



U.S. Department
of Transportation
**Federal Highway
Administration**

Texas Division Office
300 E. 8th Street, Rm. 826
Austin, Texas 78701

In reply refer to:
HDA-TX

November 10, 2008

Amadeo Saenz, Jr., P.E.
Executive Director
Texas Department of Transportation
125 E. 11th Street
Austin, Texas 78701

Re: US 281 from Loop 1604 to Borgfeld Road, Bexar County, Texas

Dear Mr. Saenz:

We have received and reviewed your letter and the attached copy of a letter from Ms. Terry Brechtel, the Executive Director of the Alamo RMA. The subject of these letters is the environmental process on US 281 from Loop 1604 to Borgfeld Road in San Antonio, Bexar County, Texas (US 281 Corridor). While we understand and appreciate your comments on the process, the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) will require that an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) be prepared for any future federal transportation project in the US 281 Corridor.

We believe the EIS process is necessary and called for under our regulations and those of the Council of Environmental Quality due to the level of environmental controversy in the subject area. We do not believe that an Environmental Assessment (EA) will sufficiently address that controversy. We completely agree with your observation that an EIS will "help address concerns related to the complex natural and human environment that co-exist in this area of San Antonio."

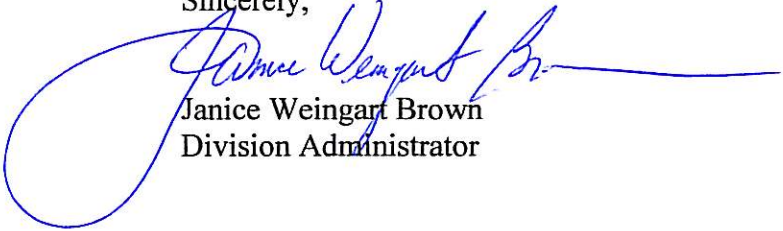
The new environmental process on any project in the US 281 Corridor will also be subject to full and comprehensive oversight by the Texas Division of FHWA. This expanded oversight will require that we work closely with TxDOT and the Alamo RMA. However, given the recently discovered discrepancies in the award of scientific services contracts for the 2007 EA, we believe that the San Antonio District office of TxDOT should have no role in supervising the new environmental studies. In addition, the EIS process will need to examine all reasonable alternatives that would meet the need and purpose of the project.

**MOVING THE
AMERICAN
ECONOMY**



Again, we look forward to working with you and the Alamo RMA in the development of this new environmental document. Please feel free to contact me with any questions.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Janice Weingart Brown", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Janice Weingart Brown
Division Administrator

cc: Terry Brechtel, Alamo RMA
Bob Jackson, TxDOT
Dianna Noble, TxDOT
Salvador Deocampo, FHWA
Michael Leary, FHWA
Tom Bruechert, FHWA
Ted West, FHWA