



***SURFACE TRANSPORTATION BOARD***  
*Washington, DC 20423*

*Office of Environmental Analysis*

November 18, 2011

Dear Reader:

The Surface Transportation Board's Office of Environmental Analysis (OEA) is pleased to announce the issuance of the Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS) for the R.J. Corman/Pennsylvania Lines Inc. (RJCP) proposed rail line construction, operation, and reactivation in Clearfield and Centre Counties, Pennsylvania. The proposed rail line would extend approximately twenty miles from Wallacetown to Gorton, Pennsylvania. RJCP would use the new rail line to serve a new waste-to-ethanol facility, quarry, and industrial park currently being developed by Resource Recovery, LLC (RRLC) near Gorton, Pennsylvania, as well as several other interested shippers located along the proposed line. Operations over the rail line would be one or at most two trains daily.

OEA issued a Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) on July 23, 2010, which discussed the potential environmental impacts that could result from the construction, operation, and reactivation of the proposed rail line and included OEA's preliminary recommendations for mitigating possible environmental effects. In response to the DEIS, OEA received 72 written/electronic comments, as well as 18 oral comments submitted at a public meeting held in Philipsburg, Pennsylvania, on September 14, 2010. After carefully reviewing all comments received, as well as additional information about the project proposal, OEA decided to prepare a Supplemental Draft Environmental Impact Statement (SDEIS) to address several changes in the project that had taken place since the preparation of the DEIS. The SDEIS focused on three specific matters: 1) the potential environmental impacts associated with RJCP's proposed transport of ethanol, a regulated hazardous material, over the rail line, 2) the change in the preliminary plan approval status of the No-Build Alternative – Local Road System Upgrade (Black Rock Road), and 3) the results of the 2010 summer field survey for Branching Bur-reed (*Sparganium androcladum*), a Pennsylvania Endangered Species. The SDEIS was issued on March 4, 2011.

In response to the SDEIS, OEA received an additional 23 written/electronic comments. Due to the public meetings that had already been held on this project and the limited focus of the SDEIS, OEA requested written comments only. All written/electronic comments received on the DEIS and SDEIS have been included in the appendices of this FEIS. Similarly, a complete copy of the transcript from the September 14, 2010 public meeting, including all 18 oral comments, has also been included in the appendices of this FEIS.

OEA has prepared this FEIS to address the public and agency comments that were received in response to both the DEIS and SDEIS. The FEIS, which is organized in a manner that is consistent with Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ) regulations, is intended to be read in conjunction with both the DEIS and SDEIS, which provide more detailed information on

the Proposed Action and Alternatives, as well as their respective impacts on the human environment. There are numerous references throughout this FEIS to pertinent sections, chapters, and appendices of the DEIS and SDEIS to avoid repetition between the documents. Thus, this document incorporates via reference, instead of repeating, the comprehensive affected environment and environmental impact analysis that was included in the DEIS and SDEIS. In addition to responding to the numerous public and agency comments received on the DEIS and SDEIS, the FEIS clarifies and, where necessary, expands upon certain environmental impact information presented in the DEIS and SDEIS, discusses OEA's conclusions, and includes OEA's final environmental mitigation recommendations for this project.

Based on the information presented in the DEIS, OEA concluded that the Modified Proposed Action would be environmentally preferable to the Proposed Action and would also be the environmentally preferable alternative for this project. In the SDEIS, OEA again found, after considering the new information presented, that the Modified Proposed Action would be the environmentally preferable alternative. Finally, after carefully reviewing and responding to all of the comments submitted on the DEIS and SDEIS in this FEIS, OEA continues to find that the Modified Proposed Action would be the environmentally preferable alternative for this project.

### **Availability of the FEIS**

OEA has distributed the FEIS to all parties of record, including key governmental agencies and other appropriate entities. OEA has made the FEIS available for review in the Clearfield County Public Library in Curwensville, PA, the Osceola Mills Public Library in Osceola Mills, PA, the Shaw Public Library in Clearfield, PA, the Centre County Public Library in Bellefonte, PA, and the Holt Memorial Library in Philipsburg, PA. The entire document is also available on the Board's website at [www.stb.dot.gov](http://www.stb.dot.gov).

### **Next Steps**

Issuance of this FEIS completes the Board's environmental review process. The Board will now make a final decision on the proposed project. In making its final decision, the Board will consider the entire environmental record, including all public comments, the DEIS, the SDEIS, the FEIS, and OEA's final recommended mitigation. No project-related construction may begin until the Board's final decision has been issued and has become effective.

OEA anticipates that the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA) will publish the notice of availability of the FEIS in the *Federal Register* on November 25, 2011. Under CEQ regulations (40 C.F.R. 1506.10(b)), agencies must wait 30 days from USEPA's Federal Register notice before issuing a final decision unless they have an internal appeal process. The Board has such a process, which means that the Board could issue a final decision in less than 30 days from November 25, 2011. If the Board were to do so, OEA recommends that the Board's administrative review period be extended to permit parties to seek agency reconsideration of the final decision within 30 days after it is served, rather than the typical 20 days. The Board would consider any administrative appeals in a subsequent decision.

OEA appreciates the efforts of all parties who reviewed and commented on the DEIS and the SDEIS. Thank you for your interest and participation in the environmental review process.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Victoria Rutson". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Victoria" written in a larger, more prominent script than the last name "Rutson".

Victoria Rutson  
Director  
Office of Environmental Analysis

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