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Columbia, SC 29201

Date: October 7, 2005

In Reply Refer To:
HDA-SC

Dr. Wenonah Haire
Tribal Historic Preservation Officer
The Catawba Indian Nation
611 East Main Street
Rock Hill, SC 29730

Subject:: Project Scoping: Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for the Proposed
Northern Portion of Interstate 73 (I-73) in South Carolina.

Dear Dr. Haire:

The proposed I-73 project in South Carolina is currently being developed as two separate projects, a southern project and a northern project. The southern project will begin at I-95 and end near the Myrtle Beach/Conway, South Carolina area. The northern project will begin in the Hamlet/Rockingham, North Carolina area and end at I-95 in South Carolina. Both sections will be developed under separate EISs. Information on the project was sent to the Catawba Indian Nation (CIN) on October 13, 2004 and two face-to-face meetings have been held where the project was discussed (September 16, 2004 and February 11, 2005). The CIN indicated during the meetings that the Tribe would have an interest in the project and requested copies of studies that would be completed for the project. The southern project has progressed and potential corridors have been developed for that project. A preferred corridor has not yet been identified and the Draft EIS has not been issued. No cultural reports have been prepared for the project so far.

The Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) in conjunction with the South Carolina Department of Transportation (SCDOT) plans to begin preparation of an EIS on the northern project and will hold an initial scoping meeting on October 17, 2004. Knowing that the Catawba Indian Nation may have difficulty making the trip we wanted to make sure we provided you with the information that would be handed out at the meeting and give the Tribe the opportunity to provide us with feedback on the project. Avoidance of any known archaeological or cultural site is of utmost importance in the development of this project. Any information the Catawba Indian Nation may have concerning any Native American cultural properties in the project study area would be very helpful in the early development of this project. A cultural report will be prepared for the project and will be forwarded to your office for review and comment.