Threatened or Endangered Species

Responses from all agencies contacted regarding threatened or endangered species have not been received. The USFWS did not identify any threatened or endangered species in the proposed construction area. The area is heavily disturbed and influenced by rail road and urban development. Due to this lack of habitat, no impacts to threatened or endangered species are expected.

Parks, Forest Preserves, Refuges, and Sanctuaries

No adverse impacts are expected to these resources since no state or federal parks, preserves, refuges or sanctuaries are in the vicinity of the proposed construction.

3.2.3.4 Air Quality

Madison County is an air quality attainment area. Impacts to air quality would result from construction, operation and maintenance of the proposed project. The operation of heavy equipment would be the primary source of pollutant emissions during construction activities. Such pollutants vary by the source, as described below:

- Particulate matter, volatile organic compounds (VOCs), carbon monoxide (CO) and nitrogen oxides (NOX) resulting from the combustion of diesel fuel
- Fugitive dust emissions along the right-of-way and unimproved roads resulting from the operation of heavy equipment.

Fugitive dust can be controlled by using water sprays or other suitable dust suppressants. The combustion emissions associated with removal operations (VOCs, CO and NOX) generally would be minor and of short duration and would have insignificant impacts on air quality. The amount of overall train traffic on the proposed rail line would exceed STB thresholds for air

quality. General air quality impacts are discussed in Part 4 Appendix A. Air quality impacts related to increased traffic on rail segments are discussed in Part 2.

3.2.3.5 Noise

Thirty seven residences would be within 500 feet of the proposed construction. All of these residences are currently within 500 feet of the existing rail lines. Presently, these residences are exposed to the noise of approximately seven passing trains per day. The proposed connection would have seven trains per day operating over it. This increase does not exceed STB thresholds for noise evaluation. However, the new connection could create additional noise due to the wheel squeal generated by trains operating on the connection. Seven trains per day would generate an Ldn 65 distance of approximately 700 feet, should wheel squeal occur. Sixty-five residences, including the 37 within 500 feet, would potentially be affected by noise from wheel squeal.

Construction operations could cause temporary increases in noise levels. Construction activities would require the use of trucks and heavy equipment. Noise generated by such equipment would be temporary and limited to the short construction period.

3.2.3.6 Historic and Cultural Resources

No documented archaeological sites or historic properties are on or near the proposed right-of-way. However, the potential for undocumented archaeological and historic sites has not been dismissed. As part of the Section 106 process, the Indiana SHPO could require site-specific field surveys to verify that no archaeological resources or historic properties would be disturbed or destroyed by the proposed construction. NS has begun consultation with the Indiana SHPO regarding the proposed site. NS will continue consultations with the Indiana SHPO to determine any further requirements.

3.2.3.7 Transportation and Safety

The proposed rail line construction project would improve train movement to destinations, enhancing the efficiency of NS operations. Rail traffic on the proposed rail line (nine trains per day) would cause minor traffic delays. Short-term disruptions of local traffic could occur during the one to two month construction period.

Train traffic on the proposed rail line would increase the potential for vehicle-train accidents at the Berry Street at-grade crossing, which has crossbuck warning signs. Pending final design, the existing at-grade crossing and warning signals at Berry Street may need to be upgraded. Any necessary upgrades will be completed in cooperation with the Indiana Department of Transportation (DOT).

EDR's database search did not identify any hazardous waste sites or other sites of environmental concern in the vicinity of the proposed rail line construction. The database search revealed 7 unmappable sites, two within the city limits of Alexandria and 5 within Madison County. These sites could not be located because of poor address or geocoding information provided to the state and/or federal databases. Based on observations made during the site visit, these sites are not in or adjacent to the proposed right-of-way.

The scrap yard on the proposed construction site was not listed in any of the searched databases. However, the potential for environmental contamination at the site cannot be eliminated. The scrap yard accepts batteries for recycling, in addition to scrap steel and other metals. The property will be assessed prior to conducting construction activities. If any contamination is encountered, proper response and remediation of the property will be implemented.

Fuels and oils necessary for construction equipment would be present only in small amounts. In the unlikely event that a spill occurs, only a small amount would be released. In the case of a

spill, NS will follow appropriate emergency response procedures outlined in its emergency response plans.

3.2.4 Potential Environmental Impact of Alternative Actions

3.2.4.1 Build Alternatives

No other build alternatives for the proposed rail line construction project were identified. The proposed construction route provides the most direct rail line connection and would minimize land use outside the NS and Conrail rights-of-way and related potential environmental impacts.

3.2.4.2 No-Action Alternative

If the no-action alternative were implemented, the proposed rail line connection would not be constructed and operated. Land use and other environmental conditions in the region would remain the same. Under this alternative, NS would continue to maintain and/or operate over less efficient rail routes. Improved efficiency between Chicago and Cincinnati and the Southeast for customers would not be realized. This alternative would result in delays from congestion, greater fuel consumption, air emissions, noise and an overall increase in expense to NS and the consumer. The no-action alternative is not considered practical or viable.

3.2.5 Proposed Mitigation

The proposed construction would result in minimal to no impact to land use, water resources, biological resources, air quality, noise, cultural resources, and transportation and safety. In consideration of minimal impacts and general NS practices, NS has proposed the following mitigation measures to minimize environmental impacts:

3.2.5.1 Land Use

- NS will restore any adjacent properties that are disturbed during construction.

3.2.5.2 Water Resources

- NS will use Best Management Practices (BMPs) to control erosion, runoff and surface instability during construction. After the new rail line is constructed, NS will reseed outside the subgrade slope to provide permanent cover and prevent potential erosion.

3.2.5.3 Biological Resources

- NS will use BMPs to control erosion, runoff and surface instability during construction. After the new rail line is constructed, NS will reseed outside the subgrade slope to provide permanent cover and prevent potential erosion.

3.2.5.4 Air Quality

- NS will comply with all applicable federal, state and local regulations regarding the control of fugitive dust.

3.2.5.5 Noise

- NS will control temporary noise from construction equipment by ensuring all machinery has properly functioning muffler systems and by work hour controls.

3.2.5.6 Historic and Cultural Resources

- NS will continue the Section 106 consultation process.

3.2.5.7 Transportation and Safety

- NS will observe all applicable federal, state and local regulations regarding handling and disposal of any waste materials encountered or generated during the proposed construction project.
- NS will transport all hazardous materials in compliance with the U.S. Department of Transportation Hazardous Materials Regulations (49 CFR parts 171-174 and 177-179).
- In the case of a spill, NS will follow appropriate emergency response procedures outlined in its emergency response plans.

- NS will restore all roads disturbed during construction to the conditions required by state or local regulations.

3.2.6 References

City of Alexandria Zoning Maps, April, 1997. Personal communication and faxed map copies.

Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), 1981. *FEMA Flood Insurance Rate Map.*

U.S. Department of Agriculture, 1967. *Soil Survey of Madison County.* Natural Resources Conservation Service.

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, 1997. Bloomington Field Office Letter regarding threatened and endangered species.

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, 1983. *National Wetlands Inventory Map.* Alexandria Quadrangle.

U.S. Geological Survey, 1994. *1:24,000-scale topographic maps.* Alexandria Quadrangle.

40 CFR Part 81 - Designation of Areas for Air Quality Planning Purposes, Subpart C Section 107, Attainment Status Designations.

3.3 BUTLER (NS)

Butler, IN is in De Kalb County, 35 miles northeast of Fort Wayne (Figure 11). Existing rail lines in the area include the north/south-oriented NS Detroit line and the east/west-oriented Conrail Chicago line.

The proposed construction site is on the east side of Butler. The site extends from southwest to northeast crossing U.S. Hwy. 6 and will occupy an area approximately 200 by 1,700 feet. The new right-of-way would occupy an area approximately 100 by 1,700 feet (3.9 acres). The proposed construction site has been disturbed and is dominated by grassland areas and a wooded/weedy ditch adjacent to the existing track. A bowling alley is south of U.S. Hwy. 6 and west of the NS Detroit line. Residences and businesses surround the proposed construction site.

3.3.1 Proposed Action and Alternatives

3.3.1.1 Proposed Action

The proposed action at Butler would involve constructing and operating a connecting track between the existing Conrail and NS tracks (Figure 4-11). This construction would create a new, efficient, more direct route between Detroit, MI and Chicago, IL and will reduce congestion in Ft. Wayne. The design would include new powered turnouts on the NS mainlines and approximately 1,700 feet of new rail line northeast of the existing crossing diamond. The proposed construction would require acquisition of approximately 3.9 acres of right-of-way and leave the existing NS/Conrail crossing diamond intact.

Construction Requirements

The exact labor force and duration of construction are not available, but are expected to require 10-15 people and three to six months. A culvert pipe may be required where the rail line would cross a ditch. Borrow material for the project would be obtained from local sources and hauled to the construction site by rail or truck.

Changes in Traffic

Following are the estimated changes in traffic over the rail lines that would be connected by the proposed construction:

- Traffic on the NS mainline north of Butler would increase from 15 to 17 trains per day.
- Traffic on the Conrail mainline west of Butler would decrease from 51 to 40 trains per day.
- Traffic on the new construction would be four trains per day.

3.3.1.2 Alternatives

Build Alternatives

No other build alternatives were identified for the proposed rail line connection. The proposed rail line would be the most direct connection between the existing rail lines and would minimize the use of new land outside the existing NS and Conrail rights-of-way and associated impacts.

No-Action Alternative

Under the no-action alternative, existing and additional post-Acquisition rail traffic would continue to operate over existing NS and Conrail rail lines. Access between the two lines would be limited to existing interchanges and terminals. The no-build alternative would reduce the total economic and operational efficiency that would be possible under the proposed Acquisition.

3.3.2 Existing Environment

3.3.2.1 Land Use

The land on the site is zoned for heavy industry, two-family residential, local business and institutional uses (Figure 4-11). Land use on the site is dominated by a wooded weedy ditch and grassland areas adjacent to existing rights-of-way. The area around the proposed construction

site is dominated by rail, residential and commercial uses. A buried MCI fiber optic cable is on the north side of the Conrail line.

None of the soils at the site are classified as prime farmland.

The project is not within a designated coastal zone.

According to the Bureau of Indian Affairs, no federally-recognized Indian tribes or Indian reservations exist in Indiana.

3.3.2.2 Water Resources

The only surface waters at the site consist of a drainage ditch along the north side of the Conrail line (Figure 4-11). This ditch drains into Big Run Creek, which then empties into the St. Joseph River. The St. Joseph River is approximately five miles east of the proposed construction site. The prevailing storm water flow is from south to north, toward Big Run Creek. The ditch would be crossed by the proposed construction.

The proposed construction area is not within a 100-year floodplain.

NWI maps indicate that no wetlands are on the proposed construction site. No hydric soils are located on the site.

3.3.2.3 Biological Resources

Vegetation

Vegetation at the proposed construction site primarily consists of small trees, shrubby brush, grasses and weedy species. Vegetation in the vicinity of the proposed construction area has been disturbed by previous railroad development and operations, as well as residential and commercial development. This vegetation is not unique or limited in the area.

Wildlife

Because the proposed location is in a developed area and consists of small trees, shrubby brush, weeds and grasses, the potential for wildlife is low. Wildlife would mainly be limited to birds and small mammals that have adapted to developed areas. The drainage ditch on the site may support some amphibians or reptile species.

Threatened or Endangered Species

USFWS and the Indiana DNR were contacted regarding threatened and endangered species in the area of the proposed project. The USFWS did not indicate any threatened or endangered species or their potential habitats are known to occur in the construction area. Comments have not been received yet from the Indiana DNR. When comments are received, they will be forwarded to the STB's Section of Environmental Analysis.

Parks, Forest Preserves, Refuges, and Sanctuaries

No known state or federally designated parks, forest preserves, refuges, or sanctuaries are within one mile of the proposed construction.

3.3.2.4 Air Quality

According to 40 CFR 81, De Kalb County, is in attainment with the National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS). Vehicles and locomotives are the primary source of emissions in the project area.

3.3.2.5 Noise

Rail, vehicular and commercial traffic are the primary sources of noise in the area of the proposed rail line construction.

Eleven residences are within 500 feet of the proposed new rail alignment. No schools or churches are within 500 feet of the construction site.

3.3.2.6 Historic and Cultural Resources

Records at the Indiana SHPO were reviewed to determine if previously identified historic and cultural resources are in the project area. Unlike most of Indiana's counties, De Kalb County has not been surveyed for historic structures. No books exist that list the important historic architecture or structures for the county. Therefore, no existing or eligible NRHP sites or archaeological sites have been recorded in the vicinity of the proposed construction. The potential for archaeological resources is considered to be low. The potential for historic resources is unknown, although no potentially historic structures were observed within or adjacent to the new right-of-way during a site visit.

3.3.2.7 Transportation and Safety

The existing transportation network consists of both rail lines and city roads. The NS and Conrail lines cross southeast of Butler. U.S. Hwy. 6 is north of the crossing. Two unpaved streets, Beech and Erie, intersect south of the crossing diamond. The closest at-grade crossings are on the NS line at Beech Street and U.S. Hwy. 6, south and north of the crossing diamond, respectively. Traffic on U.S. Hwy. 6 in the vicinity of the proposed construction is approximately 9,270 vehicles per day. No local automobile traffic data was available for Beech Street or Erie Street.

The EDR database search did not identify any hazardous waste sites in the vicinity of the proposed rail line construction. However, the search did indicate one LUST site, Miles Homes (685 East Main Street), within 500 feet of the proposed construction site. No other sites of environmental concern in the vicinity of the proposed construction site were identified in the database search. The database search revealed four unmappable sites within the Butler city

limits. These sites could not be located because of poor address or geocoding information provided to the state and/or federal databases. No evidence at these sites were observed within or adjacent to the construction area during the site visit.

3.3.3 Potential Environmental Impacts of Proposed Action

3.3.3.1 Land Use

The proposed project would result in minimal impacts to land use. The proposed construction would convert approximately 3.9 acres to rail line right-of-way. Land to be converted is currently undeveloped land. An MCI fiber optic cable may have to be relocated prior to construction.

The proposed construction would be compatible with surrounding land uses. The soil at the site is not classified as prime farmland, nor would any construction activities occur in a designated coastal zone.

3.3.3.2 Water Resources

The construction of the proposed rail line would not have adverse impacts on groundwater or surface water resources. The project may require installation of a culvert to route an existing drainage ditch under the new rail line. The culvert is not expected to substantially alter storm water drainage or infiltration patterns in the area. No wetlands would be crossed by the proposed construction. During construction, appropriate erosion and sedimentation controls would be implemented to minimize erosion and storm water runoff.

3.3.3.3 Biological Resources

Vegetation

The proposed action would have minimal adverse impact to plant communities. The proposed construction site is along an existing rail corridor where most of the area is heavily disturbed.

Land cover consists of small trees, brush, grasses and weedy species. Approximately a 100-foot wide section of trees, shrubs and grasses would be lost. However, this vegetation is not unique or limited in the area. After construction NS would reseed outside the subgrade slope.

Wildlife

No adverse impacts are expected on local wildlife populations. The proposed construction site is small, and the existing habitat is of low quality. The loss of this small amount of habitat would not significantly reduce the availability of wildlife habitat in the area.

Threatened or Endangered Species

The USFWS indicated no threatened or endangered species were known to occur in the construction area. No comments have yet been received from the Indiana DNR. The area is heavily disturbed and surrounded by industrial and residential development. Due to the lack of habitat, no impacts to threatened or endangered species are expected.

Parks, Forest Preserves, Refuges, and Sanctuaries

No adverse impacts are expected to these resources since no state or federal parks, preserves, refuges or sanctuaries are in the vicinity of the proposed construction.

3.3.3.4 Air Quality

De Kalb County is an air quality attainment area. Impacts to air quality would result during construction, operation and maintenance of the proposed project. The operation of heavy equipment would be the primary source of pollutant emissions during construction activities. Such pollutants vary by the source, as described below:

- Particulate matter, volatile organic compounds (VOCs), carbon monoxide (CO) and nitrogen oxides (NOX) resulting from the combustion of diesel fuel

- Fugitive dust emissions along the right-of-way and unimproved roads resulting from the operation of heavy equipment.

Fugitive dust can be controlled by using water sprays or other suitable dust suppressants. The combustion emissions associated with removal operations (VOCs, CO and NOX) generally would be minor and of short duration and would have insignificant impacts on air quality. The amount of overall train traffic on the proposed rail line would not meet or exceed STB thresholds for air quality. Therefore, air impacts were not quantified and are expected to be minor. General impacts are discussed in Part 4 Appendix A. Air quality impacts for segments expected to experience increased traffic are discussed in Part 2.

3.3.3.5 Noise

Eleven residences are within 500 feet of the proposed construction site and within 500 feet of the existing rail lines in the area. Presently, these residences are exposed to an approximate total of 66 trains per day. Traffic on the new construction would be four trains per day. This increase does not exceed STB thresholds for noise evaluation. Noise impacts to local residences are expected to be minimal.

Wheel squeal is not anticipated to occur during train operation over the proposed connection due to the openness of the curve. However, should it occur, the four trains operating on the line would generate an Ldn 65 noise level at approximately 300 feet. Of the 11 noise receptors identified within 500 feet, nine of them would be within this distance.

Construction operations could cause temporary increases in noise levels. Construction activities would require the use of trucks and heavy equipment. Noise generated by such equipment would be temporary and limited to the short construction period.

3.3.3.6 Historic and Cultural Resources

No documented archaeological sites or historic properties are on or near the proposed construction site. However, the potential for undocumented archaeological sites and historic properties has not been dismissed. NS has begun consultation with the Indiana SHPO regarding the proposed site. NS will continue consultations with the Indiana SHPO to determine any further requirements.

3.3.3.7 Transportation and Safety

The proposed rail line construction project would improve train movement along the system, enhancing the efficiency of NS operations. The proposed construction would require one expanded at-grade crossing at U.S. Hwy. 6. The additional train traffic could increase the potential for vehicle-train accidents and traffic delays at this crossing. However, the crossing currently has warning gates and lights and the potential for accidents is considered low. The limited amount of additional train traffic that would use the connecting track (four per day) would not significantly increase vehicle delays or disruptions in traffic. Short-term disruptions of local traffic could occur during the construction period.

EDR's database search did not identify any hazardous waste sites in the vicinity of the proposed rail line construction. However, the database search indicated one LUST site within 500 feet of the proposed construction site. This site would not be affected by the proposed project. No other sites of environmental concern were identified in the vicinity of the proposed construction site. The database search revealed four unmappable sites within the Butler city limits. These sites could not be located because of poor address or geocoding information provided to the state and/or federal databases. Based on observations made during the site visit, these sites are not in or adjacent to the proposed right-of-way.

Fuels and oils necessary for construction equipment would be present only in small amounts. In the unlikely event that a spill occurs, only a small amount would be released. In the case of a spill, NS will follow appropriate emergency response procedures outlined in its emergency response plans.

3.3.4 Potential Environmental Impact of Alternative Actions

3.3.4.1 Build Alternatives

No other build alternatives for the proposed rail line construction project were identified. The proposed construction route provides the most direct rail line connection and would minimize land use outside the NS and Conrail rights-of-way and consequently the associated environmental impacts.

3.3.4.2 No-Action Alternative

If the no-action alternative were implemented, the proposed rail line connection would not be constructed and operated. Land use and other environmental conditions in the region would remain the same. Under this alternative, NS would continue to maintain and/or operate over less efficient rail routes between Chicago and Detroit and congestion in Ft. Wayne would not be alleviated. This alternative would result in longer routes and rail traffic delays, greater fuel consumption, air emissions, noise and an overall increase in expense to NS and the consumer. The no-action alternative is not considered practical or viable.

3.3.5 Proposed Mitigation

The proposed construction would result in minimal to no impact to land use, water resources, biological resources, air quality, noise, cultural resources, and transportation and safety. In consideration of minimal impacts and general NS practices, NS has proposed the following mitigation measures to minimize environmental impacts:

3.3.5.1 Land Use

- NS will restore any adjacent properties that are disturbed during construction.

3.3.5.2 Water Resources

- NS will use Best Management Practices (BMPs) to control erosion, runoff and surface instability during construction. After the new rail line is constructed, NS will reseed outside the subgrade slope to provide permanent cover and prevent potential erosion.

3.3.5.3 Biological Resources

- NS will use BMPs to control erosion, runoff and surface instability during construction. After the new rail line is constructed, NS will reseed outside the subgrade slope to provide permanent cover and prevent potential erosion.

3.3.5.4 Air Quality

- NS will comply with all applicable federal, state and local regulations regarding the control of fugitive dust.

3.3.5.5 Noise

- NS will control temporary noise from construction equipment by ensuring all machinery has properly functioning muffler systems and by work hour controls.

3.3.5.6 Historic and Cultural Resources

- NS will continue the Section 106 consultation process.

3.3.5.7 Transportation and Safety

- NS will observe all applicable federal, state and local regulations regarding handling and disposal of any waste materials encountered or generated during the proposed construction project.

- NS will transport all hazardous materials in compliance with the U.S. Department of Transportation Hazardous Materials Regulations (49 CFR parts 171-174 and 177-179).
- In the case of a spill, NS will follow appropriate emergency response procedures outlined in its emergency response plans.
- NS will restore all roads disturbed during construction to the conditions required by state or local regulations.
- NS will cooperate with the Indiana Department of Transportation for any upgrades to warning structures at the expanded at-grade crossing.

3.3.7 References

City of Butler Zoning Maps, April, 1997. Personal communication and faxed map copies.

Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), 1984. *FEMA Flood Insurance Rate Map.*

U.S. Department of Agriculture, 1982. *Soil Survey of DeKalb County.* Natural Resources Conservation Service.

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, 1997. Bloomington Field Office. Letter regarding threatened and endangered species.

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, 1983. *National Wetlands Inventory Map.* Butler East Quadrangle.

U.S. Geological Survey, 1994. *1:24,000-scale topographic maps.* Butler East Quadrangle.

40 CFR Part 81 - Designation of Areas for Air Quality Planning Purposes, Subpart C Section 107, Attainment Status Designations.

3.4 TOLLESTON (NS)

Tolleston, IN is in Lake County near the Lake Michigan shoreline, one mile west of Gary, IN (Figure 4-13). Existing rail lines in the project area include two parallel northwest/southeast trending rail lines, which are approximately 150 feet apart at the proposed construction site. The northern rail line is a NS line, which ends approximately one mile south of the proposed connection. The southern rail line is a Conrail line that serves Fort Wayne and the Chicago Metropolitan area.

The proposed construction site at Tolleston encompasses an area approximately 900 by 150 feet (3.0 acres). The connection would occupy an area approximately 900 by 100 feet (2.1 acres). Land between the rail lines is primarily grasses and shrubs with scattered deciduous trees. Trash items are littered throughout the area. The construction site is bordered on the east and west by residential areas, while commercial buildings, two churches, a medical facility and an at-grade crossing of Highway 20 are to the north. Residential areas adjoin the southern side of the Conrail right-of-way.

3.4.1 Proposed Action and Alternatives

3.4.1.1 Proposed Action

The proposed action at Tolleston would involve the construction and operation of a new connection between the existing, parallel NS and Conrail rail lines (Figure 4-13). This proposed connection would branch from the NS line near Marshall Street and extend south, connecting to the Conrail line near Rutledge Street. These streets are perpendicular to the existing rail lines but do not cross them. This new connection would permit efficient train movement and provide better service to customers on the NS branch in Gary and an alternative route between the Chicago, IL and Fort Wayne, IN. The design includes approximately 900 feet of new rail line construction.

Construction Requirements

The exact labor force and duration of construction are not known, but are expected to require 10-15 people and three to six months. If borrow material for the project is necessary, it would be obtained from local sources and hauled to the construction site by rail or truck.

Changes in Traffic

The proposed Acquisition would result in the following estimated rail traffic changes on the rail lines that would be connected by the proposed construction:

- Traffic on the existing NS line would remain two trains per day.
- Traffic on the existing, not-in-service Conrail line would increase from zero to two trains per day.
- Traffic on the new construction would be two trains per day.

3.4.1.2 Alternatives

Build Alternatives

No other build alternatives were identified for the proposed rail line construction. The proposed rail line would be the most direct connection between the existing rail lines and would not require the acquisition of new land outside the existing rail rights-of-way. In addition, no significant environmental impacts are anticipated from the proposed construction.

No-Action Alternative

Under the no-action alternative, existing and additional post-Acquisition rail traffic would operate over existing Conrail and NS lines with no connection. Access between the two lines would be limited to existing interchanges and terminals. The no-build alternative would reduce the total economic and operational efficiency and other benefits that would be possible as a result of the proposed Acquisition.

3.4.2 Existing Environment

3.4.2.1 Land Use

Land use at the proposed construction site is all existing rail right-of-way (Figure 4-12). Land between the NS and Conrail rail lines is primarily non-native grasses with a narrow strip of shrubs and scattered deciduous trees, centered between the existing rail lines. Vegetation west of Conrail 's right-of-way is primarily grasses with scattered deciduous trees, while a mixture of gravel and grass exists between NS's eastern right-of-way and an alley to the east. This paved alley separates the rail right-of-way from residences to the east along Wabash Road, which runs parallel to the tracks. Overhead power and telephone lines parallel the east side of the alley. Apartment complexes are located approximately 250 feet east of Conrail 's line, separated by a strip of grass and deciduous trees. Commercial buildings are located along Wabash Road, northeast of the proposed connection. Other land uses in the project vicinity include the Gary Municipal Airport, which is approximately 1.5 miles west of the proposed connection. The proposed construction site is zoned residential.

None of the soils at the site are classified as prime farmland.

The project is not within a designated coastal zone.

According to the Bureau of Indian Affairs, no federally-recognized Indian tribes or Indian reservations exist in the construction area.

3.4.2.2 Water Resources

National Wetland Inventory (NWI) maps indicate that there are no surface waters or wetlands on the project site or within 500 feet, nor were any observed during a site visit. The Grand Calumet River is approximately 0.6 miles north of the proposed action.

Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) maps for the area show that the proposed project is not within the 100-year floodplain.

3.4.2.3 Biological Resources

Vegetation

Vegetation in the project vicinity has been heavily disturbed by surrounding development. Non-native grasses, with a narrow strip of shrubs and scattered deciduous trees occupy the construction site, while a mixture of gravel, grasses and deciduous trees line the edges of the existing rail rights-of-way. This vegetation is not unique or limited in the area.

Wildlife

Wildlife habitat found on the construction site is limited due to the low quality and amount of cover present on the site and surrounding land. Existing habitat could support various small mammal, reptile and songbird species adapted to developed areas.

Threatened and Endangered Species

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) and the Indiana DNR were contacted regarding threatened and endangered species in the area of the proposed rail line construction in Tolleston. Comments had not yet been received at the time this report was written. Due to the lack of habitat, no threatened or endangered species are expected to occur in the construction area.

Parks, Forests Preserves, Refuges and Sanctuaries

Tolleston City Park is located one mile south of the proposed construction site, which has a pond, picnic area and other recreational facilities. No other parks, forests, preserves, refuges and sanctuaries are located within a mile of the project area.

3.4.2.4 Air Quality

According to 40 CFR 81, Lake County has nonattainment status in the entire county for ozone and partial nonattainment status for PM-10 in relation to the National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS). The proposed construction site is within the PM-10 partial nonattainment area. Current sources of emissions in the project area include locomotives, vehicles, industry and aircraft.

3.4.2.5 Noise

Rail, vehicular, commercial and airport noise are the primary sources of noise in the area of the proposed rail line construction. A total of two trains per day operates over the NS line, while the Conrail line is currently unused.

Twenty-one residences, the Wabash Medical Clinic, Great Bend Church and St. Eliza Universal Prayer Center are within 500 feet of the proposed construction site. Eighteen of the residences are single-family dwellings, which are approximately 250 feet east of the proposed action on Wabash Road. Three single-story apartment complexes are approximately 450 feet west of the project site off West 6th Street. The Great Bend Church, Wabash Medical Clinic and St. Eliza Prayer Center are all located northeast of the construction site on Wabash Road and are approximately 250, 350 and 450 feet away, respectively. One fire station, an additional church and two schools are within 1,250 feet of the proposed construction site. The fire station, church and Ambridge School are north of the site and are approximately 800, 900 and 1,200 feet away respectively. Chase School is approximately 1,200 feet west of the construction site.

3.4.2.6 Historic and Cultural Resources

Records at the Indiana State Historical Preservation Office (SHPO) were reviewed to determine if previously identified cultural resources are in the proposed project area. No NRHP sites or archaeological sites were recorded in the vicinity of the proposed construction, nor were any potential sites observed during a site visit.

3.4.2.7 Transportation and Safety

The rail transportation network consists of two parallel single-track rail lines, which are approximately 150 feet apart at the proposed construction site. The northern rail line is an NS line, which ends approximately one mile south near an NS customer, Indiana Sugar Company. The southern line is a Conrail line, which is currently unused. Two at-grade crossings over the existing Conrail and NS lines are within 1,000 feet of the project. An at-grade crossing on U.S. 20 is approximately 1,000 feet north of the construction site. Another at-grade crossing on Taft Street is approximately 800 feet south of the proposed action. Both crossings currently have warning lights and gates.

ADT data available for roads with at-grade crossings near the proposed connection include a section of U.S. 20 between Clark Street and Bridge street. This section averages 15,360 vehicles per day. Data for other at-grade crossings is not available. A total of one train per day uses the NS switching line, while the Conrail line is currently unused.

Review of the EDR database indicated that no hazardous waste sites, e.g., NPL, CERCLIS, RCRIS-TSD, ERNS, SPL (SHWS), IN Spills, LUST or SWF/LF, were identified in the vicinity of the proposed rail line construction. The database search revealed five unmappable sites within Lake County, IN. These sites could not be located because of poor address or geocoding information provided to the state and/or federal databases.

3.4.3 Potential Environmental Impacts of Proposed Action

3.4.3.1 Land Use

The proposed action would result in minimal impacts to current land use. Land converted would include non-native grasses, a narrow strip of shrubs and scattered deciduous trees, all of which are currently within existing railroad rights-of-way. No existing utility lines or structures in the surrounding area would be altered by the construction. The proposed project would be compatible with surrounding land use because of its location between existing rail lines.

The soil at the site is not classified as prime farmland.

No construction activities would occur within a designated coastal zone.

3.4.3.2 Water Resources

National Wetland Inventory (NWI) maps indicate that there are no surface waters or wetlands in the project vicinity, nor were any observed during a site visit. The Grand Calumet River is approximately 0.6 miles north of the construction site. Impacts on the river are not anticipated due to its distance from the construction site and erosion control measures that would be implemented by NS. Soil erosion and surface instability during construction would be minimal with the use of BMP's by NS. After the new rail line is constructed, NS will reseed disturbed soil areas outside the subgrade slope to restore vegetative cover and prevent or minimize erosion. Impacts to surface water drainage patterns are not anticipated.

3.4.3.3 Biological Resources

Vegetation

The proposed action would impact the grass and wooded areas currently on the construction site. Land converted would include non-native grasses, a narrow strip of shrubs and scattered deciduous trees, all of which are currently within existing railroad rights-of-way. This vegetation

is not unique or limited in the area. In addition, NS would reseed disturbed soil areas outside the subgrade slope of the new connection.

Wildlife

A minimal amount of land, of only marginal value to wildlife, would be required for the connection. An insignificant amount of wildlife habitat would be affected. The minimal loss of habitat would have an insignificant impact on local wildlife.

Threatened and Endangered Species

Responses from the USFWS and the Indiana DNR have not been received. Once these comments are received, they will be forwarded to STB's Section of Environmental Analysis. Due to the lack of habitat, no impacts to threatened or endangered species are anticipated.

Parks, Forest Preserves, Refuges and Sanctuaries

Tolleston Park would not be significantly impacted due to its location one mile from the construction site. This area is currently exposed to train traffic on lines approximately 1,500 feet closer than the proposed action. No other parks, forests, preserves, refuges and sanctuaries are within one mile of the proposed construction.

3.4.3.4 Air Quality

Impacts to air quality would result from construction, operation and maintenance of the proposed project. The operation of heavy equipment would be the primary source of pollutant emissions during construction activities. Such pollutants vary by the source, as described below:

- Particulate matter, volatile organic compounds (VOCs), carbon monoxide (CO) and nitrogen oxides (NOX) resulting from the combustion of diesel fuel
- Fugitive dust emissions along the right-of-way and unimproved roads resulting from the operation of heavy equipment.

Fugitive dust can be controlled by using water sprays or other suitable dust suppressants. The combustion emissions associated with removal operations (VOCs, CO and NOX) generally would be minor and of short duration and would have insignificant impacts on air quality. The amount of overall train traffic on the proposed rail line would not meet or exceed STB thresholds for air quality. Therefore, air impacts were not quantified and are expected to be minor. General impacts to air quality are discussed in Part 4, Appendix A.

Locomotive emissions from rail traffic (two trains per day) using the connection would not significantly affect Lake County's ozone nonattainment status.

The proposed action is within the Lake County PM-10 nonattainment area. Locomotive emissions and construction activities can contribute particulates and dust which can impact PM-10 levels. Construction activities would be short-term. Implementation of dust suppression techniques would control fugitive dust during construction.

The proposed construction is not expected to increase total rail traffic within Lake County. It will allow for shorter, more efficient routing of trains, reducing locomotive operating times and overall emissions within the county. While the construction could result in minor but temporary adverse impacts to air quality, operation of the project may result in an improvement in overall air quality.

3.4.3.5 Noise

As described in Section 3.3.2.5, 21 residences, the Wabash Medical Clinic, Great Bend Church and St. Eliza Universal Prayer Center are within 500 feet of the proposed action. One fire station, an additional church and two schools are within 1,250 feet of the proposed construction site. All of these receptors currently experience noise generated by passing trains on the NS rail line. Presently these facilities are exposed to two trains per day on the NS line and zero trains

per day on Conrail 's line. NS estimates two train movements per day on the proposed rail line connection. This does not exceed STB thresholds for noise evaluation. No wheel squeal is expected to be produced by trains operating on the proposed connection. Noise impacts from operation on the connection are not expected to be significant.

Construction operations would cause temporary increases in noise levels. Construction activities would require the use of trucks and heavy equipment. Noise generated by such equipment would be temporary and limited to the short construction period.

3.4.3.6 Historic and Cultural Resources

No documented archaeological sites or historic properties are on or near the proposed construction site. However, the potential for undocumented archaeological sites or historic properties has not been dismissed. NS has begun consultations with the Indiana SHPO regarding the proposed site. NS will continue consultations with the Indiana SHPO until the Section 106 process is complete.

3.4.3.7 Transportation and Safety

The proposed rail line construction project would improve train movement to destinations, enhancing the efficiency of NS operations. The proposed construction project would not cross any roads. Therefore, no vehicle delays, disruptions or increase in train/vehicle accidents would result from train operations on the proposed rail connection. Short-term disruptions of local traffic could occur during the construction period.

Review of the EDR database indicated that no hazardous waste sites, e.g., NPL, CERCLIS, RCRIS-TSD, ERNS, SPL (SHWS), IN Spills, LUST or SWF/LF, were identified in the vicinity of the proposed rail line construction. The database search revealed five unmappable sites within

Lake County, IN. These sites could not be located because of poor address or geocoding information provided to the state and/or federal databases. During a site visit, no evidence of any potential hazardous waste sites was observed in the project area. No such areas would be impacted by the proposed construction.

Fuels and oils necessary for construction equipment would be present only in small amounts. In the unlikely event that a spill occurs, only a small amount would be released. In the case of a spill, NS will follow appropriate emergency response procedures outlined in its emergency response plans.

3.4.4 Potential Environmental Impact of Alternatives

3.4.4.1 Build Alternatives

No other build alternatives to the proposed rail line construction project were identified. The proposed construction route provides the most direct rail line connection and would not require additional land outside the Conrail and NS rights-of-way. The proposed build alternative would minimize associated environmental impacts.

3.4.4.2 No-Action Alternative

If the no-action alternative were implemented, the proposed rail line connection would not be constructed and operated. Land use and other environmental conditions in the region would remain the same. Under this alternative, NS would continue to maintain and/or operate over less efficient rail routes. This alternative would result in longer routes, greater fuel consumption, air emissions, noise and an overall increase in expense to NS and the consumer. Customers in Gary would not benefit from improved service. The no-action alternative is not considered practical or viable.

3.4.5 Proposed Mitigation

The proposed construction would result in minimal to no impact to land use, water resources, biological resources, air quality, noise, cultural resources, and transportation and safety. In consideration of minimal impacts and general NS practices, NS has proposed the following mitigation measures to minimize environmental impacts:

3.4.5.1 Land Use

- NS will restore any adjacent properties that are disturbed during construction.

3.4.5.2 Water Resources

- NS will use Best Management Practices (BMPs) to control erosion, runoff and surface instability during construction. After the new rail line is constructed, NS will reseed outside the subgrade slope to provide permanent cover and prevent potential erosion.

3.4.5.3 Biological Resources

- NS will use BMPs to control erosion, runoff and surface instability during construction. After the new rail line is constructed, NS will reseed outside the subgrade slope to provide permanent cover and prevent potential erosion.

3.4.5.4 Air Quality

- NS will comply with all applicable federal, state and local regulations regarding the control of fugitive dust.

3.4.5.5 Noise

- NS will control temporary noise from construction equipment by ensuring all machinery has properly functioning muffler systems and by work hour controls.

3.4.5.6 Historic and Cultural Resources

- NS will continue the Section 106 consultation process.

3.4.5.7 Transportation and Safety

- NS will observe all applicable federal, state and local regulations regarding handling and disposal of any waste materials encountered or generated during the proposed construction project.
- NS will transport all hazardous materials in compliance with the U.S. Department of Transportation Hazardous Materials Regulations (49 CFR parts 171-174 and 177-179).
- In the case of a spill, NS will follow appropriate emergency response procedures outlined in its emergency response plans.
- NS will restore all roads disturbed during construction to the conditions required by state or local regulations.

3.4.6 References

Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), 1981. *FEMA Flood Insurance Rate Map.*

Indiana Department of Transportation (DOT), 1995. *Highway Traffic Survey.*

U.S. Department of Agriculture, 1972. *Soil Survey of Lake County, IN.* Soil Conservation Service.

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, 1981. *National Wetlands Inventory Map.* Gary and Highland, IN Quadrangle.

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, 1997. Letter regarding threatened and endangered species.

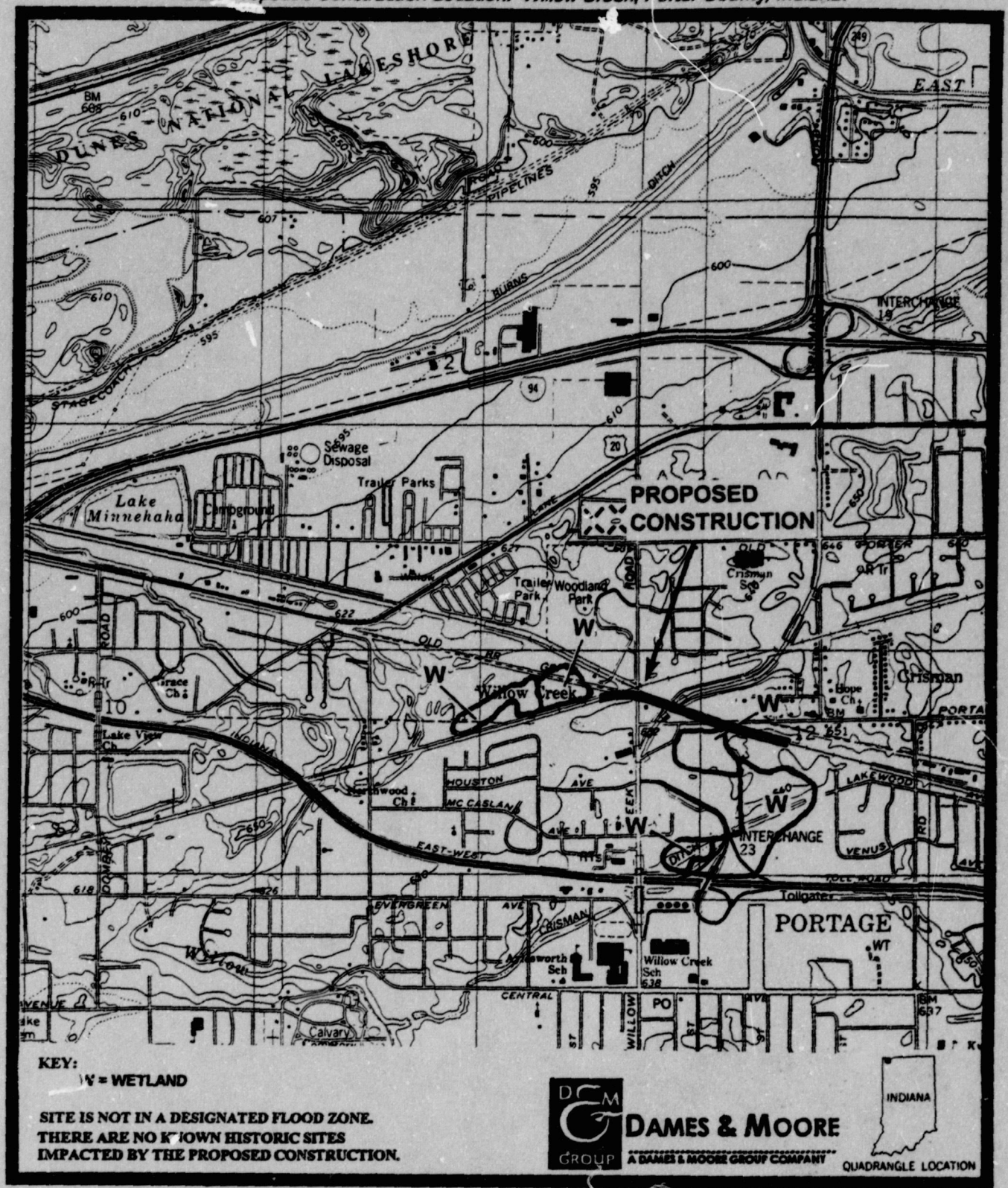
U.S. Geological Survey, 1991. *1:24,000-scale topographic maps.* Gary and Highland, IN Quadrangle

40 CFR Part 81 - Designation of Areas for Air Quality Planning Purposes, Subpart C Section 107, Attainment Status Designations.

FIGURES

Figure 4-9

CSX Proposed Construction Location: Willow Creek, Porter County, Indiana.



SCALE 1:24,000

0 1/2 0 1 MILE

1000 0 1000 2000 3000 4000 5000 6000 7000 FEET

N

Base Map: *USGS 7.5' Topographic Quadrangle: Portage, Indiana 1992*

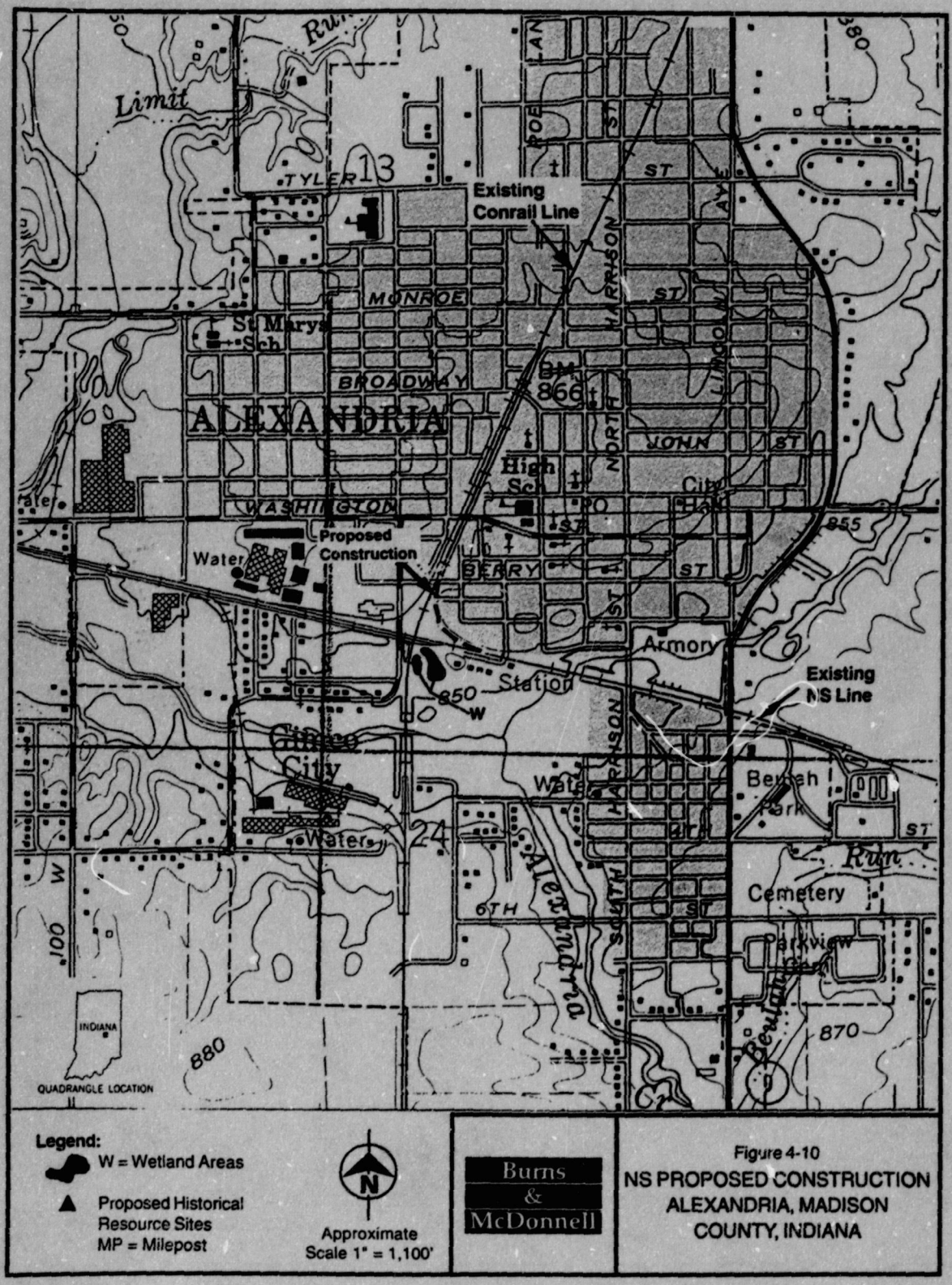
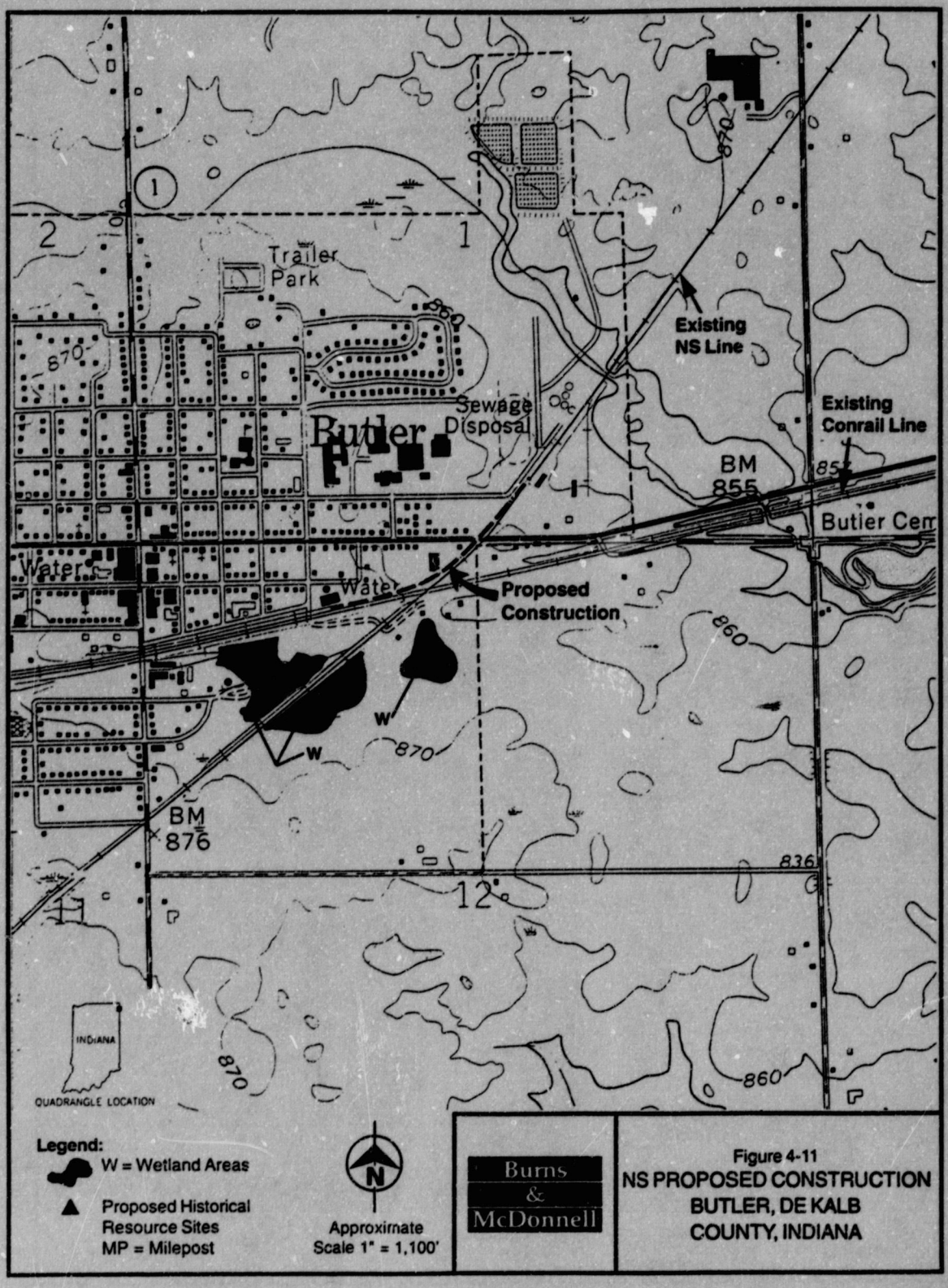


Figure 4-10
NS PROPOSED CONSTRUCTION
ALEXANDRIA, MADISON
COUNTY, INDIANA


Trailer Park
Butler
Sewage Disposal
Existing NS Line
Existing Conrail Line
BM 855
Butler Cem
Water
Water
Proposed Construction
BM 876
W
W
870
860
836
12
1
2
INDIANA
QUADRANGLE LOCATION
Legend:
W = Wetland Areas
Proposed Historical Resource Sites
MP = Milepost
N
Approximate Scale 1" = 1,100'
Burns & McDonnell
Figure 4-11
NS PROPOSED CONSTRUCTION
BUTLER, DE KALB COUNTY, INDIANA

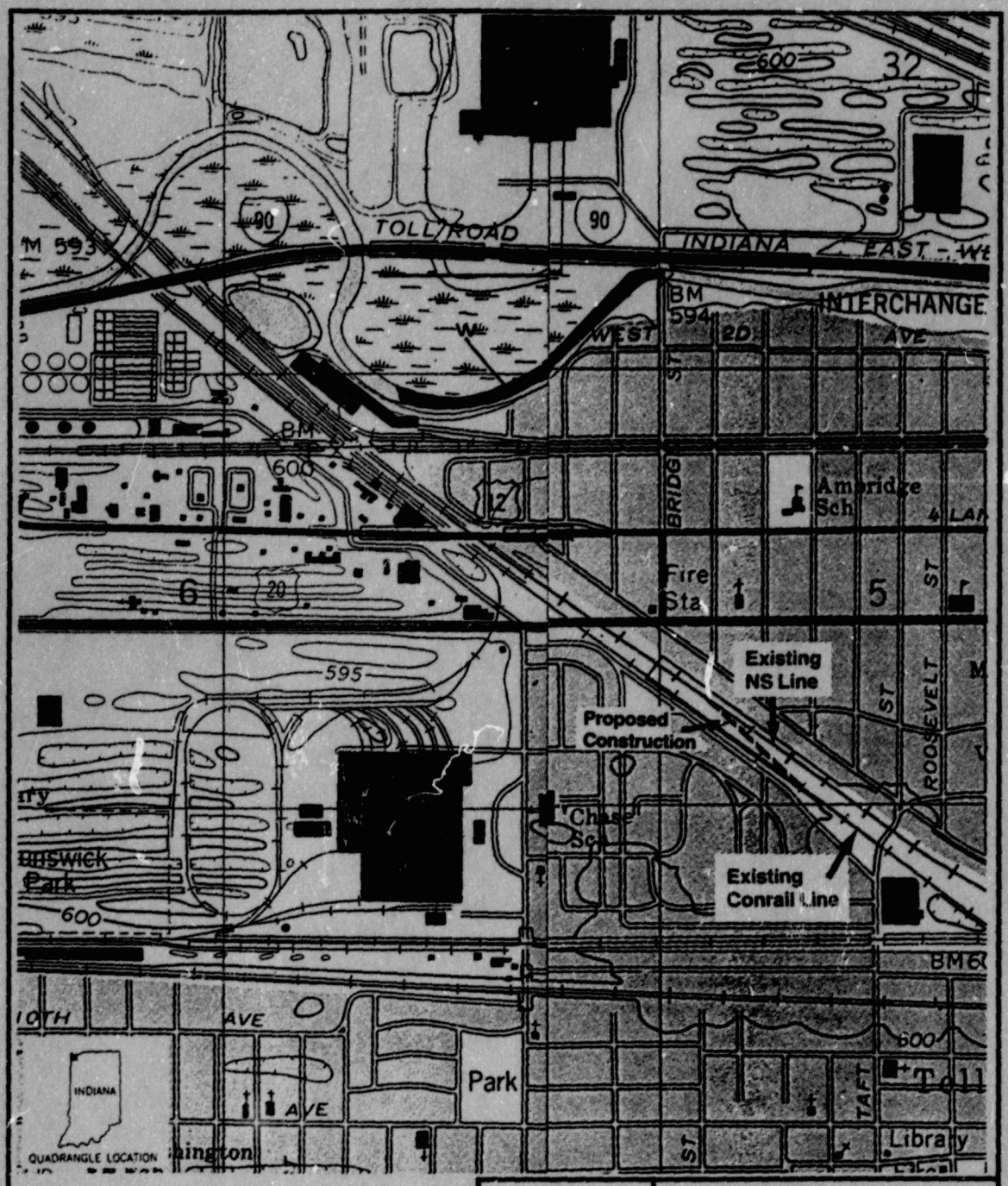


Figure 4-12
NS PROPOSED CONSTRUCTION
TOLLESTON, LAKE
COUNTY, INDIANA

4.0 MARYLAND

4.0 MARYLAND

One connection project is proposed in Maryland by NS. This section contains an analysis of the potential environmental impacts associated with the proposed construction. Information on the proposed construction is provided below.

Location	Length (feet)	Description
Hagerstown (NS)	800	Connecting Conrail and NS tracks to create a straight-line continuous double-tracking route through Hagerstown for efficient train movement between Front Royal, VA and Harrisburg, PA

A detailed description of this proposed construction project, including alternative actions considered, the existing environment, the potential environmental impact and proposed mitigation measures, is provided below.

NS DISCUSSION

4 .1 HAGERSTOWN

Hagerstown, MD is in Washington County, approximately 70 miles northwest of Baltimore, MD (Figure 4-13). Existing rail lines in the project area include a Conrail mainline and siding and a north/south NS mainline and siding.

The proposed construction site at Hagerstown encompasses an area approximately 200 by 800 feet (3.7 acres). The new connection would occupy an area approximately 100 by 800 feet (1.8 acres). The site once contained as many as seven parallel rail lines. Currently, only the two Conrail and NS mainlines and sidings are present. The site is primarily gravel-covered with scattered weeds. Vegetation adjacent to the project site includes grasses, weeds, shrubs, and

small trees that form a buffer zone between the rail corridor and adjacent areas. Land use in the area is industrial and residential. The site is bordered on the east by a baseball diamond and city park.

4.1.1 Proposed Action and Alternatives

4.1.1.1 Proposed Action

The proposed action at Hagerstown would involve the construction and operation of a new connection between the east/west Conrail and north/south NS tracks (Figure 4-13). The connection would be southeast of the intersection of these lines (Figure 4-13) and would create a straight line continuous double tracking route through Hagerstown. The project would include realigning the existing rail lines such that the Conrail and NS mainlines are connected as well as the Conrail and NS sidings. The new construction would permit efficient train movement between Front Royal, VA and Harrisburg, PA and improved service and efficiency between the Northeast and Southwest. The design includes approximately 800 feet each of new rail line construction and realignment of existing line.

Construction Requirements

The exact labor force and duration of construction are not available, but are expected to require 10-15 people and three to six months. Borrow material for the project would be obtained from local sources and hauled to the construction site by rail or truck.

Changes in Traffic

The proposed Acquisition would result in the following estimated traffic changes to the existing rail lines that would be connected by the proposed construction:

- Traffic on Conrail's line between Hagerstown, MD and Harrisburg, PA would increase from 11 to 19 trains per day.
- Traffic on NS's north/south lines would increase from 11 to 19 trains per day.

- Traffic on the new construction would be 19 trains per day.

4.1.1.2 Alternatives

Build Alternatives

No other build alternatives were identified for the proposed rail line construction. The proposed rail line would be the most direct connection between the existing rail lines and would not require new land outside the existing rail rights-of-way. In addition, the proposed construction would not result in any significant environmental impacts.

No-Action Alternative

Under the no-action alternative, existing and additional post-Acquisition rail traffic would operate over the existing NS rail lines. Access between the two lines would be limited to existing interchanges and terminals. The no-build alternative would not provide the full economic and operational benefits that would be possible as a result of the proposed Acquisition.

4.1.2 Existing Environment

4.1.2.1 Land Use

The proposed construction site includes rail and utility uses (Figure 4-13). Each existing right-of-way formerly contained up to seven rail lines. Currently, each contains only one mainline and one siding. Other land uses surrounding the proposed site include residential and industrial properties along the east/west Conrail track and a recreational area east of the north/south NS track. A residential building is directly northeast of the site, south of the east/west Conrail line. An abandoned roundhouse and other abandoned industrial buildings are located to the northwest, on the north side of the east/west-trending Conrail tracks. The proposed connection would be approximately 300 feet from this area. The proposed construction site is zoned for general industry. A small area adjacent to the Conrail line is zoned as a conversion district. The conversion district includes a former warehouse which has been converted to an apartment

building. Conversion districts are special zoning designations to provide for the revitalization of industrial area.

None of the soils at the site are classified as prime farmland.

The project is not within a designated coastal zone.

According to the Bureau of Indian Affairs, no federally-recognized Indian tribes or Indian reservations exist in Maryland.

4.1.2.2 Water Resources

No surface waters are on the proposed construction site or within 500 feet.

National Wetlands Inventory (NWI) maps indicate that no wetlands are within 500 feet of the proposed construction area.

Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) maps for the area show that the proposed project is not within the 100 year floodplain.

4.1.2.3 Biological Resources

Vegetation

The entire construction site is covered with gravel and sparse, scattered grasses and weeds. A vegetated strip consisting of small trees, shrubs, weedy annuals and grasses borders the right-of-way east and west of the NS track and north of the Conrail track. East of the NS track and south of the Conrail track, sparse vegetation and lawn areas associated with industrial and residential facilities occur adjacent to the rights-of way. This vegetation is not unique or limited in the area.

Wildlife

The potential for wildlife at the proposed construction site is limited since the site is sparsely-vegetated and includes rail, industrial, and residential development. Wildlife would mainly be limited to birds and small mammals that have adapted to developed areas.

Threatened or Endangered Species

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) and the Maryland Department of Natural Resources (DNR) were contacted regarding threatened and endangered species in the area of the proposed rail line construction. The USFWS did not have any comment regarding the impact of threatened or endangered species in the area. The Maryland DNR said they are unaware of any rare species or critical habitats in the proposed project area. Additionally, no endangered or threatened species or their habitats were observed during the site visit.

Parks, Forests, Preserves, Refuges, and Sanctuaries

There is one city park adjacent to and east of the proposed construction site. The park contains ball fields, picnic facilities and a small lake. No forest preserves, refuges or sanctuaries are located within one mile of the proposed project area.

4.1.2.4 Air Quality

According to 40 CFR 81, Washington County is in attainment with the National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS). Current sources of emissions in the project area include locomotives, vehicles, and industries.

4.1.2.5 Noise

One residential facility, an apartment complex and one public facility (a park) are within 500 feet of the proposed construction site. Both of the facilities are approximately 150 feet from the proposed construction site. The nearest school is approximately 1,200 feet northwest of the

construction site. These receptors currently experience noise generated by passing trains and vehicle traffic on local roads (see Section 4.1.2.1).

4.1.2.6 Historic and Cultural Resources

The proposed construction would occur within existing rail rights-of-way. The locations have been previously disturbed by former rail line construction and removal activities. No undisturbed cultural resources are expected to occur in the proposed construction area. Additionally, no potential historic resources occur within the construction vicinity.

4.1.2.7 Transportation and Safety

The rail transportation network consists of the north/south NS mainline and siding that intersect the east/west Conrail mainline and siding east of U.S. Highway 11. Roads in the project area include Potomac Street, U.S. Highway 11, Virginia Avenue, Burhans Boulevard and some local roads. The nearest at-grade crossing to the proposed connection is Jonathan Street.

Review of the EDR database indicated that no hazardous waste sites, e.g., NPL, CERCLIS, RCRIS-TSD, ERNS, SPL (SHWS), LUST or SWF/LF, were identified in the vicinity of the proposed rail line construction. The database search revealed 14 unmappable sites, 12 within the city limits of Hagerstown and two within Maugansville, MD. These sites could not be located because of poor address or geocoding information provided to the state and/or federal databases. No evidence of any hazardous materials sites was observed within the project area during a site visit.

4.1.3 Potential Environmental Impacts of Proposed Action

4.1.3.1 Land Use

The proposed project would result in minimal impacts to land use since it would not require additional land outside the existing railroad rights-of-way. The land use would continue as rail transportation. The rail use would be compatible with the existing industrial zoning.

The soil at the site is not classified as prime farmland.

No construction activities would occur within a designated coastal zone.

4.1.3.2 Water Resources

The construction of the proposed rail line would not have adverse impacts on groundwater or surface water resources. No surface waters or wetlands are on the proposed construction site. No wetlands occur in the project area and the construction is not within the 100-year flood plain.

4.1.3.3 Biological Resources

Vegetation

The proposed action would only impact sparse, scattered vegetation present within the existing rail rights-of-way. The proposed rail line construction would be limited to the existing rail line corridor which is mostly covered by gravel. The vegetation is not unique or limited to the area.

Wildlife

No adverse impacts to wildlife populations are anticipated. The construction site is small, and contains only minimal, marginal habitat for wildlife.

Threatened and Endangered Species

Responses from the USFWS and the Maryland DNR have been received, and neither agency expects any impacts to threatened or endangered species or their potential habitats on the proposed construction site or within the project area. As described, the site is rail right-of-way and the surrounding area is industrial and residential. Due to the lack of habitat, no impacts to threatened or endangered species are expected.

Parks, Forest Preserves, Refuges and Sanctuaries

Construction of the proposed connection would be limited to the existing rail rights-of-way. Therefore, the adjacent city park would be unaffected by the proposed construction. No other state or federally designated parks, forests preserves, refuges or sanctuaries would be impacted by the proposed construction.

4.1.3.4 Air Quality

Washington County is an air quality attainment area. Impacts to air quality would result from construction, operation and maintenance of the proposed project. The operation of heavy equipment would be the primary source of pollutant emissions during construction activities. Such pollutants vary by the source, as described below:

- Particulate matter, volatile organic compounds (VOCs), carbon monoxide (CO) and nitrogen oxides (NOX) resulting from the combustion of diesel fuel
- Fugitive dust emissions along the right-of-way and unimproved roads resulting from the operation of heavy equipment.

Fugitive dust can be controlled by using water sprays or other suitable dust suppressants. The combustion emissions associated with removal operations (VOCs, CO and NOX) generally would be minor and of short duration and would have insignificant impacts on air quality. The amount of overall train traffic on the proposed rail line would meet or exceed STB thresholds for

air quality. General air quality impacts are discussed in Part 4 Appendix A. Air quality impacts related to increased traffic on rail segments are discussed in Part 2.

4.1.3.5 Noise

As described under Section 4.1.2.5, one residential facility, an apartment complex, and one public facility (a park) are within 500 feet of the proposed construction site. Both of the facilities are approximately 150 feet from the proposed construction site. The nearest school is approximately 1,200 feet northwest of the construction site. All of these receptors currently experience noise generated by passing trains. NS estimates 19 total train movements per day on the proposed rail line. This increase exceeds STB thresholds for noise evaluation. Train traffic operating on the proposed connection (19 trains per day) would generate an Ldn 65 noise level at approximately 150 feet. No grade crossings would be present, therefore no additional Ldn 65 distance would result from horn soundings. No sensitive noise receptors would be within this distance. Wheel squeal is not expected to occur or be minimal due to the openness of the connecting curve.

Construction operations could cause temporary increases in noise levels. Construction activities would require the use of trucks and heavy equipment. Noise generated by such equipment would be temporary and limited to the short construction period.

4.1.3.6 Historic and Cultural Resources

No significant archaeological or historic resources are expected to be impacted by the proposed construction due to the activity being confined to the railroad rights-of-way. However, the potential for archaeological sites or historic properties has not been dismissed. Prior to any construction activities the Maryland SHPO will be contacted and the Section 106 process completed.

4.1.3.7 Transportation and Safety

The proposed rail line construction project would improve train movement to destinations, enhancing the efficiency of NS operations. The proposed construction project would not cross any roads. Therefore, no vehicle delays, disruptions, or train/vehicle related accidents would result from train operations on the proposed connection. The nearest at-grade crossings are found at Jonathan Street.

Review of the EDR database indicated that no hazardous waste sites, e.g., NPL, CERCLIS, RCRIS-TSD, ERNS, SPL (SHWS), LUST or SWF/LF, were identified in the vicinity of the proposed rail line construction. The database search revealed 14 unmappable sites, 12 within the city limits of Hagerstown and two within Maugansville, MD. These sites could not be located because of poor address or geocoding information provided to the state and/or federal databases. No evidence of any hazardous materials sites was observed within the project area during a site visit.

Fuels and oils necessary for construction would be present only in small amounts. In the unlikely event that a spill occurs, only a small amount would be released. In the case of a spill, NS will follow appropriate emergency response procedures outlined in its emergency response plans.

4.1.4 Potential Environmental Impact of Alternatives

4.1.4.1 Build Alternatives

No other build alternatives to the proposed rail line construction project were identified. The proposed construction route provides the most direct rail line connection, and would not require new land outside the existing railroad rights-of-way. Based on this review, the proposed construction avoids any significant environmental impacts.

4.1.4.2 No-Action Alternative

If the no-action alternative were implemented, the proposed rail line connection would not be constructed and operated. Land use and other environmental conditions in the region would remain the same. Under this alternative, NS would continue to maintain and/or operate over less efficient rail routes. This more efficient route, and associated service improvement, would not be available to serve customers. This alternative would result in rail traffic delays, greater fuel consumption, air emissions, noise and an overall increase in expense to NS and the consumer. The no-action alternative is not considered practical or viable.

4.1.5 Proposed Mitigation

The proposed construction would result in minimal to no impact to land use, water resources, biological resources, air quality, noise, cultural resources, and transportation and safety. In consideration of minimal impacts and general NS practices, NS has proposed the following mitigation measures to minimize environmental impacts:

4.1.5.1 Land Use

- NS will restore any adjacent properties that are disturbed during construction.

4.1.5.2 Water Resources

- NS will use Best Management Practices (BMPs) to control erosion, runoff and surface instability during construction. After the new rail line is constructed, NS will reseed outside the subgrade slope to provide permanent cover and prevent potential erosion.

4.1.5.3 Biological Resources

- NS will use BMPs to control erosion, runoff and surface instability during construction. After the new rail line is constructed, NS will reseed outside the subgrade slope to provide permanent cover and prevent potential erosion.

4.1.5.4 Air Quality

- NS will comply with all applicable federal, state and local regulations regarding the control of fugitive dust.

4.1.5.5 Noise

- NS will control temporary noise from construction equipment by ensuring all machinery has properly functioning muffler systems and by work hour controls.

4.1.5.6 Historic and Cultural Resources

- NS will continue the Section 106 consultation process.

4.1.5.7 Transportation and Safety

- NS will observe all applicable federal, state and local regulations regarding handling and disposal of any waste materials encountered or generated during the proposed construction project.
- NS will transport all hazardous materials in compliance with the U.S. Department of Transportation Hazardous Materials Regulations (49 CFR parts 171-174 and 177-179).
- In the case of a spill, NS will follow appropriate emergency response procedures outlined in its emergency response plans.
- NS will restore all roads disturbed during construction to the conditions required by state or local regulations.

4.1.6 References

Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), 1984. *FEMA Flood Insurance Rate Map.*

Maryland Department of Natural Resources. Personal Communication. April 1997.

U.S. Department of Agriculture, 1996. *Soil Survey of Washington County, MD.* Natural Resources Conservation Service.

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, 3/80. *National Wetlands Inventory Map.* Hagerstown

Quadrangle. (Date based on last aerial photograph).

U.S. Geological Survey, 1953, photorevised 1985. *1:24,000-scale topographic maps*. Hagerstown Quadrangle.

40 CFR Part 81 - Designation of Areas for Air Quality Planning Purposes, Subpart C Section 107, Attainment Status Designations.

Washington County Zoning Department. April, 1997. Personal communication.

FIGURES


Washington
Sch
WASHINGTON
FRANKLIN
BM
577
640
AND
OHIO
BM
579
BALTIMORE
600
BM
616
WESTERN
W
SUMMIT
Proposed
Construction
620
AND
650
K
City Park
AVE
Ga
600
CONRAIL
W
Surrey
Sch
NORFOLK
15
BM
530
SOUTH
VIRGINIA
600
Howard
Sch
E WILSON
MARYLAND
QUADRANGLE LOCATION
Legend:
W = Wetland Areas
Proposed Historical
Resource Sites
MP = Milepost
N
Approximate
Scale 1" = 1,100'
Burns
&
McDonnell
Figure 4-13
NS PROPOSED CONSTRUCTION
HAGERSTOWN, WASHINGTON
COUNTY, MARYLAND

5.0 MICHIGAN

5.0 MICHIGAN

One new connection project is proposed in Michigan by NS at the northeast end of NS's Oakwood Yard in Detroit, MI. This section contains an analysis of the potential environmental impacts associated with the proposed rail line construction. Information on the proposed construction is provided below.

Location	Length (feet)	Description
Ecorse Junction (Detroit)(NS)	400	Upgrade existing Conrail track from NS's Oakwood Yard to Conrail's River Rouge Yard via Junction Yard Secondary and the construction of a connection to permit efficient movements from Conrail track to existing NS track.

A detailed description of this proposed construction project, including alternative actions considered, the existing environment, the potential environmental impact and proposed mitigation measures, are provided below.

NS DISCUSSION

5.1 ECORSE JUNCTION (DETROIT) (NS)

The Ecorse Junction upgrade and construction is located in south Detroit, MI in Wayne County (Figure 4-14). Existing rail lines in the project area include a Conrail single-track connection between Conrail's River Rouge and Lincoln Yards which parallels NS's Oakwood yard on its south side. A Grand Trunk Western (GTW) double-track line crosses the existing Conrail single-track and connects with NS's rail lines northeast of Oakwood, before crossing the Rouge River.

The proposed construction site at Ecorse Junction encompasses an area approximately 400 by 200 feet (1.8 acres). The new connection would occupy an area approximately 100 by 400 feet (0.9 acre). In addition to the connection construction, approximately 6,000 feet of existing track would be upgraded. The proposed new connection is located at the northeast end of Oakwood Yard. The proposed construction of the #10 right-hand turnout crossover would begin just south of Conrail milepost 136. The crossover would extend west adjacent to the existing Conrail line leading to Lincoln Yard and the NS third rail in Oakwood Yard. The site is primarily gravel covered with dense patches of grass, weedy annuals and scrub saplings.

5.1.1 Proposed Action and Alternatives

5.1.1.1 Proposed Action

The proposed action at Ecorse Junction would involve upgrading an existing Conrail track from Oakwood Yard to River Rouge Yard and the construction and operation of a #10 right-hand turn out crossover (Figure 4-14). The design includes approximately 6,000 linear feet (1.1 miles) in upgrades to existing rail line and approximately 400 linear feet of new rail line constructions. The upgrade and construction would not require the acquisition of new right-of-way. Upgrading would consist of adding ballast, replacing ties where necessary, and upgrading the rails. The proposed construction of the new #10 right-hand turn out crossover would be in the northeast end of Oakwood Yard. This new connection would permit efficient train movement between Conrail's River Rouge Yard and NS's Oakwood Yard via Junction Yard Secondary by avoiding the current need to make reverse train movements through the existing connection. This would improve efficiency and consistency of service between Oakwood Yard in Detroit and Toledo.

Construction Requirements

The exact labor force and duration of construction are not available, but are expected to require 10-15 people and three to six months. Borrow material for the project would be obtained from local sources and hauled to the construction site by rail or truck.

Changes in Traffic

The proposed Acquisition would result in the following estimated changes in traffic over the rail lines that would be connected by the proposed construction:

- Traffic on the existing NS line would increase from 6 to 8 trains per day.
- Traffic on the existing upgraded Conrail line would increase from 2 to 9 trains per day.
- Traffic on the upgraded line and new construction would be seven trains per day.

5.1.1.2 Alternatives

Build Alternatives

No other build alternatives were identified for the proposed rail line construction. The proposed new connection would be the most direct connection between the existing rail lines and would eliminate the need for new land outside the existing Conrail and NS rights-of-way. In addition, the proposed construction would not result in any significant environmental impacts.

No-Action Alternative

Under the no-action alternative, existing and additional post-Acquisition rail traffic would operate between Conrail and NS lines using the existing, inefficient connection which requires trains to stop, reverse direction, stop again, and reverse direction again. Access between the two lines would be limited to existing interchanges and terminals. The no-build alternative would reduce the total economic and operational efficiency that would be possible as a result of the proposed Acquisition.

5.1.2 Existing Environment

5.1.2.1 Land Use

The area around the proposed construction site is dominated by rail, industrial and utility uses. Most of the site is covered with gravel ballast (Figure 4-14). Dense patches of grass, weedy annuals and scrub saplings are located along the existing rail rights-of-way. Interstate 75

overpasses the site and Fort Street is southwest of the construction site. The surrounding industrial properties include a Shell Oil distribution facility and above-ground storage tanks located southwest of the Conrail line and a warehouse located on Pleasant Street northwest of Rouge Yard. A buried petroleum pipeline is located south of the construction site in Oakwood Yard and utility poles are located on the east side of the proposed track upgrade. The proposed construction site is zoned industrial.

None of the soils at the site are classified as prime farmland.

The site is not within a designated coastal zone.

According to the Bureau of Indian Affairs, no federally-recognized Indian tribes or Indian reservations exist in Michigan.

5.1.2.2 Water Resources

The Rouge river is 500 feet northeast of the existing Conrail mainline. Approximately 1,000 feet east of Ecorse Junction the Conrail line passes over a drainage ditch that is connected to the Rouge River. A small intermittent pool of water was observed in the north quarter of the Conrail/GTW crossing.

No wetlands were indicated on National Wetland Inventory (NWI) maps for the proposed construction site. However, a potential, small (20 feet by 50 feet) wetlands north of where Conrail and GTW rail lines cross was noted on a site visit.

Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) maps for the area show that the proposed project is not within the 100 year floodplain.

5.1.2.3 Biological Resources

Vegetation

Most of the proposed construction site is covered with gravel. Much of the area around the site is already developed for rail activity and urban industry. Vegetated patches consisting of weedy annuals, grasses and scrub saplings have grown along the Conrail, NS, and GTW rights-of-way. This vegetation is not unique or limited in the area.

Wildlife

Wildlife in the proposed construction area is limited due to the lack of habitat and the surrounding industrial development. All of the proposed new connection and associated upgrades would be located within existing railroad rights-of-way in an urban, industrialized area. Only those amphibian, reptile, songbirds, and small mammals adapted to survive in close proximity to humans and industrial development would be expected to occur in these areas.

Threatened or Endangered Species

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) and the Michigan Department of Natural Resources (DNR) were consulted regarding threatened and endangered species in the area of the proposed rail line construction at Ecorse Junction. No plant or animal species listed as state or federally threatened, endangered, or rare have been reported to occur in the project vicinity. Due to the lack of habitat, no impacts to threatened or endangered species are expected.

Parks, Forest Preserves, Refuges and Sanctuaries

A neighborhood playground is located approximately 2,000 feet to the southwest of the proposed rail line upgrade. No other parks, forest preserves, refuges or sanctuaries are within one mile of the proposed construction site.

5.1.2.4 Air Quality

According to 40 CFR 81, Wayne County is in partial non-attainment with the National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS) for carbon monoxide (CO). However, the proposed upgrade and construction are not located in the non-attainment area. Current sources of emissions in the project area include locomotives, vehicles, and industries.

5.1.2.5 Noise

Rail, vehicular, and commercial traffic are the primary sources of noise in the project area.

Five residences are present within 500 feet of the proposed Conrail line upgrade and construction. No schools or churches are within 1,250 feet of the site.

5.1.2.6 Historic and Cultural Resources

Records at the Michigan State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) were reviewed to determine if previously identified cultural resources are in the project area. No sites listed on the National Register of Historical Places (NRHP) or archaeological sites were recorded in the vicinity of the proposed action. During a site visit, no unique or historical structures were observed in the project area.

5.1.2.7 Transportation and Safety

The rail transportation network consists of the existing Conrail rail line, Conrail's Rouge and Lincoln yards, NS's Oakwood Yard and associated lines, and the existing GTW double-track. Local roads with existing Conrail at-grade crossings near the proposed rail construction and upgrade include Pleasant Avenue and Shell Oil's access road. Interstate 75 passes over the Conrail line and Fort Street viaduct is southwest of the construction site.

Review of the EDR database indicated that no hazardous waste sites, e.g., NPL, CERCLIS, RCRIS-TSD, ERNS, SPL (SHWS), LUST or SWF/LF, were identified in the vicinity of the proposed rail line construction. The database search revealed four unmappable sites, one within the city limits of Dearborn, two in Detroit, and one within Wayne County, MI. These sites could not be located because of poor address or geocoding information provided to the state and/or federal databases.

5.1.3 Potential Environmental Impacts of Proposed Action

5.1.3.1 Land Use

The proposed project would result in minimal impacts to land use as all construction would occur within existing railroad rights-of-way. No agricultural land or prime farmland would be converted to railroad right-of-way. These impacts are expected to be insignificant due to the small portion of land affected and construction being limited to the existing rights-of-way. The proposed track upgrade and construction would not conflict with adjacent land uses, utility lines or zoning.

No construction activities would occur in a designated coastal zone.

5.1.3.2 Water Resources

The construction of the proposed rail line would not have adverse impacts on groundwater or surface water resources. The proposed new connection would cross one drainage ditch using Conrail's existing bridge. NS would obtain all necessary permits for activities potentially affecting this resource. Impacts from soil erosion resulting from cleared vegetation and open soil would be insignificant with Best Management Practices (BMP) used to control runoff and surface instability. The Rouge River would not be impacted due to its distance from the construction area and the implementation of BMPs. In addition, NS would restore disturbed soil areas outside the roadbed side slope through reseeding. Storm water drainage patterns are not anticipated to be altered by the proposed project.

5.1.3.3 Biological Resources

Vegetation

The proposed action would impact the narrow, grassy and wooded strip of vegetation bordering both sides of the existing Conrail and NS rights-of-way. The proposed rail line upgrade and construction would be within an existing rail corridor in an urban industrialized area that is mostly covered by gravel. What vegetation is present is characteristic of disturbed areas. This vegetation is not unique or limited in the area.

Wildlife

No adverse impacts to wildlife populations are anticipated. The construction site is small and contains only limited wildlife habitat. The lack of habitat and industrial nature of the area preclude it being important to wildlife.

Threatened or Endangered Species

Response from the Michigan DNR indicated that no plant or animal species listed as state or federally threatened, endangered, or rare have been reported to occur in the project vicinity. Due to this and the lack of habitat, no impacts to threatened or endangered species are anticipated.

Parks, Forest Preserves, Refuges and Sanctuaries

The neighborhood playground would not be impacted due to the proposed construction. The area is located approximately 1,000 feet from the site and currently experiences noise from rail activities on lines closer than the proposed action. No other parks, forests, preserves, refuges or sanctuaries are within one mile of the proposed construction.

5.1.3.4 Air Quality

The proposed action is not within the Wayne County CO non-attainment area. Impacts to air quality would result from construction, operation and maintenance of the proposed project.

Construction activities would be short-term and the proposed construction and upgrades are not expected to increase the total rail traffic within Wayne County. The operation of heavy equipment would be the primary source of pollutant emissions during construction activities. Such pollutants vary by the source, as described below:

- Particulate matter, volatile organic compounds (VOCs), carbon monoxide (CO) and nitrogen oxides (NOX) resulting from the combustion of diesel fuel
- Fugitive dust emissions along the right-of-way and unimproved roads resulting from the operation of heavy equipment.

Fugitive dust can be controlled by using water sprays or other suitable dust suppressants. The combustion emissions associated with removal operations (VOCs, CO and NOX) generally would be minor and of short duration and would have insignificant impacts on air quality. The amount of overall train traffic on the proposed rail line would not meet or exceed STB thresholds for air quality. Therefore, air impacts were not quantified and are expected to be minor. General impacts are discussed in Part 4 Appendix A.

The project will allow for shorter, more efficient routing of trains, reducing locomotive operating times and overall emissions within the County. While the construction could result in minor but temporary adverse impacts to air quality, operations of the project may result in improvements to overall air quality due to shorter transit times and delays created by the construction for trains operating within Wayne County.

5.1.3.5 Noise

As described under Section 5.1.2.5, five residences are within 500 feet of the proposed rail line upgrade and Jeffries School is within 1,800 feet of the proposed construction.. These receptors currently experience noise generated by passing trains on the NS, Conrail, and GTW rail lines. Presently, these facilities are exposed to approximately two trains per day on the Conrail line and

eight trains per day on the NS line. NS estimates seven train movements per day on the proposed rail line connection. This increase does not exceed STB thresholds for noise evaluation. Noise impacts are not expected to be significant.

No wheel squeal is expected to be generated by trains operating on the proposed connection as it has no significant curve.

Construction operations could cause temporary increases in noise levels. Construction activities would require the use of trucks and heavy equipment. Noise generated by such equipment would be temporary and limited to the short construction period.

5.1.3.6 Historic and Cultural Resources

No documented archaeological sites or historic properties are on or near the proposed construction site. However, the potential for undocumented archaeological sites or historic properties has not been dismissed. Consultations with the Michigan SHPO will continue until the Section 106 process is completed.

5.1.3.7 Transportation and Safety

The proposed rail line connection would require no new at-grade crossings or additional warning signals. However, the proposed new connection project would require expanded at-grade crossings of Pleasant Avenue and Shell Oil's access road. Temporary vehicle delays or disruptions would result from train operations on the proposed rail line as well as increase the potential for train/vehicle accidents. However, traffic disruptions and accident potential should be minimal due to low levels of both vehicle and rail traffic and the presence of appropriate warning signals. Short-term disruptions of local traffic could occur during the construction period. The connection would improve train movement, thereby enhancing the efficiency of NS rail operations in the area.

No at-grade crossings are involved with the proposed connection. Therefore, operation of the proposed connection would have no impact on vehicle delays or collisions.

No hazardous waste facilities are expected to be impacted by the proposed construction. Review of the EDR database indicated that no hazardous waste sites, e.g., NPL, CERCLIS, RCRIS-TSD, ERNS, SPL (SHWS), LUST or SWF/LF, were identified in the vicinity of the proposed rail line construction. The database search revealed four unmappable sites, one within the city limits of Dearborn, two in Detroit, and one within Wayne County, MI. These sites could not be located because of poor address or geocoding information provided to the state and/or federal databases. During a site visit no evidence of potential hazardous waste sites was observed in the project area.

Fuels and oils necessary for construction would be present only in small amounts. In the unlikely event that a spill occurs, only a small amount would be released. In the case of a spill, NS will follow appropriate emergency response procedures outlined in its emergency response plans.

5.1.4 Potential Environmental Impact of Alternatives

5.1.4.1 Build Alternatives

No other build alternatives for the proposed rail line connection construction project were identified. The proposed construction route provides the most direct rail line connection possible and would not require land outside the existing railroad rights-of-way. The proposed construction would minimize associated environmental impacts.

5.1.4.2 No-Action Alternative

If the no-action alternative were implemented, the proposed rail line connection would not be constructed and operated. Land use and other environmental conditions in the region would remain the same. Under this alternative, NS would continue to maintain and/or operate over less efficient rail routes. Customers would not benefit from improved service and efficiency between Detroit and Toledo. This alternative would result in longer routes, greater fuel consumption, air emissions, noise and an overall increase in expense to NS and the consumer. The no-action alternative is not considered practical or viable.

5.1.5 Proposed Mitigation

The proposed construction would result in minimal to no impact to land use, water resources, biological resources, air quality, noise, cultural resources, and transportation and safety. In consideration of minimal impacts and general NS practices, NS has proposed the following mitigation measures to minimize environmental impacts:

5.1.5.1 Land Use

- NS will restore any adjacent properties that are disturbed during construction.

5.1.5.2 Water Resources

- NS will use BMPs to control erosion, runoff and surface instability during construction. After the new rail line is constructed, NS will reseed outside the subgrade slope to provide permanent cover and prevent potential erosion.

5.1.5.3 Biological Resources

- NS will use BMPs to control erosion, runoff and surface instability during construction. After the new rail line is constructed, NS will reseed outside the subgrade slope to provide permanent cover and prevent potential erosion.

5.1.5.4 Air Quality

- NS will comply with all applicable federal, state and local regulations regarding the control of fugitive dust.

5.1.5.5 Noise

- NS will control temporary noise from construction equipment by ensuring all machinery has properly functioning muffler systems and by work hour controls.

5.1.5.6 Historic and Cultural Resources

- NS will continue the Section 106 consultation process.

5.1.5.7 Transportation and Safety

- NS will observe all applicable federal, state and local regulations regarding handling and disposal of any waste materials encountered or generated during the proposed construction project.
- NS will transport all hazardous materials in compliance with the U.S. Department of Transportation Hazardous Materials Regulations (49 CFR parts 171-174 and 177-179).
- In the case of a spill, NS will follow appropriate emergency response procedures outlined in its emergency response plans.
- NS will restore all roads disturbed during construction to the conditions required by state or local regulations.

5.1.7 References

U.S. Department of Agriculture, 1977. *Soil Survey of Wayne County, MI.* Soil Conservation Service.

U.S. Department of Agriculture, 1984. *Important Farmland Map of Wayne County, MI.* Soil Conservation Service.

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, 5/1980. *National Wetlands Inventory Map*. Dearborn Quadrangle. (Date based on last aerial photograph).

U.S. Geological Survey, 1968. *1:24,000-scale topographic maps*. Dearborn, MI Quadrangle.

40 CFR Part 81 - Designation of Areas for Air Quality Planning Purposes, Subpart C Section 107, Attainment Status Designations.

FIGURES

Legend:
W = Wetland Areas
▲ Proposed Historical Resource Sites
MP = Milepost

N
Approximate Scale 1" = 1,100'

Burns & McDonnell

Figure 4-14
NS PROPOSED CONSTRUCTION
ECORSE JUNCTION
DETROIT, WAYNE
COUNTY, MICHIGAN

6.0 NEW JERSEY

6.0 NEW JERSEY

One new connection project is proposed in New Jersey by CSX. This section contains an analysis of the potential environmental impacts associated with the proposed rail line construction. Information on the proposed construction is provided below.

Location	Length (feet)	Description
Little Ferry (CSX)	480 600	Two connections between Conrail and NYS&W tracks to allow trains to move between Conrail lines and a CSX Little Ferry intermodal facility.

A detailed description of this proposed construction project, including alternative actions considered, the existing environment, the potential environmental impact and proposed mitigation measures, are provided below.

CSX DISCUSSION

6.1 LITTLE FERRY (CSX)

The proposed construction site is located within the corporate boundaries of the Village of Ridgefield Park, NJ, approximately 4 miles west of New York City (Figure 4-16). The project would consist of the construction of connections between parallel lines of Conrail and New York Susquehanna and Western (NYS&W), facilitating traffic moving on the Northwestern Gateway Service Route. The first connection would extend 480 feet between milepost 5.75 on Conrail's line between Selkirk and North Bergen to approximately milepost 5.65 on NYS&W's line between Patterson and Croxton. The second connection would extend approximately 600 feet between milepost 4.04 on Conrail's line to approximately milepost 4.15 on NYS&W's line.

This site is in a residential, light industrial and commercial area. The connections will be built on existing railroad rights-of-way and therefore no additional land will need to be acquired to complete this project.

6.1.1 Proposed Action and Alternatives

6.1.1.1 Proposed Action

The proposed connections are approximately 480 and 600 feet long, extending obliquely between the existing Conrail and NYS&W tracks. The proposed connections will facilitate train movements between the CSX-acquired Conrail line and the Little Ferry intermodal facility, which is located on the NYS&W tracks..

Construction Requirements

It is estimated that a work force of approximately 30 persons will be required to construct the connection and that it will take several months to complete. Borrow material for the project would be obtained from local sources and hauled to the site by truck.

Changes in Traffic

The Acquisition would result in the following estimated changes to the existing rail lines that would be connected by the proposed construction:

- Traffic on the existing Conrail line north of the proposed construction would increase from 24 trains per day to 25 trains per day, an increase of one train per day.
- Traffic on the existing Conrail line south of the proposed construction would decrease from 23 trains per day to 22 trains per day, a decrease of one train per day.
- An average of approximately five trains per day would operate over the new connections.

6.1.1.2 Alternatives

Build Alternatives

No build alternatives were identified for the proposed rail line connections. The proposed project would offer the most direct connections between the existing rail lines. It would minimize the use of land outside existing railroad rights-of-way, and thus would minimize environmental impacts.

No-Action Alternative

The no-action alternative would reduce the total economic and operational efficiency that would be possible as a result of the proposed Acquisition because CSX would not be able to offer efficient single line service between Little Ferry and the western points of Chicago, St. Louis and Memphis. Were the connections not built, CSX traffic would have to be routed over Syracuse via the NYS&W or over Buffalo via D&H to Binghamton and NYS&W to reach Little Ferry. Moreover, the connections at Little Ferry are necessary to allow CSX to combine Little Ferry traffic with traffic at the nearby S. Kearny terminal that CSX would acquire from Conrail to permit more efficient intermodal service on lines to Chicago, St. Louis and Memphis. For this reason, a no-action alternative was not considered.

6.1.2 Existing Environment

6.1.2.1 Land Use

Topography of the area is flat. The construction site is located north of the Bergen Turnpike on the NYS&W. A commercial building adjoins the east side of Conrail right-of-way. Commercial establishments, residences, and a municipal park lie east of this commercial building. The Conrail and NYS&W rights-of-way extend north and south of the Bergen Turnpike. Overpeck Creek, a tributary of the Hackensack River is located south of Bergen Turnpike and approximately 250 feet south of the proposed construction project. The Crystal Clear Importing warehouse lies to the west of the rail line rights-of-way. The Hackensack River adjoins the west side of the warehouse property, approximately 500 feet west of the proposed construction.

The proposed construction site is zoned as light industrial. The area immediately surrounding the site is zoned either light industrial or commercial. Residential zoning occurs approximately 350 feet east of the proposed site.

No Indian reservation was identified on or near the project area. According to the Eastern Area Office Bureau of Indian Affairs, no federally recognized Indian tribes or Indian reservations exist in New Jersey.

Soils at the proposed construction site are classified as urban land and are not considered prime farmland soils. The proposed site is located within a Coastal Zone Management area. Two waterways, the Hackensack River and Overpeck Creek have been identified as tidal bodies of water and therefore are regulated by the New Jersey Coastal Zone. New Jersey has a Coastal Zone Management Program which requires a Waterfront Development Permit if construction activities occur within 500 feet of a tidal body.

6.1.2.2 Water Resources

The Hackensack River, a tidal body, is located approximately 500 feet west of the proposed crossover. Overpeck Creek, also a tidal body, is a tributary of the Hackensack River and is located approximately 250 feet south of the proposed crossover.

National Wetland Inventory (NWI) maps identified one estuarine intertidal wetland associated with Overpeck Creek, approximately 500 feet south of the proposed crossover.

According to the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) map, the site is located in an area of minimal flooding.

6.1.2.3 Biological Resources

Vegetation

The proposed construction site is directly surrounded by commercial and light industrial land uses. The ground surface of the proposed site is an open area between the tracks consisting of an asphalt roadway, crushed-stone ballast, and sparse non-woody vegetation. Asphalt, gravel, grasses and trees are present near the commercial and industrial facilities east and west of the proposed crossover.

Wildlife

Wildlife habitat found on and adjacent to the construction site is limited to narrow strips of intrusive non-woody vegetation, grasses and trees. This habitat may be suitable to birds and small mammals that have adapted to developed areas.

Threatened and Endangered Species

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) was contacted regarding threatened and endangered species in the area of the proposed rail line construction at Little Ferry, NJ. The American peregrine falcon *(Falco peregrinus anatum)*, the bald eagle *(Haliaeetus leucocephalus)* and the roseate tern *(Sterna dougallii dougallii)* have been identified as endangered or threatened species throughout the entire state of New Jersey. Generally, the endangered American peregrine falcon nests along coastal bays on the Delaware River and on New York City bridges. The known nesting areas for the threatened bald eagle does not include Bergen County. Finally, the endangered roseate tern is considered a rare migrant. The list did not identify any known nesting areas or migratory paths for this species. Bergen County was not identified as a known nesting area, hibernaculum or migratory path area for any species.

Parks, Forests, Preserves, Refuges and Sanctuaries

Ferris Park is a small municipal park, located approximately 250 feet east of the proposed site. The park is bound by College Place to the north, Ridgefield Avenue to the east and Main Street

to the west. No other parks, forest, preserves, refuges or sanctuaries were identified within one-mile of the proposed site.

6.1.2.4 Air Quality

Bergen County is in non-attainment with the National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS). Current sources of emissions in the project area include vehicles, locomotives, and industry.

6.1.2.5 Noise

Rail, vehicular, and commercial traffic are the primary noise sources in the project area. Sensitive receptors identified within 500 feet of the proposed site include approximately 17 residences and one park. No schools or churches were identified within 500 feet of the proposed site.

6.1.2.6 Historic and Cultural Resources

The project area for the proposed connections is a previously disturbed right-of-way between the Conrail tracks on the east and the NYS&W tracks on the west. The area was disturbed with the original construction of the tracks. It continues to be cleared and maintained to facilitate on-going railroad operations. It is highly unlikely that archaeological resources are located within the area of potential effect.

To determine if known archaeological or historic resources exist in the area of the proposed action, the New Jersey State Historic Preservation Office and the Bureau of Archaeology and Ethnology of the New Jersey State Museum were contacted requesting information about historic properties in the project area, and potential for sites to be disturbed by project activities. Both responded that no sites are known on or adjacent to the project area. The SHPO indicated that the Section 106 process is concluded for this site. In addition, Dames & Moore reviewed

railroad property records and performed a site reconnaissance. Based on this investigation, it was concluded that no recorded or observed cultural resources lie within the proposed construction area.

6.1.2.7 Transportation and Safety

The rail transportation network consists of two parallel north/south Conrail and NYS&W tracks that cross at Bergen Turnpike. Access to the proposed construction project is available north of Bergen Turnpike, via a non-public, asphalt and crushed-stone ballast thoroughfare.

During the site visit, Dames & Moore did not observe any evidence of potential hazardous waste sites in the project area. An Environmental Data Resources (EDR) database search identified one hazardous materials release site within 500 feet of the proposed rail line construction. Information on this New Jersey release site, NYS&W Railway Yard (Bergen Turnpike), indicated the discovery of a diesel fuel spill on March 22, 1996.

No other sites of environmental concern within 500 feet of the proposed construction site were identified in the database search. The database search revealed nine unmappable sites within the Little Ferry/Ridgefield City limits. These sites could not be located because of poor address or geocoding information provided to the state and/or federal databases.

6.1.3 Potential Environmental Impacts of Proposed Action

6.1.3.1 Land Use

The proposed project would result in minimal impacts to land use. The proposed connections would be completed within railroad rights-of-way and therefore no land would be acquired. An underground pipeline and telecommunications cables may need to be relocated as a result of the proposed rail alignment. No loss of prime farmland soil would be incurred, nor would it conflict with adjacent land uses or zoning.

The proposed construction area is located within a Coastal Zone Management and a Waterfront Development Permit would be required for any proposed construction activities within 500 feet of a tidal body.

6.1.3.2 Water Resources

The proposed construction would not have adverse impacts on surface water or wetlands. However, since the proposed construction project is within 500 feet of a tidal body (i.e. Hackensack River and Overpeck Creek) a permit for construction activities would be required by the New Jersey Coastal Zone Management Agency.

6.1.3.3 Biological Resources

Vegetation

The proposed project would have minimal impacts to plant communities. The proposed construction site is along existing railroad rights-of-way which consist of sparse, non-woody vegetation and are heavily disturbed.

Wildlife

Wildlife populations in the vicinity of the construction will be temporarily disturbed during site activities. Once construction is complete, this disruption will cease.

Threatened and Endangered Species

The proposed construction project is located in a heavily disturbed area. Due to the lack of suitable habitat for the peregrine falcon, bald eagle, and roseate tern, it is unlikely these species will be affected by the proposed project.

Parks, Forests, Preserves, Refuges and Sanctuaries

Ferris Park would not be significantly impacted by the proposed construction. The park is currently exposed to rail activities from the existing rail lines. No other parks, forests, preserves, refuges or sanctuaries were identified within one-mile of the proposed construction site.

6.1.3.4 Air Quality

The operation of heavy equipment would be the primary source of pollutant emissions during construction activities. Particulate matter, volatile organic compounds (VOCs), carbon monoxide (CO) and nitrogen oxide (NOx) emissions generally would be minor and of short duration and would have insignificant impacts on air quality. Fugitive dust emissions result from the operation of heavy equipment. Fugitive dust emissions may also result from the operation of heavy equipment during construction. Fugitive dust can be controlled by using water sprays or other suitable dust suppressants.

Air quality impacts due to the operation of the new connections are anticipated to be minor since existing rail lines currently carry traffic in the project area. The amount of overall train traffic on the proposed rail line would not meet the STB thresholds for analysis; therefore air impacts were not quantified.

6.1.3.5 Noise

Construction operations associated with the proposed action may cause increases in noise levels, since these operations require the use of trucks and heavy equipment. However, noise generated by such equipment would be minor and temporary.

The proposed connections will not involve any curvature in the rail line. Therefore, wheel squeal is not expected to occur.

6.1.3.6 Historic and Cultural Resources

Based on consultation with the New Jersey SHPO and Bureau of Archaeology and Ethnology of the New Jersey State Museum, and Dames & Moore's review of railroad property records, no recorded or observed cultural resources lie within the proposed construction area. In addition, the New Jersey SHPO indicated the Section 106 process is concluded for this site.

6.1.3.7 Transportation and Safety

The proposed rail line crossover would not require new at-grade crossings or modifications of grade crossings or signals at Bergen Turnpike. Therefore, no vehicle delays, disruptions or increased potential for train/vehicle accidents would result from the proposed construction. The connections would improve train movement, thereby enhancing the efficiency of operations in the area.

One hazardous materials release site was identified within 500 feet of the proposed construction site. This site would not be affected by the proposed construction project. The EDR database search revealed nine unmappable sites within the Little Ferry/Ridgefield city limits, however none of these sites is believed to be within the proposed construction area based on historical land use of the site and site reconnaissance. CSX will notify the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection if hazardous waste is encountered during construction activities.

6.1.4 Potential Environmental Impact of Alternatives

6.1.4.1 Build Alternatives

No build alternatives were identified.

6.1.4.2 No-Action Alternative

If the no-action alternative were implemented, the proposed rail line connections would not be constructed. None of the potential environmental impacts associated with construction would occur. However, the no-action alternative would not provide the operational and economic benefits possible through the proposed Acquisition, and would effectively cut off the Little Ferry facility from the rest of the CSX system, resulting in a serious loss of efficiency and ability to service area traffic (See Section 6.1.1.2).

6.1.5 Proposed Mitigation

The proposed construction would result in minimal or no impact to land uses, water resources, biological resources, air quality, noise, cultural resources, transportation, and safety. In consideration of minimal impacts and general CSX practices, CSX would undertake the following mitigation measures.

6.1.5.1 Land Use

Adjacent properties disturbed during construction activities will be restored to pre-construction conditions. Heavy equipment will not be permitted on sensitive resources surrounding the construction area. Should disturbance to sensitive resources be unavoidable, Best Management Practices will be employed to minimize impact to those resources.

6.1.5.2 Water Resources

Erosion and sedimentation control measures will be employed during construction activities to minimize impact on water resources near the construction activities. Erosion will also be minimized by disturbing the smallest area possible at the site and revegetate any disturbed areas immediately following construction activities. Any culverts in the area will be kept clear of

debris to avoid flooding, in accordance with federal, state and local regulations. Necessary permits will be obtained if construction activities require the alteration of or work in wetlands, ponds, lakes or streams or if these activities cause soil or other materials to effect the water resources.

6.1.5.3 Biological Resources

The regrowth of vegetation in disturbed areas will be encouraged through stabilization of disturbed soils and reseeding. Should environmental altering activities occur, follow-up agency consultation with the New Jersey DNR and USFWS will be conducted.

6.1.5.4 Air Quality

All applicable federal, state and local regulations regarding the control of fugitive dust will be followed as well as using control methods such as water spraying.

6.1.5.5 Noise

Temporary noise from construction equipment will be controlled through the use of work hour controls and maintenance of muffler systems on machinery.

6.1.5.6 Historic and Cultural Resources

In the event that potentially significant resources are discovered during the course of the project, the New Jersey SHPO will be notified and procedures recommended by the New Jersey SHPO will be implemented. This may include halting construction until the significance of the site can be evaluated and the impact to the significant values of the site can be mitigated or reduced.

6.1.5.7 Transportation and Safety

All roads disturbed during construction activities will be restored according to state or local regulations. Signs and barricades will be utilized, as necessary, to control traffic disruptions during construction activities. All hazardous materials generated during construction activities will be transported in accordance with the U.S. Department of Transportation Hazardous Materials Regulations (49 CFR Parts 171-174 and 177-179). If any hazardous materials are encountered during construction activities, the appropriate response and remediation measures will be implemented.

6.1.6 References

Land Use

Personal Correspondence with Jay Springer at New Jersey Coastal Zone Management Agency, May 27, 1997.

U.S. Geological Survey, 1967, photo revised 1981, Topographic Quadrangle, Weehawken, New Jersey-New York.

U.S. Department of Agriculture, March 1995. *Soil Survey of Bergen County, NJ.* Soil Conservation Service

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Water Resources and Wetlands

Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), October 15, 1982. *FEMA Flood Insurance Rate Map.*

U.S. Geological Survey, 1967, photo revised 1981, Topographic Quadrangle, Weehawken, NJ-NY.

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, *National Wetlands Inventory Map.* Weehawken, NJ-NY Quadrangle.

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Land Use Regulation Department, Jay Springer, 1997.

Phone conversation, May 27.

Biological Resources

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, New Jersey Field Office, Federally Listed Endangered and Threatened Species in New Jersey, May 1997.

Air Quality

40 CFR Part 81 - Designation of Areas for Air Quality Planning Purposes, Subpart C Section 107, Attainment Status Designations.

Noise

Harris, Miller, Miller and Hansen. May 1997.

Historic and Cultural Resources

Flinn, Karen, Registrar Archaeology/Ethnology Bureau State of New Jersey. 1997. Correspondence to Dr. Janet Friedman, Dames & Moore, May 22, 1997.

Gregg, Mike, New Jersey Historic Preservation Office. 1997. Correspondence to Dr. Janet Friedman, Dames & Moore, May 22, 1997.

Eastern Area Office Bureau of Indian Affairs, Peggy Davis, 1997. Phone conversation. May 28.

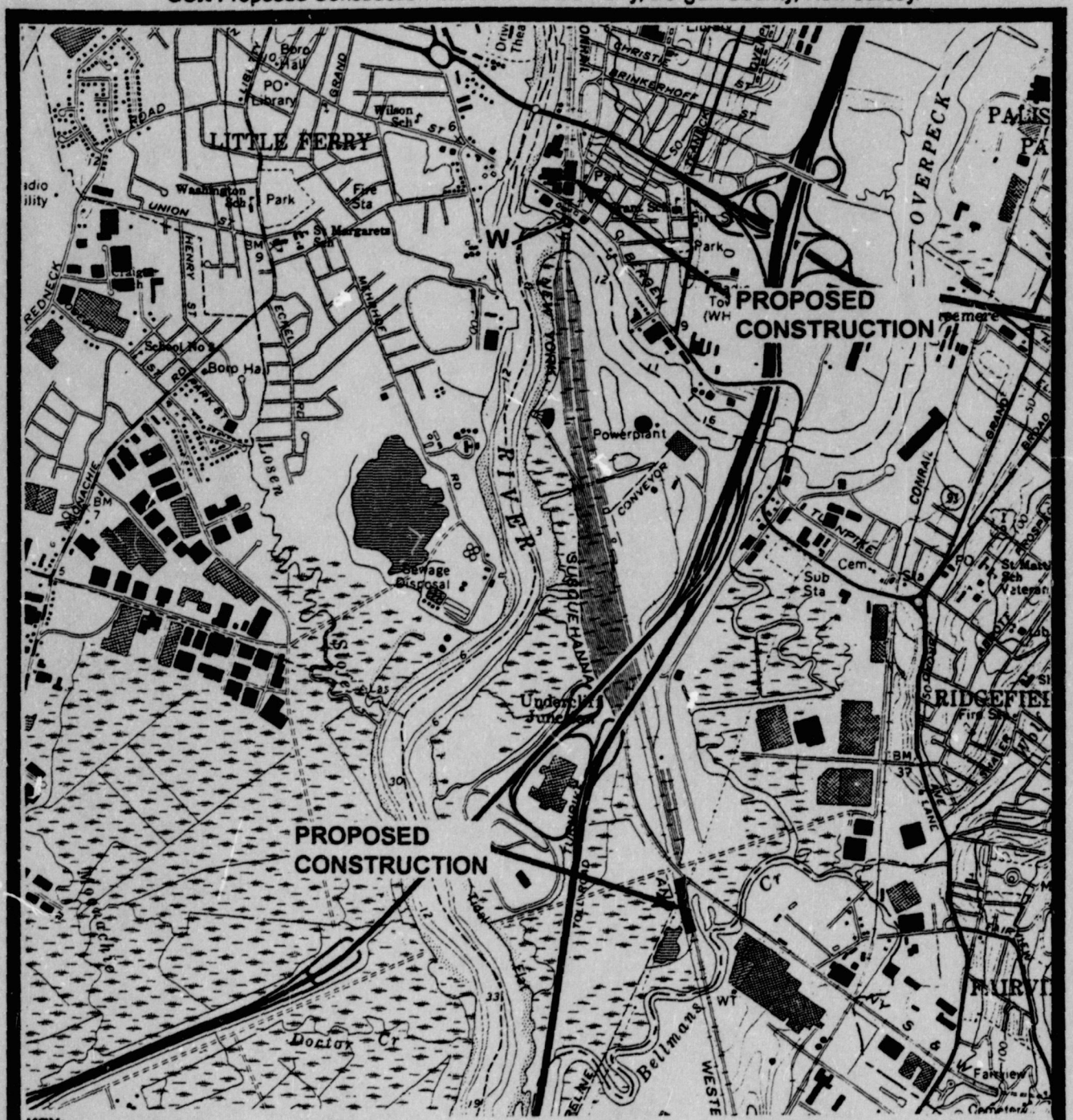
Transportation and Safety

Environmental Data Resources, May 1997.

FIGURES

Figure 4-15

CSX Proposed Construction Location: Little Ferry, Bergen County, New Jersey.



KEY:
W=WETLAND
THE NWI MAP IDENTIFIED THE HACKENSACK RIVER AND OVERPECK CREEK AS A WETLAND AREA. THE AREA IDENTIFIED ON THE MAP IS WITHIN 500 FEET OF THE PROPOSED CONSTRUCTION PROJECT. THERE ARE NO KNOWN HISTORIC SITES IMPACTED BY THE PROPOSED CONSTRUCTION.

DAMES & MOORE
A DAMES & MOORE GROUP COMPANY

NEW JERSEY
QUADRANGLE LOCATION

SCALE 1:24,000

0 1/2 0 1 MILE

1000 0 1000 2000 3000 4000 5000 6000 7000 FEET

N

Base Map: *USGS 7.5' Topographic Quadrangle: Weehawken, New Jersey-New York 1967 (Photorevised 1981)*

7.0 NEW YORK

7.0 NEW YORK

Two connection projects in New York proposed by NS would require environmental analysis. This section contains an analysis of the potential environmental impacts associated with the proposed rail line constructions. Information on the proposed constructions is provided below.

Location	Length (feet)	Description
Blasdell (Buffalo) (NS)	5,200	Connection from the NS Cleveland mainline to the Conrail Buffalo line to provide efficient train movement from Erie, PA to points west to Buffalo, NY. Proposed construction includes rehabilitation of an existing railroad bridge and construction of a new overpass.
Gardenville Junction (Ebenezer) (NS)	1,700	Connection from the Conrail Buffalo line to Conrail Ebenezer secondary line to provide efficient train movement from Erie, PA to Buffalo, NY or the Conrail Southern Tier avoiding CP-Draw.

Detailed descriptions of these proposed construction projects, including alternative actions considered, the existing environment, the potential environmental impact and proposed mitigation measures, are provided below.

NS DISCUSSION

7.1 BLASDELL (NS)

Blasdell, NY is in Erie County, approximately 6.0 miles south of Buffalo, NY (Figure 4-16). Existing rail lines in the project area include a north/south NS line and north/south and east/west Conrail lines.

The proposed construction site encompasses an area approximately 5,200 by 200 feet (23.9

area approximately 100 by 5,200 feet (11.9 acres). This site is urban, with industry to the west and residences to the east. The site itself is presently undeveloped. The site is located between the north/south NS and Conrail lines and was the location of a previous rail line. A 100 to 150-foot strip of land separates the NS and Conrail lines from NS mile post B7.2 and Lake Avenue. This area consists of native grasses, scrub brush, deciduous trees and scattered wetlands. The area is bordered on the north by the Conrail Buffalo line and on the south by Mile Strip Road. The alignment for the proposed construction follows the same alignment as a past connection which has been removed. A substantial portion of the previous roadbed is still present and would be incorporated into this construction.

7.1.1 Proposed Action and Alternatives

7.1.1.1 Proposed Action

The proposed construction at Blasdell would involve a new connection between the north/south NS and east/west Conrail line. The connection would involve construction of approximately 5,200 feet of new rail line, rebuilding a previous overpass over Lake Avenue, and rehabilitation of an existing railroad bridge to tie into the Conrail Buffalo line. The connection would begin on the NS track at NS mile post B7.2, traverse a low-lying wooded area, merge with an abandoned roadbed, cross Lake Avenue via a new overpass, and align with an existing railroad bridge to the north (Figure 4-16). This new construction would provide efficient train movement between Erie, PA and Bison Yard in Buffalo, NY. This will improve service through Buffalo between Cleveland and the Southern Tier. This connection would require 11.9 acres of land. Acquisition of approximately 3.0 acres of new right-of-way would be necessary.

The proposed connection at Blasdell would be done in conjunction with the connection at Gardenville Junction (Ebenezer), NY. Both connections are required to route NS traffic efficiently through Buffalo and one would provide no benefit without the other. These connections will significantly reduce train delays in the Buffalo area, with associated savings in

fuel consumption and emissions from idling locomotives. Section 7.2 contains a discussion of the proposed construction at Gardenville Junction.

Construction Requirements

Estimates for the labor force and duration of construction are not available, but may be significant due to overpass construction, railroad bridge rehabilitation, and site grading requirements. Extensive amounts of borrow material could be required, although no estimates have been prepared. Borrow material for the project would be obtained from local sources and hauled to the construction site by rail or truck.

Changes in Traffic

The proposed Acquisition would result in the following estimated changes in traffic over the existing rail lines that would be connected by the proposed construction.

- Traffic on the existing NS line would increase from 13 to 25 trains per day.
- Traffic on the existing Conrail lines would increase from 4 to 13 trains per day.
- Traffic on the new construction would be nine trains per day.

7.1.1.2 Alternatives

Build Alternatives

No other build alternatives were identified for the proposed rail line construction. The proposed rail line would be the most direct connection possible between the existing rail lines and would minimize the use of new land outside the existing NS and Conrail rights-of-way. In addition, the proposed construction would not result in any significant environmental impacts. The proposed construction would utilize the remnants of a previous roadbed, minimizing potential environmental impacts on that portion of the project.

No-Action Alternative

Under the no-action alternative, existing and additional post-Acquisition rail traffic would operate over existing NS and Conrail lines with no connection. Access between the two lines would be limited to existing interchanges and terminals. The no-build alternative would reduce the total economic and operational efficiency that would be possible as a result of the proposed Acquisition.

7.1.2 Existing Environment

7.1.2.1 Land Use

The area of the proposed construction site is primarily urban with adjacent residential and industrial areas (Figure 4-16). The land between the north/south NS and Conrail lines between Lake Avenue and NS mile post B7.2 contains deciduous trees, weedy annuals, and scrub brush. Scattered wetlands occur in this wooded strip of land. Land in the rights-of-way contain grasses and gravel ballast. Utility poles run parallel to the NS line on the western side of the right-of-way. The proposed construction site is zoned industrial and residential

Soils at the proposed construction site are classified as prime farmland. However, development of the site for existing rail use and of adjacent property for other uses has rendered the area unusable for agriculture.

The project is not within a designated coastal zone.

No federal or state recognized Indian tribes or lands occur at the proposed construction site.

7.1.2.2 Water Resources

Neither the existing NS nor Conrail lines cross any surface waters within the construction area.

National Wetland Inventory (NWI) maps had not been received at the time this report was written. However, Burns & McDonnell personnel noted scattered shrub/scrub and wooded wetlands between the existing NS and Conrail lines.

Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) maps for the area show that the proposed project is not within the 100 year floodplain.

7.1.2.3 Biological Resources

Vegetation

The proposed construction site is primarily urban. Land bordering the existing rail rights-of-way includes native grasses, shrubs, and deciduous trees. An overgrown area of shrubs and trees divides the NS and Conrail lines south from Lake Avenue for approximately 1,300 feet. Vegetation on other areas of the rail rights-of-way is primarily weeds scattered over the gravel ballast. This vegetation is not unique or limited in the area.

Wildlife

Wildlife habitat found on the construction site is limited to narrow strips of grasses, shrubs and trees adjacent to the edges of the existing rail rights-of-way and the overgrown area between the NS and Conrail lines. These areas provide suitable habitat for a variety of common small mammals, reptiles, amphibians, song birds, and waterfowl. Wildlife habitat adjacent to the site includes strips of shrubs and deciduous trees, and graveled areas containing scattered grasses and weeds.

Threatened and Endangered Species

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) and the New York Department of Natural Resources (DNR)were contacted regarding threatened and endangered species in the area of the proposed rail line construction at Blasdell. The USFWS responded that no Federally listed or proposed endangered or threatened species are known to exist in the project area. Comments from the New York DNR have not yet been received. No threatened or endangered species or suitable habitat for such species were observed during a site visit.

Parks, Forest Preserves, Refuges and Sanctuaries

No parks, forest preserves, refuges or sanctuaries are in the proposed construction site vicinity. The nearest park is Lakeside Memorial Park, approximately three miles southwest of the site.

7.1.2.4 Air Quality

According to 40 CFR 81, Erie County is in nonattainment for ozone with the National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS). Current sources of emissions in the project area include locomotives and motor vehicles.

7.1.2.5 Noise

Rail, vehicular and commercial traffic are the primary sources of noise in the area of the proposed rail line construction.

Ten residences are within 500 feet of the proposed construction site. One school and two churches occur within 1,250 feet of the proposed construction site. These receptors currently experience noise generated by passing trains and traffic on local roads.

7.1.2.6 Historic and Cultural Resources

The proposed construction would occur within former rail right-of-way. The location has been previously disturbed by former rail line construction and removal activities. No undisturbed historic or cultural resources are expected within the existing rail rights-of-way.

7.1.2.7 Transportation and Safety

The rail transportation network consists of three north/south Conrail lines, an east/west Conrail line and a north/south NS line. This connection is bordered on the north by the Conrail Buffalo line. One road in the project area would be crossed, Lake Avenue, via a railroad overpass. State Route 62 passes through Blasdell approximately 0.5 miles from the proposed construction site. Interstate Highway 90 and State Route 5, both pass on the outside of Blasdell and both are approximately 0.75 mile from the construction site.

ADT data was not available for Lake Avenue and Mile Strip Road, but was observed to be heavy near the evening rush hour during a site visit. A total of 13 trains per day use the NS mainline, while four trains per day operate over the Conrail mainline.

Review of the EDR database report indicated that there were three LUST sites within the proposed construction corridor. Two of the LUST are located at 45 Lisa Lane and a third is located at 62 Lisa Lane in Blasdell, NY. No other hazardous waste sites or known environmental conditions, e.g., NPL, CERCLIS, RCRIS-TSD, ERNS, SPL (SHWS), SPILLS, or SWF/LF were identified in the vicinity of the proposed rail line construction. The database search revealed 18 unmappable sites, three within the city limits of Blasdell, one within the city limits of Buffalo, 13 within the city limits of Lackawanna and one within Erie County. These sites could not be located because of poor address or geocoding information provided to the state and/or federal databases. No evidence of any hazardous waste sites was observed within the project area during a site visit.

7.1.3 Potential Environmental Impacts of Proposed Action

7.1.3.1 Land Use

The proposed project would result in minimal impacts to land use. Approximately 11.9 acres of land would be required for the new connection. Temporary construction impacts from excavation, mixing of soil profiles or soil compaction to adjacent land are considered to be insignificant due to the small portion of land affected and construction being limited mainly to the area of a former roadbed between two existing rail lines. The proposed construction would not conflict with adjacent land uses, utility lines or zoning.

No construction activities would occur within a designated coastal zone.

7.1.3.2 Water Resources

Wetlands occurring between the NS and Conrail lines would likely be crossed. These wetlands appear to have developed in the borrow areas for the previous rail connection. Minimal loss of wetland would occur due to construction of a new roadbed across this area. NS would obtain all necessary permits for construction in wetlands and implement measures to minimize impacts to adjacent wetlands.

Impacts from soil erosion resulting from cleared vegetation and open soil would be insignificant because NS would use Best Management Practices (BMPs) to control runoff and surface instability. In addition, NS would restore disturbed soil areas outside the roadbed sideslope through reseeding. In order to maintain current storm water drainage patterns, a culvert may need to be placed in the roadbed where it would cross any wetland areas near NS mile post B7.2.

7.1.3.3 Biological Resources

Vegetation

The proposed action would impact a wooded area between the NS and Conrail rights-of-way. This vegetation is not unique to the area. In addition, NS would reseed outside the subgrade slope of the new connection to restore vegetation affected by construction.

Wildlife

No adverse impacts to wildlife populations are anticipated. The construction site is small and while it provides habitat for a variety of species, it contains only limited wildlife habitat. The minimal loss of habitat due to this construction would be insignificant compared to the wildlife habitat available in the area.

Threatened and Endangered Species

The USFWS responded that no Federally listed or proposed endangered or threatened species are known to exist in the project area. Comments from the New York DNR have not yet been received. Once these comments are received, they will be forwarded to the STB, Section of Environmental Analysis. Due to the lack of suitable habitat, no impacts to threatened or endangered species are expected.

Parks, Forest Preserves, Refuges and Sanctuaries

No parks, forest preserves, refuges and sanctuaries are within one mile of the proposed construction. The nearest park is Lakeside Memorial Park approximately three miles southwest of the site. This park is too distant to be impacted by construction or operation of the proposed construction.

7.1.3.4 Air Quality

Impacts to air quality would result from construction, operation and maintenance of the proposed project. The operation of heavy equipment would be the primary source of pollutant emissions during construction activities. Such pollutants vary by the source, as described below:

- Particulate matter, volatile organic compounds (VOCs), carbon monoxide (CO) and nitrogen oxides (NOX) resulting from the combustion of diesel fuel
- Fugitive dust emissions along the right-of-way and unimproved roads resulting from the operation of heavy equipment.

Fugitive dust can be controlled by using water sprays or other suitable dust suppressants. The combustion emissions associated with removal operations (VOCs, CO and NOX) generally would be minor and of short duration and would have insignificant impacts on air quality. The amount of overall train traffic on the proposed rail line would exceed STB thresholds for air quality. General impacts to air quality are discussed in Part 4 Appendix A. Air quality impacts for segments expected to experience increased traffic above STB thresholds are discussed in Part 2.

Erie County is an ozone non-attainment area. Locomotive emissions can be contributing factors to ozone formation. However, the proposed construction is not expected to increase total rail traffic within Erie County. The project will allow for shorter, more efficient routing of trains, reducing locomotive operating times within Erie County and thus, overall emissions. While the construction may not adversely impact the non-attainment status of Erie County, it may result in improved overall air quality for ozone.

7.1.3.5 Noise

Ten residences are within 500 feet of the proposed action. These receptors currently experience noise generated by passing trains on the NS and Conrail rail lines. Presently these facilities are exposed to 13 trains per day on the NS line and four trains per day on Conrail's line. NS estimates nine train movements per day on the proposed rail line connection. This exceeds STB thresholds for noise evaluation. Train traffic operating on the proposed connection (nine trains per day) would generate an Ldn 65 noise level at approximately 100 feet. No at-grade crossings where horn soundings would occur would be located along the line to generate an additional Ldn 65 distance. None of the 10 residences within 500 feet would be within 100 feet of the connection. Of potentially greater significance would be noise generated by wheel squeal. Should wheel squeal occur, nine trains per day could generate an Ldn 65 distance of approximately 450 feet. Wheel squeal would only be expected to potentially occur at the northern end of the project, where the new line would curve to the east. In this area, no residences or other sensitive noise receptors would be within 450 feet of the connecting track.

Construction operations could cause temporary increases in noise levels. Construction activities would require the use of trucks and heavy equipment. Noise generated by such equipment would be temporary and limited to the short construction.

7.1.3.6 Historic and Cultural Resources

No historic resources are expected to be impacted by the proposed construction due to it being on railroad right-of-way. However, the potential for archaeological sites or historic properties, has not been dismissed. NS will continue consultations with the New York SHPO until the Section 106 process is complete.

7.1.3.7 Transportation and Safety

The proposed rail line connection would require no new at-grade crossings or additional warning signals. A new overhead crossing of Lake Avenue would be installed. No vehicle delays, disruptions, or increased potential for train/vehicle accidents would result from operation of the connection. Short-term disruptions to local traffic could occur during construction of the Lake Avenue overpass. These disruptions would be temporary. The connection would improve train movement, thereby enhancing the efficiency of NS rail operations in the area.

During a site visit, no evidence of potential hazardous waste sites was observed in the project area. Construction debris was encountered on the north end of the connection. No hazardous waste sites are expected to be impacted by the proposed construction.

Review of the EDR database report indicated that there were three LUST sites within the proposed construction corridor. No other hazardous waste sites or known environmental conditions, e.g., NPL, CERCLIS, RCRIS-TSD, ERNS, SPL (SHWS), SPILLS, or SWF/LF, were identified in the vicinity of the proposed rail line construction. The database search revealed 18 unmappable sites, three within the city limits of Blasdell, one within the city limits of Buffalo, 13 within the city limits of Lackawanna and one within Erie County. These sites could not be located because of poor address or geocoding information provided to the state and/or federal databases. No evidence of hazardous waste sites was observed within the project area during a site visit. No impacts to hazardous waste sites are expected. If contamination is encountered, proper response and remediation will be implemented.

Fuels and oils necessary for construction would be present only in small amounts. In the unlikely event that a spill occurs, only a small amount would be released. In the case of a spill, NS will follow appropriate emergency response procedures outlined in its emergency response plans.

7.1.4 Potential Environmental Impact of Alternatives

7.1.4.1 Build Alternatives

No other build alternatives to the proposed rail line construction project were identified. The proposed construction route provides the most direct rail line connection possible and utilizes an abandoned roadbed and an existing railroad bridge. The proposed project would minimize the acquisition of new right-of-way, the amount of fill used for construction and associated environmental impacts.

7.1.4.2 No-Action Alternative

If the no-action alternative were implemented, the proposed rail line connection would not be constructed and operated. Land use and other environmental conditions in the region would remain the same. Under this alternative, NS would continue to maintain and/or operate over less efficient rail routes. Customers would not benefit form improved service through Buffalo between Cleveland and the Southern Tier. This alternative would result in longer routes, greater fuel consumption, air emissions, noise and an overall increase in expense to NS and the consumer. The no-action alternative is not considered practical or viable.

7.1.5 Proposed Mitigation

The proposed construction would result in minimal to no impact to land use, water resources, biological resources, air quality, noise, cultural resources, and transportation and safety. In consideration of minimal impacts and general NS practices, NS has proposed the following mitigation measures to minimize environmental impacts:

7.1.5.1 Land Use

- NS will restore any adjacent properties that are disturbed during construction.

7.1.5.2 Water Resources

- NS will use BMPs to control erosion, runoff and surface instability during construction. After the new rail line is constructed, NS will reseed outside the subgrade slope to provide permanent cover and prevent potential erosion.

7.1.5.3 Biological Resources

- NS will use BMPs to control erosion, runoff and surface instability during construction. After the new rail line is constructed, NS will reseed outside the subgrade slope to provide permanent cover and prevent potential erosion.

7.1.5.4 Air Quality

- NS will comply with all applicable federal, state and local regulations regarding the control of fugitive dust.

7.1.5.5 Noise

- NS will control temporary noise from construction equipment by ensuring all machinery has properly functioning muffler systems and by work hour controls.

7.1.5.6 Historic and Cultural Resources

- NS will continue the Section 106 consultation process.

7.1.5.7 Transportation and Safety

- NS will observe all applicable federal, state and local regulations regarding handling and disposal of any waste materials encountered or generated during the proposed construction project.
- NS will transport all hazardous materials in compliance with the U.S. Department of Transportation Hazardous Materials Regulations (49 CFR parts 171-174 and 177-179).
- In the case of a spill, NS will follow appropriate emergency response procedures outlined in its emergency response plans.

- NS will restore all roads disturbed during construction to the conditions required by state or local regulations.

7.1.6 References

Personal communication with Erie County Zoning Department, April, 1997.

U.S. Department of Agriculture, 1982. *Soil Survey of Erie County, NY.* Soil Conservation Service.

U.S. Department of Agriculture, 1983. *Map of Prime Farmland.* Soil Conservation Service.

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, 10/1978. *National Wetlands Inventory Map.* Buffalo SE, N.Y. Quadrangle. (Date based on last aerial photograph)

U.S. Geological Survey, 1965. *1:24,000-scale topographic maps.* Buffalo SE, N.Y. Quadrangle

40 CFR Part 81 - Designation of Areas for Air Quality Planning Purposes, Subpart C Section 107, Attainment Status Designations.

7.2 GARDENVILLE JUNCTION (EBENEZER)

Gardenville Junction, NY is in Erie County, approximately 3.0 miles southeast of Buffalo, NY (Figure 4-18). Existing rail lines in the project area include northwest/southeast and east/west Conrail lines.

The proposed construction site at Gardenville Junction encompasses an area approximately 1,700 by 200 feet (7.8 acres). The new connection would occupy an area approximately 100 by 1,700 feet (3.9 acres). The connection would be located along the alignment of a previous connecting track which has been removed. The connection would be located within existing railroad right-of-way. The site is undeveloped and is primarily weed and grass covered. A dense woodlot is adjacent to the eastern side of the site. A large wetland is located on the south side of the intersection of the two Conrail tracks (Figure 4-18). An oil/petroleum tank farm is located to the west.

7.2.1 Proposed Action and Alternatives

7.2.1.1 Proposed Action

The proposed action at Gardenville Junction would involve the construction and operation of a new connection between the northwest/southeast Conrail "Ebenezer Secondary" track and the east/west Conrail "Buffalo" track. The connection would be northwest of the intersection of the Conrail lines (Figure 4-18). This new construction would permit efficient train movement between Erie, PA and Bison Yard in Buffalo, NY and improve service through Buffalo between Cleveland and the Southern Tier. The design includes approximately 1,700 feet of new rail line on 3.9 acres and occupy approximately 1.8 acres of existing right-of-way.

The proposed connection at Gardenville Junction would be built in conjunction with the connection at Blasdell, NY. Both connections are required to efficiently route NS traffic through

Buffalo and one would provide no benefit without the other. The reader is referred to Section 7.1 for a discussion of the proposed construction at Blasdell.

Construction Requirements

The exact labor force and duration of construction are not available, but are expected to require 10-15 people and three to six months. Borrow material for the project would be obtained from local sources and hauled to the construction site by rail or truck.

Changes in Traffic

The proposed Acquisition would result in the following estimated changes in traffic over the existing rail lines that would be connected by the proposed construction:

- Traffic on the existing Conrail "Buffalo" line would remain four trains per day.
- Traffic on the existing Conrail "Ebenezer Secondary" line would increase from 4 to 13 trains per day.
- Traffic on the new construction would be nine trains per day.

7.2.1.2 Alternatives

Build Alternatives

No other build alternatives were identified for the proposed rail line construction. The proposed rail line would be the most direct connection between the existing rail lines and would minimize the use of new land outside the existing Conrail rights-of-way. In addition, no significant environmental impacts are anticipated from the proposed construction.

No-Action Alternative

Under the no-action alternative, existing and additional post-Acquisition rail traffic would operate over the existing Conrail rail lines with no connection. Access between the existing rail lines would be limited to existing interchanges and terminals. The no-build alternative would

reduce the total economic and operational efficiency and other benefits that would be possible as a result of the proposed Acquisition.

7.2.2 Existing Environment

7.2.2.1 Land Use

The proposed site is undeveloped land covered by grasses and weeds (Figure 4-17). The area around the proposed construction site is dominated by rail, transportation and utility uses. Numerous electrical transmission lines are located east of the north/south line. These lines serve an electrical substation located northeast of the intersection of the two rail lines. Other land uses surrounding the proposed site include an industrial area to the west and undeveloped land covered with grasses and weeds along both sides of both Conrail tracks. Northeast of the intersection of the two Conrail lines is a lake and surrounding emergent wetland. The proposed site is zoned industrial.

None of the soils at the site are classified as prime farmland.

The project is not within a designated coastal zone.

No federal or state recognized Indian tribes or lands occur at the proposed construction site.

7.2.2.2 Water Resources

A small wooded wetland area is located approximately 40 feet east and down-gradient of the construction site. A pond and adjacent wetland are located northeast of the intersection of the Conrail lines, on the east side of the Conrail Ebenezer Secondary line. These water resources are also down-gradient from the proposed construction site (Figure 4-17) but are separated from it by the existing north/south Conrail line. No other surface waters are in the project area.

National Wetland Inventory (NWI) maps indicate a large palustrine open water and emergent wetland east of the proposed construction site, on the opposite side of the north/south Conrail track and a small palustrine shrub/scrub wetland that would be located between the proposed construction and the existing Conrail tracks.

Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) maps for the area show that the proposed project is not within the 100-year floodplain.

7.2.2.3 Biological Resources

Vegetation

Most of the proposed construction area is vacant or industrial and is covered by vegetation consisting of weedy annuals and grasses, portions of which are maintained as lawn. A small wooded area is found immediately to the east, between the construction and the intersection of the two Conrail lines, which contains scrub-brush and deciduous trees. Emergent wetland vegetation is present around the small, wooded pond located in this wooded area. This vegetation is not unique or limited in the area.

Wildlife

The construction site provides only limited grassland habitat, suitable for small mammals and some songbirds. The site may be used incidentally by wildlife inhabiting adjacent fields, woodlots, and wetlands. These surrounding areas provide habitat for a more diverse fauna including songbirds, waterfowl, small and large mammals, raptors, reptiles, and amphibians. Permanent surface waters in the area likely support fish and other aquatic wildlife.

Threatened or Endangered Species

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) and the New York Department of Natural Resources (DNR) were contacted regarding threatened and endangered species in the area of the proposed rail line construction at Blasdell. The USFWS responded that no Federally listed or proposed endangered or threatened species are known to exist in the project area. Comments

from the New York DNR have not yet been received. No threatened or endangered species or suitable habitat for such species were observed during a site visit.

Parks, Forest Preserves, Refuges, and Sanctuaries

No parks, forest preserves, refuges or sanctuaries are in or adjacent to the proposed construction site.

7.2.2.4 Air Quality

According to 40 CFR 81, Erie County is in nonattainment for ozone with the National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS). Current sources of emissions in the project area include locomotives.

7.2.2.5 Noise

Rail traffic is the primary source of noise in the area of the proposed rail line construction. A total of two and four trains per day operate on the two Conrail lines.

There are no schools or churches within 0.25 mile of the site. There are no residences within 500 feet.

7.2.2.6 Historic and Cultural Resources

The proposed construction would occur within former rail right-of-way. The location has been previously disturbed by former rail line construction and removal activities. No undisturbed historic or cultural resources are expected within the existing rail rights-of-way. In addition, no potential historic resources were observed in the project area during a site visit.

7.2.2.7 Transportation and Safety

The rail transportation network consists of the Conrail rail lines that intersect one another at Gardenville Junction. Major roads in this part of Buffalo include Harlem Road, Highway 90, Center Road, and Indian Church Road. There is an at-grade crossing 0.25 miles south of the construction on Lyndale Court. No traffic data are available for this road, but traffic is expected to be limited to local residents. An existing, private gravel drive for access to the rail lines is approximately 200 feet north of the intersection.

Review of the EDR database indicated that no hazardous waste sites, e.g., NPL, CERCLIS, RCRIS-TSD, ERNS, SLP (SHWS), LUST or SWF/LF, were identified in the vicinity of the proposed rail line construction. The database search revealed 11 unmappable sites, 10 within the city limits of Buffalo and one in Erie County. These sites could not be located because of poor address or geocoding information provided to the state and/or federal databases. No evidence of any hazardous waste sites was observed within the proposed construction area during a site visit.

7.2.3 Potential Environmental Impacts of Proposed Action

7.2.3.1 Land Use

The proposed project would result in minimal impacts to land use and be built on undeveloped rail right-of-way which occupies the location of a former rail connection (Figure 4-17). The proposed project would be compatible with the surrounding rail lines and other industrial facilities.

The project would not cross any prime farmland.

No construction activities would occur within a designated coastal zone.

7.2.3.2 Water Resources

The construction of the proposed rail line would not have adverse impacts on groundwater or surface water resources. Impacts from soil erosion resulting from cleared vegetation and open soil would be insignificant with Best Management Practices (BMPs) used to control runoff and surface instability. These measures will also prevent runoff from impacting wetland areas. NS would obtain any necessary permits for work in wetlands. In addition, NS would restore disturbed areas outside the roadbed side slope through reseeding. Storm water drainage patterns are not anticipated to be altered by the proposed project.

7.2.3.3 Biological Resources

Vegetation

The proposed action may involve limited clearing or trimming of trees in the adjacent woodlot. Other impacts would include the minor loss of scrub vegetation, grass-covered lawn and other grassy areas. After construction, NS would reseed outside the subgrade slope. This vegetation is not unique or limited in the area.

Wildlife

No adverse impacts to wildlife populations are anticipated. The construction site contains only limited, marginal habitat suitable for wildlife. Adjacent areas, providing higher quality habitat, would be unaffected.

Threatened or Endangered Species

The USFWS responded that no Federally listed or proposed endangered or threatened species are known to exist in the project area. Comments from the New York DNR have not yet been received. Once these comments are received, they will be forwarded to the STB, Section of Environmental Analysis. Due to the lack of suitable habitat, no impacts to threatened or endangered species are expected.

Parks, Forest Preserves, Refuges and Sanctuaries

No adverse impact is expected since no known state or federally designated parks, forests, preserves, refuges or sanctuaries are within one mile of the proposed construction.

7.2.3.4 Air Quality

Impacts to air quality would result from construction, operation and maintenance of the proposed project. The operation of heavy equipment would be the primary source of pollutant emissions during construction activities. Such pollutants vary by the source, as described below:

- Particulate matter, volatile organic compounds (VOCs), carbon monoxide (CO) and nitrogen oxides (NOX) resulting from the combustion of diesel fuel
- Fugitive dust emissions along the right-of-way and unimproved roads resulting from the operation of heavy equipment.

Fugitive dust can be controlled by using water sprays or other suitable dust suppressants. The combustion emissions associated with removal operations (VOCs, CO and NOX) generally would be minor and of short duration and would have insignificant impacts on air quality. The amount of overall train traffic on the proposed rail line would exceed STB thresholds for air quality. General impacts are discussed in Part 4 Appendix A. Air quality impacts related to increased traffic on rail segments are discussed in Part 2.

Erie County is an ozone non-attainment area. Locomotive emissions can be contributing factors to ozone formation. However, the proposed construction is not expected to increase total rail traffic within Erie County. The project will allow for shorter, more efficient routing of trains, reducing locomotive operating times within Erie County and thus, overall emissions. The construction may, therefore, result in improved air quality for ozone in the local area.

7.2.3.5 Noise

No sensitive noise receptors are within 500 feet of the proposed construction site. Train traffic operating on the proposed connection (nine trains per day) would exceed STB thresholds and would generate an Ldn 65 noise level at approximately 100 feet. No at-grade crossings where horn soundings would occur would be located along the line to generate an additional Ldn 65 distance. Of potentially greater significance would be noise generated by wheel squeal. Should wheel squeal occur, nine trains per day would generate an Ldn 65 distance of approximately 450 feet. No residences or other sensitive noise receptors would be within 450 feet of the connecting track. The proposed project would have no impact to sensitive noise receptors.

7.2.3.6 Historic and Cultural Resources

No significant or historic resources are expected to be impacted by the proposed construction due to it being confined to the previously disturbed railroad rights-of-way. However, the potential for archaeological sites or historic properties, has not been dismissed. Prior to any construction activities, the New York SHPO will be consulted and the Section 106 process completed.

7.2.3.7 Transportation and Safety

The proposed rail line construction project would improve train movement to destinations, enhancing the efficiency of NS operations. The proposed construction project would not cross any roads. Therefore, no vehicle delays, disruptions, or additional train/vehicle accidents would result from train operations on the proposed rail connection. Short-term disruptions of local traffic could occur during the construction period.

Review of the EDR database indicated that no hazardous waste sites, e.g., NPL, CERCLIS, RCRIS-TSD, ERNS, SLP (SHWS), LUST or SWF/LF, were identified in the vicinity of the proposed rail line construction. The database search revealed 11 unmappable sites, 10 within the

city limits of Buffalo and one in Erie County. These sites could not be located because of poor address or geocoding information provided to the state and/or federal databases.

During a site visit, no evidence of potential hazardous waste sites was observed in the project area. No hazardous waste sites are expected to be impacted by the proposed construction.

Fuels and oils necessary for construction would be present only in small amounts. In the unlikely event that a spill occurs, only a small amount would be released. In the case of a spill, NS will follow appropriate emergency response procedures outlined in its emergency response plans.

7.2.4 Potential Environmental Impact of Alternatives

7.2.4.1 Build Alternatives

No other build alternatives to the proposed rail line construction project were identified. The proposed construction route provides the most direct rail line connection and would not require acquisition of additional right-of-way. The proposed construction would minimize associated potential environmental impacts.

7.2.4.2 No-Action Alternative

If the no-action alternative were implemented, the proposed rail line connection would not be constructed and operated. Land use and other environmental conditions in the region would remain the same. Under this alternative, NS would continue to maintain and/or operate over less efficient rail routes. Under this alternative, NS would continue to maintain and/or operate over less efficient rail routes. Customers would not benefit from improved service through Buffalo between Cleveland and the Southern Tier. This alternative would result in longer routes, greater fuel consumption, air emissions, noise and an overall increase in expense to NS and the consumer. The no-action alternative is not considered practical or viable.

7.2.5 Proposed Mitigation

The proposed construction would result in minimal to no impact to land use, water resources, biological resources, air quality, noise, cultural resources, and transportation and safety. In consideration of minimal impacts and general NS practices, NS has proposed the following mitigation measures to minimize environmental impacts:

7.2.5.1 Land Use

- NS will restore any adjacent properties that are disturbed during construction.

7.2.5.2 Water Resources

- NS will use BMPs to control erosion, runoff and surface instability during construction. After the new rail line is constructed, NS will reseed outside the subgrade slope to provide permanent cover and prevent potential erosion.

7.2.5.3 Biological Resources

- NS will use BMPs to control erosion, runoff and surface instability during construction. After the new rail line is constructed, NS will reseed outside the subgrade slope to provide permanent cover and prevent potential erosion.

7.2.5.4 Air Quality

- NS will comply with all applicable federal, state and local regulations regarding the control of fugitive dust.

7.2.5.5 Noise

- NS will control temporary noise from construction equipment by ensuring all machinery has properly functioning muffler systems and by work hour controls.

7.2.5.6 Historic and Cultural Resources

- NS will continue the Section 106 consultation process.

7.2.5.7 Transportation and Safety

- NS will observe all applicable federal, state and local regulations regarding handling and disposal of any waste materials encountered or generated during the proposed construction project.
- NS will transport all hazardous materials in compliance with the U.S. Department of Transportation Hazardous Materials Regulations (49 CFR parts 171-174 and 177-179).
- In the case of a spill, NS will follow appropriate emergency response procedures outlined in its emergency response plans.
- NS will restore all roads disturbed during construction to the conditions required by state or local regulations.

7.2.6 References

New York Department of Natural Resources,

Personal communication with Erie County Zoning Department, April, 1997.

U.S. Department of Agriculture, 1996. Soil Survey of Erie County, NY.

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, 10/1978. National Wetlands Inventory Map. Buffalo SE Quadrangle. (Date based on last aerial photograph)

U.S. Geological Survey, 1965. 1:24,000-scale topographic maps. Buffalo SE Quadrangle

40 CFR Part 81 - Designation of Areas for Air Quality Planning Purposes, Subpart C Section 107, Attainment Status Designations.

FIGURES

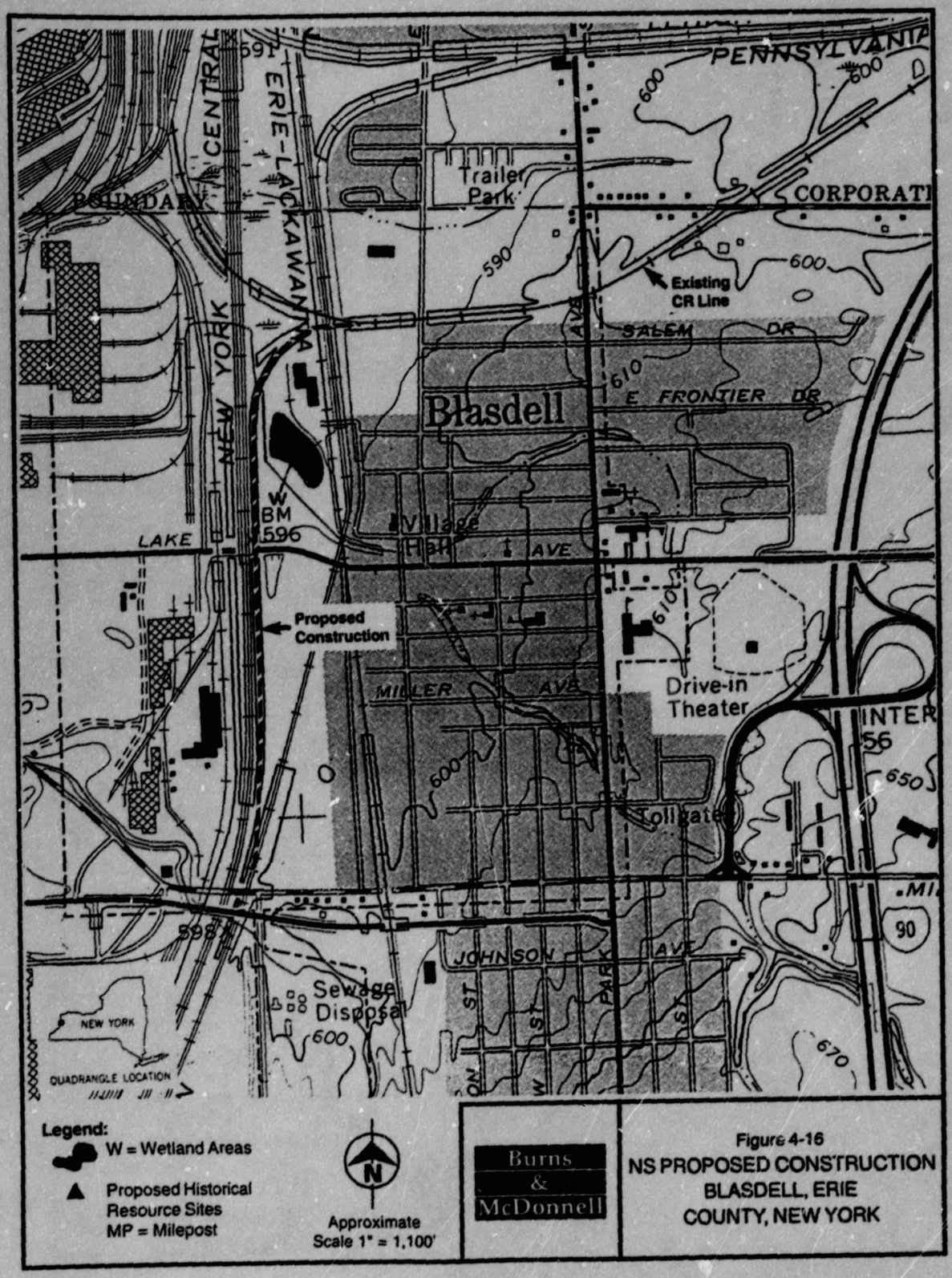


Figure 4-16
NS PROPOSED CONSTRUCTION
BLASDELL, ERIE
COUNTY, NEW YORK

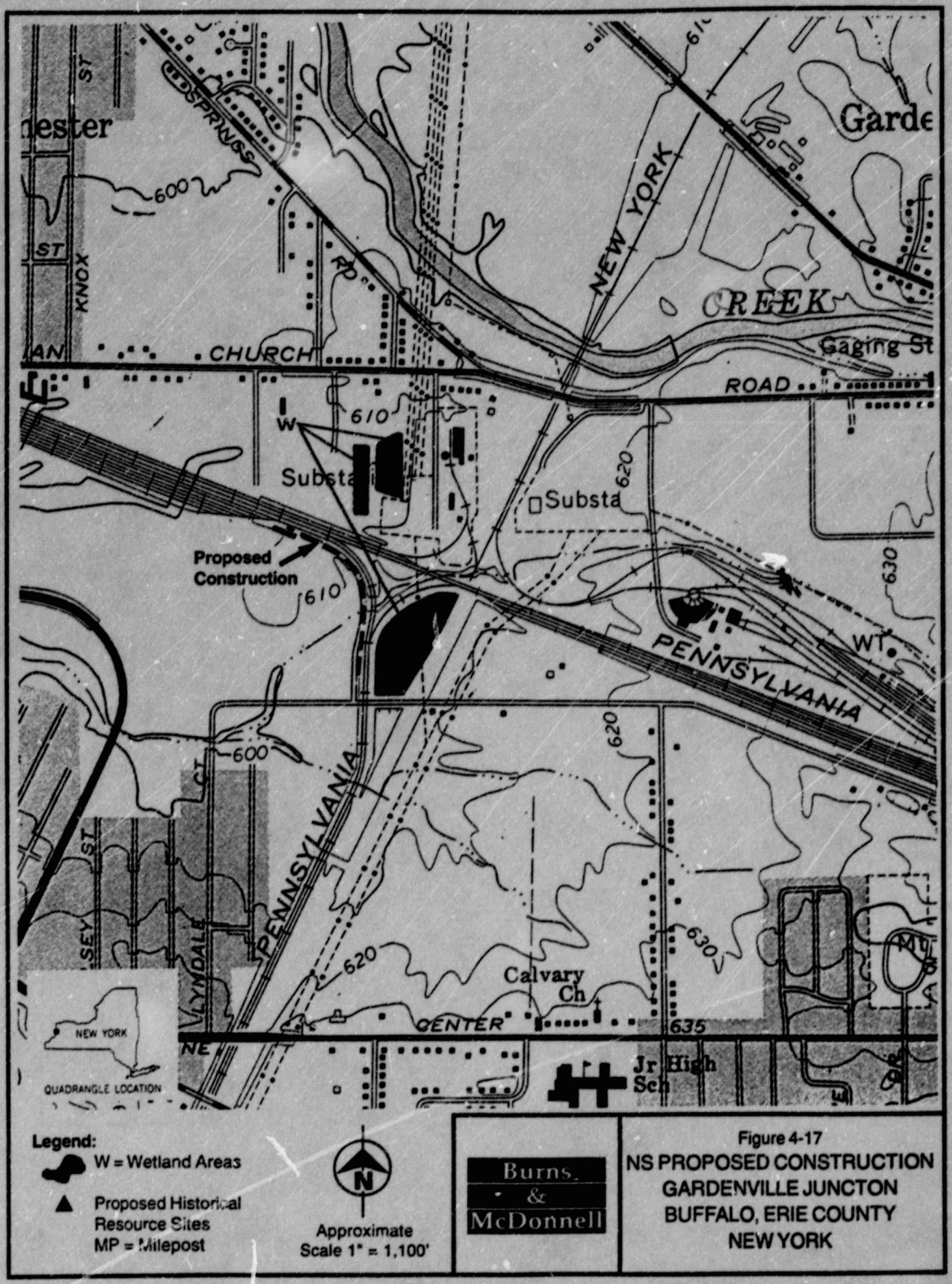


Figure 4-17
NS PROPOSED CONSTRUCTION
GARDENVILLE JUNCTON
BUFFALO, ERIE COUNTY
NEW YORK

8.0 OHIO

8.0 OHIO

Seven connections and two yard expansions proposed in Ohio require environmental analysis. Three connections and two yard expansions are proposed by CSX. Four connections are proposed by NS. This section contains an analysis of the potential environmental impacts associated with the proposed rail line constructions. Information on the proposed rail line constructions is provided below:

Location	Length (feet)	Description
Cleveland (CSX)	N/A	Construction of intermodal facility at Collinwood Yard.
Crestline (CSX)*	600	Connect two Conrail tracks to allow movements between Ft. Wayne, IN and Cleveland, OH.
Greenwich (CSX)*	3,700 700	Two connection tracks between CSX and Conrail to enable eastbound trains from Chicago, IL to proceed northeast to Cleveland, OH and to enable northeast bound trains to proceed east to Akron, OH.
Sidney (CSX)*	2,500	Connect CSX and Conrail tracks to enable northbound trains to proceed east to Columbus, OH.
Willard (CSX)	N/A	Construction of fueling facility adjacent to Willard Yard.
Bucyrus (NS)*	2,400	Connecting track between NS and Conrail to create an efficient new route from Columbus, OH to Pittsburgh, PA.
Columbus (NS)	1,400	Connecting tracks to create efficient movement between Bellevue, OH and Buckeye Yard.
Oak Harbor (NS)	5,000	Connecting track between NS and Conrail to create an efficient access from the Detroit area to NS Bellevue Yard.
Vermillion (NS)	5,400	Connecting track between NS and Conrail to create an efficient new route from Conrail's Cleveland to Chicago mainline to and from NS's Cleveland to Buffalo mainline and onto Kansas City to and from eastern destinations and origins, including New York and northern New Jersey via Buffalo.

* These projects are the subject of a Petition for waiver of the STB's "related applications" rule filed with the Surface Transportation Board on May 2, 1997. If granted, these will be the subjects of separate proceedings and environmental review that may be completed before the STB acts on the control application.

A detailed description of these proposed construction projects, including alternative actions considered, the existing environment, the potential environmental impact and proposed mitigation measures is provided below.

CSX DISCUSSION

8.1 COLLINWOOD YARD (CSX)

The site of proposed construction is located on property to be acquired at the northwestern end of Collinwood Yard in Cleveland, Cuyahoga County, northeastern Ohio. The site lies within one mile of the southern shore of Lake Erie and is immediately south of Interstate Route 90 and Ohio State Route 2 (I-90/2) (Figure 4-19). Existing facilities at Collinwood include a 20-track flat switching yard and an intermodal facility. Collinwood currently serves as a refueling, service and repair facility for locomotives, a classification facility for eastbound multi-level traffic and an intermodal facility. The proposed expansion would involve the purchase of approximately 23 acres of land north of the existing northwestern portion of the yard.

8.1.1 Proposed Action and Alternatives

8.1.1.1 Proposed Action

The proposed project, depicted in Figure 4-19, would involve the purchase of approximately 23 acres of land north of the northwestern portion of the yard. A new intermodal facility will be constructed on the acquired property. It will be designed to increase capacity and efficiency of intermodal operations at Collinwood.

Construction Requirements

It is estimated that about 100 persons will be involved in the construction of this project and that it will take between 12 and 18 months to complete. Borrow material for the project would be obtained from local sources and hauled to the construction site by truck.

Changes in Yard Activity

Yard activity at Collinwood is expected to decrease following the proposed Acquisition, while intermodal activity is expected to increase. Neither the yard activity nor the intermodal facility activity is expected to exceed STB thresholds for environmental analysis of air or noise impacts.

8.1.1.2 Alternatives

Build Alternatives

No other build alternatives were identified for the proposed facility expansion. The proposed expansion would increase the efficiency and capacity of activities at the yard and in the region, promoting the flow of east-west and north-south traffic.

No-Action Alternative

Due to the advantages of its location, Collinwood will become a major CSX hub for intermodal traffic moving between the Midwest and Southeast, between the Mid Atlantic/Northeast/New England and the Memphis and St. Louis gateways and between the Northeast and Chicago gateways. The expansion will permit Collinwood to operate as an intermodal switching yard at which containers will be consolidated from several origins and transported to a single destination on dedicated trains. The existing intermodal facility at Collinwood could not accommodate these operations. It is configured in a manner that precludes expansion and is limited by having only one inbound and one outbound track. Further, there is no paved parking and no equipment maintenance pad. Switching delays at Collinwood, which are being experienced today, would prevent CSX from efficiently handling north/south and east/west intermodal traffic and thus attracting this time-sensitive traffic from motor carriers.

8.1.2 Existing Environment

8.1.2.1 Land Use

Several large brick buildings are located in the northwestern portion of the proposed construction area. The northern portion of the site is immediately abutted by I-90/2. North of I-90/2, at distances greater than 500 feet from the northern boundary of Collinwood Yard, the area is primarily residential and commercial. A sound barrier abuts I-90/2 north of the site and separates the site from the residential dwellings north of the site. Land use immediately south of the eastern portion of the yard is commercial and light industrial and residential south of the western portion of the yard. Euclid Creek, a tributary that discharges to Lake Erie, bounds the Collinwood Yard to the east. East of Euclid Creek at a distance greater than 500 feet from Collinwood Yard, is a residential area. A commercial/light industrial area is located west of the site. There are numerous churches, schools, playgrounds and parks located within 2 miles of the site; however, none are within 500 feet of Collinwood Yard, except for St. Mary's Church and School, and Margaret Spellacy Junior High School. The topography at the site is primarily flat with some gravel cover. All tracks that enter and exit the yard as well as all ancillary tracks are at grade level.

None of the land is on or near an Indian reservation. According to the Bureau of Indian Affairs, no federally recognized Indian tribes or Indian reservations exist in Ohio.

According to the Soil Survey of Cuyahoga County, OH, no prime farmland soils are located in the immediate vicinity of the proposed construction site.

The portion of Collinwood Yard where the construction would take place is located approximately 3,500 feet south of the southern shore of Lake Erie. According to Mr. Don Povolny of the Ohio Coastal Management Program, the state of Ohio does not currently have a federally-approved coastal zone management program.

8.1.2.2 Water Resources

No water bodies were located in the immediate vicinity of the proposed construction. Euclid Creek, located northeast of the northern portion of the yard, is approximately 3,000 feet from the proposed area of construction.

According to the National Wetland Inventory (NWI) map of the area, no wetland areas are located within 500 feet of the proposed construction site.

According to Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) flood insurance rate maps, the site is located within a Zone C area. This designation indicates an area of minimal flooding, outside of the 500-year floodplain.

8.1.2.3 Biological Resources

Vegetation

The site consists of an active rail yard and a foremen rail yard with limited vegetative cover that is characteristic of disturbed areas. Sparse non-woody vegetation and a small area approximately 10 feet by 20 feet containing reeds and moist soil conditions was observed in the northwestern portion of the site during the field visit.

Wildlife

Collinwood Yard is located in a commercial/light industrial portion of Cleveland. There is little undisturbed area. The land to be acquired for construction of the intermodal facility is not expected to provide suitable habitat for wildlife species, except for those adapted to developed urban areas.

Threatened and Endangered Species

Three animal species listed as federally endangered or threatened are known to occur in Cuyahoga County. They are Indiana bat *(Myotis sodalis)*, peregrine falcon *(Falco peregrinus)*, and piping plover *(Charadrius melodus)*. The occurrence of the species in the area of the proposed construction is unlikely because the area is heavily disturbed and the surrounding area is influenced by residential, commercial, and industrial development.

Parks, Forests, Preserves, Refuges, and Sanctuaries

There are no wildlife sanctuaries, refuges, national, state or local forests/parks are not located within the proposed construction site. Euclid Beach Park is located approximately one mile north of the proposed construction site.

8.1.2.4 Air Quality

Cuyahoga County, OH is categorized as not being in attainment of National Ambient Air Quality Standard (NAAQS) for all criteria pollutants. Existing sources of air emissions near the project area include locomotives, vehicular traffic, and industry.

8.1.2.5 Noise

Rail, vehicular and commercial traffic are primary sources of noise levels in the vicinity of the proposed expansion. The site is located in an urban commercial/light industrial and residential area, and is bordered to the north by I-90/2.

Sensitive receptors within 500 feet of the proposed expansion include approximately 75 residential dwellings north and south of the site and one church. A sound barrier abuts I-90/2 to the north and separates the site from the residential dwellings north of I-90/2.

8.1.2.6 Historic and Cultural Resources

The area to be acquired for the proposed expansion at Collinwood Yard formerly contained railroad tracks and auxiliary railroad buildings. The ground appears to have been disturbed through extensive leveling. During field investigation, several large brick buildings were observed in the northwestern areas of the proposed expansion. The buildings are in very poor condition. The age and construction of the buildings was not determined.

Dames & Moore examined the files of the Ohio Archaeological Inventory on May 21, 1997. Although prehistoric archaeological sites and historic structures are listed near the project area, no historic properties have been identified within the area of construction.

According to the Ohio Historic Inventory, numerous historic residences are located in the vicinity of the project area. They range in age from the 1830's to the 1930's.

8.1.2.7 Transportation and Safety

An Environmental Data Resource (EDR) database search identified three sites that generate, transport, store and/or dispose of hazardous wastes (RCRIS-TSD), 20 leaking underground storage tank (LUST) sites and seven Ohio spill sites within 500 feet of the proposed construction project. The locations of the mappable sites are as follows:

RCRIS-TSD Sites (3)

- Papps Body Shop Inc. (20980 St. Clair Ave.)
- Ameriwaste Environmental Inc. (17877 St. Clair Ave.)
- Eaglebrook of Ohio Inc. (17877 St. Clair Ave.)

LUST Sites (20)

- Unknown (185th and Waterloo St.)

- BP 04061 (E. 185th and Lakeshore)
- Gahr Machine Co. (19199 St. Clair Ave.)
- Unknown (impacts in Euclid Creek) (1201 E. 185th St.)
- Marathon 3320 (18501 Nottingham Rd.)
- Ink Tech Corp. (18220 Lanken Ave.)
- Spero Electric Corp. (18222 Lanken Ave.)
- Aquasonic Car Wash (20500 Lakeland Blvd.)
- Former Pro Seal Mfg. Co. (16710 S. Waterloo Rd.)
- Melinz Industries Inc. (16226 S. Waterloo Rd.)
- Former Wahl Rigging Corp. (16100 S. Waterloo Rd.)
- B&B Co. (577 E. 152nd St.)
- Conrail Flexi-Flo Terminals (577 E. 152nd St.)
- Acme Iron & Metal Co. (16201 Saranac Rd.)
- Conrail (E. 152nd St.) (30' east of pump station)
- Syracuse Adhesives Co. (14500 Darley Ave.)
- Axle Properties (765 E. 140th St.) (TKS 4A 4B 4C)
- Axle Properties (765 E. 140th St.) (TK 2 10K QUENCH)
- Axle Properties (765 E. 140th St.) (TK 3 1K GAS)
- Cleveland Public Power (13915 Aspinwall)

Spill Sites (7)

- Conrail Flexi-Flo Terminals (577 E. 152nd St.) (1 spill reported)
- Consolidated Rail Corp. (601 E. 152nd St.) (6 spills reported)

8.1.3 Potential Environmental Impacts of Proposed Action

8.1.3.1 Land Use

The proposed expansion would require acquisition of approximately 23 acres of property and the demolition of a building located on the property to be acquired.

The proposed construction would be compatible with surrounding land use as most of the construction would take place adjacent to the existing yard. Prime farmland soils would not be affected by the proposed expansion and the although the site is located within a coastal county, no federally-approved coastal management program is in place in the state of Ohio.

8.1.3.2 Water Resources

Adverse impacts to wetland areas and water resources are not anticipated as there are no identified wetlands or water bodies within 500 feet of the proposed construction area or in the immediate vicinity of the site.

The project is in an area of minimal flooding, further minimizing the potential for impacts on water resources and wetlands.

8.1.3.3 Biological Resources

Vegetation

The proposed construction site is adjacent to an active train yard. As the area is heavily disturbed, proposed construction would only impact vegetation characteristic of disturbed areas.

Wildlife

Collinwood Yard is located in a commercial/light industrial portion of Cleveland. There is little undisturbed area and therefore the yard and its immediately surrounding area are not expected to provide suitable habitat for wildlife species. In addition, the proposed project is not expected to adversely affect the movement/migration of birds or mammals.

Threatened and Endangered Species

Due to the disturbed nature of the site and the level of activity in the yard, it is unlikely that it provides suitable habitat for rare, threatened, or endangered plant or animal species.

Parks, Forests, Preserves, Refuges, and Sanctuaries

There are no wildlife sanctuaries, refuges, forests or preserves located within one mile of the proposed construction area. Euclid Beach park is located approximately one mile north of the construction area. However, Interstate 90 and a residential area are located between the park and the construction area, thus the project is not anticipated to impact this resource.

8.1.3.4 Air Quality

The operation of heavy equipment would be the primary source of pollutant emissions during construction activities. Particulate matter, volatile organic compounds (VOCs), carbon monoxide (CO) and nitrogen oxide (NOx) result from combustion of diesel fuel. The emission of these pollutants during construction activities generally would be minor and of short duration and would have insignificant impacts on air quality. Fugitive dust emissions result from the operation of heavy equipment. Fugitive dust can be controlled by using water sprays or other suitable dust suppressants.

8.1.3.5 Noise

Construction operations associated with the proposed action would cause temporary increases in noise levels. These operations would require the use of trucks and heavy equipment but the noise generated by such equipment would be temporary.

Potential sensitive receptors in the vicinity of the site include residential areas to the north and south of the site, a school and various churches. Margaret Spellacy Junior High, St. Mary's School and three churches are located approximately 500 feet south of the southern bound of the

yard and two more churches are located approximately 700 feet west and northwest of the site, respectively.

Although the efficiency of the Collinwood Yard would be improved, only a modest increase in overall rail yard activity is anticipated and no substantial changes in noise levels are projected. There would be small noise level changes due to the new tracks being slightly closer than the existing tracks to noise sensitive receptors. In all cases, the increase in L_{dn} at noise sensitive receptors is projected to be less than ½ decibel.

8.1.3.6 Historic and Cultural Resources

Several buildings are located in the northwestern sector of the area of potential effect. It is not known wether the structures are eligible for listing in the National Register.

Nearby historic residences in the vicinity of the project will not be affected. They are not adjacent to the yard and therefore they will not be destroyed or modified. Land use in the vicinity will not change; the yard will continue to be used for activities associated with the railroad.

Although two prehistoric archaeological sites have previously been identified in the vicinity, it is not expected that prehistoric archaeological sites will be affected by the project for the following reasons. First, the nearby sites are associated with the uplands of Euclid Creek, to the east of the project area. Second, prior ground disturbance associated with the initial development of the rail yard would likely have destroyed any sites that may have been located nearby.

8.1.3.7 Transportation and Safety

Transportation impacts of new construction projects relate to increased train and truck traffic, including heavy equipment used to access the construction site. An access road will be

constructed to reach the site from the north. Darwin Avenue, northwest of the site, may be used to access this road. Saranac Road and St. Clair Avenue may be used to access the site from the south.

Temporary disruption of local traffic patterns and increased wear and tear on the roads may occur during construction. These impacts are expected to be temporary and are not likely to affect the viability or life of the roads.

The Environmental Data Resource (EDR) database search identified three RCRIS-TSD sites, 20 LUST sites and 7 Ohio spill sites within 500 feet of the proposed construction project. Based on observations made during the site visit, two spill sites (both of them Conrail) may be adjacent to the proposed expansion area. No other sites of environmental concern were identified within the vicinity of the proposed construction site.

The probability of a major spill of hazardous or toxic materials during construction is very small, based on the quantities and types of materials handled to perform the construction activities. Appropriate emergency response procedures will be used to promptly address any spill. Accordingly, the proposed expansion project is not anticipated to increase the probability or consequences of hazardous waste contamination.

8.1.4 Potential Environmental Impacts of Alternatives

8.1.4.1 Build Alternatives

No other build alternatives to the proposed yard expansion were identified. The proposed expansion would increase the efficiency and capacity of the yard.

8.1.4.2 No-Action Alternative

Under the no-action alternative, the proposed intermodal facility would not be built and trains

would not be routed between the intersecting tracks. None of the potential environmental impacts associated with the construction would occur. On the other hand, if the Acquisition is approved and the no-action alternative implemented, the economic, operational and environmental benefits of the project would not be realized (See Section 8.1.1.2). The absence of this connection would result in less efficient rail service, which would result in additional fuel consumption and air emissions.

8.1.5 Proposed Mitigation

The proposed construction would result in minimal or no impact to land use, water resources, biological resources, air quality, noise, cultural resources, transportation, and safety. In consideration of minimal impacts and general CSX practices, CSX would undertake the following mitigation measures.

8.1.5.1 Land Use

Adjacent properties disturbed during construction activities will be restored to pre-construction conditions. Heavy equipment will not be permitted on sensitive resources surrounding the construction area. Should disturbance to sensitive resources be unavoidable, Best Management Practices will be employed to minimize impact to those resources.

8.1.5.2 Water Resources

Erosion and sedimentation control measures will be employed during construction activities to minimize impact on water resources near the construction activities. Erosion will also be minimized by disturbing the smallest area possible at the site and revegetate any disturbed areas immediately following construction activities. Any culverts in the area will be kept clear of debris to avoid flooding, in accordance with federal, state and local regulations. Necessary permits will be obtained if construction activities require the alteration of or work in wetlands,

ponds, lakes or streams or if these activities cause soil or other materials to effect the water resources.

8.1.5.3 Biological Resources

The regrowth of vegetation in disturbed areas will be encouraged through stabilization of disturbed soils and reseeding. Should environmental altering activities occur, follow-up agency consultation with the Ohio DNR and USFWS will be conducted.

8.1.5.4 Air Quality

All applicable federal, state and local regulations regarding the control of fugitive dust will be followed and, if necessary, control methods such as water spraying will be utilized.

8.1.5.5 Noise

Temporary noise from construction equipment will be controlled through the use of work hour controls and maintenance of muffler systems on machinery.

8.1.5.6 Historic and Cultural Resources

In the event that potentially significant archaeological resources are discovered during the course of the project, the Ohio SHPO will be notified and procedures recommended by the Ohio SHPO will be implemented. This may include halting construction until the significance of the site can be evaluated and the impact to the significant values of the site can be mitigated or reduced.

8.1.5.7 Transportation and Safety

All roads disturbed during construction will be restored to the conditions required by state or

local regulations. Signs and barricades will be utilized as necessary, to control traffic disruptions during construction activities. All hazardous materials will be transported in compliance with U.S. Department of Transportation Hazardous Materials Regulations (49 CFR Parts 171-174 and 177-179). If any hazardous materials are encountered during construction activities, the appropriate response and remediation measures will be implemented.

8.1.6 References

Land Use

USDA, 1980. Soil Conservation Service, Soil Survey of Cuyahoga County, Ohio. December.

USGS, 1963. Topographic Quadrangle, East Cleveland, OH. Photorevised 1979.

City of Cleveland, 1996. Building and Zoning Maps of the City of Cleveland, Section 331.01 of the Codified Ordinances of the City of Cleveland. September.

Dierden, Chris. CSX Intermodal. Telephone conversations, 5-21-97 and 5-22-97. 904-633-1346.

Personal communication with Corbin, Barb, Great Lakes Agency, Bureau of Indian Affairs, May 22, 1997.

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Povolny, Don. Ohio Coastal Management Program. Telephone conversation 3-3-97. 614-265-6413.

USDI, 1977. National Wetlands Inventory Map of East Cleveland, OH. March.

FEMA, 1978. National Flood Insurance Rate Map, Cleveland, OH, Panel Number 390104 0005 B. August.

Biological Resources

USDI, 1977. National Wetlands Inventory Map of East Cleveland, OH. March.

USDI, 1995. U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Endangered and Threatened Species in the State of Ohio. March.

Air Quality

40 CFR 81, Cuyahoga County, National Ambient Air Quality Standards.

Noise

Harris, Miller, Miller, and Hanson. May 1997.

Transportation and Safety

Environmental Data Resource. May 1997.

Historic and Cultural Resources

Ohio State Historic Preservation Office, Columbus, OH. May 1997.

8.2 CRESTLINE (CSX)

The proposed construction site is located in the City of Crestline, Crawford County, OH, approximately 70 miles southeast of Toledo, OH and 88 miles north-northeast of Columbus, OH (Figure 4-20). The existing rail lines intersect north of the intersection of Thoman Street and Lincoln Avenue in Crestline. Construction of a new wye connection between two existing Conrail lines is proposed at milepost 75.4 on Conrail's north/south mainline (the Indianapolis Line) and milepost 188.8 on Conrail's east/west mainline (the Fort Wayne Line). The construction would be approximately 1,507 feet long and would be built entirely within existing right-of-way.

This connection is essential to CSX's ability to route less time-sensitive east/west traffic on the alternative Chicago-Cleveland Service Route linking Crestline and Ft. Wayne, facilitating use of the parallel B&O line for high-speed traffic over the Northeastern Gateway Service Route. The connection is thus a necessary link in the creation of an alternative east/west route on the CSX system.

Adjacent land uses includes existing railroad rights-of-way and a mix of residential, commercial, and industrial land.

8.2.1 Proposed Action and Alternatives

8.2.1.1 Proposed Action

The proposed construction project involves construction of a wye connection in the northwest quadrant of the existing intersection of the east/west Conrail single track and north/south Conrail double track.

The proposed connection would pass beneath State Route (SR) 61. Approximately 1,500 feet of the existing east/west Conrail single track would be relocated approximately 60 feet south to

allow for clearance under the SR 61 bridge. This relocation would not require the acquisition of new property.

Construction Requirements

It is anticipated that a workforce of approximately 35 persons will be involved in the construction of this project and that it will take several months to complete. Borrow material for the project would be obtained from local sources and hauled to the construction site by truck.

Changes in Traffic

The Acquisition would result in the following estimated changes to the existing rail lines that would be connected by the proposed construction:

- Traffic on the existing east/west Conrail line west of Crestline would increase from 6.5 to 14.5 trains per day, an increase of 8 trains per day.
- Traffic on the existing north/south Conrail line north of Crestline would increase from 14.5 to 31.3 trains per day, an increase of 16.8 trains per day.
- Traffic on the existing north/south Conrail line southwest of Crestline will decrease from 28.3 to 26.5 trains per day, a decrease of 1.8 trains per day.
- An average of five trains per day will use the new connection.

8.2.1.2 Alternatives

Build Alternative

No build alternatives were identified for the proposed rail line connection. The proposed rail line would be the most direct connection between the existing rail lines. It would minimize the use of land outside existing railroad rights-of-way, and thus would minimize environmental impacts.

No-Action Alternative

Were the connection not built, east/west traffic would have to be routed via Greenwich and Deshler, where it would connect to the line linking Deshler and Lima, OH. At Lima, the traffic

would connect to the Ft. Wayne line. This routing has several serious problems. It would cause slowing and congestion on the high-speed B&O line, effectively neutralizing CSX's plans to devote that line and the Northeastern Gateway Service Route to the most time-sensitive traffic and thus impairing operations throughout the network. In addition, the alternative routing would impair CSX's ability to continue effective rail service on the Lima-Crestline segment, to the detriment of local shippers. Further, the congestion on the B&O line would reduce CSX's ability to attract traffic from motor carriers and thus achieve the environmental benefits of diversion of freight from congested highways. For these reasons, the no-action alternative was not deemed viable and was rejected.

8.2.2 Existing Environment

8.2.2.1 Land Use

The site is primarily gravel-covered and is bordered on the east by a north/south Conrail double track and on the south by an east/west Conrail single track. An overpass for SR 61 passes over the site. The concrete embankment for the overpass borders the northern portion of the site. Land use adjacent to the site includes a mix of residential, commercial, and industrial properties north, east, and west of the proposed construction. Immediately south of the site, adjacent to the east/west Conrail single track, is Conrail property consisting of gravel-covered areas containing railroad-related equipment. A two-story brick building is 50 to 75 feet north of the east/west Conrail single track and 25 to 50 feet east of the north/south Conrail double track, and is associated with railroad-related activities. The proposed connection would be approximately 75 feet northwest of the building. A Conrail switching yard begins approximately 1,200 feet west of the proposed construction site and serves an industrial area.

According to Mr. Gehrisch, of the Village of Crestline Codes and Permits Department, the area surrounding the proposed construction site is zoned as general and local business, residential, and light and heavy industrial.

According to the Soil Survey of Crawford County, none of the soils located at or adjacent to the site are classified as prime farmland soils. The project is not located within a designated coastal zone, as the State of Ohio does not have a federal coastal zone program. None of the land is on or near an Indian reservation. According to the Bureau of Indian Affairs, no federally-recognized Indian tribes or Indian reservations exist in Ohio.

8.2.2.2 Water Resources

Surface waters were not identified on the proposed construction site. According to NRCS Soil survey for Crawford County, the soils at this site are not classified as hydric.

An unnamed perennial stream is located approximately 1,000 feet west of the construction site and crosses under the existing east/west Conrail rail line at Wiley Street. A 4-acre man-made pond, classified by the National Wetland Inventory (NWI) as a palustrine unconsolidated bottom intermittently exposed excavated wetland, is located on the south side of the existing east/west Conrail single track, approximately 500 feet south of the proposed construction site. In addition, NWI maps indicate that a small (less than 1 acre) palustrine, shrub/scrub wetland is located approximately 150 feet north of the existing east/west Conrail single track, and approximately 800 feet west of the proposed construction site. The locations of these wetlands and water bodies are shown on Figure 4-20.

Federal Emergency Management Agency maps for the area show that the proposed project area is located outside the 500-year floodplain.

8.2.2.3 Biological Resources

Vegetation

Most of the proposed construction site is covered with gravel. Much of the area around the site is already developed for rail activity and residences. A sparsely vegetated strip consisting of non-woody annuals and grasses is present along the Conrail right-of-way, west of the SR 61 bridge.

North of the junction of the east/west and north/south Conrail rail lines, lawn areas associated with commercial and residential properties abut the Conrail right-of-way.

Wildlife

The potential for wildlife at the proposed construction site is limited because the site is sparsely vegetated and is surrounded by rail, residential and commercial development. Wildlife would mainly be limited to birds and small mammals that have adapted to developed areas. Surface waters in the area may support some aquatic species.

Threatened and Endangered Species

The United States Fish and Wildlife Service and the Ohio Department of Natural Resources were consulted regarding threatened and endangered species in the area of the proposed construction. The USFWS did not have any comment regarding the impact of threatened or endangered species in the area. The Ohio Department of Natural Resources advised that it is unaware of any rare species or critical habitats in the proposed project area. Additionally, no endangered or threatened species or their habitats were observed during the site visit.

According to the list provided by the USFWS, threatened and endangered species for the State of Ohio, the Indiana bat *(Myotis sodalis)* is listed as an endangered species in Crawford County. During the summer, the Indiana bat generally inhabits small to medium river and stream corridors and well developed riparian woods; woodlots within 1 to 3 miles of small to medium rivers and streams and upland forests. The Indiana bat hibernates in caves and mines. The proposed construction project is located in a previously disturbed area without the presence of woodlots; therefore, it is unlikely the Indiana bat inhabits the proposed site.

Parks, Forests, Preserves, Refuges and Sanctuaries

No parks, forests, preserves, refuges or sanctuaries are in or adjacent to the proposed construction site. Two city parks are located in Crestline; one is located 2,000 feet east and Kelly Park is located 2,100 feet west of the proposed construction area. Commercial and urban areas are

between these parks and the proposed connection.

8.2.2.4 Air Quality

Crawford County, OH is currently categorized as being in attainment with the National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS). Current sources of emissions in the project area include locomotives, vehicles, and industries.

8.2.2.5 Noise

Rail, vehicular, and commercial traffic are the primary sources of noise in the project area. Vehicular and commercial traffic sources of noise in the vicinity of the proposed connection includes traffic on local streets, namely SR 61 and Bucyrus Street. Several residences and Crestline City Hall are within 500 feet of the proposed construction site. No other sensitive receptors are within 500 feet of the site.

8.2.2.6 Historic and Cultural Resources

Records at the Ohio State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) in Columbus, OH were reviewed to determine if historic properties had previously been identified and recorded in the project area, or if previous survey had been performed in the vicinity. No archaeological sites or historic structures have been recorded for the subject property in the Ohio State site files or the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP). In addition, Dames & Moore reviewed railroad property records and performed a site reconnaissance. Based on this investigation, it was concluded that no recorded cultural resources are present within the proposed construction area.

A two-story brick building located about 50 to 75 feet north of the existing east/west single track, and 25 to 50 feet east of the north/south Conrail double track, was observed during the site reconnaissance. It is a gable roof "side-hallway" or "two-thirds Georgian" style building. It has

a three-bay facade, 1/1 lights, with plain slip sills. The age of the building, which currently houses active signal relay function, is not known.

8.2.2.7 Transportation and Safety

The rail transportation network consists of the Conrail rail lines that intersect one another east of the SR 61 bridge. Major roads in Crestline include US Highway 30, SR 61, and certain local roads, including Bucyrus Street and Seltzer Street. Existing at-grade crossings are at Bucyrus Street (400 feet north of the site) and Wiley Street (1,200 feet west of the site). No Average Daily Traffic (ADT) data was available for these at-grade crossings. Existing roads permitting access to the proposed construction site include Mansfield Street, located to the north, and Thoman Street, which intersects the proposed construction site.

An Environmental Data Resource (EDR) database search did not identify any hazardous waste sites of concern within 500 feet of the proposed rail line construction. No other sites of environmental concern in the vicinity of the proposed construction site were identified in the database search. The database search revealed three unmappable sites within the Crestline city limits. These sites could not be located, because of poor address or geocoding information provided to the state and/or federal databases.

8.2.3 Potential Environmental Impacts of Proposed Action

8.2.3.1 Land Use

The proposed project would be compatible with surrounding land uses because of existing rail lines. It would result in minimal impacts to land use because it would be located entirely on property already dedicated to rail use.

Prime farmland soils would not be affected by the proposed project, and the site is not located within a designated coastal zone.

8.2.3.2 Water Resources

No surface water bodies or wetlands are located on the proposed construction site. The project is within an area of minimal flooding, further minimizing the potential for impacts on water resources and wetlands.

8.2.3.3 Biological Resources

Vegetation

The proposed site is located along an existing rail corridor and is mainly covered by gravel. The area is heavily disturbed and influenced by industrial and commercial development. Therefore, the proposed action would only impact vegetation characteristic of disturbed areas.

Wildlife

No adverse impacts to wildlife populations are anticipated. The construction site is small with little vegetation and does not contain habitats suitable for wildlife.

Threatened and Endangered Species

According to the responses received from the USFWS and the Ohio DNR, neither agency expects any impacts to threatened and endangered species or their potential habitats on the proposed construction site or within the project area. No threatened or endangered species or their potential habitats were observed during the site visit.

Parks, Forests, Preserves, Refuges and Sanctuaries

The proposed project will not impact wildlife sanctuaries, refuges or publicly held parks or forests.

8.2.3.4 Air Quality

The operation of heavy equipment would be the primary source of pollutant emissions during construction activities. Particulate matter, volatile organic compounds (VOCs), carbon monoxide (CO) and nitrogen oxide (NOx) emissions result from combustion of diesel fuel. The emission of these pollutants during construction activities generally would be minor and of short duration and would have insignificant impacts on air quality. Fugitive dust emissions may also result from the operation of heavy equipment during construction. Fugitive dust can be controlled by using water sprays or other suitable dust suppressants.

The post-Acquisition level of train traffic expected to use the new connection and adjacent rail line segments is anticipated to exceed STB thresholds for air quality impact analysis and this analysis is presented in Part 2 of this ER.

8.2.3.5 Noise

Generally, wheel squeal is likely to occur on any curve with a radius less than about 1,000 feet, or when the curvature is greater than approximately five degrees. Although the curvature for this connection is expected to be ten degrees, the curve will be lubricated and thus the noise from trains will be only slightly greater on the connection than on the mainlines. Furthermore, post-Acquisition operations on the connection will include only five trains per day, compared to 14.5 trains per day on the east/west line and 31.3 trains per day on the northeast/southwest line. Thus, although the new connection will be located about 100 feet closer to the nearest sensitive receptor (an apartment building in the northwest quadrant of the rail intersection), post-Acquisition noise levels at this location will be dominated by mainline train operations and the use of the connection will not cause any significant noise increase.

The post-Acquisition amount of train traffic expected to use the new connection and adjacent rail line segments is anticipated to exceed STB thresholds for noise impact analysis and this analysis

is presented in Part 2 of this ER.

8.2.3.6 Historic and Cultural Resources

No impacts to potentially significant historic or archaeological resources are expected within the area of potential effect.

It is anticipated that construction of the proposed connection may necessitate the decommissioning and demolition of the two-story brick structure currently serving as a signal relay facility. The age of this structure and its potential for listing on the National Register of Historic Places could not be determined during the field investigation, but will be further investigated before the structure is affected. To the extent warranted, CSX will consult with the SHPO about this structure before taking any action.

8.2.3.7 Transportation and Safety

The proposed construction may necessitate some improvement of the existing at-grade crossings at Bucyrus Street and Wiley Street. Other transportation impacts would be limited to relatively minor increased deterioration of public roads due to the transport of construction equipment. This impact is expected to be of short duration and is not likely to affect the viability or life of the roads. Short-term disruptions of vehicular traffic could occur during the construction period.

An Environmental Data Resource (EDR) database search did not identify any hazardous waste sites within 500 feet of the proposed connection. No other sites of environmental concern were identified in the vicinity of the proposed construction site based on the site visit.

The probability of a major spill of hazardous or toxic materials during construction is very small based on the quantities and types of materials handled to perform the construction activities. Appropriate emergency response procedures will be used to promptly address any spill situations.

Accordingly, the proposed rail line construction project is not anticipated to increase the probability or consequences of hazardous waste contamination.

8.2.4 Potential Environmental Impacts of Alternative Actions

8.2.4.1 Build Alternatives

No build alternatives were identified.

8.2.4.2 No-Action Alternative

If the no-action alternative were implemented, the proposed rail line connection would not be constructed. The connection is essential to CSX's plans to develop an alternative east/west route for less time-sensitive traffic. Absence of the proposed construction would result in less efficient rail service, increased fuel consumption and increased emission impacts. Thus, the no-action alternative is not considered a practical or viable option.

8.2.5 Proposed Mitigation

The proposed construction would result in minimal or no impact to land use, water resources, biological resources, air quality, noise, cultural resources, transportation, and safety. In consideration of minimal impacts and general CSX practices, CSX would undertake the following mitigation measures.

8.2.5.1 Land Use

Adjacent properties disturbed during construction activities will be restored to pre-construction conditions. Heavy equipment will not be permitted on sensitive resources surrounding the construction area. Should disturbance to sensitive resources be unavoidable, Best Management

Practices will be employed to minimize impact to those resources.

8.2.5.2 Water Resources

Erosion and sedimentation control measures will be employed during construction activities to minimize impact on water resources near the construction activities. Erosion will also be minimized by disturbing the smallest area possible at the site and revegetating any disturbed areas immediately following construction activities. Any culverts in the area will be kept clear of debris to avoid flooding, in accordance with federal, state and local regulations. Necessary permits will be obtained if construction activities require the alteration of or work in wetlands, ponds, lakes or streams or if these activities cause soil or other materials to effect the water resources.

8.2.5.3 Biological Resources

The regrowth of vegetation in disturbed areas will be encouraged through stabilization of disturbed soils and reseeding. Should environmental altering activities occur, follow-up agency consultation with the Ohio DNR and USFWS will be conducted.

8.2.5.4 Air Quality

All applicable federal, state and local regulations regarding the control of fugitive dust will be followed as well as using control methods such as water spraying.

8.2.5.5 Noise

Temporary noise from construction equipment will be controlled through the use of work hour controls and maintenance of muffler systems on machinery.

8.2.5.6 Historic and Cultural Resources

In the event that potentially significant resources are discovered during the course of the project, the Ohio SHPO will be notified and appropriate procedures recommended by the Ohio SHPO will be implemented. This may include halting construction until the significance of the site can be evaluated and the impact to the significant values of the site can be mitigated or reduced.

8.2.5.7 Transportation and Safety

All roads disturbed during construction activities will be restored according to state or local regulations. Signs and barricades will be utilized, as necessary, to control traffic disruptions during construction activities. All hazardous materials generated during construction activities will be transported in accordance with U.S. Department of Transportation Hazardous Materials Regulations (49 CFR Parts 171-174 and 177-179). If any hazardous materials are encountered during construction activities, the appropriate response and remediation measures will be implemented.

8.2.6 References

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Chandler, Gray, CSX. May 23, 1997.

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8.3 GREENWICH (CSX)

The proposed construction project is located north of the Village of Greenwich, Huron County, in north-central Ohio (approximately 50 miles southwest of Cleveland, and 75 miles north of Columbus, OH) (Figure 4-21). The project involves the construction of two new connections between the east/west CSX line from Chicago to Akron and the north/south Conrail line from Indianapolis to Cleveland. These lines are part of the Northeastern Gateway Service Route, a major route for time-sensitive traffic moving between the Northeast/New England and Chicago. The first connection would be constructed within existing CSX/Conrail and Wheeling & Lake Erie (W&LE) rights-of-way with the exception of approximately 0.4 acres of land that will need to be acquired. A second connection would be constructed within CSX and Conrail existing rights-of-way with the exception of 0.1 acres of land that will need to be acquired.

The proposed construction site is surrounded by primarily residential and some light industrial land uses.

8.3.1 Proposed Action and Alternatives

8.3.1.1 Proposed Action

The proposed project, depicted in Figure 4-21, would involve constructing two connections. The first proposed construction at this site would be a 45 mile per hour connection in the northwest quadrant of the existing CSX and Conrail grade crossing utilizing the existing W&LE corridor. This connection will enable eastbound CSX trains from Chicago, Illinois to utilize the Conrail line to proceed northeast toward Cleveland, OH. This new connection will be constructed north of the existing W&LE rail line to avoid existing homes. The proposed connection will be approximately 4,600 feet long. CSX would have to purchase a small (0.4 acre) parcel of land currently supporting farming activities.

The second proposed construction is a 30 mile per hour wye connection in the southeast quadrant of the existing CSX and Conrail lines. The connection would enable trains to access the eastbound CSX line toward Akron, OH. The proposed project would be approximately 1,044 feet long and CSX would require 0.1 acres of right-of-way currently supporting a light industrial facility.

The proposed connections would require the extension of an existing culvert and regrading of fill material in the area of a small unnamed creek that flows eastward from the CSX/Conrail crossing. Relocation of above ground and underground utilities will also be required.

Construction Requirements

It is anticipated that a workforce of approximately 40 persons will be required to construct the connection and that the project will take several months to complete. Borrow material for the project would be obtained from local sources and hauled to the construction site by truck.

Changes in Traffic

The Acquisition would result in the following estimated changes to the existing rail lines that would be connected by the proposed construction:

- Traffic on the existing east-west CSX rail line would increase from 32.5 trains per day to 32.9 trains per day for the line east of the proposed connection and about 55.2 trains per day for the line west of the proposed connection, an increase of about 0.4 and 22.7 trains per day, respectively.

- Traffic on the existing northeast-southwest Conrail rail line would increase from 14.5 trains per day to 54.2 trains per day on the line northeast of the proposed connection, an increase of about 39.7 trains per day. The traffic density for the line southwest of the proposed connection will decrease from 14.5 trains per day to 31.3 trains per day, a decrease of about 16.8 trains per day.

- Approximately 35 trains per day connection in the northwest quadrant and approximately nine trains per day would operate over the new connection in the southeast quadrant.

8.3.1.2 Alternatives

Build Alternative

No build alternatives were identified for the proposed rail line connection. The proposed rail lines would be the most direct connections between the existing rail lines. They would minimize the use of land outside existing railroad rights-of-way, and thus would minimize environmental impacts.

No-Action Alternative

The two connections at Greenwich are a central link between the CSX and Conrail systems and are essential to the success of the Acquisition. The connections are a key to the efficient movement of freight between Northeast/New England points and Cleveland, and from Cleveland to western points over the Northeastern Gateway Service Route. This improved service route is expected to attract substantial volumes of freight now transported by motor carriers.

In the absence of the southeast quadrant Greenwich connection, traffic would need to be routed from Cleveland south to Sterling, OH and then westbound to Greenwich. This would add approximately 80 miles to each east-west train trip using the relevant lines, resulting in more fuel usage and additional air emissions. Further, a connection would need to be built at Cleveland to facilitate this routing. That connection is not feasible because there is an automotive plant on the site where this connection would have to be constructed.

In the absence of the northwest quadrant connection at Greenwich, CSX would have to route trains in a manner that would add approximately 100 miles to each train trip, resulting in more fuel usage and additional air emissions. That alternative routing would require eastbound trains to transit through Cleveland, where a new connection would need to be built in an industrial,

urbanized area. In addition, to accommodate the additional traffic on the alternative routing, CSX would need to double track its Cleveland-Sterling line. Local shippers on that line would suffer as a result of increased congestion.

None of the options discussed above was considered feasible or economically viable and therefore each was rejected. These options would eliminate CSX's ability to attract truck traffic to its system and thus reduce the number of environmentally beneficial diversions that are predicted. Thus, one of the primary benefits of the Acquisition -- the ability to transport intermodal and other time-sensitive freight more efficiently -- would be lost.

8.3.2 Existing Environment

8.3.2.1 Land Use

The topography of the site is relatively flat with low rolling hills and deep ditches or drainages in the surrounding area. The proposed construction site, located in northeast Greenwich, is surrounded to the north of the existing CSX tracks by agricultural fields, with scattered farms and residential dwellings and to the south of the existing CSX tracks by residences and two light industrial properties (Versitech Corporation and Central Plastics Company). Approximately 0.1 acres of light industrial property and 0.4 acres of agricultural property will be acquired and converted to railroad use. Approximately 25 residences were identified within 500 feet of the proposed project.

According to Mike King, Administrator of the Village of Greenwich Utilities Department, the location of the proposed connections is in an area zoned industrial.

None of the land in the area of the proposed project is on or near an Indian Reservation. According to the Bureau of Indian Affairs, no federally recognized Indian tribes or Indian reservations exist in Ohio.

Soils listed as prime farmland are adjacent to existing rights-of-way associated with the proposed connections. These soil types include Bennington silt loam (0-2% slopes), Bennington silt loam (2-6% slopes), and Cardington silt loam (2-6% slopes). Approximately 0.4 acres of prime farmland soils would be converted to railroad use as a result of constructing the proposed connections.

According to the Ohio Department of Natural Resources, Ohio does not have a federally recognized coastal zone management program.

8.3.2.2 Water Resources

Three water bodies were identified within 500 feet of the proposed project. An unnamed tributary of the Vermilion River flows via a culvert, under the existing CSX, Conrail, and W&LE tracks near the rail intersection in a northwesterly direction toward the southwest branch of the Vermilion River, located approximately one mile northwest of the site. Just west of Angling Road, a second branch of the Vermilion River runs, via culvert, under the existing CSX, Conrail, and W&LE tracks in a northwesterly-southeasterly direction. An unnamed pond was identified approximately 200 feet northwest of the proposed project.

Review of an Ohio NWI map of the area indicated no wetlands within 500 feet of the proposed site. However, during field visits of the site, two wetlands were identified within 500 feet of the proposed project and located on the south side of the existing CSX rail line.

The proposed site is located within the 100-year floodplain which stretches along the two tributaries of the Vermilion River which flow across the area of the proposed project. The unnamed pond was also identified within the 100-year floodplain.

8.3.2.3 Biological Resources

Vegetation

Vegetation in the project area consists of agricultural lands and non-woody vegetation and trees located along the existing railroad rights-of-way and along the Vermilion River tributaries.

Wildlife

Wildlife habitats found on and adjacent to the construction site are limited to patches of non-woody vegetation and trees. The area provides suitable habitat for a variety of songbirds and mammals. Waterbodies that cross and are near the site may support some reptiles and amphibians such as snakes or frogs.

Threatened or Endangered Species

Of the federally listed threatened or endangered species known to occur in the State of Ohio, only the Indiana bat (*Myotis sodalis*) is known to inhabit Huron County.

Parks, Forests, Preserves, Refuges and Sanctuaries

Reservoir Park is located approximately one-half mile south of the proposed construction. No other wildlife sanctuaries, refuges, national, state or local forests/parks were identified within one mile of the proposed site.

8.3.2.4 Air Quality

Huron County is in attainment with the National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS). Current sources of emissions in the project area include locomotives, vehicles, and industries.

8.3.2.5 Noise

Rail, vehicular, and commercial traffic are the primary sources of noise in the project area. Vehicular and commercial sources of noise in the vicinity of the proposed connections include traffic on local streets, namely Kniffin Road and Townsend Street. Approximately 25 residences were identified within 500 feet of the proposed project.

8.3.2.6 Historic and Cultural Resources

The Ohio Historical Society (the State Historic Preservation Office for Ohio) was contacted to request information regarding potentially significant properties that may be located within the area of potential effect. In addition, Dames & Moore reviewed railroad property records, visited the Ohio SHPO to review the cultural resources inventory, and performed a site preliminary reconnaissance. Based on this investigation, no archaeological or historic resources are known to exist in the area of the proposed construction at Greenwich. However, no surveys have been conducted in the site area.

8.3.2.7 Transportation and Safety

The existing rail transportation network at Greenwich consists of the CSX/Conrail rail lines that intersect southwest of Townsend Road and Kniffin Road and a W&LE rail line in the northwest quadrant of the CSX/Conrail intersection. The existing grade crossings are protected by flashing light signals, both north and south of the area where the two rail lines currently cross Townsend

Road and Kniffin Road. Access to the rail construction area would be from Maple Street, Pierce Street, Kniffin Road, Angling Road, and Townsend Road.

An Environmental Data Resource (EDR) database search did not identify any hazardous waste sites within 500 feet of the proposed rail line construction. The database search revealed 3

unmappable sites within the Greenwich city limits. These sites could not be located because of poor address or geocoding information provided to the state and/or federal databases.

8.3.3 Potential Environmental Impacts of Proposed Action

8.3.3.1 Land Use

The proposed connections would require a small parcel of property (approximately 0.4 acre) to be acquired in an area adjacent to the existing W&LE tracks and classified as having prime farmland soils. A second parcel of property (approximately 0.1 acre in size) and classified as light industrial land use also will be acquired. Because this area is already dedicated to railroad use, the proposed construction project would not have a significant impact on land use or loss of and results only in the loss of a very small parcel of agricultural land.

The site is not located within a coastal zone management area.

8.3.3.2 Water Resources

Two tributaries of the Vermilion River and one unnamed pond are potentially subject to increased silt loading as a result of construction activities. These impacts would be temporary.

Two wetlands also identified within 500 feet will unlikely be impacted by the project, due to their location on the opposite side of the existing CSX tracks as that of the proposed connection. Best Management Practices will be implemented to further reduce the likelihood of impacts.

8.3.3.3 Biological Resources

Vegetation

The proposed action would impact sparse, scattered vegetation present within the existing rail rights-of-way and non-woody vegetation and trees associated with the two tributaries.

Wildlife

No adverse impacts to wildlife populations are anticipated. Wildlife along the proposed connections would be temporarily disturbed during construction activities. However, once construction is complete, this disruption will cease.

Threatened or Endangered Species

Field surveys to assess the presence of threatened and endangered species were not conducted, therefore, specific impacts to the Indiana Bat could not be assessed. However, it is not likely that threatened and endangered species would be present in the proposed construction area because of the disturbed nature of the proposed construction area, current land use patterns and general absence of critical habitat suitable to support these resources. Thus, impacts are not anticipated.

Parks, Forest Preserves, Refuges and Sanctuaries

Reservoir Park is not expected to be impacted during construction of the proposed connection since the park is located ½ mile from the proposed project and is shielded by approximately ½ mile of residential and commercial structures.

8.3.3.4 Air Quality

The operation of heavy equipment would be the primary source of pollutant emissions during construction activities. Particulate matter, volatile organic compounds (VOCs), carbon monoxide (CO) and nitrogen oxide (NOx) emissions result from combustion of diesel fuel. The emission of these pollutants during construction activities generally would be minor and of short duration and would have insignificant impacts on air quality. Fugitive dust emissions may also result from the operation of heavy equipment during construction. Fugitive dust can be controlled by using water sprays or other suitable dust suppressants.

The post-Acquisition amount of train traffic expected to use the new connection and adjacent rail line segments is anticipated to exceed STB thresholds for air quality impact analysis and this

analysis is presented in Part 2 of this ER.

8.3.3.5 Noise

Construction operations associated with the proposed action may cause increases in noise levels, since these operations require the use of trucks and heavy equipment. However, noise generated by such equipment would be minor and temporary.

Generally, wheel squeal is likely to occur on any curve with a radius less than about 1,000 feet, or when the curvature is greater than approximately five degrees. Although the curvature for this connection is expected to be seven degrees, the curve will be lubricated and the noise from trains (excluding horn use) will be only slightly greater on the connection than on the mainlines. Furthermore, post-Acquisition operations on the connection will include only nine trains per day, compared to 14.5 to 32.5 trains per day on the mainlines, and the closest residences are partially shielded from the connection by large commercial buildings. Due to these considerations, as well as the dominance of train horn noise associated with the nearby grade crossings in this area, the noise increases from the use of the connection will be insignificant.

As described in section 8.3.2.5, 25 residences are within 500 feet of the proposed action. CSX estimates traffic to increase by 23 trains on CSX rail lines and 20 trains on Conrail rail lines. These mainline segments exceed STB thresholds for noise evaluation and are discussed in Part 2 of this ER.

8.3.3.6 Historic and Cultural Resources

No archaeological sites or potentially significant historic sites or structures have been identified for the project area; therefore, no impacts to these resources are anticipated. It may be necessary to conduct a field reconnaissance to identify potentially significant historic properties prior to initiation of project activities. That decision will be made in consultation with the Ohio SHPO.

8.3.3.7 Transportation and Safety

The connection to be built in the northwest quadrant will cross Townsend Rd. and Kniffen Rd. The current grade crossing protection on these roads will be relocated. The connection to be built in the southwest quadrant will cross Kniffen Rd. south of an existing crossing, which will be relocated.

An Environmental Data Resource (EDR) database search did not identify any hazardous waste sites within 500 feet of the proposed rail line construction. The EDR database search identified three unmappable sites within Huron County, however, none of these sites is believed to be within the proposed construction area based on historical land use of the site and visual observations.

The probability of a major spill of hazardous or toxic materials during construction is very small because relatively limited quantities of these materials are used to perform the construction. However, in the unlikely event that such a spill occurs at the construction site, CSX will follow appropriate emergency response procedures outlined in its emergency response plan.

8.3.4 Potential Environmental Impacts of Alternative Actions

8.3.4.1 Build Alternative

No build alternatives were identified.

8.3.4.2 No-Action Alternative

If the no-action alternative were implemented, the proposed rail line connections would not be constructed. The connections are a critical link between the CSX and Conrail networks in the absence of which substantial operational efficiencies, particularly in the transportation of intermodal and other time-sensitive between Ohio and New York and Chicago, will not be

realized. Absence of the proposed construction would result in less efficient rail service, increased fuel consumption and increased emission impacts because longer routes would be used. Further, CSX could not compete effectively for east-west traffic on these lines if these connections are not built.

8.3.5 Proposed Mitigation

The proposed construction would result in minimal or no impact to land use, water resources, biological resources, air quality, noise, cultural resources, transportation, and safety. In consideration of minimal impacts and general CSX practices, CSX would undertake the following mitigation measures.

8.3.5.1 Land Use

Adjacent properties disturbed during construction activities will be restored to pre-construction conditions. Heavy equipment will not be permitted on sensitive resources surrounding the construction area. Should disturbance to sensitive resources be unavoidable, Best Management Practices will be employed to minimize impact to those resources.

8.3.5.2 Water Resources

Erosion and sedimentation control measures will be employed during construction activities to minimize impact on water resources near the construction activities. Erosion will also be minimized by disturbing the smallest area possible at the site and revegetating any disturbed areas immediately following construction activities. Any culverts in the area will be kept clear of debris to avoid flooding, in accordance with federal, state and local regulations. Necessary permits will be obtained if construction activities require the alteration of or work in wetlands, ponds, lakes or streams or if these activities cause soil or other materials to effect the water resources.

8.3.5.3 Biological Resources

The regrowth of vegetation in disturbed areas will be encouraged through stabilization of disturbed soils and reseeding. Should environmental altering activities occur, follow-up agency consultation with the Ohio DNR and USFWS will be conducted.

8.3.5.4 Air Quality

All applicable federal, state and local regulations regarding the control of fugitive dust will be followed as well as using control methods such as water spraying.

8.3.5.5 Noise

Temporary noise from construction equipment will be controlled through the use of work hour controls and maintenance of muffler systems on machinery.

8.3.5.6 Historic and Cultural Resources

In the event that potentially significant resources are discovered during the course of the project, the Ohio SHPO will be notified and procedures recommended by the Ohio SHPO will be implemented. This may include halting construction until the significance of the site can be evaluated and the impact to the significant values of the site can be mitigated or reduced.

8.3.5.7 Transportation and Safety

All roads disturbed during construction activities will be restored according to state or local regulations. Signs and barricades will be utilized, as necessary, to control traffic disruptions during construction activities. All hazardous materials generated during construction activities will be transported in accordance with U.S. Department of Transportation Hazardous Material

Regulations (49 CFR Parts 171-174 and 177-179). If any hazardous materials are encountered during construction activities, the appropriate response and remediation measures will be implemented.

8.3.6 References

Land Use

USDA, 1955. Soil Conservation Service, Soil Survey of Huron County, Ohio.

USGS, 1960. Topographic Quadrangle, Greenwich, OH (Photorevised 1972, Photoinspected 1977).

Povolny, Don, 1997. Phone conversation. Ohio Department of Natural Resources, Coastal Management Program. March 3.

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Planning Resources, May 1997.

FEMA, National Flood Insurance Rate Map, Village of Greenwich, OH. July 1976.

Povolny, Don, 1997. Phone conversation. Ohio Department of Natural Resources, Coastal Management Program. March 3.

Biological Resources

USDI 1995. U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Endangered and Threatened Species in the State of Ohio. March.

Planning Resources, May 1997.

Air Quality

40 CFR Part 81 - Designation of Areas for Air Quality Planning Purposes, Subpart C Section 107, Attainment Status Designations.

Noise

Harris, Miller, Miller and Hansen. May 1997.

Historic and Cultural Resources

Rosen, Diane, 1997. Phone conversation. Great Lakes Agency Bureau of Indian Affairs. May 27.

Transportation and Safety

Environmental Data Resource, May 1997.

8.4 SIDNEY (CSX)

The site of the proposed construction project is located south of the City of Sidney, OH, Shelby County, in west-central Ohio (Figure 4-22). Sidney is located approximately 35 miles north of Dayton, OH. The project involves construction of a 3,263-foot wye connection between CSX and Conrail. At this location, an existing Conrail rail line runs from west to east and begins to turn to the northeast immediately east of the proposed construction site. An existing CSX rail line runs from southwest to northeast and turns north just north of the site. The rail lines presently intersect west of the Piqua Sidney Road and the Great Miami River, and east of Chestnut Avenue. This proposed connection is located on the CSX line which runs between Cincinnati and Toledo, OH and the Conrail line which runs between Indianapolis, IN and Cleveland, OH.

The area of the proposed connection is dominated by residential and commercial land uses. The proposed connection is located outside the existing railroad right-of-way and will require acquisition of approximately 2.6 acres of land.

8.4.1 Proposed Action and Alternatives

8.4.1.1 Proposed Action

The proposed project, depicted in Figure 4-22, involves constructing a connection in the southeast quadrant of the existing intersection enabling northbound trains to proceed east on the Conrail line toward Cleveland, OH. Approximately 2.6 acres of additional property will need to be acquired to construct the connection. In addition, the existing Conrail rail line is approximately 25 vertical feet above the existing CSX rail line at their intersection; therefore, the proposed connection would require filling or other engineered slope protection to produce a satisfactory connection between the two lines.

Construction Requirements

It is estimated that a workforce of approximately 30 persons will be required to construct the connection and that the construction will take several months to complete. Borrow material for the project would be obtained from local sources and hauled to the construction site by truck.

Changes in Traffic

The Acquisition would result in the following estimated changes to the existing rail lines that would be connected by the proposed construction:

- Traffic on the existing Conrail line east of the connection would increase from 24.2 to 31 trains per day.
- Traffic on the existing Conrail line west of the connection would increase from 24.2 to 26.7 trains per day.
- Traffic on the existing CSX line south of the connection would increase from 22.6 to 24.9 trains per day.
- Traffic on the existing CSX line north of the connection would decrease from 22.6 to 15.3 trains per day.
- An average of approximately 9.6 trains per day would operate over the new connection.

8.4.1.2 Proposed Alternative Actions

Build Alternative

No build alternatives were identified for the proposed rail line connection. The proposed rail line would be the most direct connection between the existing rail lines. It would minimize the use of land outside existing railroad rights-of-way, and thus would minimize environmental impacts.

No-Action Alternative

If the connection were not built, traffic would be forced to follow a more circuitous routing through Deschler, OH and Greenwich, OH, adding approximately 30 miles to the routing of each

train that would use the connection. This rerouting would create considerable congestion on the mainline between Deschler and Greenwich, impairing the usefulness of that line, which forms part of the Northeastern Gateway Service Route for the carriage of high-speed traffic. Such congestion would also reduce CSX's competitiveness with motor carriers, and thus its ability to attract freight from crowded highways and achieve the environmental benefits of rail traffic. The congestion would also impair the ability of CSX to serve Ohio shippers located on the impacted lines. For these reasons, this alternative was rejected.

8.4.2 Existing Environment

8.4.2.1 Land Use

Topography of the site includes steep slopes and drainage into the Miami and Erie Feeder Canal and the Great Miami River. The site is located on the southern edge of the City of Sidney, with residential and commercial land uses dominating local development. Adjacent land consists of the following: a maintenance building for a nearby cemetery and an apparent firing range to the southeast; a canal and walking trail (former canal towpath) to the south and southeast; undeveloped or residential areas to the north and west; an old depot now used by the model railroad club located to the northwest; and the Great Miami River to the east and southeast.

The area in the southeast quadrant of the present intersection is zoned N-1: Non-Urban Residence Districts. According to the City of Sidney Zoning Department, the proposed project area is located on land owned by the City of Sidney for the city cemetery.

None of the land is located on or near an Indian Reservation. According to the Great Lakes Bureau of Indian Affairs, no federally recognized Indian tribes or Indian reservations exist in Ohio.

Personnel at the Shelby County Soil Survey office were unable to provide information regarding prime farmland designations in Shelby County. Based on review of the Soil Survey for Shelby County, OH, the soil that would be affected by the proposed construction may be prime farmland based on yields per acre of crops and pasture. However, the soils in the immediate vicinity of the proposed construction site are not currently used for agricultural purposes.

The proposed site is not located within a Coastal Zone Management Area.

8.4.2.2 Water Resources

An intermittent creek flows, via a culvert, under the existing Conrail tracks near the eastern boundary of the subject project area. This drainage appears to flow generally south and appears to be the beginning of the Miami and Erie Feeder Canal, which flows through a culvert under the CSX line near the southern boundary of the subject project area.

According to the United States Fish and Wildlife Service, National Wetland Inventory (NWI) map of the area, wetlands are not present on or within 500 feet of the proposed site.

According to the Federal Emergency Agency (FEMA) map, the proposed construction site is located in an area of minimal flooding.

8.4.2.3 Biological Resources

Vegetation

The proposed construction site consists of the existing tracks and an intermittent stream that supports non-woody vegetation.

Wildlife

Wildlife usage of the site is likely low, as this site is sparsely vegetated and includes rail development. The area may support birds and small mammals that have adapted to developed areas.

Threatened or Endangered Species

No threatened or endangered species of plants are known to exist in Shelby County. One animal species, Indiana bat *(Myotis sodalis)*, is known to inhabit Shelby County. The occurrence of the Indiana bat in the area of the proposed construction is unlikely due to the absence of critical habitat near the proposed project site.

Parks, Forests, Preserves, Refuges, and Sanctuaries

There are three local parks including the Shelby County Fairgrounds, Berger Park and Roadside Park located within one mile of the site (Figure 4-22). Berger Park and Roadside Park are each approximately 1,200 feet northeast and southeast of the site, respectively. The Shelby County Fairgrounds is approximately 2,400 feet northwest of the site. No other wildlife sanctuaries, refuges, national, or state forests/parks are located within one mile of the proposed site.

8.4.2.4 Air Quality

Shelby County, OH is currently categorized as being in attainment with the National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS). Current sources of emissions in the project area include locomotives, vehicles, and industries.

8.4.2.5 Noise

The existing noise environment in the vicinity of the proposed connection in Sidney, OH is dominated by trains on the CSX Cincinnati-Toledo line and the Conrail Indianapolis-Columbus line. Existing operations on these lines consist of 23 trains per day for Cincinnati-Toledo, and 24

to 29 trains per day for Indianapolis-Columbus. Other sources of noise in the area include traffic on local streets.

Noise-sensitive land uses potentially affected by operations on the new connection include single-family residences in the northwest and southwest quadrants.

8.4.2.6 Historic and Cultural Resources

No archaeological sites or historic structures are known to be located on property required for the connection at Sidney; however, no field survey has been conducted.

During a visit to the Ohio SHPO ro review the cultural resources inventory, Dames & Moore identified three large prehistoric archaeological sites between one and three miles northeast of the project area. The sites themselves will not be affected by the proposed undertaking. However, taken as a whole, the data from the three sites indicate that the zone around and including the area of potential effect was fairly densely occupied during the prehistoric period. This suggests that similar sites may be found within the project area during archaeological inventory.

Much of the proposed project area is very steep, and therefore, unlikely to contain archaeological remains. Given the steep topography, historic manmade filling activities, and the previous disturbance from railroad activities in the area of potential effect, much of the project area may not have a high likelihood for archaeological sites.

Three potentially historic properties have been identified near the proposed construction project.

- The Graceland Cemetery is located to the southeast of the proposed alignment area. The nearest gravesite is approximately 500 feet outside of the area of potential effect. It is not anticipated that the cemetery or any associated historic structure will be affected.

- A historic bridge (1923) over the Great Miami River is located at the eastern terminus of the project area; the proposed improvement will extend to the bridge abutment. The concrete on the bridge is badly spalled and will need to be rehabilitated. Its significance will need to be evaluated prior to actions that may affect the bridge.

- The Miami and Erie Feeder Canal and associated tow path are southeast of the proposed connector at the bottom of a steep ravine. The proposed railroad improvement has been aligned to avoid impacts to the canal and tow path; no impacts are anticipated.

8.4.2.7 Transportation and Safety

The proposed construction activity does not involve traversing a road. Access to the proposed construction area would be from the Piqua Sidney Road, and Ohio, Main, and Miami Avenues.

An Environmental Data Resource (EDR) database search did not identify any hazardous waste sites or other sites of environmental concern within 500 feet of the proposed rail line construction. The database search revealed 10 unmappable sites within the Sidney city limits. These sites could not be located because of poor address or geocoding information provided to the state and/or federal databases. No evidence of these sites were observed within or adjacent to the construction area during the site visit.

8.4.3 Potential Environmental Impacts of Proposed Action

8.4.3.1 Land Use

The proposed construction project would require acquisition of a 750-foot by 150-foot parcel of land (2.6 acres) in the southeast quadrant of the proposed construction site. This area is currently occupied by a firing range and cemetery maintenance building. It is not anticipated that any graves in the cemetery would be impacted, since they are on the southeast side of the canal; however, a building which appears to be utilized for storage of maintenance equipment and the

firing range may need to be moved. The extent of current right-of-way and the proposed alignment will need to be evaluated and further discussed with the City of Sidney relative to land acquisition and zoning, prior to proceeding with the proposed connection.

Potential sensitive receptors present within 500 feet of the proposed construction area include the potentially-historic canal and the walking trail located south and southeast of the site. Approximately four residential properties on the west side are within 500 feet west of the proposed construction atop a plateau which rises approximately 50 feet above the elevation of the proposed construction area. However, the proposed construction does not represent a significant change in land use relative to existing sensitive receptors, currently located adjacent to existing railroad tracks. Potential environmental impacts to features of historical significance, including the potentially-historic canal and bridge, are discussed in Section 8.4.3.6.

Although a small parcel of land mapped as not previously used as rail line will be developed, no land currently used for agricultural purposes would be affected by the proposed construction project. Affected land is presently undeveloped or associated with the firing range and cemetery maintenance building and is not currently farmed. However, due to the past and present use of the proposed site (rail line for several decades), the land use in the area of the proposed action will not be significantly impacted.

8.4.3.2 Water Resources

The Great Miami River flows from southwest to northeast and is adjacent to the east boundary of the subject project area. The Miami and Erie Feeder Canal flows southwest and transects the northeastern and southern portions of the proposed project area. Construction activities have the potential to cause a temporary increase in the suspended sediment load of storm water runoff entering the Miami and Erie Feeder Canal. Wetlands were not identified in the vicinity of the project area. The erosion and sediment control measures would limit impacts to the water resources near the proposed project.

8.4.3.3 Biological Resources

Vegetation

The proposed action would mostly impact sparse, scattered vegetation present within the existing rail rights-of-way, as well as the vegetation (mostly grasses and other non-woody vegetation) near the cemetery maintenance building and at the firing range.

Wildlife

No adverse impacts to wildlife populations are anticipated. The construction site is small and contains marginal habitat for wildlife. This habitat may support birds and small mammals that have adapted to developed areas.

Threatened or Endangered Species

Because suitable habitat does not exist on-site, the proposed project is not expected to adversely affect rare, threatened or endangered plants or animals. In addition, neither the project site nor areas in the vicinity are considered critical habitat for species.

Parks, Forest Preserves, Refuges, and Sanctuaries

Construction of the connection would not interfere with the normal functioning of the three local parks (Shelby County Fairgrounds, Berger Park and Roadside Park) located within one mile of the site given the proximity of existing railroad and vehicular traffic. There are no other wildlife sanctuaries, refuges, national or state parks or forests within one mile of the site.

8.4.3.4 Air Quality

The operation of heavy equipment would be the primary source of pollutant emissions during construction activities. Particulate matter, volatile organic compounds (VOCs), carbon monoxide (CO) and nitrogen oxide (NOx) result from combustion of diesel fuel. The combustion emissions associated with construction operations (VOCs, CO, and NOx) generally would be minor and of short duration and would have insignificant impacts on air quality.

Fugitive dust emissions result from the operation of heavy equipment. Fugitive dust can be controlled by using water sprays or other suitable dust suppressants.

Air quality impacts due to the operation of the new connection are anticipated to be minor since existing rail lines currently carry traffic in the project area. The amount of train traffic on the adjacent rail line segments would not exceed STB thresholds for air quality impact analysis.

8.4.3.5 Noise

Construction operations associated with the proposed action may cause increases in noise levels, since these operations require the use of trucks and heavy equipment. However, noise generated by such equipment would be minor and temporary.

Generally, wheel squeal is likely to occur on any curve with a radius less than about 1,000 feet, or when the curvature is greater than approximately five degrees. The curvature for this connection is expected to be eight degrees. However, the curve will be lubricated and thus the noise from trains will be only slightly greater on the connection than on the mainlines. Furthermore, post-Acquisition operations on the connection will include only 9.6 trains per day, compared to 24.9 to 26.7 trains per day on the mainlines, and there are no noise-sensitive receptors near the southeast quadrant of the rail intersection where the connection will be constructed. Therefore, post-Acquisition noise levels at the nearest receptors will be dominated by mainline train operations and the use of the connection will not cause any significant noise increases.

8.4.3.6 Historic and Cultural Resources

No impacts to prehistoric archaeological resources are expected within the area of potential effect. No potentially significant archaeological sites have been identified for the project area. In the event that potentially significant resources are discovered during the course of the project, the

SHPO will be notified and procedures recommended by the SHPO will be implemented.

It is not anticipated that the proposed construction project will affect the Graceland Cemetery or the historic Miami and Erie Feeder Canal which are outside the area of the project's potential effect. Rehabilitation of the historic Miami River bridge, if required, will be performed in consultation with the SHPO.

8.4.3.7 Transportation and Safety

No safety impacts relative to vehicle-train collisions would be a concern since the new connection does not involve construction or modification of a grade crossing.

No impacts are anticipated due to hazardous waste sites or other areas of environmental concern in the vicinity of the construction site. The EDR report did not identify any sites of concern within 500 feet of the proposed rail line construction. The database search revealed 10 unmappable sites within the Sidney city limits which could not be located because of poor address or geocoding information provided to the state and/or federal databases. However, there is no indication that any of the unmappable sites are within or immediately adjacent to the proposed construction site based on review of the EDR report and the site visit.

The probability of a major spill of hazardous or toxic materials during construction is very small based on the quantities and types of materials handled to perform the construction activities. Appropriate emergency response procedures will be used to promptly address any spill situations. Accordingly, the proposed rail line construction project is not anticipated to increase the probability or consequences of hazardous waste contamination.

8.4.4 Potential Environmental Impacts of Alternative Actions

8.4.4.1 Build Alternatives

No build alternatives were identified.

8.4.4.2 No-Action Alternative

Under the no-action alternative, the proposed rail line connection would not be constructed. None of the environmental impacts would occur; however, neither would the benefits of the project be realized. Absence of the proposed construction would result in less efficient rail service, increased fuel consumption, and increased emission impacts because longer routes would have to be used (See Section 8.4.1.2). The connection is a particularly vital link for traffic moving between east coast points and Cincinnati. In the absence of the connection, CSX could not effectively compete for such traffic.

8.4.5 Proposed Mitigation

The proposed construction would result in minimal no impact to land use, water resources, biological resources, air quality, noise, cultural resources, transportation, and safety. In consideration of minimal impacts and general CSX practices, CSX would undertake the following mitigation measures.

8.4.5.1 Land Use

Additional consultation with the City of Sidney relative to land acquisition and zoning of the current cemetery property will be conducted. Adjacent properties disturbed during construction activities will be restored to pre-construction conditions. Heavy equipment will not be permitted on sensitive resources surrounding the construction area. Should disturbance to sensitive resources be unavoidable, Best Management Practices will be employed to minimize impact to

those resources.

8.4.5.2 Water Resources

Erosion and sedimentation control measures will be employed during construction activities to minimize impact on water resources near the construction activities. Erosion will also be minimized by disturbing the smallest area possible at the site and revegetate any disturbed areas immediately following construction activities. Any culverts in the area will be kept clear of debris to avoid flooding, in accordance with federal, state and local regulations. Necessary permits will be obtained if construction activities require the alteration of or work in wetlands, ponds, lakes or streams or if these activities cause soil or other materials to effect the water resources.

8.4.5.3 Biological Resources

The regrowth of vegetation in disturbed areas will be encouraged through stabilization of disturbed soils and reseeding. Should environmental altering activities occur, follow-up agency consultation with the Ohio DNR and USFWS will be conducted.

8.4.5.4 Air Quality

All applicable federal, state and local regulations regarding the control of fugitive dust will be followed as well as using control methods such as water spraying.

8.4.5.5 Noise

Temporary noise from construction equipment will be controlled through the use of work hour

controls and maintenance of muffler systems on machinery.

8.4.5.6 Historic and Cultural Resources

If the historic bridge will be affected by the project, rehabilitation will be carried out under an approved bridge improvement plan in consultation with the Ohio SHPO. In the event that potentially significant cultural or historic resources are discovered during the course of the project, the Ohio SHPO will be notified and procedures recommended by the Ohio SHPO will be implemented. This may include halting construction until the significance of the site can be evaluated and the impact to the significant values of the site can be mitigated or reduced.

8.4.5.7 Transportation and Safety

All roads disturbed during construction activities will be restored according to state or local regulations. Signs and barricades will be utilized, as necessary, to control traffic disruptions during construction activities. All hazardous materials generated during construction activities will be transported in accordance with the U.S. Department of Transportation Hazardous Materials Regulations (49 CFR Parts 171-174 and 177-179). If any hazardous materials are encountered during construction activities, the appropriate response and remediation measures will be implemented.

8.4.6 References

Land Use

City of Sidney, 1996. Zoning Districts Map. June.

Rosen, Diane, 1997. Phone conversation. Great Lakes Bureau of Indian Affairs. May 27.

USDA, 1980. Soil Conservation Service, Soil Survey of Shelby County, Ohio.

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Air Quality

40 CFR Part 81 - Designation for Areas of Air Quality Planning Purposes, Subpart C Section 107, Attainment Status Designations.

Noise

Harris, Miller, Miller, and Hansen. May 1997.

Historic and Cultural Resources

Rosen, Diane, 1997. Phone conversation. Great Lakes Bureau of Indian Affairs. May 27.

Transportation and Safety

Environmental Data Resources, May 1997.

8.5 WILLARD YARD (CSX)

The Willard Yard is located in the City of Willard, Huron County, Ohio on the east-west CSX mainline, approximately 60 miles southwest of Cleveland, Ohio (Figure 4-22). It is a double-hump facility consisting of an eastbound yard and westbound yard. Post-Acquisition, the Willard Yard will become the primary westbound hub for Chicago gateway traffic, servicing the Northeastern Gateway Service Route, the Eastern Gateway Service Route and automotive traffic.

The only Willard Yard project known to require the acquisition of additional land is the construction of a fueling facility and related track on land adjacent to the existing main line tracks between MP4 and MP8 immediately west of the yard. Approximately ten acres of new property consisting of a series of small parcels spread along the four mile stretch of the project and the land needed for the facility itself near MP6, will be acquired for this project. It is currently anticipated that additional construction at or near the Willard Yard (additional block swapping tracks and construction of a third main line track) will take place on rail-owned property or rail right-of-way. Therefore, potential environmental impacts associated with this additional construction activity are not discussed in this document.

8.5.1 Proposed Action and Alternatives

8.5.1.1 Proposed Action

The site of the proposed fueling project is west of the Willard Yard at MP6. The fueling facility will be used to service increased train traffic that would be utilizing the Willard Yard following the acquisition. The facility will service trains transiting through the Willard Yard to points east and west of Willard. Fuel will be delivered to the facility daily by truck; the facility will not require the installation of either in-ground or above-ground fuel tanks.

Construction Requirements

It is anticipated that a work force of approximately 70 persons will be required to construct the fueling facility and related tracks and that it will take several months to complete the project. Borrow material for the project would be obtained from local sources and hauled to the construction site by truck.

Changes in Yard Activity

Activity at the Willard Yard would not exceed STB thresholds requiring environmental analysis for operational air and noise impacts.

The Acquisition would result in the following estimated changes to the CSX rail line adjacent to the Willard yard:

- Traffic on the existing CSX rail line adjacent to the Willard Yard would increase from 33.9 trains per day to approximately 56 trains per day, an increase of approximately 22 trains per day.

8.5.1.2 Alternatives

Build Alternatives

No other build alternatives were identified for the proposed fueling facility and related tracks. The proposed project takes advantage of property currently owned by CSX and minimizes the use of land outside existing railroad rights-of-way, thus minimizing environmental impacts.

No-Action Alternative

If the facility were not built at Willard, an additional fueling facility or facilities would need to be built elsewhere on the CSX system. Willard is an ideal location for the facility because of its location relative to Chicago and Northeast points. Willard is currently a major yard and the fueling facility would be located on a main line, thus allowing it to efficiently service a large volume of traffic.

8.5.2 Existing Environment

8.5.2.1 Land Use

The proposed project will be primarily constructed on railroad rights-of-way, with the exception of approximately 10 acres of land which will be acquired along a narrow corridor adjacent to the existing rail lines. Land use along the proposed four mile rail corridor consists primarily of agricultural lands. Approximately ten residences are located within 500 feet of the proposed project.

According to the Huron and Seneca County Soil Surveys, soil along the proposed project corridor are considered prime farmland.

The State of Ohio does not have a federally recognized coastal zone management program.

8.5.2.2 Water Resources

The proposed project crosses five intermittent streams as mapped by the USGS. No other surface water bodies were identified adjacent to or within 500 feet of the project.

The National Wetland Inventory (NWI) maps indicate that there are two small wetland areas located within 500 feet of the auxiliary track.

The proposed project is located in an area of minimal flooding.

8.5.2.3 Biological Resources

Vegetation

Existing vegetation within the right-of-way includes non-woody vegetation. Land adjacent to the right-of-way contains two small wetlands, croplands and pastures, as well as small tracts of trees.

Wildlife

The right-of-way outside of Willard Yard and the City of Willard (to the east and west) provides suitable habitat for a variety of terrestrial wildlife species. The adjacent fields provide cover for small animals such as mice, moles, squirrels, rabbits and reptiles, along with their winged predators. Various birds may also forage in these areas, including common songbirds and game species. Adjacent fields provide food and shelter for larger species such as deer, wild turkey, racoon and opossum. Wetlands provide habitat for insects, amphibians, semi-aquatic reptiles and waterfowl.

Threatened and Endangered Species

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) and the Ohio Department of Natural Resources (ODNR) were consulted regarding the presence of threatened or endangered species in the area of the proposed expansion. Of the 20 federally-listed threatened and endangered species known to inhabit the State of Ohio, one of these, *Myotis sodalis*, the Indiana bat, is known to occur within Huron County. The Indiana bat's hibernacula includes caves and mines. Its summer habitat includes small to medium river corridors with well developed riparian woods; woodlots within one to three miles of small to medium rivers; and upland forests. The occurrence of the Indiana bat in the area of the proposed construction would be limited to scattered forested tracts immediately adjacent to the rail line along a total of approximately 3,000 feet of the proposed project length.

Parks, Forests, Preserves, Refuges and Sanctuaries

No national, state or local refuges, sanctuaries, parks or forests are located within one mile of the proposed project.

8.5.2.4 Air Quality

Huron and Seneca Counties, OH are categorized as being in attainment of the National Ambient Air Quality Standard (NAAQS) for all pollutants. Existing sources of air emissions near the project area include locomotives, vehicles and farm machinery.

8.5.2.5 Noise

Construction operations associated with the proposed action would cause minor and temporary increases in noise levels since these operations require the use of trucks and heavy equipment. Noise generated by such equipment would be temporary.

The post-Acquisition amount of train traffic expected to use the Willard Yard is not anticipated to exceed STB thresholds for noise impact analysis. Rail line segments adjacent to the Willard Yard do meet the STB thresholds for noise analysis and are analyzed in Part 2 of this ER.

8.5.2.6 Historic and Cultural Resources

Dames & Moore visited the Ohio Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) on May 21, 1997, and examined the Ohio Archaeological Inventory. Nearly thirty archaeological sites were recorded in the Ohio Archaeological Inventory in the vicinity of the proposed project. Most of these were identified during archaeological field inventories conducted in 1986 and 1987 for the proposed Erie Natural Gas Pipeline, Ohio Segment. As a result, the known sites are arranged lineally within two miles of the rail track. Most of the sites are small prehistoric lithic scatters, consisting primarily of diffuse waste flakes and occasional stone tools found on the surface. None of the

sites was considered eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places. It is anticipated that similar, non-significant sites may be located in the project area.

Based on the site visit and investigation of site records at the Ohio SHPO, no known cultural, archaeological or historic properties lie within 500 feet of the proposed project area.

8.5.2.7 Transportation and Safety

Existing rail line traffic enters and exits Willard Yard along the east-west trending CSX rail lines and the northwest-southeast trending rail line. No new connections are planned in association with the proposed construction at Willard Yard. Six existing grade crossings are located along the proposed additional rail lines and there is an underpass at County Line Road.

Transportation impacts of new construction projects relate to increased traffic, including heavy equipment used to access the construction site. Roads used to access the construction site may include Townline Road or Egypt Road for east-west travel, and Section Line, Daniels, County Line and Wurtz Roads for north-south travel.

An Environmental Data Resource (EDR) database search within 500 feet of the proposed rail line construction indicates there are no known sites of environmental concern relative to contamination or hazardous waste sites.

8.5.3 Potential Environmental Impacts of Proposed Action

8.5.3.1 Land Use

The proposed construction project is expected to have moderate impacts on land use. Construction would be along existing rail line and the width of additional right-of-way acquisitions would typically be limited to 25 feet. After construction is complete, it is anticipated that adjacent land will continue to function the same as the pre-Acquisition use.

Prime farmland soil will be impacted along essentially the four mile long proposed construction area. It is anticipated that up to a total of approximately ten acres of prime farmland will be converted to railroad use. Additional consultation with the local Natural Resources Conservation Services (NRCS) office will be performed to minimize impacts to prime farmland soils caused by this project.

The site is not in a Coastal Zone Management Area and therefore no impacts of that nature would occur.

8.5.3.2 Water Resources

Temporary impacts to surface water may occur at locations where the auxiliary tracks cross existing watercourses. The temporary impacts may include deposition of sediment in downstream areas, and increased turbidity and related water quality impacts. The proposed construction activity will cross five intermittent streams.

Placement of fill to construct the new road bed for the auxiliary tracks will reduce the amount of available surface water storage area which is a concern in portions of the project occurring near stream crossings (Figure 4-22). Modifications to stream channels, stream banks or existing water conveyances such as culverts may be required for the project. These potential impacts may be eliminated with proper mitigation in the area. Additional consultation with the Army Corp of Engineers will be performed relative to the potential modifications and related water resources issues as discussed above.

8.5.3.3 Biological Resources

Vegetation

Existing vegetation in the current rail line right-of-way would be temporarily disturbed during the construction process as would vegetation in the additional land to be acquired. However, opportunistic plant species will quickly revegetate the area.

Wildlife

Wildlife along the rail line would be temporarily disturbed during construction activities. Temporary adverse impacts to wildlife populations inhabiting the watercourses crossed by the auxiliary tracks as well as those in the small wetland at the western end of the proposed project may also occur.

Threatened and Endangered Species

The slight encroachment of the auxiliary tracks on the edges of a few forested areas is not anticipated to significantly alter their potential suitability as habitat for the *Myotis sodalis*, the Indiana bat, does not exist on-site, the proposed project is not expected to adversely affect rare, threatened or endangered plants or animals.

Sanctuaries, Refuges, Parks and Forests

There are no wildlife sanctuaries, refuges, parks or forests identified within one mile of the proposed project; therefore, it is not expected to impact such areas.

8.5.3.4 Air Quality

The operation of heavy equipment would be the primary source of pollutant emissions during construction activities. Particulate matter, volatile organic compounds (VOCs), carbon monoxide (CO) and nitrogen oxide (NO_x) emissions result from combustion of diesel fuel. The emission of these pollutants during construction activities generally would be minor and of short duration and would have insignificant impacts on air quality. Fugitive dust emissions may also

result from the operation of heavy equipment during construction. Fugitive dust can be controlled by using water sprays or other suitable dust suppressants.

Rail line segments adjacent to the Willard Yard do meet the STB thresholds for air quality analysis and are analyzed in Part 2 of this ER.

8.5.3.5 Noise

Construction operations associated with the proposed action would cause minor and temporary increases in noise levels since these operations require the use of trucks and heavy equipment. Noise generated by such equipment would be temporary.

Rail line segments adjacent to the Willard Yard do meet the STB thresholds for noise analysis and are analyzed in Part 2 of this ER.

8.5.3.6 Historic and Cultural Resources

No potentially significant historic structures were identified in the immediate vicinity of the project area. No archaeological survey has been conducted in the project area.

In the event that potentially significant resources are discovered during the course of the project, the SHPO will be notified and procedures recommended by the SHPO will be implemented. It is anticipated that this may include halting construction until the significance of the site can be evaluated and the impact to the significant values of the site can be mitigated or reduced.

8.5.3.7 Transportation and Safety

Minor adjustments in local traffic patterns would be necessary because grade crossings at Daniels Road, Wurtz Road and Reed-Venice Road will be removed. These are light density roads and

nearby alternate routes with crossings are available at State Route 4, County Line Road (underpass) and Section Line Road. Removal of three of the four grade crossings will reduce the potential for train-motor vehicle accidents.

The proposed construction project will also require lengthening the underpass at County Line Road. This would entail minor temporary disruptions to traffic on County Line Road during the construction period.

Review of state and federal databases for hazardous waste sites and other sites of environmental concern indicate that there are no such sites are located within 500 feet of the proposed construction location. If hazardous wastes are encountered during the proposed construction activities, CSX will contact the appropriate state agencies to address issues related to the site.

The probability of a major spill of hazardous or toxic materials during construction is very small based on the type and quantities of materials handled. Appropriate emergency response procedures will be used to promptly address any spill. Accordingly, the proposed rail line construction project is not anticipated to increase the probability or consequences of hazardous waste contamination.

8.5.4 Potential Environmental Impact of Alternative Actions

8.5.4.1 Build Alternative

The Willard Yard is ideally located for purposes of a fueling facility. No economically viable or operationally feasible build alternatives were identified for the proposed project. Thus, potential environmental impacts were not quantified.

8.5.4.2 No-Action Alternative

If the no-action alternative were implemented, the proposed fueling facility would not be constructed. That facility is essential to the economic and operational efficiency of the post-Acquisition CSX network and if it were not built at Willard, it would need to be constructed elsewhere (See Section 8.5.1.2).

8.5.5 Proposed Mitigation

The proposed construction would result in minimal impact or no impact to land use, air quality, biological resources, air quality, noise, cultural resources, transportation and safety. In consideration of the anticipated impacts and general CSX practices, CSX would undertake the following mitigation measures.

8.5.5.1 Land Use

Adjacent properties disturbed during construction activities will be restored to pre-construction conditions. Heavy equipment will not be permitted on sensitive resources surrounding the construction area. Should disturbance to sensitive resources be unavoidable, Best Management Practices will be employed to minimize impact to those resources.

8.5.5.2 Water Resources

Erosion and sedimentation control measures will be employed during construction activities to minimize impact on water resources near the construction activities. Erosion will also be minimized by disturbing the smallest area possible at the site and revegetating any disturbed areas immediately following construction activities. Any culverts in the area will be kept clear of debris to avoid flooding, in accordance with federal, state and local regulations. Necessary permits will be obtained if construction activities require the alteration of or work in wetlands,

ponds, lakes or streams or if these activities cause soil or other materials to effect the water resources.

8.5.5.3 Biological Resources

The regrowth of vegetation in disturbed areas will be encouraged through stabilization of disturbed soils and reseeding. Should environmental altering activities occur, follow-up agency consultation with the Ohio DNR and USFWS will be conducted.

8.5.5.4 Air Quality

All applicable federal, state and local regulations regarding the control of fugitive dust will be followed as well as using dust control methods such as water spraying.

8.5.5.5 Noise

Temporary noise from construction equipment will be controlled through the use of work hour controls and maintenance of muffler systems on machinery.

8.5.5.6 Historic and Cultural Resources

In the event that potentially significant resources are discovered during the course of the project, the Ohio SHPO will be notified and procedures recommended by the Ohio SHPO will be implemented. This may include halting construction until the significance of the site can be evaluated and the impact to the significant values of the site can be mitigated or reduced.

8.5.5.7 Transportation and Safety

All roads disturbed during construction activities will be restored according to state or local regulations. Signs and barricades will be utilized, as necessary, to control traffic disruptions during construction activities. All hazardous materials generated during construction activities will be transported in accordance with the U.S. Department of Transportation Hazardous Materials Regulations (49 CFR Parts 171-174 and 177-179). If any hazardous materials are encountered during construction activities, the appropriate response and remediation measures will be implemented.

8.5.6 References

Land Use

USGS, 1960. Topographic Map, Willard Quadrangle, OH. Photorevised 1972.

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Air Quality

40 CFR Part 81 - Designation of Areas for Air Quality Planning Purposes, Subpart C Section 107, Attainment Status Designations.

Noise

Harris, Miller, Miller and Hansen. May 1997.

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Transportation and Safety

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NS DISCUSSION

8.6 BUCYRUS (NS)

Bucyrus, OH is in Crawford County, approximately 70 miles north of Columbus, OH (Figure 4-23). Existing rail lines bordering the project area include a north/south oriented NS mainline to the west, an east/west Conrail mainline, and a Conrail siding along the north side of the Conrail mainline.

The proposed construction site is located between Woodlawn Avenue and Whetstone Street in northeast Bucyrus. The construction site encompasses an area approximately 2,400 by 200 feet (11.0 acres). The new connection would occupy an area approximately 100 by 2,400 feet (5.5 acres). This urban site is within a primarily residential and commercial area. The site is undeveloped, except for approximately 15 percent, which contains a construction yard and a building supply company. The proposed construction would require at-grade crossings at East Warren Street and Rensselaer Street. Highland Avenue passes beneath (below grade) the existing Conrail line.

8.6.1 Proposed Action and Alternatives

8.6.1.1 Proposed Action

The proposed action at Bucyrus would involve the construction and operation of a new connection between the east/west oriented Conrail and the north/south oriented NS tracks. The connection would be southeast of the intersection of the Conrail and NS lines (Figure 4-23). The design includes approximately 2,400 feet of new rail line and would require the construction of a #15 right hand turn out north of Woodlawn Avenue and a #15 left hand turn out west of Whetstone Street. This new construction would permit more direct and efficient train movement between Columbus, OH and Pittsburgh, PA. It would avoid rail traffic congestion at Cleveland

and provide improved, more consistent service for customers between Pittsburgh and Columbus and points south.

Construction Requirements

The exact labor force and duration of construction are not available, but are expected to require 10-15 people and three to six months. Borrow material for the project would be obtained from local sources and hauled to the construction site by rail or truck.

Changes in Traffic

The proposed Acquisition would result in the following estimated rail traffic changes on the rail lines that would be connected by the proposed construction:

- Traffic on the existing NS line would increase from 26 to 32 trains per day.
- NS traffic on the existing Conrail line would increase from 6 to 8 trains per day.
- Traffic on the new construction would be eight trains per day.

8.6.1.2 Alternatives

Build Alternatives

No other build alternatives were identified for the proposed rail line construction. The proposed new connection would be the most direct connection between the existing rail lines and would minimize the use of new land outside the existing railroad rights-of-way. In addition, the proposed construction would not result in any significant environmental impacts.

No-Action Alternative

Under the no-action alternative, existing and additional post-Acquisition rail traffic would operate over existing Conrail and NS lines with no connection. Access between the two lines would be limited to existing interchanges and terminals. The no-build alternative would reduce the total economic and operational efficiency and other benefits that would be possible as a result of the proposed Acquisition.