



GRADE-SEPARATED U-TURN PROGRAM NO NET LOSS COMPENSATORY REFORESTATION

FACT SHEET

OVERVIEW

The New Jersey Turnpike Authority is undertaking the Grade-Separated U-Turn Program to provide for the safe movement of maintenance and emergency service vehicles from the Delaware Memorial Bridge to just north of Interchange 5. The Program will construct seven new U-Turns to replace 23 existing cut-throughs in the median barrier.

One of the new U-Turns is planned within the boundaries of the Borough of Lawnside at Turnpike Milepost 29.1, located at the Essex Road Overpass (I-295 Exit 31).

The area associated with construction of the new U-Turn bridge includes existing forested land that is subject to the No Net Loss Compensatory Reforestation Act. The area of disturbance is no larger than is necessary to construct the U-Turn, as the Authority has taken every effort to reduce the impact to forested areas.

NO NET LOSS

Under the No Net Loss Compensatory Reforestation Act, New Jersey state entities are required to develop a plan for compensatory reforestation when trees are removed during development of projects involving one-half acre of existing forested land or more and land is owned or maintained by a state entity.

The goal of the reforestation plan is to ensure there is no net loss of existing forested areas.

NO NET LOSS AT MILEPOST 29.1

The Authority has explored three options to mitigate for the 1.1 acres at Milepost 29.1 that are subject to the No Net Loss Compensatory Reforestation Act. These options include:

- On-site reforestation which is not feasible due to site constraints
- Alternative site reforestation on public land within the Borough
- Monetary compensation provided to the NJ Department of Environmental Protection State Forestry Fund, which provides grants to municipalities for community forestry management plans

Upon review, the Authority has determined planting on-site is infeasible due to site constraints and design requirements. The program team also reviewed potential sites in Lawnside with Borough officials to determine whether nearby public land was suitable for off-site planting. The review concluded the alternative site locations were ineligible for replanting as they are active recreational areas or already forested areas.

PROPOSED REFORESTATION PLAN

As no appropriate on-site or alternate-site reforestation alternatives have been identified to satisfy the reforestation requirements, the Authority's proposed reforestation plan calls for a monetary contribution to be provided to the NJ Department of Environmental Protection Division of Parks and Forestry to be expended for reforestation by the division based on the advice from the Community Forestry Council and approval of the director of the division.

PUBLIC FORUM

Under the No Net Loss Compensatory Reforestation Act, a public forum is being held on January 28, 2025.

PLEASE MAIL COMMENTS BY MARCH 29, 2025 TO:

NEW JERSEY TURNPIKE AUTHORITY

1 TURNPIKE PLAZA, P.O. BOX 5042

WOODBIDGE, NJ 07095

OR E-MAIL TO Structuresdesign@njta.com

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