**Nebraska Department of Transportation**

**HIGHWAY PROJECT INFORMATION**

NDOT PROJECT:

STP-97-4(110) Merritt Reservoir North; C.N. 80731

The Nebraska Department of Transportation (NDOT) is currently soliciting public input on the proposed improvements of Nebraska Highway 97 (N-97) in Cherry County.

Identified as ***Merritt Reservoir North****,* the proposed project would improve approximately 5.05 miles of N-97.

The project would start approximately 39.9 miles north of the Hooker-Cherry County Line at mile marker (MM) 110.35, and extend north to MM 115.40, approximately 25.7 miles south of the southern corporate limits of Valentine. Construction may begin and/or end approximately 200 feet ahead of or beyond the actual project limits to accommodate transitioning the pavement.

The purpose of this proposed project is to preserve the N-97 transportation asset, improve the reliability of the transportation system, and perpetuate the mobility of the traveling public. The need for this proposed project is based on the current condition of the roadway.

The proposed improvements on this project consist of milling and resurfacing the roadway with asphalt, widening of the roadway, and improving highway drainage in spot locations. Asphalt patching would be made prior to the resurfacing. Existing non-surfaced accesses to the Nebraska Game and Park Commission (NGPC) recreational areas would be surfaced. Existing surfaced accesses to the NGPC recreational areas would be resurfaced. To improve sight distance, the Hoffman Flat and Lone Tree Area & Campground entrances would be slightly relocated.

The project would require the acquisition of additional property rights, which could include new right-of-way (ROW), control of access (CA), permanent easements (PE), and/or temporary easements (TE). If your property is impacted by this project, you will be contacted by a representative once the design footprint has been established. Access to adjacent properties would be maintained during construction but may be limited at times due to phasing requirements.

This project would occur within the Merritt Reservoir State Recreation Area. Wetland impacts are anticipated and would be mitigated as necessary.

This project would be constructed under traffic with lane closures controlled by appropriate traffic control devices and practices.

Construction of the proposed project could begin as early as spring of 2024 and be complete by the winter of 2024.

The public is encouraged to make suggestions or express concerns regarding this proposed project. Materials can be provided in alternative languages or formats. Comments will be collected through May 22, 2023. Written comments or requests should be submitted to: Sierra Luhn, Public Involvement Specialist, Nebraska Department of Transportation, P.O. Box 94759, Lincoln, NE 68509-4759; sierra.luhn@nebraska.gov; voice telephone 402-479-3103, Fax 402-479-3989.

Information regarding the proposed project will be made available on the NDOT website at [ndot.info/](http://dot.nebraska.gov/projects/future-projects/)80731. For those without internet access, information may be obtained through the contact above or at NDOT Headquarters, 1500 Nebraska Pkwy, Lincoln, NE. For further information, contact Mark Kovar, NDOT District 8 Engineer, 402-387-2471, mark.kovar@nebraska.gov.