Environmental Assessment
Determinations and Compliance Findings for HUD-assisted Projects
24 CFR Part 58

Part A. General Project Information

1. **Project Name:** INFRA-STR-004
PR-122 Lajas-San Germán Connector
AC-012201

2. **Responsible Entity:** Puerto Rico Highway and Transportation Authority (PRHTA)

3. **Grant Recipient Name:** Puerto Rico Highway and Transportation Authority (PRHTA)

4. **State/Local Identifier:** Puerto Rico

5. **Preparer:**
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6. **Certifying Officer Name and Title:**

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7. **Consultant** (if applicable): Behar Ybarra & Associates LLC
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8. **Direct Comments to:** PRHTA at oea@act.pr.gov

9. **Project Location**:
The proposed project is located within the boundaries of the municipalities of Lajas and San Germán in the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico. The project begins at road PR-321, coordinates 18.058536, -67.045267 in the Municipality of Lajas and ends at road PR-166

(San Germán South Bypass), coordinates 18.076742, -67.034764 in the Municipality of San Germán.

The proposed project runs through the parcels 334-093-206-11, 334-000-007-02, 334-000-007-91, 334-000-007-86, and 334-074-201-54, in the direction of Lajas to San Germán. The proposed extension of PR-122 begins at the point of intersection with PR-321, at approximately 1.5 kilometers from the urban center of the Municipality of Lajas until the end of the existing segment of PR-122 in the El Retiro ward in the Municipality of San Germán. See Figure 1: Location: Aerial Map included in Appendix 1.

10. Description of the Proposed Project [24 CFR 50.12 & 58.32]**:**

The proposed action consists of extending the existing PR-122 Highway, known as Casto Perez Avenue, from its current intersection with the PR-321 highway in Lajas to its intersection with the eastern end of the PR-166 highway (San Germán South Bypass) in San Germán. The project estimated length is 2.7 kilometers. The existing PR-122 serves as an access to the Municipality of San Germán, connecting the Interstate PR-2, which is a principal arterial, with the existing PR-166 (minor arterial) at the El Retiro ward. See Figure 1: Location: Aerial Map.

The proposed route runs mostly parallel to road PR-101 and is approximately one kilometer (1 Km) to the east of it. On its trajectory, PR-122 passes between the El Retiro Community and a creek without name in San Germán, then it continues passing over the Maresúa creek toward to Lajas until crossing through Km 1.0 in road PR-321. The project estimated length is 2.7 kilometers. The topography of the property goes from flat to steep.

The main characteristics of the horizontal alignment of the proposed project are the following:

- Intersections: three (3)- one at the intersection with PR-321 (beginning of the project, 18.061792, -67.044106), one at level with the access to the El Retiro community (18.073803, -67.031883), and one at the end of the project with PR-166 (18.076303, -67.033911).
- Structures: four (4) – Bridge #1 over PR-321 (18.061778, -67.044081), three-cell box culvert over Maresúa creek (18.066825, -67.043719), Bridge #1A over historical drainage structures 6 and 7 to avoid affecting old train vestiges at approximately station 49 + 60 (18.068900, -67.034983), and Bridge #2 to the access road in the El Retiro community (18.072892, -67.031789)

The extension of Highway PR-122 will be designed to meet the requirements of an R-5 classification according to the Design Manual of the Puerto Rico Highway and Transportation Authority and will have a typical section similar to the existing Casto Pérez Avenue (PR-122) in San Germán that will provide four (4) lanes of 3.65 meters wide each, and will be divided by a concrete barrier or by a central island, depending on the corresponding section. In both cases, a safety strip will be left on each side of the central protection to comply with the minimum design standards established in the applicable local and federal standards. Additionally, a 2.40-meter shoulder will be provided on each side of the proposed road, of which 1.80 meters will be paved. The project entails a total of 79.86 acres including the right of way.

The project includes a new drainage system along the road, including cross drainage elements, and a box culvert at the Maresúa creek crossing to handle current runoff and allow for efficient stormwater removal across PR-122 road extension. The works to be performed along the Maresúa creek consists in the construction of a three-cell concrete box culvert, 73.94 meters long, with flared wingwalls. Each concrete cell will be 3.05 m wide by 3.05 m rise. Figure 2 included in Appendix 1 shows this area in a partial reproduction of the United States Geological Survey (USGS) Topographic Quadrangle of San Germán.

The project maintains the natural hydrological function of the watershed. The 1.09 km² contributing drainage area, mostly composed of mixed forest (≈ 70%) and hydrologic soil groups C and D, is preserved. Peak discharges were estimated using the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) TR-55 method following Department of Natural and Environmental Resources (DNER) guidelines, ensuring consistency with regional hydrologic conditions. No diversion, channelization, or impervious area increase outside the road alignment is proposed; hence, stormwater quantity and velocity outside the project limits will not be adversely affected.

The culvert design provides adequate conveyance capacity to avoid overtopping of the roadway during extreme flood events. Flood hazards are mitigated by the culvert's triple-cell configuration, which balances conveyance efficiency with minimized constriction. The structure complies with FEMA and Puerto Rico Planning Board (PRPB) criteria for floodway encroachment, maintaining the 100-year flood levels within regulatory limits.

The proposed design includes:

- A new drainage system along the road, including cross drainage elements and the use of a three-cell box culvert to preserve natural stream flow.
- Installation of a pool- dissipator to maintain natural flow and connectivity at the Maresúa Creek and to handle current runoff and allow for efficient stormwater

removal across PR-122 road extension. The pool-dissipator design will support stormwater infiltration and sediment reduction to protect wetland water quality.

- Construction phasing to allow for partial flow of Maresúa creek during activities.
- Implementation of erosion and sedimentation control Best Management Practices throughout the construction area to protect remaining wetlands from equipment, foot traffic, and debris during construction and revegetating.
- Restoration and revegetation of temporarily disturbed areas with wetland-specific plant species used to restore ecological function (native emergent vegetation) observed during the JD Study.
- Minimizing the construction footprint to limit wetland encroachment.

11. Statement of Purpose and Need for the Proposal:

The need for an alternative, resilient transportation corridor between San Germán and Lajas has been documented since 1968. The existing PR-101 is a steep, two-lane rural highway with limited capacity and multiple hazard-prone segments. The roadway is susceptible to flooding from Quebrada Maresúa and its tributaries, which routinely inundate low-lying areas during heavy rainfall events, interrupting mobility and isolating communities. As noted in prior assessments, "the Quebrada Maresúa and its tributaries flood low elevation points on the PR-101 highway during heavy rains, interrupting the passage of vehicles and the transit between Lajas and San Germán."

Over the last four decades, commercial, industrial, and residential growth in the region has significantly increased traffic demand, resulting in congestion, reduced travel reliability, and diminished emergency response capacity. PR-101 no longer provides adequate mobility for residents, workers, freight, or emergency services. The lack of a continuous north–south corridor also prevents PR-122 from fulfilling its intended regional function as a connector between PR-2 and Lajas.

The absence of a resilient, high-capacity route creates vulnerabilities that are inconsistent with CDBG-MIT goals, including:

- Limited redundancy in the transportation network
- High exposure to flood-related disruptions
- Reduced access for emergency vehicles during disaster events
- Constraints on economic activity and supply-chain movement

- Increased travel times and emissions due to congestion

These deficiencies demonstrate a clear need for a safer, more reliable, and hazard-resistant transportation corridor.

The purpose of the PR-122 Extension is to complete the missing segment between PR-166 in San Germán and PR-321 in Lajas, creating a continuous, resilient north–south corridor that improves mobility, enhances safety, and supports long-term regional resilience. The project will provide a direct link between PR-2 and Lajas, reduce travel times, and offer a reliable alternative to PR-101 during flood events or emergencies.

The project purpose aligns directly with CDBG-MIT program objectives by:

- Improving hazard resilience: Providing a transportation corridor less susceptible to flooding and capable of maintaining functionality during extreme weather events.

- Strengthening emergency response: Ensuring reliable access for ambulances, police, fire services, and evacuation traffic.

- Enhancing mobility and redundancy: Creating an alternative route that reduces dependence on PR-101 and improves regional network reliability.

- Supporting economic resilience: Facilitating the efficient movement of goods, workers, and tourists, thereby strengthening the region's economic stability.

- Reducing emissions and improving environmental performance: Shorter travel times and reduced congestion will lower fuel consumption and greenhouse gas emissions.

The PR-122 Extension is needed to address longstanding mobility, safety, and hazard-related deficiencies in the region. Its purpose is to create a resilient, efficient, and reliable transportation corridor that meets the CDBG-MIT program's objectives of reducing risk, improving infrastructure resilience, and supporting long-term economic and community stability.

12. Existing Conditions and Trends [24 CFR 58.40(a)]:

The proposed project area is located in the western region of Puerto Rico, between the municipalities of San Germán and Lajas. The corridor follows the partially constructed alignment of PR-122, extending from its current end point at PR-321 in Lajas toward its planned connection with PR-166 (San Germán South Bypass). The project consists of completing the remaining unbuilt section of PR-122, which was previously initiated but never finalized.

The project area is predominantly rural and undeveloped, characterized by:

- Flat to mildly rolling topography, with incremental elevations toward the south near San Germán

- Open agricultural lands, uncultivated fields, and pasture areas

- Secondary vegetation and disturbed grasslands

- Scattered rural residences along existing local roads

The proposed alignment runs roughly parallel to PR-101, approximately 1 kilometer east of that roadway. Along its path, the corridor passes between Comunidad El Retiro and an unnamed intermittent creek in San Germán, then continues toward Lajas, crossing PR-321 at km 1.0.

At the beginning of the 20th century, the project area formed part of the broader corridor used by the Compañía de los Ferrocarriles de Puerto Rico, which operated an island-wide rail system connecting coastal and inland municipalities. Although the exact alignment of the former tracks has since been removed or repurposed, portions of the landscape between San Germán and Lajas still reflect this historic transportation use through linear clearings, old embankments, and remnants of access paths. While no active rail infrastructure remains today, the historical presence of the railway contributes to the cultural and developmental context of the project area.

Historically, this region supported extensive agricultural activity, particularly sugarcane cultivation during the 19th and early 20th centuries. Remnants of former agricultural landscapes, such as abandoned fields, old access paths, and scattered structures are still visible. The broader San Germán area also contains former sugarcane and coffee plantation lands in varying states of preservation.

Today, agriculture remains present but reduced. Current land uses include:

- Pasture and livestock operations

- Small-scale crop cultivation (vegetables, fruits, melons, pineapples)

- Rural residential clusters

- Light commercial activity near PR-2 and PR-166

The project corridor itself remains undeveloped, with no existing roadway infrastructure except for isolated segments of the previously initiated PR-122 construction.

San Germán's economy has transitioned from agriculture to manufacturing, including electrical components, machinery, pharmaceuticals, textiles, and food products. Lajas maintains a strong agricultural and livestock sector, complemented by fishing and tourism, particularly in the La Parguera area.

Mobility between the two municipalities currently depends on:

- PR-2, a principal arterial

- PR-101 and PR-321, which provide local connectivity

Because PR-122 remains incomplete, there is no continuous north–south corridor between Lajas and San Germán aside from PR-2. This limits redundancy, increases travel times, and concentrates traffic on PR-2 for short-distance inter-municipal trips.

Current trends in the project area include:

- Gradual expansion of rural residential development along major roadways

- Continued agricultural use of open lands

- Commercial growth near PR-2 and PR-166

- Increased regional mobility needs due to economic activity in San Germán and tourism in Lajas

The partially constructed PR-122 corridor has remained unused for years, and the surrounding land has not undergone significant development, maintaining a predominantly rural character. Overall, the project area consists of undeveloped rural land, historically shaped by agriculture, with scattered residential uses and limited built infrastructure. The proposed action would complete the remaining unfinished segment of PR-122, improving connectivity between Lajas and San Germán while utilizing an alignment that has already been partially established.

13. Funding Information

Grant Number	HUD Program	Funding Amount
B-18-DP-72-0002	Community Development Block Grant – Mitigation (CDBG-MIT)	$8,285,284,000

14. Estimated Total HUD Funded Amount: $70,892,956.75.

15. Estimated Total Project Cost (HUD and non-HUD funds) [24 CFR 58.32(d)]:

Allocation	Amount
CDBG-MIT Funds	$70,892,956.75.

16. Part B. Compliance with 24 C.F.R. 50.4, 58.5, and 58.6 Laws and Authorities

COMPLIANCE FACTORS: Statutes, Executive Orders, and Regulations listed at 24 C.F.R. §58.5 and §58.6		**Compliance Determinations**
Are formal compliance steps or mitigation required?	Yes ☐ No ☒	
"No" *applies when compliance with the authority is achieved without adverse effects on the protected resource, without necessary mitigation or attenuation AND when no formal consultation, permit or agreement is required to establish compliance. In these situations, enter* ***"No"*** *in the STATUTORY WORKSHEET status column.* ***"Yes"*** *applies when project compliance with the authority requires formal consultation, a permit or agreement, OR when the proposal may have an adverse effect on the protected resources.* ***Part B*** *summarizes what additional steps or formal procedures must be completed prior to submitting a Request for Release of Funds (RROF) to HUD or to the State. Evidence of completion and implementation of the required procedures or mitigation must be retained in the project Environmental Review Record (ERR).*		
STATUTES, EXECUTIVE ORDERS, AND REGULATIONS LISTED AT 24 CFR 50.4 and 58.6		
16.1. Airport Hazards 24 CFR Part 51 Subpart D	Yes ☐ No ☒	The project is not located within an FAA-designated civilian airport Runway Protection Zone (RPZ), or Accident Potential Zone (APZ). The project is not located within 2,500 feet of a civil airport or 15, 000 feet of a military airport. The nearest civilian airport is the Eugenio Maria de Hostos in Mayaguez, and the nearest military airport is Luis Muñoz Marin. The project is 75,251 feet from the civilian airport and 376,441 feet from the military airport. The project is in compliance with 24 C.F.R. Part 51, Subpart D without further evaluation. Refer to Airports Map Zone, Figure 4 included in Appendix 1.
16.2. Coastal Barrier Resources Coastal Barrier Resources Act, as amended by the Coastal Barrier	Yes ☐ No ☒	This project is not located in a CBRS Unit. The project is located 30,897 feet north of the nearest Coastal Barrier Resource System, PR-65P. Therefore, the Project is in

Improvement Act of 1990 [16 USC 3501]		compliance with the Coastal Barrier Resources Act (CBRA), as amended by the Coastal Barrier Improvement Act (CBIA) of 1990 [16 U.S.C. § 3501]. Refer to Coastal Barrier Resource System Map, Figure 5 included in Appendix 1.
16.3. Flood Insurance Flood Disaster Protection Act of 1973 and National Flood Insurance Reform Act of 1994 [42 USC 4001-4128 and 42 USC 5154a]	Yes ☐ No ☒	As per FEMA's FIRM Panel 72000C1560J, effective November 18, 2009, and Panel Number 72000C1570H, dated April 19, 2005, this project is located within Zone X, outside the Special Flood Hazard Area (SFHA)/ 100-year floodplain. Therefore, the project does not require flood insurance or is excepted from flood insurance in accordance with the Flood Disaster Protection Act of 1973 and the National Flood Insurance Reform Act of 1994. Documentation demonstrating the location outside the SFHA has been included. Therefore, the project is in compliance with 42 U.S.C. §§ 4001-4128 and 42 U.S.C. § 5154a. Refer to Flood Insurance Rate Map, Figure 6 included in Appendix 1
17. STATUTES, EXECUTIVE ORDERS, AND REGULATIONS LISTED AT 24 CFR 50.4 & 58.5		
17.1. Clean Air Clean Air Act, as amended, particularly section 176(c) & (d); 40 CFR Parts 6, 51, 93	Yes ☐ No ☒	The Clean Air Act (CAA), as amended, establishes the federal framework for protecting and improving ambient air quality. The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has established National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS) for six criteria pollutants: carbon monoxide (CO), lead (Pb), nitrogen dioxide (NO_2), ozone (O_3), particulate matter with an aerodynamic diameter of 10 micrometers or less (PM_{10}), fine particulate matter with an

		aerodynamic diameter of 2.5 micrometers or less ($PM_{2.5}$), and sulfur dioxide (SO_2). The air quality evaluation for the Proposed Action considers: (1) the project location relative to federally designated nonattainment and maintenance areas; (2) existing regional air quality conditions; (3) changes in mobile-source emissions associated with the Proposed Action; (4) temporary construction-related emissions; and (5) the applicability of federal conformity requirements. **Air Quality Designation Status** Based on current EPA air quality designation information, the project area within the municipalities of San Germán and Lajas is not located within a federally designated nonattainment or maintenance area for an applicable NAAQS pollutant. The project location relative to applicable air quality designation areas is documented in Figure 7 of Appendix 1 and in the supporting documentation included in Appendix 3. Because the Proposed Action is outside applicable nonattainment and maintenance areas, the General Conformity requirements of 40 CFR Part 93, Subpart B, are not applicable to the Proposed Action. This determination is based on the geographic applicability of the General Conformity regulations and is separate from the project-specific evaluation of mobile-source and construction-related emissions presented below. **Regional Roadway Emissions Analysis**

		An Air Quality Impact Assessment was prepared to evaluate changes in mobile-source emissions associated with operation of the Proposed Action. The assessment constitutes a regional roadway emissions analysis and compares estimated on-road vehicle emissions under the Proposed Condition with emissions under the No Action condition. The analysis used traffic and transportation data developed for the project, including vehicle counts, roadway-link characteristics, mileage between intersections, average speeds, roadway grades, and modeled signalized-intersection delay times. EPA's Motor Vehicle Emission Simulator (MOVES) was used to estimate pollutant-specific motor-vehicle emission factors. The traffic activity data and roadway characteristics were then combined with the MOVES-derived emission factors to calculate daily and annual roadway emission estimates for the analyzed scenarios. The analysis estimated emissions of CO, NO_x, PM_{10}, $PM_{2.5}$, VOCs, and carbon dioxide equivalent (CO_2e) for the analytical period presented in the Air Quality Impact Assessment. Detailed model inputs, roadway-link assumptions, and calculations are included in the supporting appendices to the Air Quality Impact Assessment. The MOVES analysis estimates mobile-source emissions and emission rates. It does not, by itself, constitute atmospheric

		dispersion modeling and does not calculate receptor-level ambient pollutant concentrations. Accordingly, the results of the regional roadway emissions analysis are reported as total mass emissions, principally in tons per year (TPY), and are not directly compared numerically with concentration-based NAAQS expressed in ppm, ppb, or µg/m³. **Results of the Regional Emissions Analysis** The regional roadway emissions analysis indicates that the Proposed Condition results in increases in total roadway emissions for several evaluated pollutants relative to the No Action condition. The magnitude of the incremental change varies by pollutant and analysis year. For example, the analysis reports that the difference between the Proposed and No Action conditions declines substantially over time for CO, from approximately 1.200 TPY in the initial analysis year to approximately 0.152 TPY by 2040. Incremental VOC emissions similarly decline from approximately 0.229 TPY to approximately 0.100 TPY over the analytical period. Incremental PM_{10} and $PM_{2.5}$ emissions remain comparatively small, generally on the order of approximately 0.004 to 0.006 TPY and 0.003 to 0.005 TPY, respectively, depending on the analysis year. The analysis also indicates that NO_x differences vary over the analytical period. In certain years, the Proposed Condition produces lower estimated NO_x emissions than the No Action condition, while in later

		years small increases are projected. These trends reflect changes incorporated into the emissions analysis, including vehicle technology, fleet turnover, emission controls, traffic activity, and operating conditions. The reported emissions estimates quantify the total mass of pollutants emitted from roadway mobile sources. They do not represent ambient pollutant concentrations at nearby receptors. Accordingly, an increase in TPY emissions under the Proposed Condition does not, by itself, establish or predict a violation of a concentration-based NAAQS. The significance of the emissions results is evaluated in the context of the project area's current attainment status, the magnitude of the incremental emissions changes, existing regional air quality conditions, the nature of the project, and applicable federal air quality requirements. **Evaluation Relative to the NAAQS** The NAAQS are ambient concentration standards expressed in units such as ppm, ppb, or µg/m³ and include pollutant-specific averaging periods and statistical forms. The regional roadway emissions analysis, by contrast, estimates total pollutant mass emissions in TPY. Therefore, the emissions inventory results are not equivalent to ambient concentrations and are not represented as receptor-level predictions of 1-hour, 8-hour, 24-hour, or annual pollutant concentrations.

		The Air Quality Impact Assessment does not rely on MOVES as a dispersion model and does not represent the MOVES-derived emissions estimates as direct predictions of ambient pollutant concentrations. Rather, the analysis evaluates the relative change in mobile-source emissions between the No Action and Proposed conditions. Based on the project area's location outside applicable nonattainment and maintenance areas, the comparatively small incremental changes in criteria-pollutant and precursor emissions identified in the regional roadway analysis, and the absence of a new major stationary industrial emission source, the Proposed Action is not expected to cause or contribute to a violation of an applicable NAAQS or result in significant long-term degradation of regional air quality. This conclusion recognizes that the Proposed Condition increases total roadway emissions for certain pollutants relative to the No Action condition. The environmental finding is therefore not based on an assertion that project emissions are zero or universally lower than No Action emissions. Rather, it is based on the magnitude and context of the projected changes, the area's air quality designation status, the nature of the emissions sources, and the applicable regulatory framework. **Construction-Phase Air Quality Effects** Construction activities will generate temporary emissions from nonroad diesel equipment, haul trucks, worker vehicles,

		earthmoving operations, excavation, grading, material handling, exposed soils, and other construction activities. Principal pollutants may include NO_x, CO, PM_{10}, $PM_{2.5}$, VOCs, diesel particulate matter, and fugitive dust. These emissions will be temporary and will vary spatially and temporally as construction progresses along the project corridor. Construction-related emissions will be minimized through implementation of the following enforceable environmental commitments: • Water or other approved dust-control methods shall be applied as necessary during clearing, grading, excavation, earthmoving, and other dust-generating activities. • Exposed soils and disturbed areas shall be stabilized or otherwise managed as soon as practicable when active construction is not occurring. • Trucks transporting soil, aggregate, debris, or other loose materials capable of generating fugitive dust shall be covered or otherwise secured during transport, as appropriate. • Track-out of soil and sediment onto public roadways shall be minimized through stabilized construction entrances, wheel-cleaning measures, sweeping, or equivalent controls. • Open burning of construction debris or project-generated waste shall be

		prohibited except where separately authorized under applicable law. • Construction equipment and trucks shall be maintained in proper operating condition. • Unnecessary idling of diesel-powered equipment and trucks shall be minimized, except where idling is required for safety, operational, maintenance, or manufacturer-specified purposes. • To the maximum extent practicable, EPA-certified Tier 4 or cleaner nonroad diesel equipment shall be used for major construction equipment categories where commercially available and compatible with project requirements. • Construction sequencing and equipment placement shall be managed, where practicable, to minimize prolonged simultaneous operation of multiple high-emitting equipment units near sensitive receptors. • Complaints concerning construction-related dust or exhaust shall be documented, evaluated, and addressed through appropriate corrective measures when project activities are determined to be the source of a substantiated air quality concern. **Controlled Blasting** Certain project segments may require controlled blasting because of subsurface or geologic conditions. Blasting may generate short-term and localized

		emissions of fugitive dust, particulate matter, and combustion-related gases. Where blasting is required, activities shall comply with applicable federal and Puerto Rico requirements, approved project specifications, and any required blasting plan or permit conditions. Appropriate dust-control, debris-management, exclusion-zone, safety, and post-blast measures shall be implemented. Additional blasting requirements are addressed in the Explosive and Flammable Hazards section and in Section 33, Mitigation Measures and Environmental Commitments. **General Conformity** EPA's General Conformity regulations are codified at 40 CFR Part 93, Subpart B and apply to qualifying federal actions in areas designated as nonattainment or maintenance for applicable NAAQS pollutants. Based on current EPA designation information, the project area in San Germán and Lajas is outside applicable nonattainment and maintenance areas. Accordingly, General Conformity requirements under 40 CFR Part 93, Subpart B, do not apply to the Proposed Action. This determination is based on the geographic applicability of the General Conformity regulations and does not depend on characterizing the MOVES emissions inventory as ambient concentration modeling. **Conclusion**

		The regional roadway emissions analysis indicates that the Proposed Condition increases total mobile-source emissions for several pollutants relative to the No Action condition, although the magnitude of the incremental changes in criteria-pollutant and precursor emissions is comparatively small and generally declines over time for several pollutants. The emissions analysis quantifies total roadway pollutant mass emissions and does not represent receptor-level ambient concentrations. Accordingly, the analysis does not rely on MOVES as a dispersion model or claim that MOVES directly predicts compliance with 1-hour, 8-hour, 24-hour, or annual NAAQS concentration limits. Based on the project area's location outside applicable nonattainment and maintenance areas, the magnitude and context of the projected mobile-source emissions changes, the nature of the Proposed Action, and implementation of enforceable construction air quality controls, the Proposed Action is not expected to cause or contribute to a violation of an applicable NAAQS or result in significant long-term degradation of regional air quality. General Conformity requirements under 40 CFR Part 93, Subpart B, do not apply because the Proposed Action is outside applicable nonattainment and maintenance areas. Temporary construction emissions will be minimized through the environmental commitments identified herein and through

		compliance with applicable Puerto Rico air pollution control requirements. See Appendix 3 for the Air Quality Impact Assessment and supporting air quality designation documentation. See Figure 7 in Appendix 1 for the project location relative to applicable air quality designation areas. See Section 33 for enforceable mitigation measures and environmental commitments.
17.2. Coastal Zone Management Coastal Zone Management Act, sections 307(c) & (d)	Yes ☐ No ☒	The project is located 25,258 feet from the nearest Coastal Zone Management Area and is not located within a Coastal Zone as defined in the state Coastal Management Program. Based on the Puerto Rico Coastal Zone Management Program (PRPB), the project is located outside the designated Coastal Zone boundary. Therefore, the project is in compliance with the Coastal Zone Management Act, sections 307(c) and (d). Refer to CZMA map, Figure 8 included in Appendix 1.
17.3. Contamination and Toxic Substances 24 CFR Part 50.3(i) & 58.5(i)(2)	Yes ☐ No ☒	The project site was evaluated for potential contamination by conducting a field inspection on December 18, 2022, to identify any onsite hazards including, but not limited to, soil staining, above ground storage tanks, signs of underground storage tanks, odors, hazardous debris, etc. The site inspection did not identify any onsite hazards. The review of federal and state databases, field observations, and historical aerials found no Environmentally Recognized Conditions (ERCs) within the project corridor.

		The assessment was performed to identify any potential contamination and that it "focused on detecting those sites in which land uses may have the potential of finding evidence of toxic pollutant released into the environment." No NPL, RCRA CORRACTS, TSD facilities, or hazardous releases were identified within or adjacent to the ROW. No Phase II investigation is recommended; thus, no significant contamination concerns the project. In addition, a desktop review of EPA databases, NEPAssist, and other sources was conducted to determine if the project site was located near dump sites, junk yards, landfills, hazardous waste sites, or industrial sites, including USEPA National Priorities List Sites (Superfund sites), CERCLA or state-equivalent sites, RCRA Corrective Action sites with release(s) or suspected release(s) requiring clean-up action and/or further investigation. The NEPAssist database was reviewed to identify EPA facilities within 3,000 feet of the project site. A total of twenty-one (21) sites were identified. The distribution of registered places is among RCRA, NPDES, ICIS-AIR, TRI and Brownfields (ACRES) facilities and some of which are co-located: o AC-010118 Pav Reh Safety Improv PR 101 Km 0.0 @ 10.0 San Germán. Registry ID: 110071709513. Address: Carretera PR-101 Km 0.0 To Km 10.0, San Germán, PR 00683. NPDES facility, no violations identified. At 2,376 feet. o Pavement Rehabilitation and Safety Improvements, PR-101, From Km 0.0 To Km

		10.0. Registry ID: 110071662085. Address: Carretera PR-101 Km 0.0 To Km 10.0, San Germán, PR 00683. NPDES facility, no violations identified. At 2,376 feet. o WALLACE SILVERSMITHS DE PR, LTD Registry ID: 110067184424. Coordinates: 18.0767, -67.0283. Address: El Retiro Industrial Park Street B, San Germán, PR 00683. NPDES facility, no violations identified. At 2,245 feet. o WALLACE SILVERSMITHS DE PR, LTD. Registry ID: 110071357883. Coordinates: 18.077279, -67.029145. Address: El Retiro Industrial Park, Street B, SAN Mare, PR 00683. NPDES facility, Significant/Category I Noncompliance. At 1,921 feet. o KMART #3896. Registry ID: 110004893848. Coordinates: 18.079932, -67.03508. Address: Ave Casto Perez Int Carr 2, San Germán, PR 00683. RCRA facility, no violation identified. At 1,164 feet. o INTERAMERICAN UNIV SAN GERMAN. Registry ID: 110007810431. Coordinates: 18.080442, -67.036833. Address: CALLE LUNA, SAN GERMAN, PR 00683. RCRA facility, no violation identified. At 1,524 feet. o PR Industrial Development Co. Registry ID: 110007820563. Coordinates: 18.078796, -67.030578. Address: RD 102 KM 33.2, SAN GERMAN, PR 00683. RCRA facility, no violation identified. At 1,722 feet. o TEXACO PR INC SAN GERMAN SS. Registry ID: 110007821697. Coordinates: 18.077714, -67.026969. Address: PR-102 KM 33.6, SAN GERMAN, PR 00683. RCRA facility, no violation identified. At 2,866 feet.

		o Pace Analytical Inc. Registry ID: 110007806320. Coordinates: 18.075618, -67.027181. Address: B & C, SAN GERMAN, PR 00683. RCRA facility, no violation identified. At 2,665 feet. o Wallace Silversmiths De Puerto Rico Ltd. Registry ID: 110000580853. Coordinates: 18.077278, -67.029144. Address: El Retiro Industrial Park Calle B, SAN GERMAN, PR 00683. RCRA facility, no violation identified. TRI facility, Toxics Release Inventory Last Reported for 2007. At 1,961. o GE Industrial Of PR, LLC (Caribe GE). Registry ID: 110007807150. Coordinates: 18.075983, -67.026226. Address: EL RETIRO INDUSTRIAL PARK ST B, SAN GERMAN, PR 00683. RCRA facility, no violation identified. TRI facility, Toxics Release Inventory Last Reported for 2016. ICIS-Air facility, Permanently Closed. NPDES facility, Terminated. At 2,978 feet o Old Market Plaza. Registry ID: 110017614205. Coordinates: 18.08131, -67.04141. Address: 96 Interamericana Ave, San German, PR 00683. RCRA facility, no violation identified. At 2,993 feet. o Pep Boys Manny Moe & Jack The 907. Registry ID: 110004891706. Coordinates: 18.052446, -67.0491. Address: PR-122 KM 1.1, San German, PR 00683. RCRA facility no violations identified. At 2,741 feet. o 1P. ACRES Property ID: 150281. Coordinates: 18.0808333, -67.0408333 Address: PR 102 KM. 32.2 Interamerican Univ

		Ave, San Germán, PR 00683. There are no current cleanup activities. At 2,579 feet. o 2P. ACRES Property ID: 150282. Coordinates: 18.0784451, -67.0412752 Address: PR 102 KM 28.1 Maresúa San Germán, PR 00683. There are no current cleanup activities. At 2,344 feet. o 3P. ACRES Property ID: 150283. Coordinates: 18.0808333, -67.04083330000003. Address: #22 Interamerican University Ave San Germán, PR 00683. There are no current cleanup activities. At 2,579 feet. o 5P. ACRES Property ID: 150285. Coordinates: 18.0808333, -67.0408333. Address: PR 122 Angel Casto Perez Ave San Germán, PR 00683. There are no current cleanup activities. At 2,579 feet. o SG-0047 (2H) Abandoned House ACRES Property ID: 149802. Coordinates: 18.0808333, -67.0408333000003. Address: Km 31.8, Hm. 8 at the Interamerican University Avenue (Pueblo Central), San Germán, PR 00683. There are no current cleanup activities. At 2,579 feet. o SG-0080 (2H) Abandoned House ACRES Property ID: 149804. Coordinates: 18.0808333, -67.0408333. Address: Rama Street (Pueblo Oriental), San Germán, PR 00683. There are no current cleanup activities. At 2,579 feet. o SG-0082 (2H) Abandoned House ACRES Property ID: 149803. Coordinates: 18.0808333, -67.0408333. Address: 25 Interamerican University Avenue San

		Germán, PR 00683. There are no current cleanup activities. At 2,579 feet. o SG-0084 (7H) Abandoned House. ACRES Property ID: 149806. Coordinates: 18.0808333, -67.04083330000003. Address: 22 Ruiz Belvis Street (Pueblo Central) San Germán, PR 00683. There are no current cleanup activities. At 2,938 feet. Almost all appear to be in regulatory compliance with no documented violations, enforcement actions, or unresolved compliance issues noted in available EPA records. Just one site, Wallace Silversmiths De PR, LTD has Administrative Noncompliance, however, based on available environmental compliance data, no contamination concerns associated with these nearby facilities are anticipated to impact the proposed project. No adverse effects on the project site are expected due to the presence or proximity of these regulated facilities. Refer to the ECHO Reports included in Appendix 4. Radon is a naturally occurring radioactive gas that can accumulate in enclosed structures and pose a health risk. According to radon potential mapping developed by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Puerto Rico is generally classified as a low radon potential area (Zone 3). The proposed project involves outdoor transportation infrastructure improvements and does not include construction of habitable buildings where radon accumulation could occur. Therefore, radon exposure risks associated

		with the project are negligible and no mitigation measures are required. An asbestos and lead based paint study was conducted in March 2025 on seven (7) structures located in Comunidad El Retiro. Three (3) structures are being used as living spaces, three (3) are used as storage and one (1) is used as a gazebo. Ceramic substrates in the bathroom of one of the structures used for storage tested positive for lead. The identified painted surfaces may contain levels of lead below 1.0 mg/cm2, which could create lead dust, or lead contaminated soil hazards if the paint is turned into dust by abrasion, scraping, or sanding. If demolition, or renovation activities, are conducted in the nearest future it is recommended to establish a lead hazard control strategy that will account for the potential LBP risks present in the site. Out of the seven (7) structures, three (3) of them had no suspected materials observed and accordingly, no samples were collected. Twenty-eight (28) samples were collected from suspected material located in the other four (4) structures. Asbestos fibers above 1% area were not detected in any of the samples collected and analyzed. Therefore, the project is in compliance with 24 C.F.R. § 50.3(i) and § 58.5(i)(2). Refer to Contamination and Toxic Substances, Figure 9 included in Appendix 1. Refer to ECHO Reports, Radon Memorandum and ACM/LBP study included in Appendix 4.
17.4. Endangered Species	Yes No	The proposed PR-122 Extension Project constitutes a federal undertaking subject to

Endangered Species Act of 1973, particularly section 7; 50 CFR Part 402	☒ ☐	review under Section 7 of the Endangered Species Act (ESA) and its implementing regulations (50 CFR Part 402), as required by 24 CFR 58.5(e). Accordingly, the project's potential effects on federally listed threatened and endangered species and designated critical habitat were evaluated using the best available scientific and regulatory information, including the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) Information for Planning and Consultation (IPaC) system, field surveys, and coordination with the Puerto Rico Department of Natural and Environmental Resources (DNER). Based on the official IPaC species list (updated December 22, 2025), the project area overlaps with the potential range of the following listed species: • Puerto Rican Boa (Chilabothrus inornatus) • Puerto Rican Nightjar (Antrostomus noctitherus) • Yellow-shouldered Blackbird (Agelaius xanthomus) • Puerto Rican Skink (Spondylurus nitidus) • Palo de Rosa (Ottoschulzia rhodoxylon) A review of habitat characteristics within the project's Area of Potential Effect (APE), supported by the Flora and Fauna Study (Appendix 6), indicates that the corridor is primarily composed of disturbed lands, secondary vegetation, and previously altered areas associated with agricultural

		use and existing infrastructure. These conditions limit the availability of high-quality habitat for most listed species within the direct impact footprint. • Avian species (Nightjar and Blackbird): No individuals or active nesting areas were documented during field surveys. Suitable habitat for the Puerto Rican Nightjar exists in nearby undisturbed forested areas but is limited within the project footprint. The updated project alignment no longer overlaps with critical habitat designated for the Yellow-shouldered Blackbird. • Puerto Rican Boa: Although not observed during surveys, suitable edge habitat and vegetative cover indicate potential transient use. Direct impacts are expected to be minimal and avoidable with implementation of conservation measures. • Puerto Rican Skink: Suitable microhabitats such as leaf litter and rocky substrates may occur; however, field surveys did not confirm its presence within the APE. Additionally, although proposed critical habitat may overlap the broader project area, it has not been finalized and therefore does not constitute designated critical habitat under ESA Section 7 at this time. • Palo de Rosa: No individuals were identified within the construction limits. The species occurs regionally, but existing land use conditions

		(previous agriculture and disturbance) substantially reduce the likelihood of occurrence within the project footprint. Potential project impacts are primarily limited to temporary disturbance, minor vegetation clearing, and localized increases in noise during construction. These effects are not expected to result in significant habitat loss, fragmentation, or direct mortality, nor to adversely affect the viability of listed species, given the limited ecological value of the impacted areas and the implementation of avoidance and minimization measures. Based on the project design and implementation of conservation measures, the following effect determinations were made: • Puerto Rican Boa, Puerto Rican Nightjar, Yellow-shouldered Blackbird: May affect, not likely to adversely affect (NLAA) • Puerto Rican Skink and Palo de Rosa: May affect, not likely to adversely affect (NLAA) Avoidance and minimization measures include, but are not limited to: • Pre-construction surveys during nesting season (April–July) for Puerto Rican Nightjar and other avian species • Immediate coordination with USFWS if listed species or active nests are identified

		• Implementation of USFWS conservation measures for the Puerto Rican Boa • Worker environmental awareness training • Limiting vegetation clearing to the minimum necessary footprint • Implementation of erosion and sediment control BMPs to protect adjacent habitats • Revegetation of disturbed areas with native species to restore habitat function An amendment to the informal consultation was submitted to USFWS on February 19, 2026, due to refinement of the project footprint and updated species lists. In a concurrence letter dated April 23, 2026 (Appendix 5), the USFWS confirmed that: • The NLAA determination for the Puerto Rican Boa and Puerto Rican Nightjar remains valid • The Service concurs with the NLAA determination for Palo de Rosa with implementation of BMPs • The project no longer affects Yellow-shouldered Blackbird critical habitat • No effects determination is required for the Puerto Rican Skink's proposed critical habitat (not yet designated) • The recommended conservation measures and BMPs are sufficient to avoid adverse effects The USFWS concluded that the requirements of Section 7 of the Endangered Species Act have been satisfied, provided that the

		project is implemented as described and mitigation measures are followed. Therefore, the project is in full compliance with 24 CFR 58.5(e) and the Endangered Species Act of 1973 (16 U.S.C. 1531 et seq.), and no further consultation is required unless project conditions change, new information becomes available, or new species are listed that may be affected. Refer to the USFWS concurrence letter and consultation materials in Appendix 5, the Flora and Fauna Study in Appendix 6, and Figure 10 in Appendix 1. Refer to Appendix 7 for the Study to Determine the Presence of Yellow-Shouldered Blackbird.
17.5. Explosive and Flammable Hazards 24 CFR Part 51 Subpart C	Yes ☒ No ☐	The project will create a corridor that will increase effectiveness by providing better strategic highway network mobility and accessibility for people and freight, however, does not include development, construction or rehabilitation that would increase residential density. The project will not require the installation of aboveground storage tanks (ASTs). A site visit was performed on December 18, 2022, by Miguel A. Perez Correa P.E. of Behar Ybarra & Associates (see Appendix 2). No evidence of explosive or flammable hazards was observed. However, based on the results of the geotechnical studies performed so far, the use of explosives would be necessary in some portions of Zones IIA & IIB (weathered and partly weathered rocks) since conventional units are capable of stripping some of the IIA zone, but causing them

		extraordinary wear and tear. Due to the location of the Proposed Action and its surroundings, no impact on human health or the environment is expected. The use and management of explosives is highly regulated practice that would only be performed by qualified persons with the necessary safety training as required by the DNER permit conditions which include notification to nearby residents and the use of seismographic equipment to document that vibrations resulting from the use of explosives does not affect nearby structures. The protocols included for the Proposed Action will ensure that threatened and/or endangered species will not be impacted, especially during their breeding season. Use of explosives for the construction of the roadway corridor will be controlled so that no adverse impact is caused to human health or the environment. Since the Proposed Action earthwork related activities exceed the threshold value of 5,000 cubic meters, a Single Incidental Operation Permit must be secured from the 50 Environmental Assessment for the Construction of PR-10 DNER. The permit application would be required to indicate if the use of explosives is needed as part of the Proposed Action construction activities and must include a copy of the geotechnical soil survey report. The contractor will be required among other conditions to monitor the use of explosives using seismographs. The results of the monitoring should be reported to the agency and would serve to document that no damage was caused to nearby

		structures and the environment. The use and handling of explosives require a permit from the Police Department. Personnel in charge of the use of explosives for the Proposed Action will comply with the following state/federal regulations: ● Regulation for the Administration, Application and Supervision of the Puerto Rico Explosive Law (September 11, 1970) ● Applicable requirements of the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) and the Mine Safety and Health Administration (MSHA) The PRHTA Standard Specifications for Road and Bridge Construction (2005) regulates the use of explosives by contractors in a highway construction project. Article 107.12 of the General Provisions section addresses the use of explosives. Other controls are established in Specifications 203-3.01(d)(2) and 203-3.02(f) regarding blasting operations and the use of explosives in the excavation phase of the project. Facilities that manage hazardous waste are regulated under the provisions of 40 CFR Parts 260 through 265 of the Resource Conservation Recovery Act (RCRA). These regulations, among other things, require the owner/operator of such a facility to assess the management of the chemicals substances whose use may result in the generation of wastes that may be characterized as Hazardous Wastes (HW) as per the results of their chemical testing in a certified laboratory. If testing or knowledge of waste results in the characterization of the

		wastes as HW, those wastes shall be handled, managed, and disposed of only at approved EPA/DNER facilities. Also, if certain minimum threshold monthly HW generation rates are met, the facility must file for and obtain an EPA RCRA Waste Generator number, which is used as an identifier of the facility for regulatory purposes. The facility ID is then entered into one of various databases maintained by EPA and is required to be used in the manifest document that is prepared by the generator and accompany the waste until reaching its final disposal site. Standards constructions, safety practices and applicable state and federal regulations will be followed to minimize any risk related to fuel handling during construction activities. Therefore, the Project is in compliance with the 24 C.F.R. Part 51 Subpart C. See Figure 11 AST Map included in Appendix 1 and Field Visit Report included in Appendix 2
17.6. Farmlands Protection Farmland Protection Policy Act of 1981, particularly sections 1504(b) and 1541; 7 CFR Part 658	Yes ☐ No ☒	The proposed project has a total footprint of approximately 68.44 acres. According to the 2020 U.S. Census Bureau Urban Area Map, the project area is located within a designated urbanized area. Under 7 C.F.R. § 658.2(a), land within an officially designated urban area is not subject to the Farmland Protection Policy Act (FPPA). A review of the USDA Web Soil Survey (WSS) indicates that within the project footprint: - 11.4% is classified as Farmland of Statewide Importance - 5.5% is classified as Prime Farmland

		- 83.1% is classified as Non-Prime Farmland Although some soil units within the project area qualify as prime or statewide-important farmland, the FPPA only applies to farmland that is not already committed to urban development. The project area lies within a Census-designated urbanized area and contains only a limited percentage of soils with agricultural potential, none of which are currently, or foreseeably used for agricultural production. Therefore, the site is exempt from FPPA requirements. In coordination with the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS), a Farmland Conversion Impact Rating (Form AD-1006) was completed to document the evaluation. NRCS reviewed the project footprint, the Farmland Classification Map, and the 2020 Census Urban Area Map, and in a letter dated August 2, 2024, concluded that: "Although the area of interest includes land classified as prime farmland, it is located within a designated urban area based on the 2020 Census Map. Therefore, this area is not subject to the Farmland Protection Policy Act (FPPA)." The completed AD-1006 will be submitted to NRCS for recordkeeping of agricultural lands converted, once the EA is approved. Therefore, the project is in compliance with the Farmland Protection Policy Act of 1981, particularly sections 1504(b) and 1541; 7 C.F.R. Part 658."

		Refer to Figure 12: Farmland Protection Map in Appendix 1, and USDA-NRCS consultation in Appendix 8.
17.7. Floodplain Management Executive Order 11988, particularly section 2(a); 24 CFR Part 55	Yes ☐ No ☒	According to the FEMA Advisory Base Flood Elevation Map (ABFE) for Puerto Rico (FEMA Region II Hub (arcgis.com)) effective date 4/13/2018, the project is located in Zone X. outside of the 0.2 % Annual Chance Flood area. Preliminary FIRM information was not available for the area and not considered in the review. As the project site is not located within the FEMA-designated Special Flood Hazard Areas for the 1 percent (100-year) or 0.2 percent (500-year) flood zones, it is not classified as being within the floodplain. The proposed project is not a critical action since there is no risk of flooding that could cause the potential loss of life, injury to people, or damage to properties. Since the scope of work will not undergo activities within a floodplain, the project does not require compliance with 8-step decision-making at 24 C.F.R. § 55.20 or the 5-step decision-making at 24 C.F.R. § 55.12(a). The project is in compliance with the HUD Floodplain Management Regulations and the Executive Order 11988. Refer to Figure 13: Advisory Base Flood Elevation Map and Figure 14: Preliminary Flood Insurance Rate Map included in Appendix 1.
17.8. Historic Preservation	Yes ☒ No ☐	The project was assessed for its potential effects on identified historic properties. This assessment considered direct, indirect, and

National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, particularly sections 106 and 110; 36 CFR Part 800		cumulative impacts on the integrity and significance of the properties. The project site is not located in a historic district. Archaeologists Jaqueline López (SOI-Qualified Archaeologist) performed an ARCHAEOLOGICAL RECONNAISSANCE SURVEY PHASES IA-IB on August 16, 2017. The study concluded that the presence of old railway culverts and other related structures, as evidenced in the on-site documentary research, may be affected. Equally, some seemed to be in the direct footprint of the proposed project and will surely be directly affected. Consultation with the State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) and other consulting parties was conducted to discuss the findings and potential impacts. The PR-122 Extension Project proposed the extension of the existing PR-122 from the intersection of road PR-166 in San Germán to PR-321 in Lajas. Part of the proposed project runs through currently unoccupied land that once served as a route for the Tren de Circunvalación (Circumvallation Train) that joined the cities of San Juan and Ponce along the North, West, and South coasts of Puerto Rico. The train ruins consist of abandoned drainage structures, several of which are clogged and non-functional. In SHPO's letter dated April 23, 2021, it was stated that the Tren de Circumvalación is a property eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places and that the implementation of the proposed undertaking meets the criteria of adverse

		effect by causing damage/destruction to the historic property and that further consultation would be needed to develop and evaluate alternatives or modifications to the undertaking that could avoid, minimize or mitigate adverse effects on historic properties, as per 36 CFR 800.6. In addition, the letter advises that PRHTA will need to notify the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation of the adverse effect and include supporting documentation. In response to the letter from SHPO dated April 23, 2021, an Archaeological Phase II (Plan de Documentación y Conservación Arqueológica & Medidas de Mitigación a Recursos Arqueológicos was submitted on August 15, 2023, conducted by Archaeologists Virginia Rivera Calderon (SOI-Qualified Archaeologist). On October 18, 2023, PRHTA submitted the "Medidas de Mitigación de Recursos Arqueológicos del Tren de Circunvalación", prepared by Behar Ybarra & Associates, LLC, the current project designers. This document is submitted as an additional annex to Archaeological Phase II, outlining potential mitigation measures to minimize the adverse impact on the structures identified in the project. As part of the evaluation carried out in the Documentation and Conservation Plan for the project, a total of seventeen (17) elements with historical value and a residual value were identified along the study corridor. Of the seventeen (17) historical elements identified, sixteen (16) are associated with the infrastructure of the

		train and one (1), the 1st, not associated, nor the Residual. SHPO responded on December 12, 2023, with the concurrence with the conservation and mitigation plans presented. The mitigation measures to be considered in the redesigned route for completing the PR-122 extension are: • Construction of retaining walls to prevent backfilling over structures and/or reduce the potential for direct impact on historical structures. • Construction of bridges with piers located outside the culvert areas to preserve the integrity of the road and historical structures. • Relocation of a culvert (Historical Resource #5) near the project to promote education about the history of the ring road. • For Historical Resource #4, the construction of an upstream retaining wall, below the structure, is proposed to preserve it. • Several of the historical resources found are obstructed by deposited material; it is recommended to remove the deposited material at the entrance or catchment area and channel the runoff waters to avoid future erosion problems. Of the 17 historical resources located in the vicinity of the project, four (4) are outside the construction boundaries, twelve (12) are very unlikely to be affected, and one (1)

		culvert will be affected. To mitigate the impact, it is proposed to relocate the affected structure and display it near the project, including appropriate signage to promote the history of the Puerto Rico Beltway. All documented structures will be rehabilitated. The other structures of the "TREN DE CIRMUNVALACIÓN" within the project boundaries will be documented, protected, and rehabilitated. After the review of all documentation, they concur that the revised mitigation measures are appropriate for the proposed project. The archaeological monitoring plan requested for their review and concurrence was submitted to SHPO on December 11, 2024. SHPO concurred letter was received on January 9, 2025, with the following requirements. • *The results of the archaeological units to be excavated (interior and exterior) of structure 4 must be submitted for our review prior to its demolition.* • *If the relocation of structure #5 requires making cuts to facilitate its movement, the proposed intervention must be submitted to the PRSHPO for review.* • *Please notify the PRSHPO the archaeological monitoring start date 48 hours prior to the initiation of work.* The monitoring activities will be divided into three groups: activities before the project begins, activities during construction, and

		post-construction activities. Monitoring will be undertaken during all activities, these include excavations and earth movements, demolitions, removal of structures, cleanups, exposition, shoring and protection of the historical resources and reconstruction of the historic culverts. On February 11, 2025, the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation (ACHP) received the proposed project notification and supporting documentation regarding the potential adverse effects of the referenced undertaking on a property or properties listed or eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places. Based upon the information provided, on February 25, 2025, they responded affirming that they concluded that Appendix A, Criteria for Council Involvement in Reviewing Individual Section 106 Cases of their regulations, "Protection of Historic Properties" (36 CFR Part 800) implementing Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act, does not apply to this undertaking. Accordingly, they express that their participation in the consultation to resolve adverse effects is not needed. On September 2, 2025, SHPO "acknowledge receipt of the archaeological monitoring work plan dated July 16, 2025, prepared by archaeologist Virginia Rivera Calderón & the Historic – Architectural mitigation plan: documentation, interpretation and nomination to the National Register of Historic Places prepared by Karen Anderson, Arleen Pabón & Berenice Sueiro submitted in

		July 2025 for the case mentioned above. Both plans are deemed acceptable, and we concur with their implementation." In the letter, SHPO stated that "When available, please submit the relocation plan for Historic Resource #5 and Please notify the PRSHPO the archaeological monitoring start date 48 hours prior to the initiation of work.". Therefore, the project is in compliance with the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, particularly sections 106 and 110; 36 C.F.R. Part 800. Refer to Figure 15: Historic Preservation Map included in Appendix 1 and SHPO concurrence letter and documentation included in Appendix 9.
17.9. Noise Abatement and Control Noise Control Act of 1972, as amended by the Quiet Communities Act of 1978; 24 CFR Part 51 Subpart B	Yes ☒ No ☐	The project corridor includes noise-sensitive land uses, primarily residential receptors located along PR-122 and near the intersection with PR-321. The proposed project is not located within: • 15 miles from a civil airport • 1,000 feet from a major stationary noise source • 3,000 feet from a railroad Existing ambient noise levels are relatively low, due to: • Low-density residential development • Limited traffic volumes • Absence of major industrial or transportation noise sources Baseline sound levels are approximately 49.7 dBA at the most affected receptor.

		A Noise Study (December 2024; revised October 2025) (Appendix 10) evaluated existing and future noise conditions. Modeling indicates minimal to moderate increases in traffic noise along the corridor. At most receptors, projected noise levels remain below HUD thresholds. However, one receptor (Receptor #1), consisting of two residences near the PR-122 / PR-321 intersection, will experience a substantial increase: • Existing: 49.7 dBA • Year 2028: 61.1 dBA (+11.4 dBA) • Year 2048: 62.2 dBA (+12.5 dBA) Although the increase exceeds 10 dBA, the resulting levels remain below 65 dBA, which is classified as "Normally Acceptable" for residential land uses under HUD regulations (24 CFR Part 51 Subpart B). Noise Abatement Analysis: A noise barrier was evaluated for Receptor #1: • Required height: approximately 5 meters • Minimum length: approximately 100 meters • Estimated cost: $550–$750 per square meter Based on cost-effectiveness criteria (cost per benefited receptor), the barrier is determined to be: • Technically feasible • Not economically reasonable or cost-effective

		Additional constraints include: • Steep terrain and elevation differences • Structural and foundation requirements • Drainage and access limitations • Long-term maintenance costs No other feasible or practicable abatement measures were identified that would significantly reduce noise at this receptor. Construction Noise: Construction activities will result in temporary and localized noise increases from: • Heavy equipment and machinery • Material transport and handling • Earthwork and grading • Potential use of controlled blasting in mountainous areas Construction impacts may be of longer duration in mountainous sections; however, they will remain temporary. The following measures shall be implemented: • Equipment and vehicles shall be turned off when not in use • Construction shall occur during daytime hours to the extent practicable • Equipment shall be properly maintained • Quieter equipment and methods shall be used where feasible • Construction personnel shall be trained in noise control practices

		• Advance notification shall be provided prior to blasting activities Construction activities may include the controlled use of explosives in mountainous areas, which could result in temporary high noise levels. These activities will be managed in accordance with applicable permits and safety requirements. See Section Explosive and Flammable Hazards and Section 33 (Mitigation Measures) for detailed requirements and controls related to blasting operations. Due to the distance and scattered nature of nearby residences, construction noise impacts are expected to be limited and not significant. The project will result in: • Minor to moderate increases in operational noise along the corridor • A substantial increase (>10 dBA) at one receptor However, resulting noise levels remain within HUD's "Normally Acceptable" range. No feasible or cost-effective mitigation measures are available. Noise impacts have been identified but mitigation is not feasible or cost-effective, consistent with reviewer direction. In accordance with 24 CFR Part 51 Subpart B: • The project will not result in unacceptable noise exposure • Noise levels at affected receptors remain within HUD standards • Impacts are limited, localized, and primarily temporary

		Therefore, the proposed project is in compliance with HUD noise regulations and will not result in significant adverse noise impacts. Refer to Figure 16: Noise Abatement Map included in Appendix 1. Refer to Noise Study in Appendix 10.
17.10. Sole Source Aquifers Safe Drinking Water Act of 1974, as amended, particularly section 1424(e); 40 CFR Part 149	Yes ☐ No ☒	According to the USEPA's Source Water Protection, Sole Source Aquifer Protection Program, there are no sole source aquifers in Puerto Rico. Therefore, the proposed project site is not located within a sole source aquifer, nor will it directly or indirectly impact one. Therefore, the project is in compliance with the Safe Drinking Water Act of 1974, as amended, particularly section 1424(e); 40 C.F.R. Part 149. Refer to Sole Source Aquifer Map, Figure 17 included in Appendix 1.
17.11. Wetlands Protection Executive Order 11990, particularly sections 2 and 5	Yes ☒ No ☐	The National Wetlands Inventory (NWI) mapping shows two riverine wetlands near or adjacent to the proposed action site related to the Maresúa creek and an unnamed creek. The NWI shows the Maresúa Creek crossing from east to west through the southern section of the Study Area the unnamed creek tributary of Río Guanajibo running from south to north outside and along the eastern-northeastern side of the Study Area. According to the Primary Screening for Wetlands conducted by engineer Miguel A. Pérez Correa on February 6, 2025, as per HUD's Regulations at 24 CFR 55.9 (b) (see

		Appendix 11), the primary screening conclusively determined that the project site contains wetlands. Wetland vegetation, hydric soils and hydrology were wetlands indicators observed within the project area. There are several other streams included on the PR Commonwealth Hydrography GIS Layer. Based on field observations performed during the Wetland Jurisdictional Determination and Delineation Study (JD Study) conducted by Ambienta Inc. in March 2024 (see Appendix 11), these streams seem to be ephemeral and, in some cases, could be classified as erosional features between the hill's toes. Erosive features can be described as gullies or small washes, characterized by infrequent or short-duration flow where the main source of stream flow is surface runoff from rainfall. These ephemeral features collect runoff water from adjacent uplands through the Study Area and appear to be natural; some are tributaries of Quebrada Maresúa and some are tributaries of the unnamed creek. According to the JD Study, based on field observations, Maresúa creek is ephemeral and can be denominated as a non-relative permanent water (NRPW). In addition, the unnamed creek running from south to north outside and along the eastern-northeastern side of the Study Area; seems to be relatively permanent water (RPW). Design requirements set forth by the PRHTA require the use of structures to minimize direct impacts to creeks and small streams

		along the path of a proposed roadway. This practice helps to minimize direct impacts on the streams without disturbing the wetland beneath the structures. Pursuant to Executive Order (EOs) 11990, the PRHTA has determined portions of this project be in wetland areas, thus the project requires compliance with the 8-step decision-making process for possible impacts to wetlands at 24 C.F.R. § 55.20. An 8-Step Decision-Making Process Analysis was conducted considering direct and indirect impacts associated with this project to comply with the wetland protection requirements of 24 CFR 58.20. The evaluation centered in the permanent discharge of fill material into 0.2245 acres of riverine wetlands related to the waters of the U.S. (WOTUS) associated to the Maresúa creek. Aside from the mentioned area, there would be no adverse impacts to the wetlands along the remaining project corridor. An early and final floodplain notices were published on March 6, 2025, and February 20, 2026, respectively, in newspapers of island-wide circulation to inform the public of the proposed activities within the floodplain. The notices were also sent to various agencies via email. A response to the early notice (Step 2) was received from US Fish and Wildlife Service's Caribbean Ecological Services Field Office. The email received requested additional information be provided regarding the project in question. As a response, the requested information was provided on March 13, 2025.

No further comments were received by USFWS after documents were provided and the comment period was over. No comments were received for the Step 7 during the comment period.

In accordance with the Department of Housing and Urban Development guidelines, practical alternatives to locating the proposed action in a wetland were identified and evaluated. These included the following alternatives:

Alternatives	**Justification for Inclusion or Exclusion**	**Cost**
1. Widening the existing PR-101 (Locations outside and not affecting the wetland)	This alternative was rejected because the section would involve expropriating and relocating families and businesses located close to PR-101 and would not accomplish the project objective of connecting existing segments of PR-122 between the municipalities of San Germán and Lajas. In addition, the former Puerto Rico Beltway train ("Tren de	N/A

			Circunvalación") runs north-south in the western part of the study area, which limits moving the route further west, as it would affect a greater number of existing hydrological structures related to the former train that could be eligible for inclusion in the National Register of Historic places. Also, the topography of the project area limits the available routes without impacting the wetlands.	
		2.1 Three-spans concrete bridge (Alternative methods to serve identical project objectives)	This alternative was discarded due to its high costs.	$7M

		2.2 Installation of a metal culvert type arch (Alternative methods to serve identical project objectives)	This alternative was discarded due to structural reasons, as this structure would not have the capacity to withstand the overload on the structure necessary to maintain the road level.	N/A
		2.3 Installation of a three-cell box culvert (Alternative methods to serve identical project objectives)	This alternative was selected as the best alternative due to its capacity to withstand the overload on the structure necessary to maintain the road level and its cost.	$2.086M
		3. A determination not to approve any action proposing the occupancy of the wetland.	This alternative was rejected because of previous studies that found that the area in dire needs better strategic highway network mobility and accessibility for people and freight before, during, and	N/A

	after an emergency event.	

The selected alternative considers the construction of a three-cell concrete box culvert, 73.94 meters long, with flared wingwalls at the Maresúa creek (Station 40+01.06) to minimize the impact on the wetland.

The selected route achieves the project's main objective of connecting both existing segments of PR-122 while avoid impact on existing historic drainage structures related to the former "Tren de Circunvalacion de Puerto Rico" and also moves between two mountains on the route, avoiding excessive terrain cutting. The considered alternative includes the best cost-efficient design that improves emergency response time, enhances roadway ingress/egress to allow rapid repair and asset recovery efforts and improve public safety while reducing impact to existing wetlands in the area.

During the permitting process with the United States Army Corps of Engineers (USACE), potential impacted area was reduced to approximately 0.2245 acres of wetlands within the Maresúa Creek corridor. The affected area consists primarily of riparian and streambed habitat altered by the necessary construction of a culvert crossing and associated roadway embankment. While the project does result in the permanent conversion of a small segment of aquatic habitat, the impacts are

		not considered to constitute an irreparable compromise of natural resources, and the project will avoid impacts to nearby forested wetlands or higher-quality aquatic resources. Therefore, while unavoidable impacts to wetlands and WOTUS will occur, these do not rise to the level of an irreparable loss of significant ecological function since the proposed project does not contemplate a complete obliteration of a natural habitat that leads to significant environmental deterioration and loss of ecological capacity. The three-cell box culvert will have minor impacts on the wetland due to its design. Based on this action, we can identify direct impacts to the wetlands: (1) during construction and (2) after construction as loss of wetland area due to land leveling for access by machinery; temporary alteration of hydrology due to changes in water flow due to the diversion of stream flow while the box culverts are built; degradation of water quality due to runoff and sedimentation during the road leveling process for access to the construction area, and alteration of habitat for local flora and fauna. (1) Direct impact during construction: since the proposed alignment crosses the Meresúa Creek during earthworks, the construction of a temporary crossing will

		be necessary to allow the movement of heavy equipment from one point to another. The temporary impact area within the Ordinary High-Water Mark (OHWM) will be 0.02694 acres. For this project, it is anticipated that the heavy equipment to be used by the contractor for earthworks will operate from the uplands and is not expected to be located within the channels of the Maresúa. The proposed temporary crossing for heavy vehicles will be located between stations 39+69.08 and 40+02.03, approximately thirty-five (35) meters east of the PR-122 alignment. It is important to clarify that this temporary crossing was added after revision to facilitate (method for diverting the waters) redirection of Maresúa Creek's flow during the culvert construction and to avoid interrupting the construction process by having to rebuild the temporary crossing for the next phase. The temporary crossing will be 26.6028 meters long, installing four strategically placed 42" diameter pipes to allow better redirection of the creek flow and to provide water diversion allowing to divide the construction in phases. The goal of this strategy is to maintain creek flow through two of the four pipes to be installed while one phase of the three-

		cell box culvert is being built. The construction of this temporary crossing is expected to impact approximately 61.51 square meters (0.0152 acres) and to deposit approximately 35.02 cubic meters (45.804 cubic yards) of permanent material (earth fill) into waters of the United States. Another direct temporary impact is related to the construction of the three-cell box culvert at station 40+01.06 and the berms required to redirect the flow of Maresúa Creek and allow work to be carried out in dry conditions. In addition to the proposed berm at the entrance of the temporary crossing, a second berm will be constructed at the exit of the box culvert to allow partial construction of the proposed energy dissipator. These temporary berms are expected to impact approximately 47.51 square meters (0.01174 acres) and to deposit approximately 11.44 cubic meters (14.96 cubic yards) of temporary earth fill into waters of the United States. For the construction of the three-cell box culvert, the machinery will be located upland, and no heavy equipment will be on the Maresúa Creek channel. As part of the construction process, it is expected that the cell outside U.S. waters will be built first. Once constructed, the creek

		channel will be diverted to this cell, and then the remaining cells will be built. The areas subjected to temporary direct impacts will be restored to their original conditions after the three-cell box culvert is completed. Direct and indirect impacts from construction are expected to be temporary and mitigated through construction staging plans developed in partnership with PRHTA to minimize disturbance throughout the construction period. (2) Impact after construction: the project is expected to cause direct permanent impacts to the Maresúa Creek waters of the United States due to the construction of the three-cell box culvert. The proposed structure is a three-cell reinforced concrete box culvert, each cell measuring 3.05 m × 3.05 m (width × height), for a total effective waterway area of approximately 27.9 m². The culvert is 73.94 m long with flared wingwalls, a longitudinal slope of 0.02 m/m, and a lowered middle cell (10% of height) to maintain the natural base flow continuity. The construction of this structure is expected to permanently impact directly an approximate area of 908.727 square meters (0.2245 acres)

		and will have an approximate fill volume of 827.6815 cubic meters (1,082.5569 cubic yards) of permanent material that will be deposited into waters of the United States. The project was submitted to the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) regarding the construction of the box culvert which would impact water of the Maresúa creek. On June 10, 2025, the USACE authorized a Nationwide Permit 14 (linear Transportation Projects) with the following Special Conditions (included in Appendix 11): 1. Permettee shall complete a Commencement Notification within 10 days of the initiating date. 2. Best Management Practices (erosion control, fill material, turbidity barriers). 3. Comply with Conservation Measures for the PR Boa. 4. If forested areas are cleared during PR nightjar nesting season, a qualified biologist should search prior. 5.Temporary impacts shall be immediately removed after completion and the affected areas of WOTUS completely restored to pre-existing conditions. The areas affected by temporary fills must be revegetated as appropriate.

		1. File a Notice of Intent to be covered by the General Water Quality Certificate with the PR DNER. The project is compliance with the Executive Order 11990, particularly section 2 and 5. Refer to Figure 18: Wetlands Map included in Appendix 1. Refer to Appendix 11 for supporting documentation.
17.12. Wild and Scenic Rivers Wild and Scenic Rivers Act of 1968, particularly section 7(b) and (c)	Yes ☐ No ☒	This project is not within proximity of the NWSRS river. The project is located 436,795 feet (82.73 miles) from the nearest Wild and Scenic River, De la Mina River, in El Yunque National Forest in Puerto Rico. Therefore, the project is in compliance with Wild and Scenic Rivers Act of 1968, particularly section 7(b) and (c). Refer to Wild and Scenic Rivers Map, Figure 19 included in Appendix 1.

18. ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT FACTORS [24 CFR 58.40]

[Please use the following link to learn more about Environmental Assessment: https://www.hudexchange.info/programs/environmental-review/environmental-assessment/]

Recorded below is the qualitative and quantitative significance of the effects of the proposal on the character, features and resources of the project area. Each factor has been evaluated and documented, as appropriate and in proportion to its relevance to the proposed action. Verifiable source documentation has been provided and described in support of each determination, as appropriate. Credible, traceable and supportive source documentation for each authority has been provided. Where applicable, the necessary reviews or consultations have been completed, and applicable permits of approval have been obtained or noted. Citations, dates/names/titles of contacts, and page references are clear. Additional documentation is attached, as appropriate. **All conditions, attenuation or mitigation measures have been clearly identified.**

Impact Codes: Use an impact code from the following list to make the determination of impact for each factor.

1	2	3	4
Minor beneficial impact	No impact anticipated	Minor Adverse Impact – May require mitigation	Significant or potentially significant impact requiring avoidance or

			modification which may require an Environmental Impact Statement

19. LAND DEVELOPMENT

Environmental Assessment Factor	Impact Code	Impact Evaluation
19.1. Conformance with Plans / Compatible Land Use and Zoning / Scale and Urban Design	1	The proposed PR-122 Extension is consistent with applicable regional, municipal, and Commonwealth planning documents and conforms to existing land-use and zoning designations along the project corridor. The project aligns with the 2040 Long Range Multimodal Transportation Plan for Puerto Rico, developed by the Puerto Rico Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO), which establishes transportation priorities intended to improve mobility, enhance freight and passenger access, strengthen system performance, support economic vitality, and promote environmental sustainability. The PR-122 Extension directly advances these objectives by improving regional connectivity between San Germán and Lajas and providing a safer, more efficient north–south corridor. According to the Puerto Rico Planning Board, land use within the project corridor is predominantly Residential, Agricultural, and Rural. At the northern terminus in the El Retiro Community of San Germán (PR 166), adjacent parcels are zoned Intermediate Residential (R I) and High Density Residential (R A). South of this point, the alignment traverses General Rustic (R G) and General Agricultural (A G) lands that are currently undeveloped and not in productive use (Refer to Appendix 1, Figure 20: Land Uses Map). These land uses are compatible with the proposed roadway extension and do not present soil related constraints to construction.

		The project also complies with Resolution No. 488 of the Puerto Rico House of Representatives (September 10, 2001), which directed the Puerto Rico Department of Transportation and Public Works (DTOP) to evaluate the feasibility of extending PR-116 in Lajas to connect with PR-122 in San Germán. The proposed extension fulfills this legislative directive by completing the intended regional linkage. The project is compatible with the Environmental Public Policy Act of Puerto Rico (Law No. 9 of 1970, as amended), which promotes the orderly, sustainable, and environmentally responsible development of public infrastructure. The PR-122 Extension harmonizes with existing land uses, which are predominantly rural, agricultural, and low-density residential, and does not conflict with municipal Urban Expansion Maps or zoning classifications in San Germán or Lajas. The project is also consistent with the Road Plan for the Western Region of Puerto Rico, which identifies the PR-122 corridor as a priority transportation improvement to support mobility, economic development, and regional accessibility. The Puerto Rico Planning Board has historically supported development in this region, including the establishment of new commercial, residential, and tourism centers throughout the southwest. The PR-122 Extension complements these planning efforts by improving access to existing and future activity centers. The proposed action conforms to all applicable regional and municipal plans, is compatible with existing land uses and zoning, and supports the long-term transportation, economic, and environmental objectives established by the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico and the MPO.

19.2.	Soil Suitability/ Slope/ Erosion/ Drainage/ Storm Water Runoff	2	The project area includes natural slopes typical of the San Germán–Lajas region. A Hydrologic and Hydraulic Study prepared in May 2025, identified average overland slopes of approximately 39% in the Quebrada Maresúa watershed and 44% in the Quebrada Sin Nombre watershed (Refer to Appendix 12). These slopes require standard erosion and sedimentation controls during construction but do not pose long term stability concerns. No unsuitable or unstable soils were identified that would preclude roadway construction. The study confirms that the proposed culvert and gabion wall structures can be safely constructed with appropriate engineering design. The landslide data indicates low to high landslide susceptibility (Refer to Appendix 1, Figure 21: Landslide Susceptibility Map). To minimize soil disturbance and prevent sediment transport, the contractor will implement Best Management Practices (BMPs) consistent with the Puerto Rico Environmental Quality Board (EQB) Construction General Permit. A Construction Erosion and Sediment (CES) Control Plan will be developed and enforced. Required measures will include: • Silt fences and sediment barriers • Stabilized construction entrances • Sediment traps or basins • Timely stabilization of disturbed areas using crushed rock, concrete, or vegetative cover These measures will prevent erosion, protect adjacent properties, and maintain water quality during construction. The proposed roadway will slightly modify existing drainage patterns but will not significantly

		increase surface runoff. The final design incorporates a drainage system consistent with local stormwater regulations, directing runoff to new storm sewer inlets along the corridor. These inlets will discharge to the unnamed creek north of the project and to Quebrada Maresúa to the south, maintaining natural drainage pathways. The H&H Study evaluated the hydraulic effects of the project on Quebrada Maresúa and Quebrada Sin Nombre during the 100-year storm event. The analysis concludes that the proposed three cell concrete box culvert and gabion wall do not increase the 100-year base flood elevation beyond the limits allowed by Puerto Rico Planning Board Regulation No. 13. During the construction phase of the PR-122 highway extension project in San Germán, the gross volume of earthwork operations is estimated at 964,789 cubic meters (CM). The distributed breakdown of materials under Item Code 203 is quantified as follows: Total Excavation Volume (Cut): 705,851 CM • Unclassified Excavation: 636,875 CM • Rock Excavation: 68,976 CM Total Borrow Material required (Fill): 258,938 CM • Borrow Class "B": 258,938 CM Net Haul-Out Excess: Accounting for the direct reuse of acceptable unclassified material for structural embankments on-site, the project generates a net surplus of 446,913 CM of cut material. Applying a specific 10% soil bulking/expansion factor (1.10) for loose transport, the total volume to be hauled out and disposed of outside the project boundaries is exactly 491,604 loose cubic meters (LCM).

		The handling, transport, and ultimate disposal of the surplus excavated material will be strictly managed under a Construction Logistics Plan (CLP) to avoid environmental degradation and community disturbance in the San Germán municipality. • Fleet and Staging: Material will be loaded utilizing heavy hydraulic excavators and track loaders into heavy-duty, multi-axle dump trucks (with an average capacity of 10–14 CM per trip). Applying the 10% expansion factor, this translates to a distribution of 35,115 to 49,160 total truck trips over the duration of the earthwork phase. • Hauling Routes: Transport routes will favor primary arterial roads (such as the PR-2 and connected highway segments) to bypass narrow municipal streets and highly populated urban zones in downtown San Germán, minimizing local traffic gridlock. • Final Disposal Requirements: No material will be discarded arbitrarily. All surplus material must be directed to designated, DRNA-permitted filling sites or registered municipal waste landfills that operate under Resource Conservation and Recovery Act (RCRA) Subtitle D regulations. To control the impacts stemming from heavy equipment hauling operations, the contractor will be enforced to follow the following multi-tiered mitigation framework: A. Air Quality & Fugitive Dust Suppression (Clean Air Act & Puerto Rico Rule 402) Impact: Elevated ambient particulate matter (PM10 and PM2.5) and silica dust from hauling loose earth along municipal roads.

		Mitigation: All dump trucks carrying excavated soils must have their cargo beds fully secured with tightly woven, mechanical tarps (tarping) before exiting the construction zone. Dedicated water trucks will continuously spray active unpaved haul roads, stockpiles, and loading points to maintain soil moisture levels and prevent windborne dust. Truck wheel-washing stations or rumble grids will be built at every project egress point to prevent earth and mud track-out onto public asphalt surfaces. B. Stormwater Management & Sediment Control (NPDES Construction General Permit) Impact: Heavy runoff carrying loose silt into the Guamá or Rosario river basins, disrupting local aquatic ecosystems and triggering soil erosion. Mitigation: The project will strictly follow a site-specific Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP) registered with EPA Region 2. Temporary soil stockpiles slated for hauling must be ringed with geotextile silt fences, straw wattles, or diversion dikes. Stockpiles left static for more than 14 days will be temporarily stabilized with hydroseeding or physical geotextile covers. C. Traffic, Noise, and Vibration Reductions Impact: Severe vehicle congestion, acoustic disturbance to neighboring communities, and ground vibrations from heavy dump truck rotations. Mitigation: Hauling operations will be restricted to daylight hours (e.g., 7:00 AM to 5:00 PM) to respect local residential sleep windows. Trucks must maintain low speed limits inside the project boundaries (equal or less than 15 mph) to limit exhaust spikes and engine braking noise. All

			haul trucks must hold up-to-date vehicular emission inspections. During construction, the contractor will comply with the Small Construction Site Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP) requirements under the NPDES General Permit for projects disturbing more than one acre. The SWPPP will ensure proper handling of stormwater, minimize sedimentation, and prevent pollutants from entering nearby water bodies.
19.3.	Hazards and Nuisances including Site Safety and Noise	2	The project site is located in a predominantly rural area with scattered residential and agricultural uses. Construction activities associated with the PR-122 extension, including demolition, excavation, site clearing, and roadway construction, will temporarily introduce typical construction related hazards such as increased equipment activity, noise, and site-specific safety risks. These impacts will be short-term and limited to the active construction zone. A visual assessment and review of publicly available environmental databases (EPA Envirofacts, Puerto Rico Department of Natural and Environmental Resources [DRNA], and Puerto Rico Planning Board GIS layers) indicate that the project area is not located near hazardous material storage facilities, landfills, Superfund sites, high-voltage transmission corridors, or other known hazard sources. No records suggest the presence of underground storage tanks, hazardous waste generators, or contaminated sites within or adjacent to the project corridor. During construction, site safety will comply with all applicable OSHA and PROSHA requirements. Safety measures will include fencing and securing the active work zone, restricting access to authorized

		personnel, and requiring the use of appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE). Construction areas will be clearly marked, and safety signage will be posted. Emergency access routes will remain open at all times to ensure continued public safety. Upon completion, the roadway and associated structures will comply with the Puerto Rico Building Code (IBC 2018-based), including seismic, wind, and hurricane-resistance standards. All permanent infrastructure will meet applicable fire safety, electrical, and public health codes, ensuring long-term safety for users. There are no permanent noise-generating facilities, such as airports, major industrial operations, or rail lines, near the project site. Existing ambient noise levels are typical of a rural transportation corridor, primarily influenced by traffic along PR-101, PR-321, and local streets. Construction activities will generate temporary and moderate noise from heavy machinery, hand tools, and material handling. To minimize noise impacts and comply with the Puerto Rico Noise Pollution Control Regulation, the contractor will implement the following measures: - Limit construction activities to daytime hours (typically 7:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m.). - Turn off equipment and vehicles when not in use. - Maintain all machinery in good working condition and use mufflers or noise-reducing attachments where feasible. Once operational, the project will not introduce new permanent noise sources or create additional hazards or nuisances. The completed roadway is

		not expected to generate noise levels beyond those typical of existing regional traffic patterns. No significant hazards, nuisances, or long-term noise impacts are anticipated. Construction-related risks will be temporary, controlled, and mitigated through standard safety and noise-reduction practices.
20. SOCIOECONOMIC		
Environmental Assessment Factor	**Impact Code**	**Impact Evaluation**
20.1. Employment and Income Patterns	1	According to the U.S. Census Bureau's American Community Survey (ACS) 2023 5-Year Estimates, the Municipality of San Germán has an estimated population of approximately 31,514 residents with a median household income of $17,921. The local economy is driven by small businesses, agriculture, retail and construction. The unemployment rate remains relatively high compared to national levels, reflecting the limited diversity of the local job market. Lajas has an estimated population of approximately 23,334 residents with a median household income of $18,920. The local economy is driven by manufacture, small businesses, agriculture and retail. Lajas also presents a high unemployment rate of 9.5% compared to national levels (4.4% as of September 2025, Bureau of Labor Statstics), reflecting socioeconomic vulnerability. The proposed PR-122 extension is expected to have net positive effects on employment and income patterns in the short and long term by generating temporary construction employment and improving regional access that can support economic activity and job creation. For both

			municipalities, this project may help reduce employment and mobility barriers. According to the Employment Multiplier Tool provider by the Puerto Rico Planning Board, a 60 million construction project could induce 660 direct employment and 720 indirect employments. The proposed project will assist in employment and income patterns by promoting tourism and providing travel options for residents, visitors, and workers. Therefore, it leads to favorable developments for commercial, industrial, and institutional operations in the project area with better accessibility within the west side of the island.
20.2.	Demographic Character Changes, Displacement	2	According to the 2020 Decennial Census and U.S. Census Bureau estimates, the Municipality of Lajas has a total population of 23,334 and San Germán a total population of 31,879. San Germán and Lajas are small to mid-sized municipalities in Puerto Rico's southwestern region, with relatively stable or slightly declining populations over the last decade. Both municipalities have high proportions of low- to moderate-income (LMI) households, a majority Hispanic population, and moderate age distributions typical of rural areas (younger working adults often out-migrate for employment). Housing in the areas near the project is primarily owner-occupied. In the 2020 Census, the housing unit vacancy rate for Lajas was 22.8% and for San Germán was 16.4%. The proposed project will promote the local economy and generate new job opportunities. Additionally, it is expected to rely on local labor, which presents several advantages. Hiring local workers will boost the local economy by providing jobs and increasing spending on local businesses.

		Also, engaging local labor strengthens community ties, enhances project acceptance among residents, and leverages local knowledge to deliver higher-quality work. The area near the proposed alignment consists mainly of agricultural land, scattered residential properties, and undeveloped terrain. There are no densely populated urban clusters within or immediately adjacent to the proposed right-of-way. The project's alignment occurs mostly within previously disturbed or uninhabited lands. Implementation of the Selected Alternative may result in community impacts associated with the acquisition of Parcel 017-03. The parcel contains seven structures, including four residential structures occupied by two family groups. Based on available information, the occupants do not hold legal title to either the parcel or the structures they occupy. Nevertheless, the families are established occupants of the affected residences and may be subject to displacement as a result of the project. The Puerto Rico Highway and Transportation Authority (PRHTA) will evaluate the occupancy status of affected residents and will carry out any required relocation activities in accordance with applicable federal and Commonwealth right-of-way acquisition and relocation assistance requirements. Appropriate relocation assistance and benefits, if determined applicable, will be provided to eligible occupants during the ROW acquisition process. No other residential relocations are currently anticipated within the project area. All activities will be carried out in compliance with federal and local requirements, ensuring that affected families are

		treated fairly, consistently, and without undue burden. No commercial or community structures are anticipated to be acquired or demolished. Therefore, no direct displacement of businesses is expected. Improved road access may support moderate economic activity, but this is expected to occur gradually and within existing municipal planning frameworks.
21. COMMUNITY FACILITIES AND SERVICES		
Environmental Assessment Factor	**Impact Code**	**Impact Evaluation**
21.1. Educational and Cultural Facilities	1	The project would not result in any change to regional or local area educational and cultural facilities, nor to increase demand for such services. This determination is supported by a review of land use data, municipal planning documents, and agency coordination. The project is located within a predominantly rural corridor between the municipalities of San Germán and Lajas, characterized by agricultural lands, secondary vegetation, and low-density development. A review of available spatial data, including the Puerto Rico Planning Board land use maps and municipal territorial plans (Planes de Ordenación Territorial), confirms that no educational or cultural facilities are located within the project's Area of Potential Effect (APE). According to geospatial data from the Puerto Rico Department of Education and publicly available institutional directories, the nearest educational facilities include: • Universidad Interamericana de Puerto Rico – Recinto de San Germán

		• Escuela Intermedia Julio Víctor Guzmán (San Germán) • Escuela Elemental Henry W. Longfellow (San Germán) • Escuela Superior Leonides Morales Rodríguez (Lajas) These facilities are located several kilometers from the project footprint, within urbanized areas of San Germán and Lajas. Review of roadway connectivity indicates that no direct access routes to these institutions will be disrupted or modified by the proposed project. With respect to cultural resources, coordination with the Puerto Rico State Historic Preservation Office (PRSHPO), as documented in correspondence included in Appendix 9, indicates that the project includes the rehabilitation and treatment of identified historic structures within the corridor. This finding is further supported by the Cultural Resources Assessment (Appendix 9), which evaluated historic properties in accordance with Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act. The PRSHPO concurrence letter recognizes that the proposed actions will avoid adverse effects and incorporate preservation measures thereby contributing positively to the conservation of cultural resources within the project area. Based on these documented sources: • Puerto Rico Planning Board land use data • Municipal Plans of San Germán and Lajas • Puerto Rico Department of Education facility listings • Cultural Resources Assessment and PRSHPO consultation correspondence (Appendix 9)

		it is concluded that the project will not adversely affect existing educational or cultural facilities. On the contrary, by improving regional mobility and reducing travel times, the project is expected to enhance access to educational institutions and cultural resources for residents of both municipalities. increase demand for them. The project is located in a predominantly rural setting, away from schools, libraries, museums, or recognized cultural landmarks. Instead, it will enhance regional access to such facilities between San Germán and Lajas. According to the Puerto Rico State Historic Preservation Office, the proposed plan will rehabilitate several historical structures, adding cultural importance to the project.
21.2. Commercial Facilities	1	The proposed PR-122 Extension Project is not expected to result in adverse impacts on existing commercial facilities. This determination is supported by a review of land use data, cadastral information, and municipal planning documents. According to the Puerto Rico Planning Board (Junta de Planificación) land use maps and the Municipal Plans of San Germán and Lajas (Planes de Ordenación Territorial), the project corridor is primarily characterized by agricultural lands, open space, and low-density rural development, with limited presence of established commercial uses within the project's direct impact area (Right-of-Way). A review of property and parcel data from the Puerto Rico Cadastre (CRIM) further indicates that no registered commercial structures fall within the footprint of the proposed roadway extension. Based on preliminary design plans and right-of-way evaluations, no business displacements, relocations, or acquisitions of

		commercial properties are anticipated. The project has been designed to avoid existing developed parcels to the extent practicable, consistent with minimization requirements under federal and state environmental review processes. Although no adverse impacts are expected, the project may contribute to indirect, long-term beneficial effects on commercial activity. According to regional transportation planning documents, including the Puerto Rico Department of Transportation and Public Works (DTOP) long-range transportation plans and PRHTA project justifications, improved roadway connectivity between San Germán and Lajas is intended to: • Enhance regional accessibility and mobility • Reduce travel times between municipalities • Improve the efficiency of goods movement, particularly for the agricultural sector These improvements are recognized factors that can support localized economic development, particularly near roadway intersections and access points. Consistent with findings from transportation planning literature and DTOP planning assumptions, improved infrastructure may encourage small-scale commercial growth, including: • Local retail and service establishments • Tourism-related businesses • Agricultural support services and product distribution However, such growth would occur outside of the immediate construction footprint and would be subject to future municipal land use controls and permitting processes, as established in the Municipal Plans of San Germán and Lajas.

		During construction, temporary access disruptions could occur, but these will be minimized through the implementation of traffic management plans and coordination with local authorities. No permanent access restrictions to commercial areas have been identified. Based on the following supporting documentation: • Puerto Rico Planning Board Land Use Maps • Municipal Plans of San Germán and Lajas (Planes de Ordenación Territorial) • Puerto Rico Cadastre (CRIM) property data it is concluded that the proposed project will not adversely affect existing commercial facilities. Instead, the project is expected to provide long-term beneficial effects by improving accessibility, supporting local commerce, and promoting regional economic activity in western Puerto Rico.
21.3. Health Care and Social Services	2	Health care and social services facilities would not be impacted by the proposed project, and no displacement or loss of service access is anticipated. The project is instead expected to enhance regional connectivity and improve emergency response times between San Germán and Lajas. This conclusion is supported by the following references: 1. Regional access to health services and emergency response benefits The planned expansion of PR-122 has been identified by the Government of Puerto Rico as a project that will "have an important impact on access to health services… and the capacity to respond to emergency situations," reinforcing that improved roadway connectivity directly benefits emergency response efficiency and service accessibility.

		2. Existing health care infrastructure in San Germán Hospital de la Concepción, located in San Germán, is a general acute care hospital with emergency services available 24 hours a day, serving as a key regional provider. The hospital provides a wide range of inpatient and outpatient services, including surgery, diagnostic imaging, laboratory services, and rehabilitation, confirming the availability of comprehensive care within the municipality. Additional documentation indicates that the hospital is part of a broader emergency care network in southwestern Puerto Rico, improving response capacity and reducing travel and waiting times for urgent care. 3. Availability of primary care and diagnostic services (CDTs) Puerto Rico maintains a distributed network of Centros de Diagnóstico y Tratamiento (CDTs) across municipalities, including Lajas, which provide primary care, diagnostic services, and management of urgent but non-life-threatening conditions. CDTs function as critical first-contact health facilities and referral points to higher-level hospitals, ensuring local access to essential services without requiring long-distance travel. 4. Regional health system capacity and coverage Puerto Rico's health system includes a broad network of hospitals and federally supported health centers serving hundreds of thousands of patients annually, demonstrating sufficient baseline capacity to meet population demand.

		Post-disaster assessments (e.g., Hurricane María) documented that the majority of hospitals and health centers remained operational or restorable, indicating system resilience and redundancy within the island's healthcare infrastructure. The presence of established hospitals (e.g., Hospital de la Concepción), CDTs, and regional referral centers confirms that San Germán and Lajas are already served by an adequate network of healthcare and social service providers. None of the referenced facilities are identified as being located within or immediately adjacent to the proposed PR-122 alignment based on available planning descriptions. Transportation improvements such as PR-122 enhance access rather than create demand pressures, particularly by improving emergency response times and inter-municipal connectivity. Based on the documented distribution of health facilities, their service capacity, and the recognized relationship between transportation infrastructure and emergency accessibility, the proposed project: • Will not displace or adversely affect health care or social service facilities, • Will not significantly increase demand beyond existing system capacity, and • Will provide a beneficial effect by improving access and emergency response efficiency within the San Germán–Lajas region. References • Gobierno de Puerto Rico. (2023). *Acuerdo para la expansión de la carretera PR-122 entre San Germán y Lajas*. Metro Puerto

		Rico. (Supports improved access to health services and emergency response benefits.) • Hospital de la Concepción. (2025). *Servicios y tecnologías*. Retrieved from https://hospitaldelaconcepcion.com/ (Supports description of hospital services and regional healthcare capacity.) • Hospital de la Concepción – Facility Profile. (2025). *Acute care hospital with 24-hour emergency services*. (Supports classification as a general acute care hospital and emergency provider.) • El Nuevo Día. (2025). *Hospital de la Concepción fortalece su red de servicios*. (Supports role in regional emergency network and reduced response times.) • Departamento de Salud de Puerto Rico (DSPR). (2024). *Centros de Diagnóstico y Tratamiento (CDT) en Puerto Rico*. (Supports availability and function of CDTs as primary care and diagnostic facilities.) • Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA). (2024). *Puerto Rico Health Center Program Uniform Data System (UDS)*. (Supports system-wide healthcare capacity and patient coverage.) • Cabrera, J., et al. (2020). *Evaluating Disaster Damages and Operational Status of Health-Care Facilities During the Emergency Response Phase of Hurricane María in Puerto Rico*. CDC. (Supports resilience and operational capacity of healthcare infrastructure.)

21.4.	Solid Waste Disposal / Recycling	2	Solid waste management services in the Municipalities of San Germán and Lajas are overseen by their respective Municipal Departments of Public Works and regulated by the Puerto Rico Solid Waste Management Authority (ADS), the agency responsible for implementing public policy and managing the technical, administrative, and operational aspects of solid waste handling across the island. The proposed project involves the extension of PR-122 from its current intersection with PR-166 in San Germán to PR-321 in Lajas. The project corridor primarily traverses undeveloped land and does not contain any active structures or facilities that generate solid waste. As such, no ongoing solid waste generation occurs at the location. During the construction phase, solid waste will primarily consist of earthwork debris, concrete, metals, wood, packaging, vegetation, and general construction materials. These materials are consistent with typical construction and demolition (C&D) debris generated in Puerto Rico projects. All waste will be managed in accordance with local and territorial regulations, including the Puerto Rico Environmental Quality Board regulations governing solid waste disposal and permitting requirements. Contractors will be required to implement a Construction Waste Management Plan that includes proper segregation, recycling, and disposal of materials, consistent with Puerto Rico requirements that emphasize separation, recycling, and disposal in authorized facilities. Recyclable materials such as asphalt, concrete, and metals will be diverted from landfills whenever feasible, consistent with federal guidance

		promoting the reuse of highway construction materials due to their environmental and economic benefits, including reduced landfill use and conservation of natural resources. The project will also comply with Commonwealth laws promoting waste reduction and recycling, including the "Ley para la Reducción y Reciclaje de los Desperdicios Sólidos," which establishes policies for separation, processing, and diversion of waste from landfills. No significant adverse impacts related to solid waste disposal or recycling are anticipated. The project will comply with applicable ADS regulations and municipal waste handling protocols. References • Autoridad de Desperdicios Sólidos (ADS) / DRNA. Acerca de la ADS (2024). • Puerto Rico Environmental Quality Board. Reglamento sobre disposición final de residuos sólidos en Puerto Rico (Regulation No. 6458). • Puerto Rico Laws. Ley para la Reducción y el Reciclaje de Desperdicios Sólidos (Law No. 70 of 1992, as amended). • State Regs Today. Construction and Demolition Waste Management in Puerto Rico (2024). • Food Handlers Guide. Construction and Demolition Debris Recycling in Puerto Rico (2025). • Federal Highway Administration (FHWA). Recycled Materials Policy (2015). [fhwa.dot.gov] • Federal Highway Administration (FHWA). Recycling and Sustainability Guidance (2025).

21.5.	Waste Water / Sanitary Sewers	2	The proposed extension of PR-122 from PR-166 in San Germán to PR-321 in Lajas is a transportation infrastructure project and does not involve the construction of residential, commercial, industrial, or other occupied facilities that would generate wastewater. As such, no long-term wastewater production is anticipated, and no connection to municipal sanitary sewer systems is required. The project corridor traverses predominantly undeveloped land and does not contain existing structures that discharge wastewater. The proposed design does not include permanent buildings, rest areas, service facilities, or other features that would require sanitary sewer service. Therefore, the project will not create demand for wastewater treatment capacity. During construction, limited temporary wastewater generation may occur from worker sanitation needs. These needs will be managed through licensed vendors who provide portable toilets and perform regular servicing in accordance with applicable regulations. Federal construction sanitation standards require that job sites without sewer access provide self-contained portable or chemical toilets, ensuring proper waste containment and preventing contamination of soil, surface water, or groundwater. In addition, federal environmental regulations governing construction activities require the implementation of pollution prevention measures and prohibit unauthorized discharges to waters of the United States, reinforcing that wastewater generated during construction must be properly contained and managed. The municipalities of San Germán and Lajas operate sanitary sewer systems regulated by the

		Puerto Rico Aqueduct and Sewer Authority (PRASA), the government entity responsible for water supply, wastewater management, and sewer infrastructure throughout Puerto Rico. PRASA establishes and enforces rules and regulations governing the use, connection, and discharge to sanitary sewer systems in order to protect public health and ensure proper wastewater management. Because the project does not require sewer connections, no impacts to existing or planned sewer system capacity are expected. The project will not affect wastewater infrastructure, will not require sewer capacity, and will comply with all applicable health and environmental regulations for temporary construction phase sanitation. The proposed project does not include the installation or use of on-site septic systems. No occupied structures, facilities, or uses requiring wastewater treatment are planned. Therefore, on-site septic system considerations are not applicable to the proposed action. References • Puerto Rico Aqueduct and Sewer Authority (PRASA). Laws and Regulations (Act 40 of 1945, as amended; Regulation 8901). • Commonwealth of Puerto Rico. Aqueduct and Sewer Authority Act – Rules and Regulations on Disposal of Sewage (22 L.P.R.A. §159). • Puerto Rico Aqueduct and Sewer Authority (PRASA). Agency Overview and Responsibilities. • U.S. Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA). Sanitation Standards for Construction (29 CFR 1926.51).

		• U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). Construction and Development Effluent Guidelines (40 CFR Part 450).
21.6. Water Supply	2	The proposed extension of PR-122 from PR-166 in San Germán to PR-321 in Lajas is a transportation infrastructure project that does not include the development of residential, commercial, or industrial facilities. The project does not require potable water service for long-term operation, as no occupied structures or facilities are included in the design. No municipal or non-municipal water supply connections are needed. The municipalities of San Germán and Lajas receive water services from the Puerto Rico Aqueduct and Sewer Authority (PRASA), the government-owned entity responsible for potable water quality, management, and distribution throughout Puerto Rico. However, no direct connection to PRASA's infrastructure is anticipated for this project. During construction, potable water for workers will be supplied by the construction contractor through commercially provided sources. Federal safety standards require that an adequate supply of potable water be provided at all construction sites, either through public systems or alternative approved sources, ensuring safe consumption and proper sanitary conditions for workers. Potable water is defined as water that meets established health-based regulatory standards for human consumption under federal law. This temporary use will not affect municipal water supply capacity or water quality. The project will not draw from or impact sole-source aquifers, nor will it require approvals for water purification or transport systems. Water use

			in Puerto Rico is regulated through permitting systems and water quality standards established by the Department of Natural and Environmental Resources (DRNA) and federal Clean Water Act requirements, which ensure protection of water quantity and quality. The project will not result in significant consumption of community water resources. The proposed action will not affect municipal or non-municipal water supply systems and will not require long-term potable water service. No adverse impacts to local or regional water supply systems are expected. The project will comply with all applicable water use and conservation regulations during construction. References • Puerto Rico Aqueduct and Sewer Authority (PRASA). Agency Overview and Services. • Puerto Rico Aqueduct and Sewer Authority (PRASA). Authority Responsibilities for Water Supply and Management (Act 40 of 1945). • U.S. Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA). Sanitation Standards for Construction (29 CFR 1926.51). • U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). Drinking Water Regulations under the Safe Drinking Water Act. • Puerto Rico Department of Natural and Environmental Resources (DRNA). Water Quality Standards Regulation. • State Regs Today. Water Rights and Water Use Regulations in Puerto Rico (2024).
21.7.	Public Safety - Police, Fire and	1	The municipalities of San Germán and Lajas are served by public healthcare facilities, clinics, and emergency response services, including hospitals,

Emergency Medical		Centros de Diagnóstico y Tratamiento (CDTs), and emergency medical service (EMS) units in both municipalities, with additional regional hospitals nearby. Emergency medical services in Puerto Rico are supported through coordinated government systems that deploy ambulances, trained personnel, and equipment to ensure timely response to incidents. Fire stations and emergency response units are strategically distributed across municipalities to provide rapid response coverage, while police services are provided by both the Puerto Rico Police Bureau and municipal police departments that act as first responders to emergencies and public safety incidents. The Puerto Rico emergency management framework operates through coordinated municipal, territorial, and federal systems, ensuring integration of police, fire, and EMS resources during routine operations and emergencies. Fire stations in both San Germán and Lajas are located within approximately 2.5 miles of the project corridor. From the nearest point of the project in Lajas, both the State Police Department and Municipal Police offices are located within approximately 2 miles (or about a 5-minute drive), which supports efficient emergency response coverage. Improvements in roadway connectivity, such as the proposed PR-122 extension, facilitate faster travel for emergency responders and improve access between municipalities. Transportation infrastructure is recognized as a critical component of emergency response, enabling responders to reach incident locations quickly and transport injured individuals to medical facilities.

		The project area is not located within a specific zone identified for heightened wildfire intensification risk at the local scale. While Puerto Rico as a whole may experience wildfire hazards under certain climatic conditions, wildfire mitigation and response are managed through coordinated efforts of the Puerto Rico Fire Department, Department of Natural and Environmental Resources, and local agencies, with regulations and practices aimed at preventing ignition and limiting spread. The proposed project will be confined to the designated right-of-way (ROW), and no project features are expected to introduce ignition sources or conditions that would significantly increase wildfire risk. The proposed activity would not increase demand for police, fire, or emergency medical services. No access issues to these services are expected during the construction phase. The project is anticipated to have a beneficial effect by improving transportation efficiency and supporting emergency response mobility between San Germán and Lajas. References • State Regs Today. Emergency Medical Services (EMS) in Puerto Rico (2024). • Local Offices. Policía Municipal de San Germán – Roles and Responsibilities. • Puerto Rico Government Authority. Emergency Management Structure and Responsibilities in Puerto Rico. • U.S. Department of Transportation / FHWA. Emergency Transportation Response and Preparedness.

21.8.	Parks, Open Space and Recreation	2	The proposed extension of PR-122 from PR-166 in San Germán to PR-321 in Lajas traverses a semi-rural corridor characterized by undeveloped land, agricultural areas, and low-density residential zones. The project alignment does not intersect any designated public parks, recreational facilities, or protected open space areas. Transportation infrastructure improvements are recognized as mechanisms that can enhance access to recreational areas by reducing travel time and improving connectivity between communities and outdoor amenities. Within the study area there are informal trails used by residents and visitors for hiking and mountain biking. These trails are consistent with broader trends in Puerto Rico where former railroad rights-of-way have been repurposed into recreational trail systems, supporting walking and bicycling activities and connecting communities to recreational resources. These trails run mainly within the footprint of the former "Tren de Circunvalación de Puerto Rico," a historic rail corridor that extended across the island and has influenced current land use and trail opportunities. These trails may be temporarily disrupted during the construction phase. However, following construction, the paths could be rehabilitated, and safe crossings (e.g., under Bridge 1A) may allow continued connectivity for recreational users. Transportation and recreation planning guidance recognizes that projects can incorporate mitigation measures that maintain or improve trail connectivity and, in some cases, provide a net benefit to recreational resources. During construction, temporary and localized disruptions (e.g., noise, dust, or access limitations)

		may occur near adjacent areas. These impacts will be addressed through standard best management practices and are not expected to result in long-term effects on recreational access or use. The project will not result in the conversion or use of parkland or protected open space under Section 4(f) of the U.S. Department of Transportation Act or Section 6(f) of the Land and Water Conservation Fund Act. Section 4(f) requires avoidance of publicly owned parks and recreational areas unless no feasible and prudent alternatives exist, while Section 6(f) protects lands acquired with federal funds from conversion to non-recreational uses without approval. Since no such resources are present within the project limits, no impacts to protected recreational lands are anticipated. References • Federal Highway Administration (FHWA). Recreational Trails Program and Benefits of Transportation Investments (2025). • Safe Routes Partnership. Federal Funding and Transportation Improvements for Park Access (2023). • Rails-to-Trails Conservancy. Top Trails in Puerto Rico (2021). • Rails-to-Trails Conservancy. Borinquen Trail Initiative (2023). • Redescubriendo Puerto Rico. Ferrocarril de Circunvalación History and Alignment. • Federal Highway Administration (FHWA). Section 4(f) Net Benefit and Environmental Review Guidance. • U.S. Department of Transportation / FHWA. Section 4(f) Regulations (23 CFR Part 774).

			• U.S. National Park Service. Land and Water Conservation Fund (Section 6(f)) Protections.
21.9.	Transportation and Accessibility	1	The proposed extension of PR-122 from PR-166 in San Germán to PR-321 in Lajas is designed to improve regional mobility, reduce congestion, and provide a more direct connection between the two municipalities. Transportation infrastructure investments such as roadway improvements are widely recognized as providing long-term benefits through enhanced mobility, reduced travel times, and improved access to services and economic opportunities. A traffic study was conducted in May 2023 to evaluate existing and future traffic conditions within the study area. Traffic studies are standard engineering tools used to collect data on traffic volumes, flow patterns, and peak-period demand, and to model "what-if" scenarios that predict the effects of transportation improvements on travel time, congestion, and system performance. The study area included PR-116, PR-122, PR-321, PR-101, PR-102, and PR-166, and involved manual traffic counts during peak weekday periods. The analysis documented existing Levels of Service (LOS) at key intersections, which is a widely used metric to evaluate roadway performance based on travel speed, delay, congestion, and user experience. Existing conditions showed moderate congestion at several intersections during AM and PM peak hours, with LOS varying by location. These conditions served as the baseline for evaluating the benefits of the proposed extension. The study evaluated multiple future scenarios, including opening year (2028), 10-year (2038), and 20-year (2048) horizons, as well as a 2048 No Action

		scenario. Traffic modeling approaches such as these are commonly used to forecast future system performance and identify improvements needed to address projected deficiencies. The analysis demonstrates that the PR-122 extension will: • Improve regional mobility and connectivity • Reduce travel times between San Germán and Lajas • Improve LOS at key intersections • Provide a safer and more efficient transportation corridor These findings are consistent with established transportation planning principles, which show that roadway improvements can enhance travel reliability, reduce congestion, and improve overall system efficiency for users. The project is not expected to adversely affect public transportation, pedestrian access, or ADA infrastructure. Modern transportation planning increasingly incorporates multimodal considerations, ensuring that roadway projects maintain or improve accessibility for all users, including pedestrians and transit users. Refer to Appendix 13: Traffic Study for detailed analysis and supporting data. References Federal Highway Administration (FHWA). Chapter 4: Mobility and Access (Highway Performance Report). Federal Highway Administration (FHWA). Scoping and Conducting a Traffic Study.

		Highway Capacity Manual / Transportation Engineering Guidance. Level of Service (LOS) Definition and Application. Federal Highway Administration (FHWA). Highway Investment Analysis Methodology. [fhwa.dot.gov] Federal Highway Administration (FHWA). Traffic Congestion and Reliability Report. U.S. Department of Transportation. Evolving Use of Level of Service Metrics and Multimodal Analysis. Government of Puerto Rico / ACT. PR-122 Expansion Project Description and Benefits (2023). Refer to Appendix 13: Traffic Study
22. NATURAL FEATURES		
Environmental Assessment Factor	**Impact Code**	**Impact Evaluation**
22.1. Unique Natural Features, Water Resources, Surface Water	2	The proposed extension of PR-122 from PR-166 in San Germán to PR-321 in Lajas is located within a predominantly rural landscape characterized by agricultural lands, forested areas, and small drainage features typical of the region. Puerto Rico's hydrography consists of a network of rivers, streams (quebradas), and drainage basins that vary in size and flow depending on rainfall and topography, with many smaller streams exhibiting seasonal or intermittent flow conditions. The project corridor does not intersect any federally designated natural landmarks, critical habitats, or unique natural features protected under federal law. However, the broader region includes environmentally sensitive resources, such as the Laguna Cartagena National Wildlife Refuge, located several kilometers southwest of the project area. This refuge is recognized as one of the most important freshwater wetland habitats in Puerto

		Rico for migratory and resident aquatic birds, highlighting the ecological significance of regional water resources. Although the refuge is not directly affected by the proposed alignment, its presence underscores the importance of applying appropriate environmental protection measures during construction. Two minor watercourses, Quebrada Maresúa and an unnamed tributary, are located within the project limits. These features are consistent with the island's extensive network of smaller streams and drainage features documented in national hydrographic datasets. These streams are not mapped as Special Flood Hazard Areas by FEMA, and the Hydrologic and Hydraulic (H&H) Study confirms that neither watercourse has established regulatory floodway limits. Floodplain management in Puerto Rico is governed by Planning Regulation No. 13, which implements National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP) requirements and establishes standards to ensure that development does not increase flood risks or adversely affect flood elevations. The study evaluated existing and proposed hydraulic conditions and determined that the project's drainage improvements—including the three-cell concrete box culvert at Quebrada Maresúa and the gabion wall at the unnamed stream—will not increase 100-year flood elevations, consistent with regulatory requirements. Compliance with these floodplain regulations is essential to minimize flood risk, protect infrastructure, and preserve natural hydrologic functions. Construction activities such as grading, excavation, and earthwork have the potential to generate temporary increases in sedimentation and runoff that could affect nearby streams and

		agricultural lands. Uncontrolled stormwater runoff from construction sites can introduce sediment and pollutants into water bodies, negatively affecting aquatic habitats and water quality. To avoid adverse impacts on water resources, the project will implement the following measures: • Best Management Practices (BMPs) for erosion and sediment control (e.g., silt fencing, sediment traps, stabilized entrances, and prompt stabilization of disturbed soils), consistent with EPA guidance for construction stormwater management. • A stormwater management system designed to maintain existing drainage patterns and prevent downstream flooding. • Compliance with the National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) Construction General Permit and development of a Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP), which is required for projects disturbing one acre or more and is designed to prevent pollutants from entering waterways. • Protection of riparian buffers and minimization of disturbance near surface water features. SWPPPs are recognized as critical tools for identifying pollution sources and implementing BMPs that minimize sediment and contaminant transport, thereby protecting nearby water bodies and ecosystems during construction activities. These measures will ensure that temporary construction impacts are minimized and that long-term hydrologic function is preserved. The project does not directly impact unique natural features or major surface waters. With the

		implementation of required BMPs and adherence to the H&H Study recommendations and applicable regulatory frameworks, no significant adverse impacts to water resources, surface waters, or sensitive ecological areas are anticipated. References • U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. Laguna Cartagena National Wildlife Refuge – Overview and Ecological Significance. • National Hydrography Dataset / USGS. Hydrologic Features of Puerto Rico. • Puerto Rico Planning Board. Planning Regulation No. 13 – Special Flood Hazard Areas Regulation. • State Regs Today. Floodplain Development and FEMA/NFIP Regulations in Puerto Rico. • U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). National Menu of Best Management Practices for Stormwater – Construction. • U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). NPDES Stormwater Requirements and SWPPP Guidance. • EcoPermit Pros. Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP) Overview. • General Hydrography Reference. Hydrology and Surface Water Systems of Puerto Rico.
22.2. Vegetation, Wildlife	2	The proposed project area generally contains mountainous and forested landscapes with secondary forests at different stages of maturity, as well as unmanaged pasturelands typical of previously disturbed agricultural areas. Puerto Rico's forest systems are ecologically important, providing critical habitat, reducing erosion, and supporting biodiversity across mountainous and rural regions.

		The USFWS IPaC report identifies Palo de rosa (Ottoschulzia rhodoxylon) as a federally listed threatened species within the general project area. This species is native to Puerto Rico and occurs in scattered subpopulations, often associated with forested habitats. No critical habitat has been designated for this species under the Endangered Species Act. Conservation efforts emphasize the protection of habitat, forest buffers, and implementation of protective measures in coordination with the Puerto Rico Department of Natural and Environmental Resources (DNER) and USFWS when evaluating infrastructure projects. Implementation of Best Management Practices (BMPs) and conservation measures during project design and construction is consistent with USFWS recommendations to avoid or minimize impacts to this species. The proposed project will not introduce non-native or invasive vegetation species that could disrupt ecological communities. This is important because island ecosystems like Puerto Rico are particularly vulnerable to invasive species, especially in disturbed areas such as roadsides, which can facilitate their spread and affect native biodiversity. Vegetation management activities associated with the project will be limited to the designated right-of-way (ROW), ensuring that adjacent natural areas remain undisturbed. All tree removal associated with the project will be mitigated in accordance with applicable requirements established by the Puerto Rico Department of Natural and Environmental Resources (DNER), the primary regulatory agency responsible for environmental protection and compliance in Puerto Rico. Landscape

		maintenance activities, including mowing and vegetation control, will occur only within the roadway corridor, minimizing disturbance to surrounding habitats. These measures help preserve ecosystem stability and resilience, which are essential for maintaining wildlife habitat and mitigating environmental stressors such as erosion, extreme weather, and habitat degradation. According to the updated USFWS IPaC report, there are no designated critical habitats within the project's direct impact area (ROW). However, the northern portion of the project lies within proximity to habitat areas associated with the Yellow-shouldered Blackbird (Agelaius xanthomus), an endemic and endangered species in Puerto Rico with a restricted distribution primarily in coastal and southwestern regions. A Flora and Fauna Study conducted during the species' breeding season did not document any visual or auditory observations of this species within the project area, indicating that direct impacts are unlikely. In addition, the project area contains potential habitat for other native species, including the Puerto Rican boa (Chilabothrus inornatus) and the Puerto Rican nightjar (Antrostomus noctitherus). The Puerto Rican boa is an endemic species historically listed under the Endangered Species Act, with recent assessments indicating population recovery and reduced threats. The Puerto Rican nightjar is also an endemic species associated with forest habitats in southern Puerto Rico and dependent on suitable vegetation structure for nesting and survival. Although these species were not detected during field surveys, the

		implementation of conservation measures and BMPs recommended by USFWS and DNER will ensure that potential impacts are avoided or minimized. The proposed project involves construction of a new roadway segment connecting two existing roadways within an already influenced transportation corridor. While the alignment traverses undeveloped land, it will not result in significant habitat fragmentation because it does not divide large, contiguous habitat blocks, and existing disturbances (e.g., agriculture, existing roads, and historical land use) have already influenced landscape connectivity. Maintaining forest buffers and minimizing clearing within the ROW reduces the potential for fragmentation and supports habitat continuity for wildlife species. References • U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS). Palo de Rosa (Ottoschulzia rhodoxylon) Species Profile. [fws.gov] • Federal Register. Reclassification of Palo de Rosa from Endangered to Threatened (2022). • U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS). Palo de Rosa Distribution and Status Information. • BirdLife International / USFWS. Yellow-shouldered Blackbird (Agelaius xanthomus) Species Information. • U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS). Puerto Rican Boa Species Status and Recovery Information. • U.S. Geological Survey (USGS). Puerto Rican Nightjar Habitat and Distribution Study (2023).

		• Puerto Rico Department of Natural and Environmental Resources (DNER). Environmental Regulatory Authority and Compliance Framework. • USDA / DRNA. Puerto Rico Forest Action Plan and Ecosystem Functions. • Frontiers in Ecology and Evolution. Invasive Species in Puerto Rico and Ecological Impacts.
22.3. Other Factors	1	After the identification of the Communities of Concern (CoC) within the project area—Retiro and Ancones Wards in the Municipality of San Germán and Santa Rosa Ward in the Municipality of Lajas—a comparative analysis was conducted against broader geographic areas to establish a socioeconomic framework. In transportation planning, CoCs are typically defined using census-based geographic units and represent populations that may experience limited access to opportunities or disproportionate socioeconomic challenges. This area, referred to as the Statistical Reference Area (SRA), includes: • Totals and averages for the municipalities of San Germán and Lajas; • Puerto Rico overall averages. The assessment of the socioeconomic profile indicates that the population within the CoC is older but has relatively high levels of educational attainment (defined as completion of at least a high school diploma) compared to other areas of Puerto Rico. While per capita income in the CoC ($9,333) is lower than the Puerto Rico average, median household income is higher than the SRA

		and Puerto Rico baseline, suggesting variability in income distribution within the area. Despite these conditions, the CoC exhibits higher unemployment rates and lower labor force participation, which are key indicators commonly used to identify disadvantaged or underserved communities in environmental justice analyses. This aligns with broader Puerto Rico socioeconomic patterns, which include relatively low employment rates and higher poverty levels compared to the United States, highlighting underlying structural economic challenges on the Island. Based on these indicators, the CoC can reasonably be classified as a disadvantaged community, particularly due to employment limitations and reduced economic participation. Under FHWA guidance, environmental justice analyses must identify and address potential effects on such populations, ensuring equitable distribution of project benefits and avoiding disproportionate adverse impacts. A key consideration in this assessment is the role of transportation in influencing socioeconomic conditions. Transportation systems are directly linked to community mobility, access to employment, and economic opportunity, and community impact assessments explicitly evaluate these relationships as part of project development. Limited transportation access can constrain economic advancement, whereas improved connectivity enhances access to jobs, education, and essential services. The proposed project consists of the construction of a new roadway segment, which is expected to improve traffic flow and connectivity between San

		Germán and Lajas. Transportation infrastructure investments are widely recognized for their ability to: • Increase access to employment opportunities; • Reduce travel time and transportation costs; • Stimulate regional economic activity and productivity; • Generate direct, indirect, and induced employment effects. Improved connectivity is particularly relevant for the tourism-based economy of La Parguera in Lajas, a well-known destination featuring natural attractions such as the bioluminescent bay, cays, and marine ecosystems that attract visitors and support local businesses. Tourism-dependent areas rely heavily on efficient transportation access to sustain economic activity and employment opportunities. As discussed in the Demographic Character Changes and Displacement section, the project will require acquisition of a limited number of residential structures and relocation of affected occupants from Parcel 011-00. PRHTA will provide relocation assistance in accordance with applicable federal and Commonwealth requirements. No disproportionate impacts to the identified Communities of Concern are anticipated. Therefore, the proposed improvements to PR-122 are expected to provide beneficial socioeconomic impacts, particularly by enhancing access between residential communities and employment centers, including tourism-related jobs in La Parguera. Improved transportation

		networks facilitate regional integration and enable underserved populations to better access labor markets and economic resources. PRHTA is coordinating with the Puerto Rico Department of Natural and Environmental Resources (DNER) regarding appropriate habitat mitigation associated with project effects on habitat connectivity within the ecological corridor. The final mitigation ratio and associated implementation requirements remain under agency coordination as of the date of this Environmental Assessment. PRHTA has committed to implement the habitat mitigation ultimately established through the applicable DNER coordination, approval, permit, or other operative agency process. The final mitigation requirement shall be documented and incorporated into the project's environmental commitments and applicable design, permitting, construction, or implementation documents before commencement of the project activity that would trigger the corresponding mitigation obligation. References • Federal Highway Administration (FHWA). Environmental Justice Reference Guide (2015). • FHWA. Community Impact Assessment Process under NEPA. • Climate Policy Dashboard. Definitions of Environmental Justice and Disadvantaged Communities (2026). • U.S. Census Bureau. Puerto Rico Social Indicators (2026). • U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS). Puerto Rico Labor Market Data (2026).

		• U.S. Department of Transportation. Economic Benefits of Transportation Infrastructure (2024–2026). • Federal Highway Administration (FHWA). Employment Impacts of Highway Infrastructure Investment. • Puerto Rico Travel Guide. Lajas and La Parguera Tourism Overview (2026).

23. ENERGY

Environmental Assessment Factor	Impact Code	Impact Evaluation
23.1.1. Energy Efficiency	1	The project will comply with the latest Puerto Rico building code and HUD's energy efficiency standards.

24. Additional Studies Performed:

Studies Performed	Appendix Number	Company/Professional	Date
Air Quality Impact Assessment	3	Behar Ybarra and Associates EHSCONSULTING SERVICES	01/2020
LBP and ACM Study ESA Phase I Report	4 4	AES International Behar Ybarra and Associates	03/2025 01/2020
Flora & Fauna Study	6	Coll Rivera Environmental	08/2017
Study to Determine Presence of the Yellow-shouldered Blackbird	7	Coll Rivera Environmental	07/2020
Archaeological Study Phase IA-IB Archaeological Documentation Monitoring Plan	9 9 9	Jaqueline López Meléndez Behar Ybarra and Associates Centro de Investigaciones Arqueológicas Bieque	04/2017 10/2023 09/2024
Noise Study	10	Behar Ybarra and Associates	09/2025
Wetlands Protection 8-Step Decision-Making Process Analysis, Wetland Jurisdictional Determination and Delineation Study, Wetlands Visual Assessment	11 11 11	Behar Ybarra and Associates Ambienta Inc.	02/2026 03/2024 12/2025

H-H Study	12	Behar Ybarra and Associates	05/2025
Traffic Study	13	Behar Ybarra and Associates	05/2023

25. Field Inspection Completed on December 18, 2022, by Miguel a. Perez Correa P.E.
A copy of the field inspection report with photos and environmental observations is included in Appendix 2.

26. List of Sources, Agencies and Persons Consulted:

Data Sources:
1. Esri Imagery Basemap service.
2. Flood zone data obtained from FEMA web viewer.
3. Coastal Zone Management Act files obtained from NOAA.
4. Wetlands, Coastal Barrier Resource Zone and Critical Habitat data U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS).
5. Hazardous site data from EPA.
6. Karst zone data obtained from USGS.
7. Puerto Rico Planning Board website.
8. USDA-NRCS (Natural Resources Conservation Service) – Farmland Classification Map.
9. Google Earth – Various Distance and Location Maps.
10. US Environmental Protection Agency, National Ambient Air Quality Standards, Nonattainment Areas for Criteria Pollutants (Green Book)

Agencies Consulted:
1. Autoridad de Acueductos y Alcantarillados (AAA)
2. Autoridad de Energía Eléctrica (AEE)
3. Institute of Puerto Rican Culture (ICP) – Dept. of Archaeology and Ethnohistory
4. State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO)
4. Puerto Rico Department of Transportation and Public Works (DTOP)
5. Municipality of San Germán and Lajas
6. USDA-NRCS (Natural Resources Conservation Service)
7. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)
8. United States Fish and Wildlife Services (USFWS)
9. Department of Natural and Environmental Resources (DNER)

Persons Consulted:
1. Kevin Martin, Atkins Realis - Project Manager. Contract for Project Oversight.
2. Jorge Lizardi, SOI-Qualified Architectural Historian – Conducted Section 106 requirement studies

3. Jaqueline López, SOI-Qualified Archaeologist - Conducted Section 106 requirement studies
4. Environmental Consultants
Walter E. Soler, Ambienta Inc. – Conducted flora and fauna surveys, Jurisdictional Determination, and Tree Inventor
Abraham Rodriguez, AES International – Conducted Asbestos Containing Materials & Lead Based Paint Studies
Jorge Coll Rivera, Coll Rivera Environmental - Study to determine the presence of Yellow-shouldered Blackbird
4. Ivan Usero Pérez, Geopráctica Inc. - Soil Study and Site Condition Analysis

27. List of Permits Obtained (see Appendix 14):

List of Permits			
Permit	Exhibit	Permit Number	Date
Environmental Recommendation issued by the OGPe	14.1	2022-466230-SRM-070566	10/02/2023
PRASA	14.2	AAA-RO-24-41-0016	3/27/2025
PR Telecommunication Bureau	14.3	2022-466230-SRI-308412	9/25/2024
LUMA	14.4	24-3-0079	10/14/2024
USACE	14.5	SAJ-2002-06830 (NWP-YCP)	6/10/2025
Construction Permit			To be obtained
National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) Construction General Permit			To be obtained

28. Public Outreach [24 CFR 50.23 & 58.43]

An early and final floodplain notices were published in newspapers of island-wide circulation to inform the public of the proposed activities within the floodplain. The notices were also sent to various agencies via email. A response to the early notice (Step 2) was received from US Fish and Wildlife Service's Caribbean Ecological Services Field Office. The email received requested additional information be provided regarding the project in question. As a response, the requested information was provided on March 13, 2025.

No further comments were received by USFWS after documents were provided and the comment period was over. No comments were received during the Step 7 comment period. As a result of the Environmental Review Process, a combined public notice for the proposed project, Finding of No Significant and Notice of Intent to Request Release of Funds (FONSI/NOI-RROF) will be published in an island-circulation newspaper. This notice will have a Spanish translation. Any substantive comments received will be addressed and incorporated into the final environmental assessment document.

As part of the public outreach, the project team conducted targeted community outreach, including direct coordination with local stakeholders, and ongoing communication with residents and businesses adjacent to the project area. Outreach activities focused on sharing the project's purpose and needs, anticipated construction activities, environmental considerations, and expected benefits resulting from the restoration of the roadway connection. A presentation to the community was conducted on January 28, 2026, in the Centro Cultural Anastacio Ruiz Irrizarry in the Municipality of Lajas. A second presentation was conducted on April 7, 2026, in the Centro de Convenciones Santiago R. Palmer, in the Municipality of San Germán, Puerto Rico. A total of 60 people and 56 people attend the meetings in Lajas and San Germán, respectively. Public outreach and stakeholder coordination show that the project is generally viewed favorably due to its purpose of completing road PR-122 and enhancing transportation safety and reliability. Copy of the meeting's stenography, citizen comment, and photos are included in Appendix 15.
During construction, public outreach will be conducted through a required project sign installed at the site. This sign will provide information about the project and include contract details for the public to submit comments or enquiries.

29. Cumulative Impact Analysis [24 CFR 58.32]
The cumulative impact analysis evaluates the incremental effects of the PR-122 Extension when added to other past, present, and reasonably foreseeable future actions within the San Germán–Lajas region. The cumulative impact study area includes the rural and semi-rural corridor within the municipalities of San Germán and Lajas surrounding the proposed project.

Land uses within the study area consist primarily of agricultural lands, scattered residential development, natural habitats, and existing transportation corridors. Past and ongoing activities include agricultural land management, dispersed residential development,

routine roadway maintenance of PR-122 and PR-321, and maintenance or expansion of municipal utilities serving nearby communities.

Reasonably foreseeable actions include routine roadway maintenance by the Puerto Rico Highway and Transportation Authority, minor utility upgrades by municipal service providers, and incremental residential development consistent with adopted municipal land use plans. No major planned infrastructure projects have been identified within the study area.

When considered in combination with these past, present, and reasonably foreseeable actions, the proposed PR-122 Extension may contribute minor incremental impacts, primarily associated with temporary construction activities. These impacts include localized increases in traffic, short-term construction noise, and minor air emissions from construction equipment. These impacts are temporary and shall be minimized through implementation of best management practices (BMPs), including erosion and sediment control measures, stormwater management practices, dust suppression, and implementation of a Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP).

Potential cumulative impacts to wetlands, water resources, and hydrologic systems were evaluated through the project's Hydrologic and Hydraulic Study. Project design incorporates drainage structures and stormwater management measures intended to maintain existing drainage patterns and minimize disturbance to adjacent wetlands and surface waters in accordance with applicable regulations.
Potential cumulative effects to biological resources were also evaluated. Habitat associated with sensitive species, including the yellow-shouldered blackbird, occurs within the broader region; however, field surveys conducted for the project did not document nesting within the project area. In coordination with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS), precautionary measures shall be implemented during vegetation clearing activities. In addition, the Puerto Rico Department of Natural and Environmental Resources (DNER) has required habitat mitigation at a 1:1 ratio. Such mitigation will be implemented as required by DNER to maintain habitat connectivity within the ecological corridor.

With respect to land use and growth, transportation improvements can facilitate increased accessibility; however, the proposed PR-122 Extension is intended to improve safety and connectivity within the existing roadway network. The surrounding area is largely rural, and future development will remain subject to municipal planning controls and applicable

environmental permitting requirements. Therefore, the project is not expected to induce substantial new development or significant land use changes.

The proposed project does not result in irreversible or irretrievable commitments of resources beyond those typical of roadway construction, and its contribution to cumulative impacts is incremental and limited in scale relative to existing conditions in the study area. When evaluated in combination with past, present, and reasonably foreseeable future actions, the proposed PR-122 Extension will not result in significant cumulative adverse impacts. The project's incremental contribution to cumulative effects is minor relative to existing conditions within the study area. Impacts are limited in scale, primarily temporary during construction, and shall be minimized through the implementation of best management practices and applicable regulatory requirements.

Therefore, cumulative impacts are not considered significant in accordance with 24 CFR 58.32

30. Alternatives [24 CFR 58.40(e)]:
In accordance with 24 CFR 58.40(e), this Environmental Assessment evaluates reasonable alternatives that could meet the project's purpose and need while avoiding or minimizing adverse environmental impacts.

The Puerto Rico Highway and Transportation Authority (PRHTA) conducted a multidisciplinary analysis to evaluate feasible roadway alignments for the extension of PR-122 between the municipalities of San Germán and Lajas. The purpose of the project is to improve regional mobility, enhance safety, and increase transportation system resilience, particularly during emergencies and flood conditions.

A total of four (4) build alternatives (Alternatives A, B, C, and D), as well as the No Action Alternative, were evaluated. Each alternative was assessed using a consistent set of criteria, including:

- Ability to meet mobility and accessibility objectives
- Constructability and engineering feasibility
- Environmental impacts (natural resources, water bodies, and cultural resources)
- Right-of-way requirements
- User safety and operational performance
- Long-term maintenance and life-cycle costs

Due to topographic constraints, all alternatives are located within a valley corridor between two mountain systems and run generally parallel to PR-101. The alignments pass near Comunidad El Retiro and connect PR-321 with PR-166.

Description of Alternatives:
Alternative A (Previously Studied Alignment – 2003) - Alternative A follows the alignment identified in the 2003 environmental documentation, extending from PR-122 and PR-321 northward to PR-166. This alternative would:

- Require the largest right-of-way acquisition
- Result in the greatest amount of earthwork and terrain modification
- Impact the highest number of historic resources, including nine identified structures

Due to these factors, Alternative A would result in the greatest environmental and cultural resource impacts and was therefore eliminated from further consideration.

Alternative B (Preferred Alternative) - Alternative B follows a similar general alignment to Alternative A but incorporates design modifications to reduce impacts. This alternative:

- Reduces grading and terrain disturbance
- Minimizes right-of-way requirements
- Avoids or reduces impacts on environmental and cultural resources
- Provides a continuous roadway meeting PRHTA Design Class R-5 standards

The design consists of four 3.65-meter travel lanes separated by a median or barrier, improving safety, operational efficiency, and long-term system performance.

Alternative C - Alternative C incorporates a different horizontal and vertical alignment, including additional bridges and retaining structures to reduce impacts in environmentally sensitive areas. While this alternative reduces some localized impacts, it:

- Requires complex structural elements
- Increases construction and maintenance costs
- Introduces additional engineering challenges

Alternative D - Alternative D further modifies the alignment to avoid mountainous terrain and certain sensitive areas. However, this alternative:

- Involves significant design modifications
- Results in higher construction costs
- Does not substantially reduce overall environmental impacts compared to Alternative B

Alternatives Evaluation and Selection

The alternatives were evaluated to identify the option that best meets the project purpose while minimizing environmental impacts:

- Alternative A was eliminated due to its greater environmental and cultural impacts, especially on historic resources and land disturbance.
- Alternatives C and D reduce certain localized impacts but introduce disproportionately higher costs, increased engineering complexity, and long-term maintenance challenges.
- Alternative B provides the best balance between environmental protection, engineering feasibility, and cost-effectiveness.

Although Alternatives C and D include design elements to avoid specific resources, they introduce additional impacts associated with structural construction and do not provide a net environmental benefit when considered comprehensively.

Preferred Alternative
Based on the analysis, Alternative B is identified as the environmentally preferable alternative, as it:

- Meets the project's purpose and need
- Minimizes impacts on environmental and cultural resources
- Reduces right-of-way requirements
- Provides a cost-effective and technically feasible solution
- Enhances mobility, safety, and system resilience

Implementation of the Selected Alternative will require permanent right-of-way (ROW) acquisition from multiple parcels within the project corridor. Most parcels identified in the Land Acquisition Plan are vacant or were previously acquired by the Puerto Rico Highway and Transportation Authority (PRHTA). However, Parcel 017-03 contains seven structures,

including four residential structures occupied by two family groups. As a result, implementation of the Selected Alternative will require ROW acquisition and may result in the relocation of these occupants. PRHTA will conduct all required acquisition activities in accordance with applicable federal and Commonwealth requirements. The Selected Alternative, together with the mitigation measures identified in this Environmental Assessment, represents the most balanced and environmentally responsible option for meeting the project's purpose and need.

The Selected Alternative, together with the mitigation measures identified in this Environmental Assessment, represents the most balanced and environmentally responsible option while meeting the project's transportation purpose and need.

31. No Action Alternative [24 CFR 58.40(e)]:

In accordance with 24 CFR 58.40(e), under the No Action Alternative, the proposed extension of PR-122 between San Germán and Lajas would not be constructed. The existing transportation network would remain unchanged, and no CDBG-MIT funding would be used to improve mobility, system redundancy, or emergency access in the region.

While the No Action Alternative would avoid short-term construction-related environmental impacts, it would not meet the project's purpose and need or support the objectives of the CDBG-MIT program related to hazard mitigation and infrastructure resilience.

Under the No Action Alternative:

- Traffic congestion and travel delays on PR-101 would persist.
- Emergency response and evacuation capabilities would remain limited, particularly during extreme weather events.
- The region would continue to lack a resilient transportation corridor less vulnerable to flooding.
- Economic development opportunities and freight mobility improvements would not be realized.
- Long-term transportation system deficiencies would remain unaddressed.

The PR-122 corridor has been identified in Commonwealth transportation planning efforts for more than two decades as a critical infrastructure improvement needed to enhance connectivity and support regional development.

Although the No Action Alternative would avoid direct environmental impacts associated with construction, it would not address existing deficiencies in mobility, safety, and hazard resilience, nor would it meet the purpose and need of the project.

Therefore, the No Action Alternative is not considered a reasonable alternative.

32. Summary of Findings and Conclusions:

The proposed project involves the construction of a new roadway segment connecting two existing segments of PR-122 within the municipalities of Lajas and San Germán. The project includes the construction of four hydraulic structures, consisting of three bridges and one box culvert at the Quebrada Maresúa crossing.

All compliance factors under 24 CFR Part 58.5 and 58.6 were reviewed. The following factors were reviewed and found to have no significant impacts or require no mitigation beyond standard conditions:

Airport Hazards
Coastal Barrier Resources
Flood Insurance
Coastal Zone Management
Floodplain Management
Clean Air
Explosive and Flammable Hazards
Farmland Protection
Noise Abatement and Control
Sole Source Aquifer
Wild and Scenic Rivers

According to the most recent U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) Information for Planning and Consultation (IPaC) and Puerto Rico Department of Natural and Environmental Resources (DNER) data, the project area is within the range of several listed species, including the Puerto Rican boa (Chilabothrus inornatus), Puerto Rican nightjar (Antrostomus noctitherus), yellow-shouldered blackbird (Agelaius xanthomus), palo de rosa (Ottoschulzia rhodoxylon), and Puerto Rican skink (Spondylurus nitidus).

No designated critical habitat occurs within the project right-of-way (ROW); however, the project is located in proximity to designated critical habitat for the yellow-shouldered blackbird and within proposed habitat for the Puerto Rican skink.

Based on consultation with USFWS, the proposed project may affect but is not likely to adversely affect these species. Impacts on biological resources have been avoided and minimized through project design, and additional protective measures shall be implemented during construction in accordance with USFWS and DNER requirements.
An asbestos and lead-based paint survey conducted in March 2025 identified limited lead presence in one structure. If demolition or renovation occurs, a lead hazard control strategy shall be implemented to prevent exposure. No asbestos-containing materials above regulatory thresholds were identified. Therefore, impacts associated with hazardous materials are not expected to be significant with implementation of standard controls.
National Wetlands Inventory mapping identifies two riverine wetlands associated with Quebrada Maresúa and an unnamed tributary. The project has been designed to minimize impacts through the use of elevated structures and hydraulic crossing improvements.

In accordance with Executive Order 11990 and 24 CFR §55.20, an 8-Step Decision-Making Process was completed. The analysis determined that no practicable alternative exists to locating the crossing at Quebrada Maresúa due to topographic and alignment constraints. The selected design, which includes a three-cell concrete box culvert, minimizes impacts to waters of the United States to the extent practicable.

Wetland and water resource impacts have been avoided and minimized through design and will be further minimized through adherence to permit conditions. The project has been authorized under U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Nationwide Permit 14, and all permit conditions shall be implemented during construction.

Consultation with the Puerto Rico State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) determined that the Tren de Circunvalación railroad features within the project area are eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places. The project results in an adverse effect on this historic resource.

In accordance with 36 CFR Part 800, mitigation measures—including documentation, protection, relocation of one culvert, and development of interpretive elements—have been developed, evaluated, and accepted by SHPO. Archaeological and architectural mitigation plans were approved, and monitoring requirements should be implemented during all phases of construction.

Temporary construction-related impacts—such as noise, dust, localized traffic disruptions, and soil disturbance—are expected to be short-term and shall be minimized through implementation of best management practices (BMPs), including erosion and sediment controls, stormwater management, and adherence to OSHA/PROSHA safety standards.
Long-term impacts are predominantly beneficial, including improved regional mobility, enhanced emergency response capacity, and increased transportation system resilience.

Based on the environmental assessment conducted in accordance with 24 CFR Part 58, the proposed project is not anticipated to result in significant impacts on the human environment. Identified impacts to wetlands, historic resources, and other environmental factors have been avoided, minimized, or mitigated to the extent practicable. All mitigation measures described in this Environmental Assessment will be implemented as conditions of project approval.

Therefore, the preparation of an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) is not required under NEPA. A Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) will be issued following the public notice and comment period in accordance with 24 CFR §§58.43 and 58.70.

33. Mitigation Measures and Conditions

Summarize below all mitigation measures adopted by the Responsible Entity to reduce, avoid, or eliminate adverse environmental impacts and to avoid non-compliance or non-conformance with the above-listed authorities and factors. These measures/conditions must be incorporated into project contracts, development agreements, and other relevant documents. The staff responsible for implementing and monitoring mitigation measures should be clearly identified in the mitigation plan.

Law, Authority, or Factor	Mitigation Measure
Clean Water Act / Stormwater (NPDES) / PRASA EQB Construction General Permit	A Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP) shall be implemented, including erosion and sediment control BMPs such as silt fences, sediment traps, stabilized construction entrances, and prompt stabilization of disturbed soils. BMPs shall be inspected and maintained throughout construction to prevent sediment discharge into Quebrada Maresúa and the unnamed tributary. Implementation – Contractor, PRHTA Compliance – DNER, EPA, PRDOH

Contamination and Toxic Substances- 24 CFR Part 58.2 (i)(2), 23 CFR Sec. 771.119 and 42 U.S.C. Chapter 82	A lead hazard control strategy shall be implemented if demolition/renovation occurs to prevent exposure to lead dust or contaminated soils. Implementation – Contractor, PRHTA Compliance - DNER, PRDOH
Endangered Species Act of 1973, Section 7: 50 CFR Part 402, 16 U.S.C. 1536, Section 7 and 23 CFR Sec. 771.119	Puerto Rican Boa Guidelines. Vegetation clearing shall be minimized; disturbance to habitat shall be avoided; species protection measures shall be implemented. Puerto Rican Nightjar and Protected Avian Species. If vegetation clearing or other habitat-disturbing activity occurs during the applicable nesting season identified in the USFWS consultation record, preconstruction surveys shall be conducted by qualified personnel within the area of potential disturbance. If an active nest or listed species is identified, the applicable avoidance measures shall be implemented and USFWS shall be contacted when required by the consultation conditions. No clearing shall proceed within an applicable avoidance area until authorized under the consultation requirements. Implementation: Contractor/Qualified Biologists Compliance/Monitoring: Inspectors, PRHTA, DNER
Historic Preservation	Resolution of Adverse Effects. The SHPO-accepted Archaeological Monitoring Work Plan and Historic-Architectural Mitigation Plan shall be implemented in accordance with their approved scope and timing. Required documentation, protection measures, interpretive measures, treatment of affected historic railroad resources, and

	other plan-specific mitigation shall be completed and documented. PRSHPO shall be notified at least 48 hours before initiation of archaeological monitoring. The relocation plan for Historic Resource No. 5 shall be submitted to PRSHPO when available, consistent with SHPO correspondence. Implementation: PRHTA, qualified archaeologist, qualified architectural historian, Contractor as applicable. Compliance/Monitoring: Inspectors, PRHTA and PRSHPO
Wetlands Protection Executive Order 11990, Sections 2, and 6 and 23 CFR Sec. 777	All 8-Step Process requirements shall be followed and USACE permit conditions complied with. Construction at or adjacent to Quebrada Maresúa and Quebrada Sin Nombre shall remain within approved construction limits and shall comply with final hydraulic design requirements and applicable permit conditions. The three-cell box culvert at Quebrada Maresúa and the authorized bank-protection/gabion work associated with Quebrada Sin Nombre shall be constructed in a manner that minimizes unnecessary channel disturbance, sediment release, bank instability, and obstruction of flows. Construction materials, excavated material, concrete washout, fuels, and debris shall not be stored or discharged into the channels except as specifically authorized. Implementation: Contractor Compliance/Monitoring: PRHTA /Inspectors
Explosive and Flammable Hazards – 24 CFR Part 51, Subpart C and 23 CFR Sec. 771.119	Use of explosives shall comply with all permit requirements. A permit from DNER shall be obtained prior to use. Nearby

	residents shall be notified in advance of blasting activities. Blasting vibrations shall be monitored using seismographic equipment to prevent damage to structures. Air and noise impacts associated with blasting shall be minimized through implementation of BMPs. Implementation – Contractor Compliance – PRHTA Inspectors
Noise Abatement and Control	Sound attenuation measures to minimize noise impact during construction. Restrict construction activities to daytime hours (7:00 a.m.–6:00 p.m.); maintain equipment in good working order; use mufflers or noise-reducing attachments; turn off idling equipment when not in use. Implementation – Contractor Compliance – PRHTA Inspectors
Soil Suitability/ Slope/ Erosion/ Drainage/ Storm Water Runoff	Erosion controls shall be implemented; soil shall be stabilized promptly; stockpiling near watercourses shall be avoided; controls shall be inspected after rainfall. Implementation – Contractor Compliance – PRHTA Inspectors
Environmental Commitment Tracking	PRHTA shall maintain an Environmental Commitments Compliance Log identifying each commitment, responsible party, required timing, implementation status, inspection or monitoring record, agency notification, corrective action, and completion documentation. Commitments applicable to construction shall be incorporated into contract documents and communicated to the contractor before notice to proceed. Implementation: PRHTA /Project Management Team

	Compliance/Monitoring: PRHTA and Inspectors
Ecological Corridor and Habitat Connectivity.	Habitat mitigation required by DNER shall be implemented in accordance with the final agency-approved mitigation requirements, including the applicable mitigation ratio, acreage, location, planting/restoration specifications, protection mechanism, monitoring period, and success criteria. Measures shall preserve or restore ecological connectivity affected by the project. Implementation: PRHTA, Contractor/qualified biologist as applicable. Compliance/Monitoring: PRHTA Inspectors
Temporary Traffic Control Plan	Maintenance of Traffic/Temporary Traffic Control Plan shall be implemented. Access for emergency services, residents, businesses, and affected properties shall be maintained to the extent practicable. Advance notice shall be provided for material closures or access changes. Implementation: Contractor Compliance/Monitoring: PRHTA Inspectors

34. Determination:

☒ **Finding of No Significant Impact** [24 CFR 58.40(g)(1)]
(The project will not result in a significant impact on the quality of the human environment.)

☐ **Findings of Significant Impact** [24 CFR 58.40(g)(2)]
(The project may significantly affect the quality of the human environment.)

Preparer Signature: 	**Date: 7 / 30 / 2026**

Name/Title/Organization: **Yazmín M. Acevedo Ortiz / Senior Environmental Specialist / Behar Ybarra and Associates LLC**

Certifying Officer Signature: Edwin J. Vz del Valle	**Date:** 8 /20/ 2026
Name/Title: Edwin Velázquez del Valle, Certifying Officer	

This original, signed document and related supporting material must be retained on file by the Responsible Entity in an Environmental Review Record (ERR) for the activity/project (ref: 24 CFR Part 58.38) and in accordance with recordkeeping requirements for the HUD program(s).