

Surface Transportation Board

Finance Docket No. 35087

Canadian National Railway Company, Grand Trunk Corporation
–Control–
Elgin, Joliet, and Eastern Railway

Guide to the Final Environmental Impact Statement

This Final Environmental Impact Statement (Final EIS) evaluates the environmental impacts of the proposed acquisition of the Elgin, Joliet, and Eastern Railway by the Canadian National Railway and Grand Trunk Corporation, together with its affiliates (Applicants). The Surface Transportation Board (Board), Section of Environmental Analysis (SEA), has examined and evaluated concerns beyond those originally presented in the Draft EIS. More than 9,500 comments were received by SEA from the public, agencies, elected officials, organizations, businesses, individuals and other stakeholders during the 60-day comment period.

The Final EIS responds to public comments on the Draft EIS; identifies corrections and changes to information presented in the Draft EIS; discusses SEA's conclusions regarding environmental effects; and reflects additional work on all of the rail operations and resource issues raised during the Draft EIS comment period. Furthermore, the Final EIS includes SEA's final environmental mitigation recommendations, including the requirement that the Applicants comply with the terms of the Negotiated Agreements with Joliet, Illinois, and Crest Hill, Illinois, and mitigation for the transaction-related construction activities.

This document has been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) of 1969, as amended (42 U.S.C. 4321); the Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ) regulations implementing NEPA; the Board's environmental rules (49 CFR Part 1105); and other applicable environmental statutes and regulations.

This Final EIS contains an Executive Summary and five chapters which include: 1) Introduction and Background; 2) Revised Information; 3) Comment Summaries and Responses; 4) Final Recommended Conditions; and 5) Public Involvement and Community Outreach.

Executive Summary

- The **Executive Summary** provides an overview of the Applicants' stated purpose of and need for the Proposed Action; responds to comments received on the Draft EIS; identifies corrections and changes to the information presented in the Draft EIS; discusses SEA's conclusions regarding environmental effects; and includes SEA's final environmental mitigation recommendations.

Volume I: Chapters 1 – 2

- **Chapter 1, "Introduction and Background"** provides a brief background of the Chicago rail system, including both freight and commuter services. It also describes the Applicants' Purpose and Need, Proposed Action and Alternatives to the Proposed Action. This chapter also describes the Board's jurisdiction and review process for this proposed

transaction. Finally, Chapter 1 provides a brief summary of the community outreach and public involvement activities that have occurred since the Draft EIS was issued.

- **Chapter 2, “Revised Information”** describes the additional analyses SEA conducted in response to issues raised during the Public Comment Period. This information includes additional environmental analysis conducted at the Matteson and Leithton connections, as well as additional analyses for the STAR Line, school safety, hazardous materials transport, emergency services, noise and vibration, air quality, environmental justice, biological resources, and cumulative effects. Chapter 2 also presents a section showing changes and corrections to text in the Draft EIS.

Volume II: Chapters 3 – 5, Preparers, References, Index

- **Chapter 3, “Comment Summaries and Responses”** summarizes the nearly 55,000 comment issues on the Draft EIS that were raised during the comment period on the Draft EIS. The chapter provides a brief description of the comment process, followed by highlights of the comments SEA received. Specific responses to letters provided by the US Department of Interior, US Department of Transportation, and US Environmental Protection agency are presented, as are responses to issues raised by the Applicants in their comment letter. Finally, Chapter 3 presents summaries of and responses to the many comments SEA received on concerns about traffic congestion, emergency services, rail safety, and many other issues.
- **Chapter 4, “Final Recommended Conditions”** discusses SEA’s recommended environmental mitigation that is designed to address the project-related adverse impacts. In addition to SEA’s recommended mitigation, Chapter 4 also sets forth the Applicants’ voluntary mitigation and the two negotiated agreements that Applicants have reached with Joliet Illinois, and Crest Hill, Illinois.
- **Chapter 5, “Outreach and Coordination”** describes the process SEA undertook to engage the public, community organizations, and elected officials in the Board’s environmental review process. The process began with the 14 Scoping Meetings held in January 2008, the eight public meetings held in August and September 2008 to receive comments on the Draft EIS, and concluded with a Public Meeting in November 2008 in Washington, D.C. In addition to the public meetings, SEA held numerous meetings with resource agencies, stakeholders, and elected officials.

Volume II also includes the following:

- **List of Preparers**, which lists the names and qualifications of all the individuals primarily responsible for preparing the EIS.
- **References**, which lists the sources of information used in preparing the EIS.
- **Index**, which lists names, places, and key topics alphabetically, together with the page numbers on which they occur in the EIS.

The Final EIS also includes **Appendices** containing the detailed analyses conducted in various technical disciplines. Additional appendices contain administrative information, public outreach and agency consultation information and documents, relevant Board decisions, and information provided by CN in response to SEA’s request for additional information. Also included in the appendices are transcripts of all of the Draft EIS Public Meetings and copies of all comments received on the Draft EIS.

The **Appendices** are organized as follows:

Volume III: Appendix A

Appendix A – Additional Technical Information

- A.1 Revised Matteson Rail Connection
- A.2 Revised Leithton Rail Connection
- A.3 Metra STAR Line analysis
- A.4 Rail Safety
- A.5 Transportation Systems
- A.6 Environmental Justice Statistical Analysis
- A.7 Air Quality Modeled Impacts
- A.8 Noise and Vibration
- A.9 Biological Report
- A.10 Cultural Resources
- A.11 Corrections & Revisions to Draft EIS Appendices

Volume IV: Appendices B through C

Appendix B – Administrative Information

- B.1 Relevant Board Decisions and Federal Register Notices
- B.2 Agency Consultation and Coordination
- B.3 Public Outreach Materials
- B.4 Alternative Language Materials

Appendix C: Applicant Information

- C.1 Information Requests
- C.2 Additional Information from the Applicants

Volume V: Appendices D through E

Appendix D: Meeting Transcripts

- D.1 Matteson, Illinois
- D.2 Mundelein, Illinois
- D.3 Barrington, Illinois
- D.4 Bartlett, Illinois
- D.5 Chicago, Illinois
- D.6 Aurora, Illinois
- D.7 Gary, Indiana
- D.8 Joliet, Illinois

Appendix E: Comments on the Draft EIS

- E.1 Comments from the U.S. Department of Interior
- E.2 Comments from the U.S. Department of Transportation
- E.3 Comments from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
- E.4 Comments received from the Applicants
- E.5 Comments from all others on the Draft EIS (on CD only)

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