

## Was this an accurate estimate from the DOT Chief Engineer (KS) or a just a guesstimate to make the Benefit/Cost ratio fit the project?

MUST READ - FOAA document #000364/000365

13 January 2012 email from the MaineDOT Chief Engineer (KS) to the MaineDOT project manager (RC). "Fill in the range of costs alternatives....Low should be no greater than \$65 M ..you decide High." Engineering guidance or just a guesstimate?? Seems like they decided on a price that would make the project doable and nothing more. It should be noted that this alternative has only gone through preliminary engineering to date and there is really no way to accurately estimate the cost of this project until final engineering reveals the real geology of the area. It is well known to many in the area that the 6.1 mile length of 2B-2 will face boggy areas, areas with a lot of ledge and even areas around the I-395 interchange that had compacting issues when I-395 was initially constructed. Don't forget that this connector will go some 40 feet under Eastern Ave. and Mann Hill Road - not an easy feat with the geology of this area.

One of my earliest posts when the cost was \$61 million with updated comments on following page. Also to review how we got here-view Gretchen's 2013 FOAA briefing.

**From:** Sweeney, Ken

**Sent:** Friday, January 13, 2012 1:07 PM

**To:** Charette, Russ

000364

**Subject:** RE: I-395/Route 9 Study

Yes...as follows:

Does the purpose statement need to reference AASHTO POLICY? If it must then it should say GUIDE not policy.

Add a sentence or two about Freight connectivity and the recent Congressional action to allow 100k trucks on the interstate system and the critical need to provide a safe connection to the interstate system for those trucks on route 9 from Canada and regionally from Washington County and EastPort Port needing to travel to points south and west.

Fill in the range of cost alternatives....Low should be no greater than \$65 M ..you decide High

000365

Anticipated Construction could begin in 2014-2015

We also discussed wording and had a meeting with the biologists that led to a comment that we should only commit to the 1.2 bankful on the structures that make environmental sense and not a blanket 1.2 statement. We should also avoid the "will be considered in final design" when it involves environmental commitment because the regulators interpret the language consider the same as require.

That's all I recall

Thanks

ken

[Click here to view briefing by Gretchen Heldman of March 2013 FOAA release.](#)

**Are construction costs intentionally “low-balled”, falsified or manipulated to get projects through the process to final acceptance?**

We always felt that there was a magic cost number that the DOT was trying to stay under when they priced the connector beneath the \$65 million number that the Chief Engineer gave to the Project Manager in 1.13.2012, FOAA #000364. It needs to be noted that it would become clear through other FOAA documents that the \$61 million cost was necessary to keep the Benefit/Cost ratio above the 1.0 project viability value—simple put—the DOT manipulated and falsified the B/C ratio:

- (12.06.2011) FOAA #000392 defined the cost of 2B-2 @ \$93.24 million using design criteria for freeways.
- (1.30.2012) DOT Chief Engineer (KS) decided to go to cheaper rolling rural criteria that will decrease costs by 1/3 in FOAA #000431.
- (8.01.2012) FOAA #187 defined benefits @ \$61,424,195.00 and 1.1 B/C.
- However 1/3 of the cost was actually \$62.16 million when reduced by 1/3 of \$93.24 million—exceeding the \$61,424,195.00 benefits—\$62.16 million cost would have dropped the B/C ratio below the 1.0 value and the project would not be viable—so—it should be obvious that the DOT falsified the cost from \$62.16 million to \$61 million to make the project viable—and raises the question if the DOT has also falsified the 2017 cost @ \$79.25 million and what is the actual cost now at the end of 2019 when it appears that costs have risen by 46% since March estimates. Is there any wonder why we mistrust DOT?
- I contend that the manipulation of the B/C ratio was intentional (possible even criminal) to make 2B-2 appear affordable...what's next?? And, why should we believe it? 2B-2 may already have decreased the B/C ratio below viability with updated 2019 costs.