M	H	M	M	L	L	L	M
SE	L	L	M	M	L	L	L	L	L	M
SF	H	L	M	M	M	M	L	L	L	M
SG	H	L	H	H	L	M	H	H	H	M
SH	H	L	H	H	L	H	H	H	H	M
SI	L	L	H	H	L	M	H	H	H	M
SJ	M	L	H	H	L	H	H	M	H	M
SK	L	L	H	H	L	M	H	L	H	M
SL	H	L	H	H	L	H	H	L	H	M
SM	L	M	M	M	L	L	L	H	L	M
SN	L	M	M	M	M	L	L	M	L	M
SO	L	L	M	H	L	L	L	M	L	M
SP	L	L	M	M	L	L	L	L	L	M
SQ	L	L	M	H	L	L	L	L	L	M
SR	M	L	M	M	L	M	L	L	L	M



Developed land was less than 6% in any alternative but had some difference so alternatives under 4% were considered high rank and the remainder medium. Prime farmland soils are substantial in all alternatives and none received a ranking greater than medium. Alternatives with less than 80% prime farmland soil were ranked medium and all others low. Wetlands in all alternatives were similar but the range did facilitate a high ranking for the alternatives less than 55%, a medium ranking for alternatives 55% to 60% and a low ranking for those greater than 60%. Additionally, any alternative containing section S6 was lowered one rank because of the presence of the wetland mitigation banks.

One hundred year floodplains in all alternatives were comparable but the range did warrant some distinction so that alternatives with less than 49% received a high ranking, alternatives between 49% and 60% a medium ranking and alternatives over 60% a low ranking. Total waste sites across the alternatives have a variation of approximately 85%. Alternatives with waste sites within 15% of the lowest were ranked high, between 15% and 30% medium and greater than 30% low.

Public and stakeholder input resulted in a high or low ranking for alternatives dependent on the river crossing location. Specific public and/or stakeholder input generated a low ranking for alternatives using the S13 Missouri Bend or S14 Red Eye crossing due to concerns by the public. A high public and/or stakeholder input value was given to the alternatives using the S12 Plaquemine crossing because of positive feedback. Agency input was largely non-existent beyond the river crossing issues addressed during alternative refinement, so all alternatives were assigned a medium or neutral ranking.

#### 5.3.3.3. East Unit Corridor Alternatives

The East Unit quantification matrix is shown in Table 5.5. In general, all the alternatives have an overall homogeneity with the primary distinguisher being estimated capital cost and public/stakeholder input.

For the East Unit qualitative ranking matrix, *Table 5.6*, several parameters necessitated additional consideration. Cost estimates for the eight alternatives varied by as much as 29+%. Capital cost estimates were assigned three ranks, the lowest a high rank, those within 8% of the lowest a medium ranking; and those over 8% a low ranking. Developed land had a similar small percentage in all alternatives and all were given a high ranking. Prime farmland soils constitute a relevant portion of all alternative acreage but the limited percentage range of 32%-37% resulted in the three lowest ranked high and the remainder medium. Wetlands in all alternatives were similar, yielding a medium ranking for all alternatives. There are substantial 100-year floodplains in all alternatives with similar quantities so all were given a low rank. There are no waste sites in any East Unit alternative so all ranked high.





Table 5.5 East Unit Corridor Alternative Quantification Matrix									
Evaluation Parameter		East Unit Corridor Alternatives							
		EA	EB	EC	ED	EE	EF	EG	EH
		Estimated length (miles)							
		24.98	24.36	24.86	23.84	26.08	25.46	25.76	24.75
E N G I N E E R N I C E	Estimated Capital Cost (Millions - \$2008)	\$1,000.6	\$969.2	\$1,071.1	\$1,045.4	\$1,157.4	\$1,126.0	\$1,227.1	\$1,201.4
	<b>Traffic &amp; Transportation Improvement:</b>								
	ADT at Amite River	35,964	35,964	35,964	35,964	35,964	35,964	35,964	35,964
	ADT south of I-12	21,344	21,344	21,344	21,344	21,344	21,344	21,344	21,344
	Daily Reduction System Wide VHT	5,246	5,246	5,246	5,246	5,246	5,246	5,246	5,246
Resource Inventory Potential for Impacts:									
E N V I R O N M E N T A L	<b>Land/Land Use:</b>	% TA	% TA	% TA	% TA	% TA	% TA	% TA	% TA
	Developed Land	2.7%	2.5%	2.6%	2.4%	2.8%	2.6%	2.7%	2.5%
	Prime Farmland Soils	37.1%	32.4%	33.9%	31.6%	37.0%	34.8%	34.0%	31.8%
	<b>Natural Resources:</b>	% TA	% TA	% TA	% TA	% TA	% TA	% TA	% TA
	Wetlands	49.0%	49.8%	53.3%	52.9%	50.3%	51.1%	54.4%	54.1%
	100-year floodplain	80.4%	79.7%	82.6%	81.5%	80.1%	79.4%	82.3%	81.2%
	<b>Waste Sites:</b>	#	#	#	#	#	#	#	#
	Solid Waste Facilities	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	RCRA	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	State Hazardous Sites	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
LUST	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Active Facilities	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
P U B L I C	Public/Stakeholder Input on Corridor Alternative	M	L	M	L	M	L	M	L
	Agency Input on Corridor Alternative	M	M	M	M	M	M	M	M

% TA: Percent of total corridor alternative acreage. #: Number of a resource in corridor alternative.

Table 5.6 East Unit Corridor Alternative Qualitative Ranking Matrix								
Evaluation Parameter	East Unit Corridor Alternatives							
	EA	EB	EC	ED	EE	EF	EG	EH
	Rank	Rank	Rank	Rank	Rank	Rank	Rank	Rank
Estimated Capital Cost	H	H	M	M	L	L	L	L
Traffic & Transportation Improvement	L	L	L	L	L	L	L	L
Developed Land	H	H	H	H	H	H	H	H
Prime Farmland Soils	M	H	M	H	M	M	M	H
Wetlands	M	M	M	M	M	M	M	M
100-year floodplain	L	L	L	L	L	L	L	L
Waste Sites	H	H	H	H	H	H	H	H
Public/Stakeholder Input	M	L	M	L	M	L	M	L
Agency Input	M	M	M	M	M	M	M	M

Public controversy on a particular section common to four of the alternatives resulted in them being ranked low. Little or no public and stakeholder input on the other alternatives produced a medium ranking. Agency input was mainly non-existent beyond upland/wetland interface concerns addressed during alternative refinement, so all alternatives received a medium or neutral ranking.



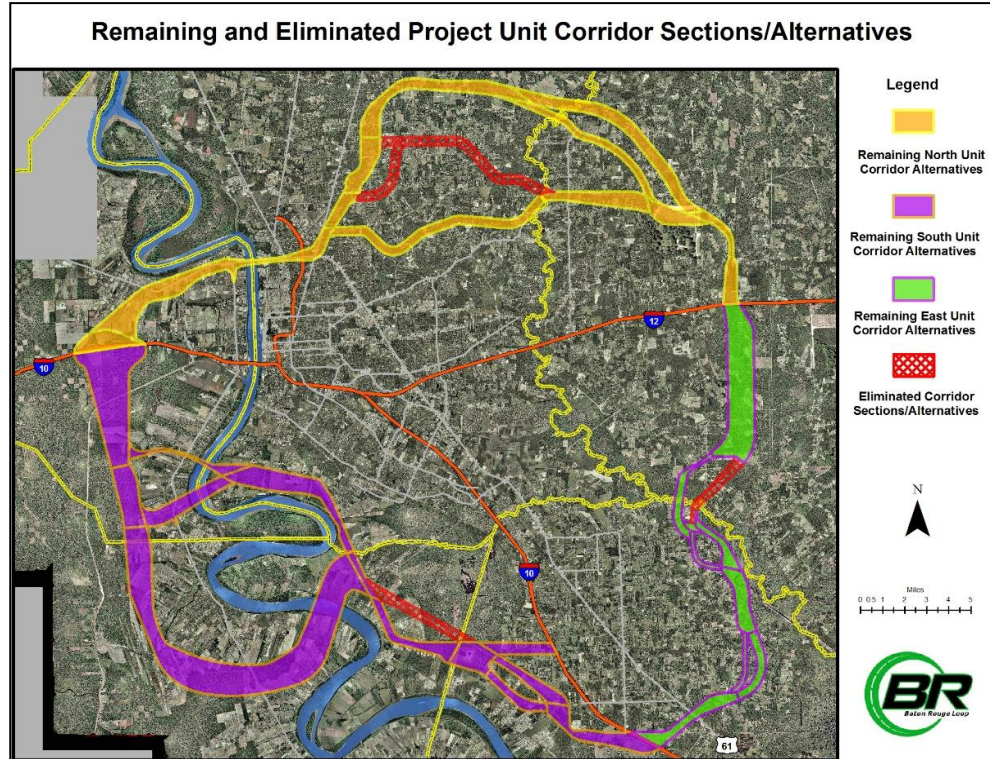
#### **5.4. Baton Rouge Loop Corridor Recommendation**

Based on an evaluation of capital cost, traffic, environmental resources, and agency and public input the Project Team has not been able to reach a consensus on a single Preferred Baton Rouge Loop Corridor at this time.

In the North Unit, several alternatives have comparable capital cost and environmental impact potential but they also have stakeholder and public input issues. The Project team is of the opinion that it would be appropriate to eliminate Corridor Alternatives NB and NC, because of the public and stakeholder input. It is recommended that the remaining three alternatives be carried forward for additional agency, public, and stakeholder input.

In the South Unit, the Project Team has been able to make a determination that one-half (9) of the alternatives should be eliminated from further consideration. The nine alternatives are recommended for removal due to the potential for significant environmental impacts and agency concerns resulting from the wetland mitigation banks in section S6. This determination leaves nine alternatives with three alternatives using each of the three Mississippi River crossing locations. The Project Team concludes these nine should be carried forward for additional agency, public, and stakeholder comment. The nine Corridor Alternatives for further consideration are SB, SD, SF, SH, SJ, SL, SN, SQ, AND SR.

In the East Unit, the Project Team recommends four Corridor Alternatives - EB, ED, EF and EH, be removed from further consideration principally as an outcome of public and stakeholder input. While the remaining alternatives do have some variation it is the opinion of the Project Team they should be carried forward for additional agency, public, and stakeholder comment. The four remaining and eliminated Unit Corridor Sections/Alternatives are shown in *Figure 5-1*.



**Figure 5-1: Remaining and Eliminated Unit Corridor Sections/Alternatives**