with the U.S. Department of Transportation Hazardous Materials Regulations (49 CFR Parts 171-174 and 177-179).

- If any contamination is encountered or if a spill occurs during removal operations, NS will follow appropriate response and remediation procedures outlined in its Emergency Response Plan.

4.1.6 References

FEMA, 1978. Flood Insurance Rate Map, Oregon. Lucas County, Ohio. March 15, 1978. Reference number 390361-0012-b.

FEMA, 1983. Flood Insurance Rate Map, Lucas County, (unincorp.). Lucas County, Ohio. March 16, 1983. Reference number 390359-0070-b.

FEMA, 1983. Flood Insurance Rate Map, Lucas County, (unincorp.). Lucas County, Ohio. March 16, 1983. Reference number 390359-0065-b.

FEMA, 1983. Flood Insurance Rate Map, Lucas County, (unincorp.). Lucas County, Ohio. March 16, 1983. Reference number 390359-0025-b.

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USDA, 1980. Soil Conservation Survey. Lucas County, Ohio, June 1980.

USGS, 1965. Topographic Quadrangle. Rossford, Ohio, 1965.

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USGS, 1980. Topographic Quadrangle. Oregon, Ohio-Michigan, 1965, photorevised 1980.

USDI, 1977. Fish and Wildlife Service, National Wetlands Inventory Map. Rossford, Ohio, based on aerial photography, April 1977.

USDI, 1977. Fish and Wildlife Service, National Wetlands Inventory Map. Toledo, Ohio, based on aerial photography, April 1977.

USDI, 1977. Fish and Wildlife Service, National Wetlands Inventory Map. Oregon, Ohio, based on aerial photography April 1997.

USGS, 1965. Topographic Quadrangle. Rossford, Ohio, 1965.

USGS, 1965. Topographic Quadrangle. Toledo, Ohio, 1965.

USGS, 1980. Topographic Quadrangle. Oregon, Ohio-Michigan, 1965, photorevised 1980.

USFWS, 1977. Federally Listed Threatened and Endangered Species in the State of Ohio, March 14, 1997.

4.2 TOLEDO PIVOT BRIDGE

Toledo is in Lucas County, near the southwest shore of Lake Erie on the Michigan-Ohio border. The Toledo Pivot Bridge is within the city limits of Toledo. The bridge spans the Maumee River, approximately 2.0 miles south of Lake Erie.

The bridge is currently operated by NS. The area crossed includes the Maumee River and short lengths of both banks which are incorporated into the bridge approaches and abutments. Areas of the approaches include undeveloped, but disturbed land. Developed areas in the vicinity of the bridge are primarily industrial, with a small amount of residential lands.

4.2.1 Proposed Action and Alternatives

4.2.1.1 Proposed Action

The proposed action would include the abandonment of the 0.2-mile long Toledo Pivot Bridge from MP CS2.8 to MP CS3.0 (Figure 3-7). This NS pivot bridge is located in Lucas County, OH near the southwest shore of Lake Erie on the Michigan-Ohio border, approximately 95 miles west of Cleveland. The segment is approximately 2.0 miles southwest of the Maumee River's mouth into Lake Erie, near the community of Ironville, OH. This bridge currently provides NS a means to cross the Maumee River in Toledo, OH. The bridge would no longer be required following the proposed Acquisition due to the acquisition by NS of Conrail's Maumee River bridge located approximately four miles to the south.

The proposed action includes removal of railroad-associated equipment from the bridge abutments and approaches, such as rails, ties, and appurtenances (i.e., communications, signals). NS would make every effort to convey ownership of the bridge to another interested party to avoid bridge removal. If no such party is found, the bridge structure would need to be removed as part of the abandonment process to allow for continued safe navigation on this portion of the Maumee River. Abandonment procedures are discussed in greater detail in Section 1.2.

Lines acquired due to the Acquisition would enable existing NS rail traffic operating over this bridge to be rerouted to an existing Conrail line and bridge. Abandonment of this bridge would eliminate annual maintenance expenses, repair costs and future capital investment. Abandonment of this bridge is therefore preferred in order to obtain the maximum benefit from the proposed Acquisition.

4.2.1.2 Alternatives

The only alternative to the proposed abandonment action is the no-action alternative (continuing present operations). Discontinuing operations without abandoning the bridge is not an option as the abandonment is on a navigable river and the U.S. Coast Guard requires removal of an abandoned bridge. Under the no-action alternative, NS would continue to maintain and operate the bridge. These alternatives would not provide realization of the full operational, environmental and economic benefits possible through the proposed Acquisition.

4.2.2 Existing Environment

4.2.2.1 Land Use

Land use adjacent to the pivot bridge includes the Maumee River. Cargo ships, tug and recreational boats are common on the Maumee River during the spring and summer months.

Land within the right-of-way is limited to the bridge approaches only. This land includes the rail line, graveled rail bed and sideslopes. Land use along the right-of-way of the western bridge abutment consists of undeveloped land on the north, while to the south there is a trailer park adjacent to the tracks.

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

The project is not within a designated coastal zone management area.

4.2.2.2 Water Resources

NWI maps indicate that there are no designated wetlands near the proposed abandonment (Figure 4-2). This bridge's purpose is to provide NS a crossing of the Maumee River. The Maumee River is a navigable water of the U.S. The Maumee River at this bridge location is approximately 1,000 feet wide.

FEMA maps indicate that the proposed action is within the boundaries of the 100 year floodplain.

4.2.2.3 Biological Resources

Vegetation

Medium-sized rocks used for erosion control line the east bank of the Maumee River with weedy annuals and non-native grasses growing beyond the rocks. Land adjacent to the right-of-way beyond the bridge abutments includes patches of weedy annuals, non-native grasses, open soil, and gravel. Less industry exists on the west bank allowing for establishment of more vegetation. A small band of deciduous forest with scrub brush borders the right-of-way to the north, while weedy annuals and non-native grasses exist on the south side of the tracks.

Wildlife

The right-of-way for the bridge is primarily the air space over the Maumee River. As such, the only habitat for terrestrial wildlife is found in and adjacent to the right-of-way of the bridge approaches and abutments. Adjacent scrub brush and weedy annuals provide cover for small mammals such as mice, moles and rabbits. Adjacent timbered areas on the west bank provide food and shelter for squirrels, opossums, songbirds and birds of prey. The bridge itself provides some habitat for bird species such as rock doves, starlings and swallows.

The Maumee River provides a freshwater aquatic habitat for a variety of species including waterfowl, shorebirds, gulls, turtles and fish.

Threatened and Endangered Species

The USFWS and Ohio DNR were contacted regarding threatened and endangered species and critical habitats in the area of the proposed rail line abandonment. Both agencies indicated that there are no rare or endangered species or their habitats in the abandonment area. No threatened or endangered species or their habitats were observed during a site visit.

Parks, Forests, Preserves, Refuges and Sanctuaries

Two city parks are located approximately one mile from the pivot bridge: Collins Park, east of the Maumee River and Riverside Park, which borders the Maumee on the west bank.

4.2.2.4 Air Quality

Lucas County currently has a partial nonattainment status for SO_2 pollution. This area includes the region east of Route 23 and west of the eastern boundary of Oregon Township. The Toledo Pivot Bridge is entirely within this nonattainment area. Emissions sources in the abandonment area include vehicles, locomotives, and nearby industries.

4.2.2.5 Noise

Rail and river traffic are the primary sources of noise along the proposed abandonment. There are no sensitive noise receptors within 500 feet of the bridge. Additionally, the eastern side of the bridge is heavily industrial which also contributes to local noise levels.

4.2.2.6 Historic and Cultural Resources

The Toledo Pivot Bridge is on a rail line that was constructed between April 1871 and May 1888 as a part of the Wheeling and Lake Erie Railroad, an extension to the P.C. and St. L. Railway.

The construction appears to be Pratt-through-truss, but exhibits some of the characteristics of a Baltimore (Petit). The 1,400 feet of crossing is composed of seven spans, which are supported on limestone masonry pillars with wooden pilings at the extreme east and west ends of the bridge.

Construction dates are unknown, but Pratt-through-truss designs were common from 1844 thru the twentieth century, while the Baltimore (Petit) designs were common between 1871 and the early twentieth century. The limestone pilings were generally discontinued by the early twentieth century. An evaluation of the Toledo Pivot bridge is that it may be eligible for National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) listing.

A review of NRHP listing and information at the Ohio State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) did not identify any additional historic structures or archaeological sites in the vicinity of the proposed abandonment.

4.2.2.7 Transportation and Safety

Currently, ten trains regularly operate over the pivot bridge per day, while an additional five to six trains per week operate sporadically over the bridge. Daily train traffic averages 10.9 trains. Traffic using this bridge creates a potential for train derailments or hazardous materials spills. No grade crossings are present along the segment to be abandoned. Traffic over the bridge would be rerouted to the Conrail bridge approximately four miles south.

The bridge restricts clearance for vessels traveling on the Maumee River. A portion of the bridge that spans the navigation channel must be swung open to allow ships to travel up the Maumee River or downstream to Lake Erie. After a vessel passes, the span must be swung back into place for rail traffic. The bridge is currently operational only during peak river traffic in the spring and summer when the bridge span is swung open 8 to 12 times per day to allow passage for commercial and recreational traffic.

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The results of the EDR database identified no hazardous waste sites or known environmental conditions within 500 feet of the proposed abandonment. The database search revealed five unmappable sites. These sites are located somewhere within Lucas County and could not be precisely located due to poor address or geocoding information. No evidence of these sites was observed within the right-of-way during the site visit.

4.2.3 Potential Environmental Impacts of Proposed Action

Abandonment of the Toledo Pivot Bridge would require either the transfer of ownership of the bridge to another interested party or bridge removal. Due to the size of the bridge, NS would prefer to convey ownership rather than remove and salvage the bridge. If the bridge is conveyed to another owner, operation and maintenance of the bridge are expected to remain similar to current conditions with the exception that trains would not be likely to continue to operate over it. No impacts would be expected from conveyance of ownership. If however, ownership cannot be conveyed, removal of part or all of the bridge would be required in order to maintain safe navigation on the Maumee River.

4.2.3.1 Land Use

The proposed abandonment could involve removal of the bridge structure and abutments. Removal activities would not significantly impact adjacent land uses, although the removal of the bridge could require the use of rubber-tired construction equipment, cranes, barges, and other heavy construction equipment outside of the rail line right-of-way on property around bridge approaches and abutments. Any adjacent land that would be disturbed by removal activities would be restored by NS. Removal of the bridge abutments could temporarily disturb sediment deposits on the river bottom, as well as dislodge debris that may have collected around the abutments. NS would clear all debris surrounding the abutments before river traffic could resume.

River traffic could potentially be delayed as a result of removal operations. These delays would be temporary and would cease after removal operations are completed. The removal of the bridge would have beneficial effects for navigation of the river due to elimination of delays during bridge operation and the obstacle that the bridge presents.

No construction activities would occur within a designated coastal zone management area.

4.2.3.2 Water Resources

Removal activities could disturb areas of soil around the bridge approaches and abutments, thereby increasing the potential for soil erosion and sedimentation into the Maumee River. Impacts on soil and water quality due to erosion would be minimal since NS will use appropriate erosion control technologies. Actions to control erosion and sedimentation could include using sediment barriers (e.g., silt fences and straw bale dikes), diversion ditches and sediment collection basins to ensure minimal impacts to the water quality.

Disturbance of the Maumee River bed during bridge pier removal could temporarily increase water turbidity. These increases would be temporary and restricted to the area of the bridge and a short distance downstream. Turbidity increases are expected to be much less than those currently experienced during high rainfall and stream flow periods.

Removal of the bridge piers could dislodge debris that may have collected around the piers. NS would remove all debris surrounding the piers.

4.2.3.3 Biological Resources

Vegetation

Existing land vegetation around bridge approaches and abutments would be temporarily disturbed during the removal process due to vehicle and construction equipment traffic. However, opportunistic plant species would quickly revegetate disturbed areas. The approaches

and abutments would eventually revert to communities similar to those present before removal. Current vegetation control practices along the right-of-way would be discontinued after removal operations are completed allowing growth and maturation of vegetation. Therefore, the overall impact of the proposed abandonment on vegetation along the right-of-way should be beneficial.

Wildlife

Terrestrial wildlife on the banks of the Maumee River would be temporarily disturbed during removal activities due to increased human activity and noise from equipment. However, once operations are completed, the area should revert to an environment similar to that before operations started. Wildlife habitat would be increased and enhanced due to the absence of train movements and noise.

Removing the pivot bridge would eliminate cover for a variety of bird species that may roost or nest within the bridge structure. These birds are typically well adapted to urbanized environments, and populations are not expected to be adversely impacted. Additionally, rock doves and starlings, the primary species expected to use the bridge, are introduced species and are considered nuisances by federal and state fish and game agencies. Any impacts to these species would not be considered significant.

The bridge piers and debris collected nearby may provide cover and breeding areas for a variety of fish and aquatic species. However, these habitats are limited due to their size and would not significantly impact aquatic populations if they are removed.

Removal operations could temporarily increase soil erosion and turbidity in the Maumee River. However, adverse impacts to fish populations and habitat are not expected because NS will follow permit requirements, sediment control measures, and other recommended mitigation procedures.

Threatened and Endangered Species

The USFWS and Ohio DNR do not expect any impacts to threatened or endangered species or their potential habitats within the right-of-way. No threatened or endangered species were observed during a site visit nor are they anticipated to be present. Therefore, this project would have no impact on them.

Parks, Forests, Preserves, Refuges and Sanctuaries

Recreational quality at Collins Park and Riverside Park would be increased due to the absence of train-associated noise. Users of these parks would not be subjected to periodic disturbance due to train operation.

4.2.3.4 Air Quality

The operation of heavy equipment would be the primary source of pollutant emissions during removal activities. Such pollutants vary by the source, as described below:

- Particulate matter, volatile organic compounds (VOCs), carbon monoxide (CO), and nitrogen oxides (NO_x), 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 would be controlled by using control methods such as water spraying. However, fugitive dust would be minor due to the small amount of ground disturbance required around bridge approaches and abutments. Removal equipment emissions (VOCs, CO, and NO_x) generally would be minor and of short duration. Removal operations themselves would be temporary and would have insignificant, temporary impacts on air quality.

Removal equipment and locomotives contribute little SO_2. Removal activities would not likely worsen the nonattainment status of Lucas County. Following removal, the elimination of

locomotives would not reduce overall SO_2 levels such as to affect the nonattainment status of Lucas County. While post-abandonment pollutant emissions along the right-of-way would be eliminated, little or no change in air quality within the county is anticipated.

4.2.3.5 Noise

Removal operations associated with the abandonment would cause temporary increases in noise levels due to the use of trucks, front-end loaders, cranes, barges and other construction equipment. However, as no sensitive noise receptors are located within 500 feet of the proposed abandonment, no noise impacts due to bridge removal would occur.

4.2.3.6 Historic andCultural Resources

Section 106 consultation with the Ohio SHPO regarding the NRHP eligibility of the bridge has been initiated. NS will retain its interest in and take no steps to alter the bridge until the Section 106 process has been completed.

No known or documented archaeological sites exist on the approaches to the Maumee River Pivot bridge. However, the potential for undocumented archaeological sites has not been dismissed. NS will continue consultation with the Ohio SHPO to determine any further requirements.

4.2.3.7 Transportation and Safety

Currently, an average of 10.9 trains per day move over the Toledo Pivot Bridge. If the NS pivot bridge is abandoned, NS traffic would be rerouted over an existing Conrail bridge, approximately four miles south of the Toledo Pivot Bridge. No customer impact is anticipated as a result of the abandonment.

If ownership of the bridge cannot be conveyed, the Toledo Pivot Bridge would be removed to allow for continued safe river navigation on the Maumee River. Abandoning the bridge without removal would result in a deteriorating structure and jeopardize river traffic safety.

The results of the EDR database search identified no hazardous waste sites or known environmental conditions in the vicinity of the proposed abandonment corridor. The database search revealed 5 unmappable sites. 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 was observed within the right-of-way during the site visit.

NS would follow the procedures of their Emergency Response Plan to prevent or contain any spills of fuels or oils from removal equipment.

4.2.3.8 Energy

The STB requires an evaluation of the impacts of a rail abandonment on energy consumption if the abandonment would result in a diversion of more than 1,000 rail cars per year to truck transportation or diversion of more than 50 rail cars per mile per year over any line segment. Impacts to energy consumption relate to the reduced efficiency of transporting materials by truck as compared to rail. Rail traffic over the bridge would be rerouted to the Conrail rail line and bridge 4 miles south. The Toledo Pivot Bridge abandonment would not result in any diversion of rail traffic to trucks. The detailed methodology for assessing energy impacts is provided in an Appendix to Part 1 of this ER.

4.2.4 Potential Environmental Impacts of Alternatives

The only alternative to the proposed abandonment is the no-action alternative (and therefore no change in operations). The action would have no affect on the existing quality of the human and natural environment or energy consumption.

4.2.5 Proposed Mitigation

Mitigation measures proposed by NS to minimize environmental impacts are listed below.

4.2.5.1 Land Use

- NS will restore any adjacent properties that are disturbed during right-of-way removal activities.

4.2.5.2 Water Resources

- NS will use BMPs to control soil erosion and sedimentation in streams during removal operations. Such actions could include using sediment barriers (e.g., silt fences and straw bale dikes), diversion ditches and sediment collection basins.

- NS will disturb the smallest area possible around the Maumee River and will revegetate disturbed areas immediately following removal operations.

- NS will obtain all necessary federal, state and local permits if removal activities require the alteration of wetlands, ponds, lakes, streams, or rivers, or if salvaging activities would cause soil or other materials to wash into these water resources.

4.2.5.3 Biological Resources

- NS will encourage regrowth of vegetation in disturbed areas through stabilization of disturbed soils and reseeding.

- NS will use BMPs to control soil erosion and sedimentation in streams during removal operations. Such actions could include using sediment barriers (e.g., silt fences and straw

bale dikes), diversion ditches and sediment collection basins.

4.2.5.4 Air Quality

- NS will comply with all applicable federal, state and local regulations regarding the control of fugitive dust. Fugitive dust emissions created during removal operations shall be minimized by using control methods such as water spraying.

4.2.5.5 Noise

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

4.2.5.6 Historical and Cultural Resources

- NS will make a reasonable effort to convey ownership of the Toledo Pivot Bridge and any other structures determined potentially eligible for the NHRP to prevent their removal.

- NS will retain its interest in and take no steps to alter the Toledo Pivot Bridge, until the Section 106 process of the National Historic Preservation Act (16 USC 470f, as amended) has been completed for this structure.

- If previously unknown archaeological remains are found during removal operations, NS shall cease work in the area and immediately contact the Ohio SHPO.

4.2.5.7 Transportation and Safety

- NS will observe all applicable federal, state, and local regulations regarding handling and

disposal of any waste materials, including hazardous waste, encountered or generated during removal operations.

- NS will dispose of all materials that cannot be reused in accordance with state and local solid waste management regulations.

- NS will implement appropriate measures to minimize disruption of and provide for the continued safety of river traffic during removal.

- NS will transport all hazardous materials generated by removal activities in compliance with the U.S. Department of Transportation Hazardous Materials Regulations (49 CFR Parts 171-174 and 177-179).

- If any contamination is encountered or if a spill occurs during removal operations, NS will follow appropriate response and remediation procedures outlined in its Emergency Response Plan.

4.2.6 References

FEMA, 1978. Flood Insurance Rate Map, Oregon. Lucas County, Ohio. March 15, 1978. Reference number 390361-0012-b.

FEMA, 1983. Flood Insurance Rate Map, Lucas County, (unincorp.). Lucas County, Ohio. March 16, 1983. Reference number 390359-0070-b.

FEMA, 1983. Flood Insurance Rate Map, Lucas County, (unincorp.). Lucas County, Ohio. March 16, 1983. Reference number 390359-0065-b.

FEMA, 1983. Flood Insurance Rate Map, Lucas County, (unincorp.). Lucas County, Ohio. March 16, 1983. Reference number 390359-0025-b.

FEMA, 1978. Flood Insurance Rate Map, Oregon. Lucas County, Ohio. March 15, 1978. Reference number 390361-0014-b.

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USGS, 1980. Topographic Quadrangle. Oregon, Ohio-Michigan, 1965, photorevised 1980.

USGS, 1980. Topographic Quadrangle. Oregon, Ohio-Michigan, 1965, photorevised 1980.

FIGURES

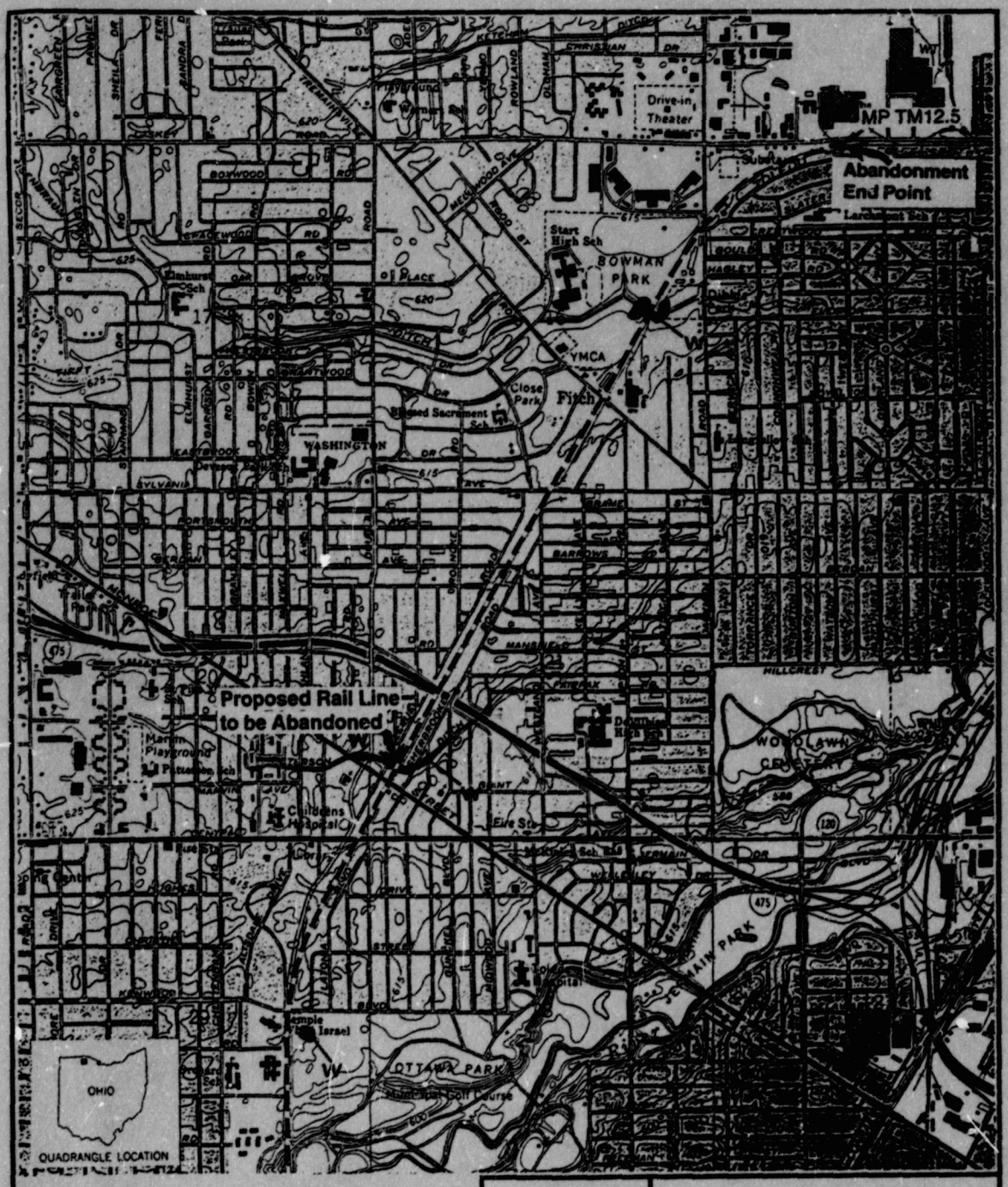


Figure 3-6a
NS PROPOSED ABANDONMENT
TOLEDO TO MAUMEE
LUCAS COUNTY, OHIO

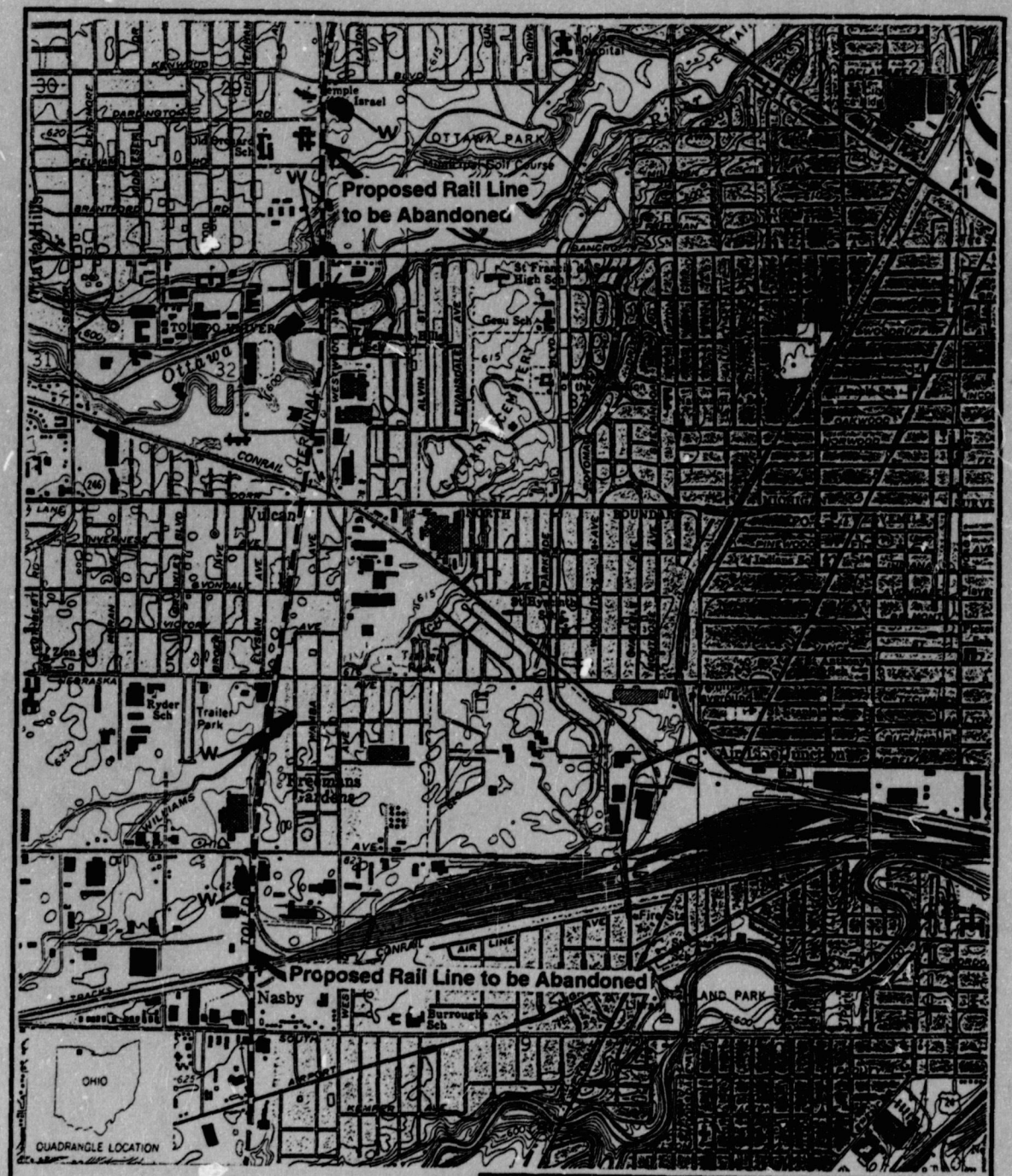
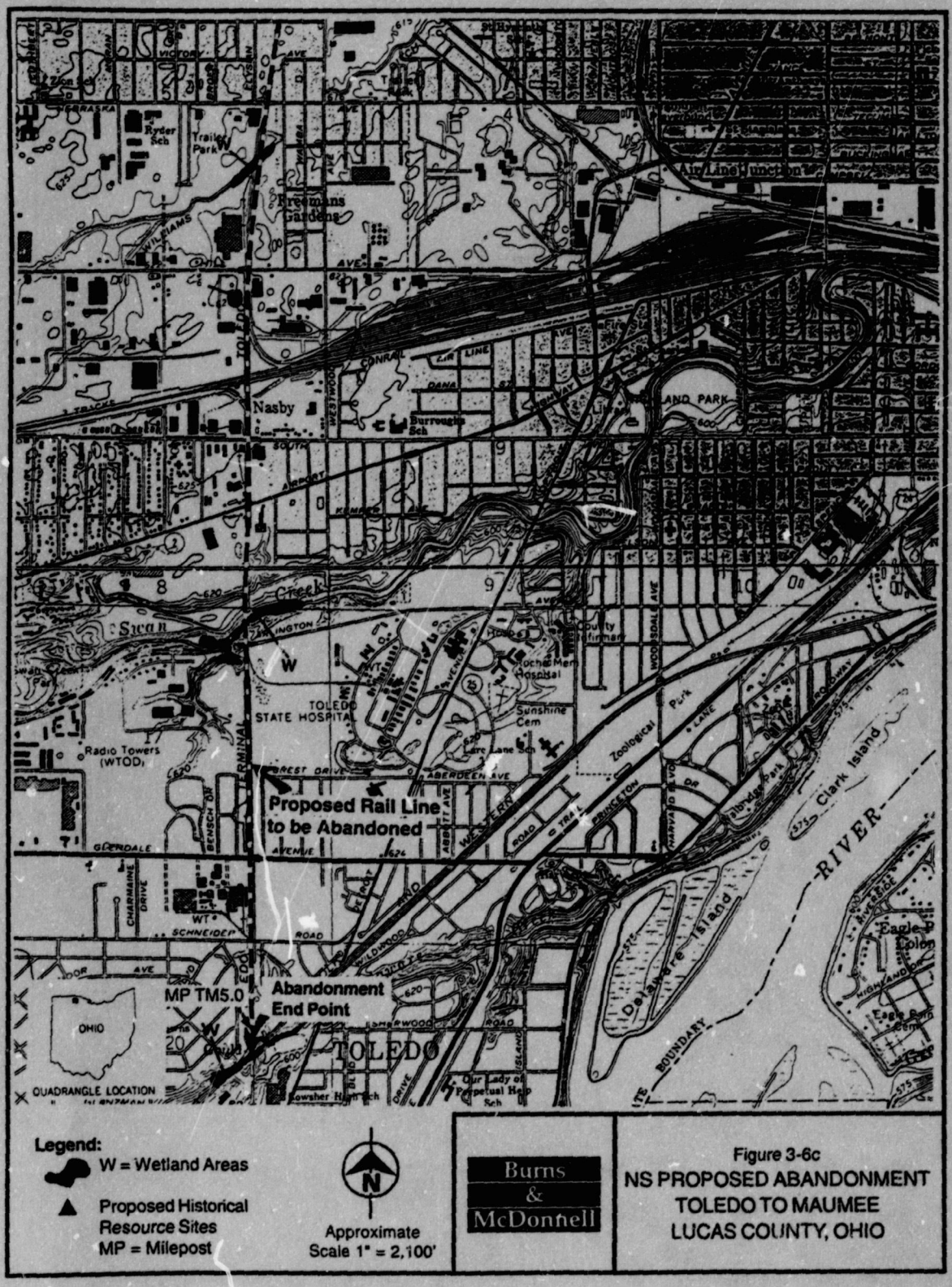
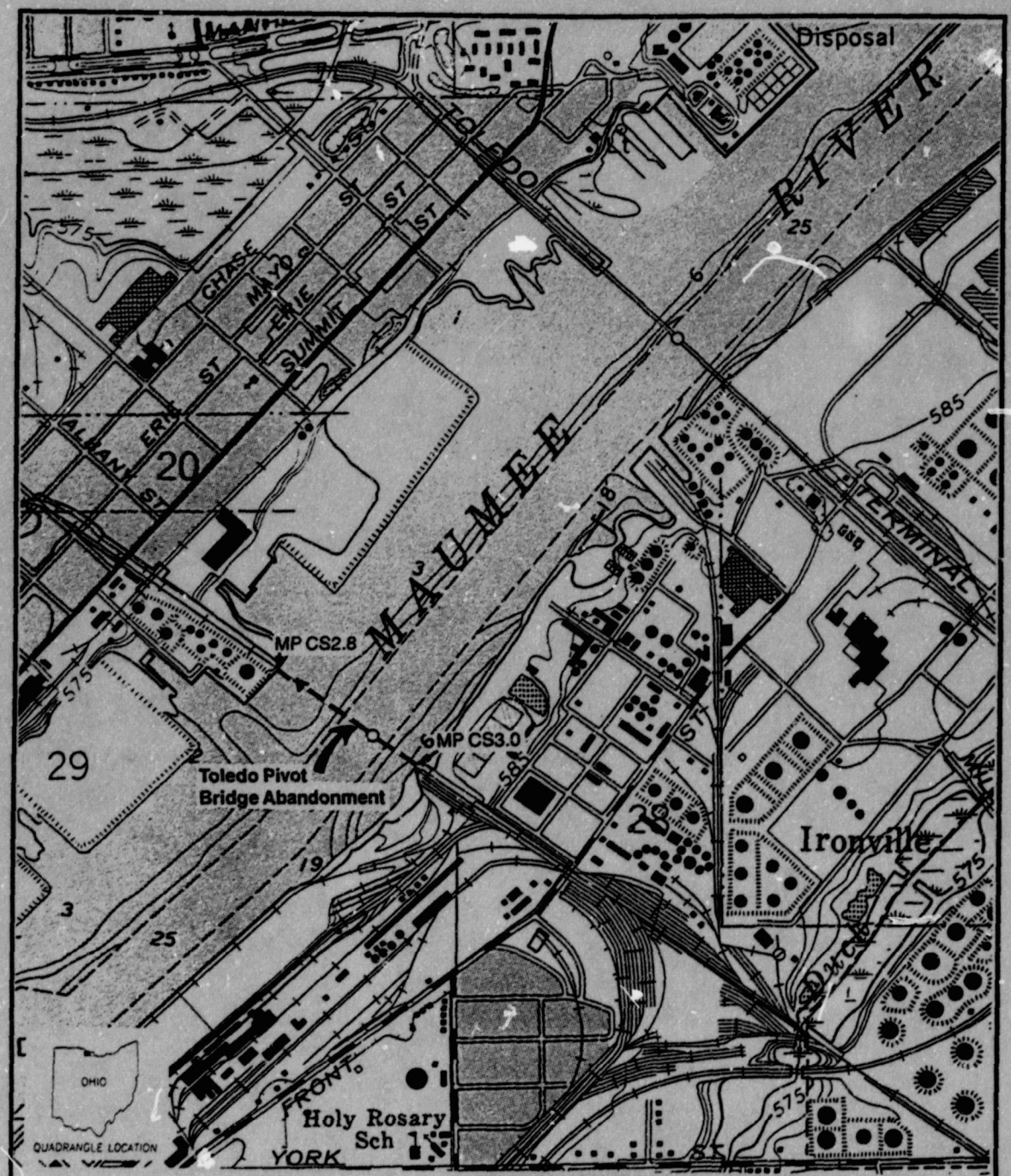


Figure 3-6b
NS PROPOSED ABANDONMENT
TOLEDO TO MAUMEE
LUCAS COUNTY, OHIO


Proposed Rail Line to be Abandoned
MP TM5.0
Abandonment End Point
TOLEDO
TOLEDO STATE HOSPITAL
Nasby
Freemans Gardens
Ryder Sch
Trailer Park
Burroughs Sch
Sunshine Cem
Zoological Park
Clark Island
RIVER
Delaware Island
Eagle Point Colon
Eagle Point Cem
Radio Towers (WTOD)
Our Lady of Perpetual Help Sch
Rowsher High Sch
OHIO
QUADRANGLE LOCATION
Legend:
W = Wetland Areas
Proposed Historical Resource Sites
MP = Milepost
Approximate Scale 1" = 2,100'
Burns & McDonnell
Figure 3-6c
NS PROPOSED ABANDONMENT
TOLEDO TO MAUMEE
LUCAS COUNTY, OHIO


Disposal
MAUMEE RIVER
MP CS2.8
MP CS3.0
Toledo Pivot
Bridge Abandonment
Ironville
Holy Rosary
Sch
YORK
FRONT
TERMINAL
ALBANY ST
ERIE ST
SUMMIT
CHASE
MAYO
ST
575
585
20
29
25
19
OHIO
QUADRANGLE LOCATION
Legend:
W = Wetland Areas
Proposed Historical
Resource Sites
MP = Milepost
N
Approximate
Scale 1" = 1,100'
Burns
&
McDonnell
Figure 3-7
NS PROPOSED ABANDONMENT
TOLEDO, OHIO
NS PIVOT BRIDGE
LUCAS COUNTY, OHIO

APPENDIX A
POTENTIAL IMPACT AREAS AND METHODOLOGIES FOR CONSTRUCTION AND ABANDONMENT PROJECTS

APPENDIX A
POTENTIAL IMPACT AREAS
AND METHODOLOGIES FOR
CONSTRUCTION AND ABANDONMENT PROJECTS

Several environmental impact areas were evaluated for each proposed abandonment and construction project requiring analysis. These include land use, water resources and wetlands, biological resources, air quality, noise, historic and cultural resources, transportation, safety and energy. The methods utilized in the assessment of impacts for each of these categories, with an explanation of the significance criteria, are provided below.

Each of the proposed projects was visited by environmental scientists to assess land use, vegetation (in general terms), presence of potentially historic structures and other characteristics of the areas. During the site reconnaissance visits, information was noted on topographic maps, and photographs of the areas adjacent to the rail lines were taken. Information was also obtained from published reference materials and from federal, state and local agencies.

LAND USE

Land use information was obtained from site investigations and from U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) topographic maps. Land use information from site visits was noted on USGS 7.5-minute topographic maps for each project. Land use within 500 feet of the proposed construction areas and along lines proposed for abandonment was determined. Buildings (such as residential and commercial buildings, schools and churches) near the proposed construction sites were also noted due to possible sensitivity to noise disturbance or incompatibility with construction. Contacts were made with county planning agencies in each state to obtain information on local planning and zoning requirements to determine if rights-of-way would be consistent with any such requirements. Contacts were made with the U.S. Bureau of Indian Affairs to determine the presence of any officially recognized Native American tribes or reservations near the site.

USGS Topographic Maps

USGS topographic maps were utilized during the site visits for notation of land use, and for preparation of the figures presented. When possible, information depicted on the topographic maps was verified in the field. The maps were also utilized to determine approximate distances not practically measured during the site visits. Proper place names of roads, creeks, and water bodies not readily evident during the site visits were developed from information on these maps.

NRCS Maps

The United States Department of Agricultural Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS, formerly known as the Soil Conservation Service) has created a national database of prime farmland. Local NRCS offices were contacted and requested to provide soil surveys, maps or drawings indicating the location of prime farmland at or in the vicinity of the projects. These maps or drawings were reviewed, and the areas of prime farmland adjacent to or within 500 feet of the center line of the railway were inventoried to determine approximate areas or lengths of prime farmland in the area.

Flood Zone Maps

The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) publishes maps showing areas subject to flooding. These maps were previously published and distributed by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (USDHUD) and are periodically updated and revised. Maps that cover each proposed project area were obtained and reviewed to determine which portions of the line would be located within the 100-year and 500-year flood plains.

Coastal Zone Management Plans

Any proposed project that may affect land or water uses within a coastal zone designated pursuant to the Coastal Zone Management Act (16 U.S.C. 1451 et seq.) must be found to be consistent with the state's Coastal Zone Management Plan. Contacts were made with state coastal zone agencies to determine if the proposed project was within coastal zone management jursidictional boundaries.

Significance Criteria

The following criteria were used to assess the significance of land use impacts:

Land Use Consistency and Compatibility

- The severity of visual, air quality and noise impacts on sensitive land uses.
- Interference with the normal functioning of adjacent land uses.
- Consistency and/or compatibility with local land use plans and policies.

Prime Agricultural Land

- Permanent loss of NRCS-designated prime farmland.

Coastal Zone Resources

- Consistency with the State Coastal Zone Management Plan.

WATER RESOURCES AND WETLANDS

Identification of the types and extent of surface water features occurring within 500 feet of the center line along proposed construction and abandonment sites was completed using a variety of information sources.

Water resources were primarily identified from site inspection and interpretation of hydrologic features delineated on USGS topos and NWI maps. The other information sources described below were used to confirm and/or refine the locations of these features.

USGS Topographic Maps

USGS topographic maps indicate, among other items, the types and extent of water features on the landscape. These features include permanent and intermittent streams, water bodies, wetlands, tidal channels, mudflats, sewage-treatment ponds, channels, culverts, and ditches. Water resources located within 500 feet of the railroad right-of-way were assessed for each project. Each crossing of a water resource was counted as required by 33 CFR Section 330.2 (I).

National Wetlands Inventory Maps

NWI maps show various water features with a focus on wetland resources. The inventory was completed by USFWS through a stereoscopic analysis of high altitude aerial photography and delineation of wetland types on USGS topos. Wetlands are classified by USFWS in accordance with *Classification of Wetlands and Deepwater Habitats of the United States*. A particular wetland is located and classified in detail on NWI maps by a sequence of alphabetical and numerical symbols based on the attributes of the wetland. A comprehensive explanation of the classification system is provided in the map legend. This classification system includes a broad range of the types and extent of wetland resources, as well as other water features. However, for this evaluation, wetlands were identified as rivers, lacustrine (reservoirs, lakes) or palustrine (any

vegetated wetland). Palustrine wetlands were further identified as forested, shrub/scrub, or emergent (containing herbaceous vegetation) wetlands. There are often differences between the USFWS definition of a "wetlands" and the definitions of various federal, state, and local regulatory agencies. All NWI wetlands that occur within 500 feet of the construction sites are depicted on figures.

Soil Survey Maps

Soil surveys have been completed by NRCS for a large number of counties in the United States. Maps have been prepared for each survey that show the types and extent of soil types. A subset of the soils mapped by NRCS is classified as "hydric;" that is, soils subjected to prolonged periods of flooding, ponding or saturation. The occurrence of a hydric soil provides an indication that an area may be a wetland. Information from the soil survey maps was used to cross-reference other sources of information to better understand the soils and hydrologic conditions at select locations.

Site Visits

Sites of all proposed projects were inspected and reviewed in the field by environmental scientists, as well as by representatives of CSX, NS, or Conrail. Information about water resources and other areas of interest was collected during the inspections. Field notes and photographs taken during the inspections were retained for later review and utilized to amend and refine information derived from other sources.

Significance Criteria

The following criteria were used to assess the potential impacts to water resources and wetlands that could result from the proposed construction projects:

- Alteration of creek embankments with rip-rap, concrete, and other bank stabilization measures.
- Temporary or permanent loss of surface water area associated with the incidental deposition of fill.
- Downstream sediment deposition or water turbidity due to fill activities, dredging, and/or soil erosion from upland construction site areas.
- Direct or indirect destruction and/or degradation of aquatic, wetland, and riparian vegetation/habitat.
- Degradation of water quality through sediment loading or chemical/petroleum spills.
- Alteration of water flow that could increase bank erosion or flooding, uproot or destroy vegetation, or affect fish and wildlife habitats.

The extent and duration of impacts to water resources and wetlands resulting from a specific project would depend primarily on the type of work to be completed and the size of the project. The overall effect could be lessened by avoiding important resources and minimizing impacts to the extent practicable, and by implementing the proposed mitigation measures. Prior to initiating any construction or abandonment, regulatory agencies would be consulted regarding the need to obtain permits, such as U.S. Army Corps of Engineers' (COE) Section 404 permits, National Pollution Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permits, and state-required permits or agreements, as appropriate.

BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES

Information regarding biological resources potentially occurring at or in the immediate vicinity of each proposed project (within 500 feet of the center line) was collected from a variety of sources, including USGS topographic maps, NRCS soil survey maps, lists of threatened and endangered species, reference books on regional flora and fauna, and information databases. In addition, federal and state agencies such as the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and Departments

of Natural Resources were consulted, and specific information concerning the potential occurrence of sensitive plants and animals in the vicinity of the proposed project sites was solicited.

Site visits were conducted at all of the project sites to evaluate biological resources (in general terms). These evaluations included general determinations as to the occurrence or potential occurrence of sensitive species and habitat for sensitive species, overall value to wildlife, and use of the area as a migration corridor for animals.

Significance Criteria

The following significance criteria were utilized to assess the potential impacts to biological resources resulting from the proposed projects:

- Loss or degradation of unique or important vegetative communities.
- Disturbance of nesting, breeding or foraging areas of threatened or endangered wildlife.
- Loss or degradation of areas designated as critical habitat.
- Loss or degradation of wildlife sanctuaries, refuges or national, state or local parks/forests.
- Alteration of movement or migration corridors for animals.
- Loss of large numbers of local wildlife or their habitats.

Sensitive animal species with potential to occur in the vicinity of a project may be impacted by abandonment or construction activities. A determination as to the level of impact will depend on many factors including the availability of suitable habitat, previous surveys, and comments from agencies.

Parks, forest preserves, refuges and sanctuaries were identified within one mile of the proposed construction. These areas were visited or local officials contacted to obtain information on what recreational opportunities and facilities were present. Impacts to these areas were determined based on their distance from the proposed constructions and the degree to which rail construction, operation and maintenance would disturb or disrupt activities at these areas.

HISTORIC AND CULTURAL RESOURCES

In order to evaluate the potential impacts to historic and cultural resources, the State Historic Preservation Officer (SHPO), in each state where a rail line abandonment or construction is proposed, was sent a letter requesting information on known historic properties or archaeological sites potentially affected by the project, or the offices were visited by a qualified archaeologist to review records and files. The SHPOs were asked to indicate whether further actions are needed to identify historic properties. Each letter was followed by telephone or personal contact with each SHPO. Documentation of historic and cultural resources in the project area was requested, evaluations of structures (primarily bridges) as potentially eligible for the NRHP was sought, and a determination of the potential impacts of the project on any NRHP eligible structures was requested.

In addition to information provided by the SHPOs, information maintained by CSX, NS, and Conrail, was reviewed to determine what structures, if any, associated with a proposed abandonment project might be eligible for the NRHP. Bridges in particular were reviewed to determine their type, age, length or size, any other distinguishing characteristics, and potential eligibility for the NRHP.

In accordance with 49 CFR 1105.8, each of the proposed rail line abandonments and constructions is shown on USGS topographic maps, as well as the location, if available, of documented historic properties. Known archaeological sites, if within the construction areas,

were not depicted on these figures due to the sensitive nature of these resources. These resources are, however, discussed in the evaluation of each proposed project.

Impacts to historic and archaeological resources would be considered adverse (as defined in 36 CFR 800.9) if any site listed or eligible for listing on the NRHP would experience destruction of the site; alteration of site characteristics or setting; neglect resulting in deterioration or destruction; or transfer, lease, or sale of the property on which the site occurs if adequate restrictions or conditions are not included to ensure preservation of the property's significant historic features.

TRANSPORTATION AND SAFETY

Potential impacts on local transportation systems are discussed for each proposed project. Railroad safety precautions during construction and abandonment work are also discussed. Safety on the associated rail line segments was evaluated as discussed in the methodologies for Safety and Transportation, included in an Appendix in Part 1 of the ER.

Hazardous waste sites are also discussed under the Transportation and Safety section. Railroad records or information databases were examined to determine if there are known hazardous waste sites or sites where there have been hazardous materials spills at construction or abandonment locations. The information searches of federal and state environmental databases were used to identify known sites of environmental concern within 500 feet of the proposed construction and abandonment sites. EDR searched the following databases:

- National Priority List (NPL)
- Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Information System (CERCLIS)
- Resource Conservation and Recovery Information System - Treatment, Storage, or Disposal (RCRA-TSD) sites

- Emergency Response Notification System (ERNS) spill sites
- State Priority List (SPL)
- State Licensed Solid Waste Facilities (SWF/LF)
- State Inventory of Leaking Underground Storage Tanks (LUST)
- State Inventory of reported spills (SPILLS)
- Orphan or unmappable sites list

The reports were reviewed to determine if any of these sites would be impacted by the proposed constructions and abandonments. Site visits noted any obvious indications of potential hazardous waste sites within the project areas.

AIR QUALITY

Emissions from trains have the potential to impact air quality. STB regulations contain thresholds for air quality impacts related to rail traffic increases. If STB thresholds would be met, the impact to air quality must be analyzed. Methods for analyzing air quality impacts for projects that would meet STB thresholds are included in an Appendix in Part 1 of the ER. General impacts to air quality are discussed below.

Abandonment/Construction

During abandonment and construction, the air quality in the vicinity of the proposed construction could be impacted by fugitive dust and vehicle emissions. Increases in fugitive dust could occur due to grading and other earthwork necessary for rail bed preparation or removal activities. Emissions from heavy equipment and construction vehicles would also occur. These impacts to air quality would be temporary and limited to the period of construction or abandonment. Additionally, the emissions from the small number of vehicles and equipment would be insignificant compared to the overall train and vehicle emissions in the project areas. Any

impacts would be minimized by CSX's and NS's Best Management Practices that would include dust control and vehicle maintenance measures.

Operation

Following abandonment, trains would no longer operate on the particular rail line. As no operations would occur, there would be no operational impacts to air quality. Current rail traffic on most of the lines that are proposed for abandonment is very low, and will be diverted to other existing lines. Even if some of the traffic would be diverted to trucks, which are less fuel efficient and have greater emissions per ton-mile than locomotives, the total or net impact to ambient air quality is expected to be minimal. Therefore, air impacts from traffic are not addressed on a site by site basis.

For proposed construction projects, the amount of train traffic operating over the proposed project may meet STB thresholds for air quality. For those projects where STB thresholds are anticipated to be met, air impacts were evaluated. The methodology for determining the potential impacts is included in an Appendix in Part 1 of the ER. For those construction where STB thresholds would not be exceeded, the operation of trains over the proposed line is not expected to significantly impact air quality. Further, the proposed Acquistion would result in a significant number of truck-to-rail diversions, potentially improving the ambient air quality in the region of the proposed construction.

Maintenance

No maintenance activities would occur along abandoned lines. Therefore, no impacts to air quality would result.

Right-of-way maintenance activities along new connections would temporarily impact air quality as a result of emissions from vehicles and equipment used to perform maintenance activities. Maintenance activities would be confined to the rail line and occur sporadically for short periods throughout the year. Emissions during maintenance activities would be insignificant compared to the existing emissions in the area and would not significantly impact air quality.

NOISE

Abandonment/Construction

Most of the proposed projects would consist of abandonment or construction activities that last for, at most, a few months at any one location. Temporary increases in noise level would occur during these operations, but the noise level would be similar to that of normal track maintenance procedures. Thus, the abandonment and construction activities are not expected to result in significant adverse noise impacts.

Operation

The proposed abandonment projects are not expected to result in significant long-term adverse noise impacts. Following abandonment and salvage, all adjacent land uses would experience a reduction in noise impact. The only potential long-term adverse noise impacts would result from moving traffic from the abandoned lines to other lines or facilities. Any impacts related to the rerouting of rail traffic resulting in increases on those rail lines that meet STB thresholds are discussed in Part 2.

The noise sources for the operation of new connections would be the same as on line segments with the addition of potential wheel squeal on the connection curves. The noise of through trains on the connections has been modeled using the same approach used to evaluate noise impacts on

the line segments, as assessed in Part 2 of the ER and discussed in the Noise methodology in an Appendix to Part 1 of this ER. Measurements were performed at representative, existing connections to characterize the levels of wheel squeal level. It is commonly accepted that wheel squeal is likely to occur on curves with a radius that is less than 100 times the wheelbase. This means that wheel squeal results on any curve with a radius less than about 1000 feet or when the curvature of the track is greater than approximately 5°. (Rail curvature is usually specified in terms of "degrees of curvature." The relationship between radius and degree of curvature is: Radius = 5370 ÷ Degree.)

The sound exposure level (SEL) of one train on a curve was approximated using the following relationship:

$$SEL = 95 + 10log(\text{Train length in ft} \div \text{Train speed in mph}) + 15\log(35 \div \text{Dist}) - 1.6$$

Noise from rail line construction and operation has the potential to impact noise receptors along the rail line. Sensitive noise receptors include residences, schools, churches, libraries and hospitals. Sensitive noise receptors within 500 feet of proposed projects were identified since these would be the most likely affected by noise from construction or abandonment activities and any subsequent rail operations. For construction projects expected to meet STB noise thresholds, the number of noise receptors experiencing average daily noise levels (Ldn) of 65 decibels or greater was determined.

ENERGY

The proposed projects would allow CSX and NS to use shorter rail routes between destinations, increasing the efficiency of their systems. Shorter, more direct routes would reduce the overall fuel consumption of locomotives. None of the proposed abandonments would result in the diversion of rail traffic to truck traffic meeting STB thresholds for detailed evaluation. Thus, the

proposed projects would have an overall positive impact on energy use and encourage diversion of truck traffic to more fuel efficient rail transport.

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ENVIRONMENTAL REPORT

CSX CORPORATION AND CSX TRANSPORTATION, INC.,
NORFOLK SOUTHERN CORPORATION AND
NORFOLK SOUTHERN RAILWAY COMPANY
-CONTROL AND OPERATING LEASES/AGREEMENTS-
CONRAIL INC. AND CONSOLIDATED RAIL CORPORATION

PROPOSED CONSTRUCTION PROJECTS

PART 4 of 4

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and Norfolk Southern Railway Company

CSX Corporation and CSX Transportation, Inc. (CSX), and Norfolk Southern Corporation and Norfolk Southern Railway Company (NS), are filing an application with the Surface Transportation Board (STB) seeking authority to control Conrail Inc. and Consolidated Rail Corporation and to allocate the assets of Conrail between them.

This Environmental Report describes the proposed action and expected environmental effects. This Environmental Report has been prepared by CSX and NS to assist the STB in its review of the potential environmental effects of the proposed action. The STB has announced its intention to prepare an Environmental Impact Statement on the proposed action. The STB will publish a notice in the Federal Register soliciting comments on the scope of the environmental review process.

We are providing this Environmental Report so that you may review the information that will form the basis for the STB's independent environmental analysis of this proceeding. If you believe that any of the information is misleading or incorrect or that any pertinent information is missing, or if you have any comments related to environmental matters, you may file comments with the STB. Anyone wishing to file comments on environmental matters should submit an original and ten (10) copies of the comments to:

Office of the Secretary
Case Control Unit
Finance Docket No. 33388
Surface Transportation Board
1925 K Street, N.W.
Washington, DC 20423-0001

Attention:
Elaine K. Kaiser
Chief, Section of Environmental Analysis
Environmental Filing

Questions and comments on environmental matters may also be directed to the STB's Section of Environmental Analysis at its toll-free number: **1-888-869-1997.**

Your comments will be considered by the STB in evaluating the environmental impacts of the proposed action.

GUIDE TO THE ENVIRONMENTAL REPORT
(published in three volumes):

The Environmental Report includes four parts:

Volume 6A

Part 1: Overview and Description of the Proposed Acquisition and Alternatives
This Part provides an overview of the proposed Acquisition, a summary of the potential environmental impacts and descriptions of analytical methodologies. A Glossary and List of Abbreviations and Acronyms are included in the front of Part 1.

Volume 6B

Part 2: Rail Line Segments, Rail Yards and Intermodal/Triple Crown Services Facilities
This Part provides detailed analysis of the potential environmental impacts related to proposed changes in traffic and other Acquisition-related activities on specific rail line segments, at rail yards, and at intermodal/Triple Crown Services facilities.

Volume 6C

Part 3: Proposed Abandonments
This Part provides detailed analyses of each proposed abandonment, proposed mitigation of potential environmental impacts associated with the abandonments and descriptions of analytical methodologies.

Part 4: Proposed Construction Projects
This Part provides detailed analyses of each proposed construction project (connections and other projects requiring newly acquired rights-of-way or property), proposed mitigation of the potential environmental impacts related to each project and descriptions of analytical methodologies.

PART 4 PROPOSED CONSTRUCTION PROJECTS

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*Figures are included at the end of the applicable state section.

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

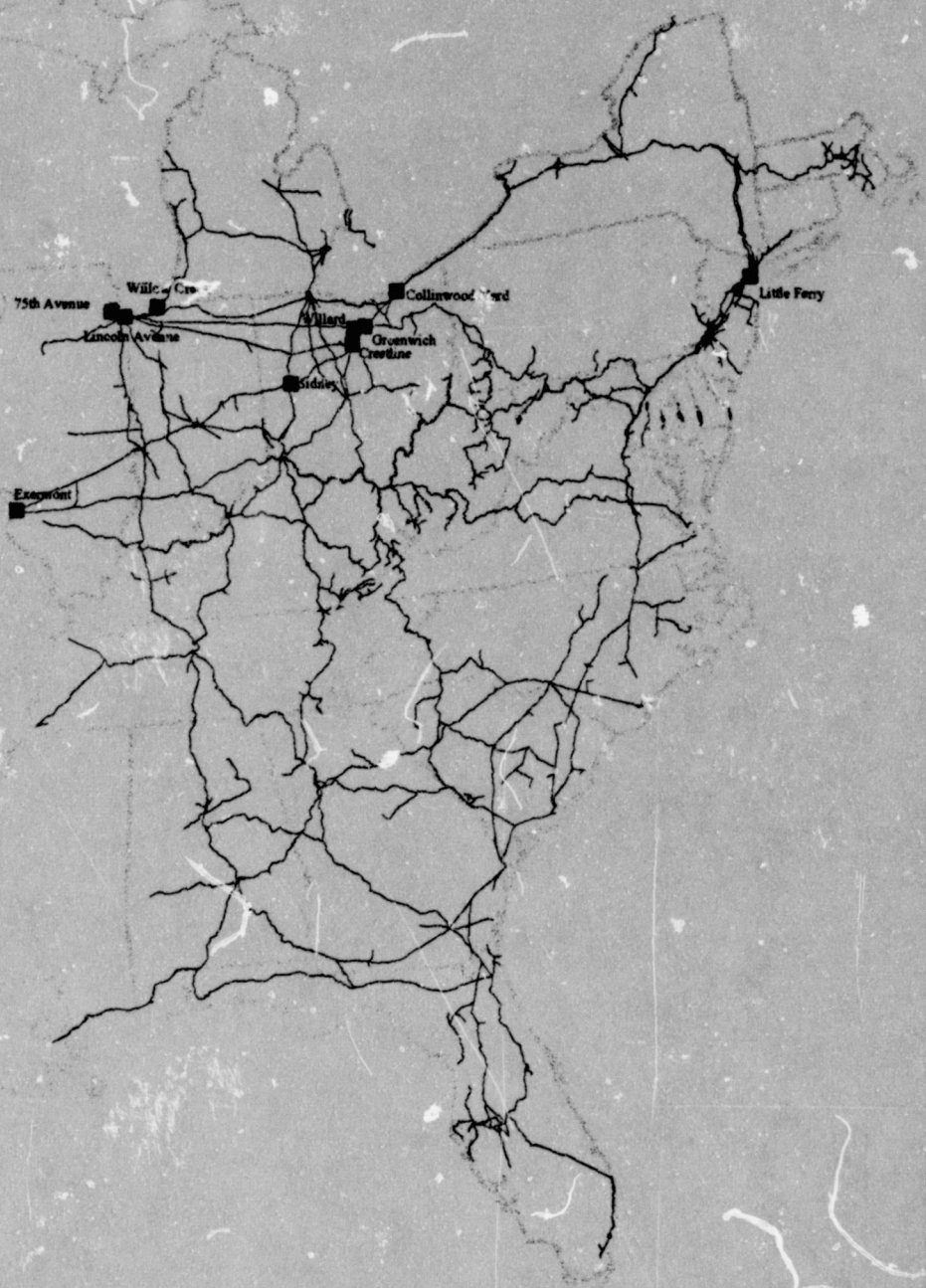
1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 OVERVIEW

This Part 4 of the Environmental Report (ER) is prepared for the proposed Acquisition of Conrail, Inc. and Consolidated Rail Corporation (Conrail or CR) by CSX Corporation and CSX Transportation, Inc. (CSX) and Norfolk Southern Corporation and Norfolk Southern Railway Company (NS) and division of Conrail's assets. The Surface Transportation Board (STB) requires analysis of potential environmental impacts associated with all construction projects that are under STB's jurisdiction and those "non-jurisdictional" projects related to the Acquisition that require acquisition of new property. Jurisdictional constructions consist of new connections between two railroads. As used hereafter in this ER, the term "Acquisition" means the entirety of the transactions contemplated in this proceeding. This Part includes analyses of potential environmental impacts associated with such proposed construction projects for the proposed Acquisition.

Proposed construction projects include connections, construction of a fueling facility adjacent to an existing yard and construction of a new intermodal facility. A number of connections are proposed to be constructed which would allow access between existing rail lines that are in close proximity in order to facilitate more efficient routing of traffic over the expanded CSX and NS systems. The other construction projects would also improve efficiency by improving routing, increasing capacity of yards and lines, avoiding congestion and reducing idle time and fuel consumption.

CSX proposes constructing eight new connections (Figure 4-1), four of which would be built on existing railroad right-of-way and four of which would require the acquisition of additional right-of-way. The proposed connections would be in Illinois, Indiana, New Jersey, and Ohio. CSX also proposes to construct a fueling facility adjacent to an existing rail yard and construction of a new intermodal facility, both in Ohio, that would require acquisition of new right-of-way.



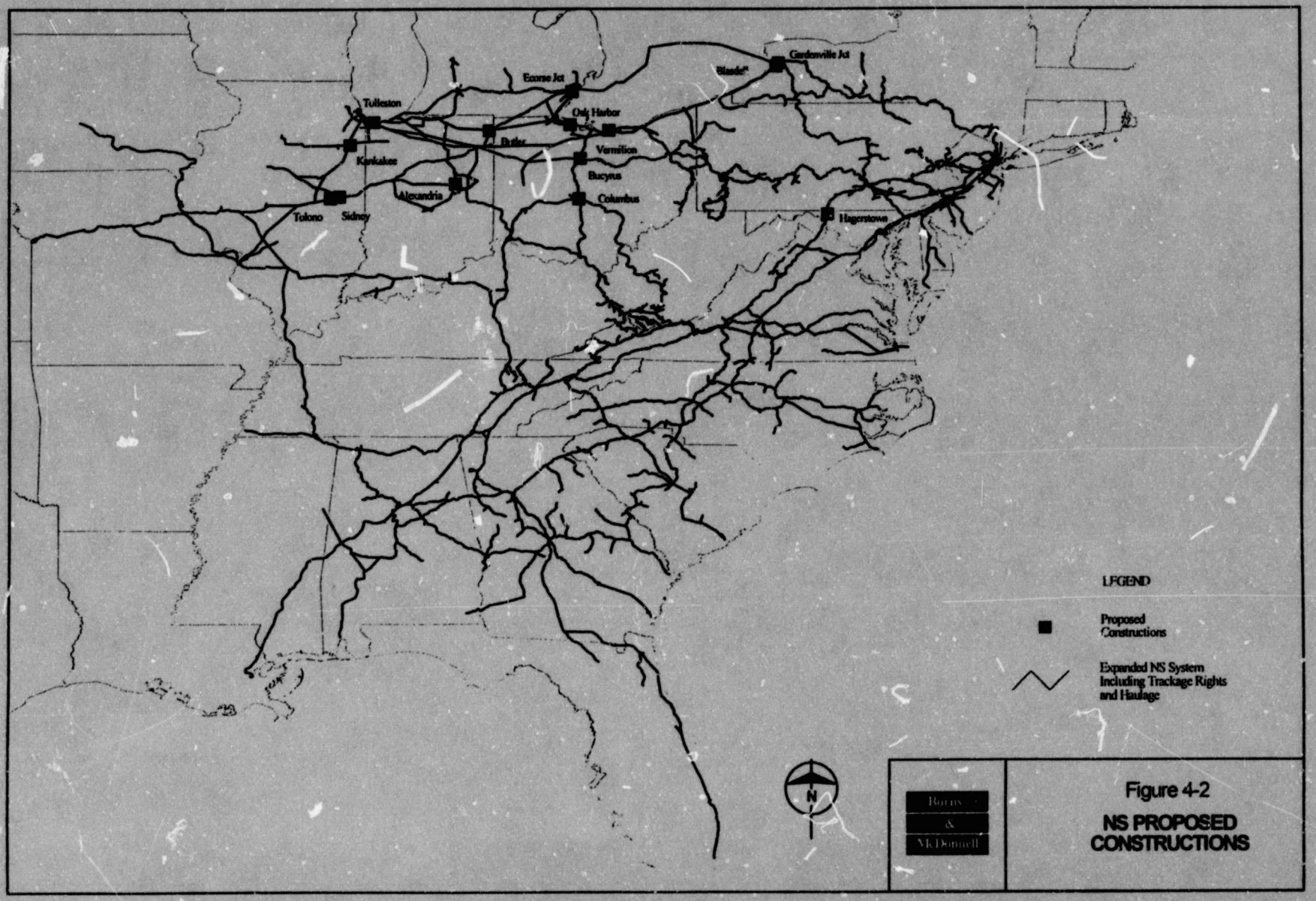
LEGEND

Proposed Constructions

Expanded CSX System Including Trackage Rights and Haulage

Figure 4-1
CSX PROPOSED CONSTRUCTIONS

DAMES & MOORE
A DAMES & MOORE GROUP COMPANY


Gardenville Jct
Bladel*
Ecorse Jct
Tolleston
Oak Harbor
Butler
Vermilion
Kankakee
Bucyrus
Alexandria
Columbus
Tolono
Sidney
Hagerstown
LEGEND
Proposed Constructions
Expanded NS System Including Trackage Rights and Haulage
N
Burns & McDonnell
Figure 4-2
NS PROPOSED CONSTRUCTIONS

NS proposes constructing 14 new connections (Figure 4-2), six of which would be built on existing railroad right-of-way and eight of which would require the acquisition of additional right-of-way. The proposed rail line construction projects would be in Illinois, Indiana, Maryland, Michigan, New York and Ohio.

A list of proposed construction projects to be analyzed follows:

Table 4-1
CSX PROPOSED CONSTRUCTION PROJECTS

State	Location	Length (feet)	Description
IL	75th Street SW, Chicago	1,640	Connecting the Belt Railway of Chicago and B&OCT lines to permit eastbound trains from Bedford Park, IL to proceed south to Blue Island, IL.
IL	Exermont	3,590	Connecting the parallel Conrail and CSX lines to allow trains from East St. Louis, IL to proceed onto CSX's mainline.
IL	Lincoln Ave., Chicago	840	Connecting Indiana Harbor Belt (IHB) and B&OCT lines to allow trains to move from the IHB to CSX's Barr Yard.
IN	Willow Creek**	2,800	Connecting CSX and Conrail tracks to facilitate movements between Porter. IN and Chicago, IL.
NJ	Little Ferry	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.
OH	Cleveland*	N/A	Construction of new intermodal facility at Collinwood Yard.
OH	Crestline**	1,507	Connecting two Conrail tracks to allow movements between Ft. Wayne, IN and Cleveland, OH.

Table 4-1
CSX PROPOSED CONSTRUCTION PROJECTS

State	Location	Length (feet)	Description
OH	Greenwich**	4,600 1,044	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.
OH	Sidney**	3,263	Connecting CSX and Conrail tracks to enable northbound trains to proceed east to Columbus, OH.
OH	Willard*	N/A	Construction of a fueling facility and associated track adjacent to an existing rail yard.

* These CSX projects are non-jurisdictional but require acquisition of new property.

** These projects are the subjects of a Petition for Waiver of the STB's "related applications" rule filed by CSX and Conrail with the STB 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.

Table 4-2
NS PROPOSED CONSTRUCTION PROJECTS

State	Location	Length (feet)	Description
IL	Kankakee	1,000	Connecting track between Conrail and IC to permit efficient movements from the Conrail Chicago mainline and Chicago Terminal area to Kansas City and St. Louis Gateways via Decatur, IL.
IL	Sidney*	3,200	Connecting track between NS and UP to permit efficient movement between UP points in the Gulf Coast/Southwest and NS points in the Midwest and Northeast, and bypassing congestion at E. St. Louis, IL.

Table 4-2 NS PROPOSED CONSTRUCTION PROJECTS			
State	**Location**	**Length (feet)**	**Description**
IL	Tolono	1,600	Connecting track between NS and IC to permit efficient movement between Effingham, IL and Lafayette, IN and bypassing congestion at E. St. Louis.
IN	Alexandria*	1,000	Connecting track between Conrail and NS to permit creation of a new, efficient and consolidated through-route from Chicago, IL to Cincinnati, OH; Atlanta, GA and the Southeast via Alexandria and Muncie, IN.
IN	Butler	1,700	Connecting NS and Conrail tracks for direct through-movement of traffic from NS Detroit, MI line to Conrail Chicago, IL line creating an efficient, new route.
IN	Tolleston	900	Connecting NS and Conrail tracks to serve NS industry at Gary, IN from Conrail line.
MD	Hagerstown	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.
MI	Ecorse Junction (Detroit)	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.
NY	Blasdell (Buffalo)	5,200	Connection from the NS Cleveland mainline to the Conrail Buffalo line to provide efficient train movement from Erie, PA to Buffalo, NY. Proposed construction includes rehabilitation of an existing railroad bridge and construction of a new overpass.

Table 4-2
NS PROPOSED CONSTRUCTION PROJECTS

State	Location	Length (feet)	Description
NY	Gardenville Junction Ebenezer (Buffalo)	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.
OH	Bucyrus*	2,400	Connecting track between NS and Conrail to create an efficient new route from Columbus, OH to Pittsburgh, PA.
OH	Columbus	1,400	Connecting tracks to create efficient movement between Bellevue, OH and Buckeye Yard.
OH	Oak Harbor	5,000	Connecting track between NS and Conrail to create efficient access from the Detroit area to NS Bellevue Yard.
OH	Vermilion	5,400	Connecting track between NS and Conrail to create an efficient new route from Conrail's Cleveland to Chicago mainline to NS's Cleveland to Buffalo mainline to and from eastern destinations and origins, including New York and Northern New Jersey via Buffalo.

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

The proposed construction projects would result in a variety of economic benefits, including, increased efficiency, improved transit times, reduced transportation costs, shorter rail routes, more productive use of terminals, fewer terminal and other delays, and heightened reliability of service. These enhanced efficiencies will result in the diversion of traffic from highways to rail. This will result in reduced emissions, fuel usage and congestion, and enhanced highway safety.

A discussion of construction procedures is provided in Section 1.2. A discussion of areas

potentially impacted by construction projects is provided in Section 1.3. Methodologies for determining impact significance for construction projects are provided in Appendix A to Part 4 of this ER. The environmental analyses for each proposed construction project in Illinois, Indiana, Maryland, Michigan, New Jersey, New York and Ohio are provided in Sections 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 and 8, respectively. Each state section provides the following information for construction projects: (1) description of the proposed construction and alternatives, (2) description of the existing environment at and around each construction location, (3) potential environmental impacts of the proposed construction and (4) proposed mitigation.

In addition to these rail line construction projects, both CSX and NS will undertake several rehabilitation and upgrade projects to be completed on existing railroad right-of-way or railroad property. With the exception of connections between two railroads, these proposed rehabilitation and upgrading projects on railroad right-of-way do not fall within the jurisdiction of the STB; therefore they will not be analyzed in this ER.

1.2 CONSTRUCTION PROCEDURES AND TYPES

Construction projects include connections, construction of a new fueling facility and intermodal facility. CSX and NS use similar general construction procedures for new track, which are described below. All construction projects will be conducted in a manner to minimize possible environmental impacts as more fully described in the mitigation section for each project. All track construction projects would include the following steps:

- Undertake survey work.
- Obtain permits if required.
- Relocate utilities if required.
- Remove existing ground cover (which might include vegetation, pavement, or existing structures) and scrape area to bare ground.
- Grade surface for roadbed. The amount of grading required varies by location and type

of project.

- Construct (cut or fill or both) the roadbed, which would include placement and compaction of bed material. Borrow material would be imported as necessary.
- Cap the new roadbed with subballast, which is placed and compacted.
- Recompact the subballast.
- Lay the new tracks, either by use of prefabricated panels or use of ties and welded rail strands.
- Add ballast delivered by railcar. Lift the track and compact the ballast by use of tamping machinery.
- Conduct final track alignment.
- Coordinate with the state highway department on installing signs or signals at any new grade crossings as required.

During track-laying at grade crossings, highway traffic could be temporarily disrupted; flagmen would be used as needed. Generally, new track construction at grade crossings can be completed within one day. None of the proposed CSX projects would result in new at-grade crossings. Three of the proposed NS projects (Bucyrus, Oak Harbor and Vermilion, OH) would result in new at-grade crossings. One CSX project would require an expanded grade crossing (Willow Creek, IN). Four NS projects would require expansion of existing grade crossings (Kankakee, IL; Tolono, IL; Alexandria, IN; and Butler, IN). Expanded grade crossings are those which currently have one or more tracks, but would have an additional track added after the proposed construction. The proposed fueling facility to be constructed near Willard Yard by CSX would enable three at-grade crossings to be eliminated.

The size of the construction zone required to complete the proposed connections would differ among the proposed projects. In most areas, work would be completed within a 200-foot-wide construction zone. The permanent right-of-way would generally be 100 feet wide. Consequently, construction activities may result in temporary effects to a narrow strip of adjacent land.

1.2.1 Connections

Connections involve the construction of a track between two existing rail lines. CSX proposes eight connections, four of which would be built on existing railroad right-of-way and four of which would require the acquisition of additional right-of-way. Four of these would be between CSX and Conrail lines and one each would be between two Conrail lines, the Belt Railway of Chicago and B&OCT line, the Indiana Harbor Belt and B&OCT, and Conrail and NYS&W. Fourteen connections are proposed by NS, six of which would be built on existing railroad right-of-way and eight of which would require acquisition of additional right-of-way. Of these connections, ten would be between Conrail and NS lines; one between Conrail lines; one between NS and Union Pacific Railroad Company (UP) lines, over which NS has trackage rights; one between NS and Illinois Central Railroad Company (IC), over which NS has trackage rights; and one between Conrail and IC, over which NS has trackage rights.

1.2.2 Fueling Facility/Intermodal Facilities on New Right-of-Way

CSX proposes one new fueling facility that would require the acquisition of new right-of-way (Willard, OH) and construction of one new intermodal facility (Cleveland, OH). Because the projects would be adjacent to existing active rail yards, much of the new disturbance would occur in areas that are already impacted by rail operations. Disturbance to previously undisturbed native/natural habitats is anticipated to be limited. Two intermittent streams would be crossed by the proposed siding construction at Willard. Bridges or culverts would be installed, as necessary, for these crossings.

No yard expansions or intermodal facilities requiring new right-of-way are proposed by NS.

1.3 POTENTIAL IMPACTS AND METHODOLOGIES

The following topics were analyzed for each construction project requiring the acquisition of new right-of-way or property:

- land use

- water resources
- biological resources
- air quality
- noise
- historic and cultural resources
- transportation and safety
- energy

Estimates of the number of daily train movements through each connection are provided in this Report. The rail operations conducted over each connection will mirror operations conducted generally over the CSX and NS systems in terms of numbers of cars per train, types of cars, locomotive power requirements, and proposed speeds. Maintenance-of-way practices will also be the same as at other points on each railroad's system.

The methodology for evaluation of the potential impacts of each of these topics is set forth in Appendix A to Part 4. The following sections contain information on each of the topics evaluated for each of the proposed construction projects.

2.0 ILLINOIS

2.0 ILLINOIS

Six proposed connections in Illinois require environmental analysis. Three each are proposed by CSX and NS. 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
75th Street SW, Chicago (CSX)	1,640	Connecting the Belt Railway of Chicago and B&OCT lines to permit eastbound trains from Bedford Park, IL to proceed south to Blue Island, IL.
Exermont (CSX)	3,590	Connecting the parallel Conrail and CSX lines to allow trains from East St. Louis, IL to proceed onto CSX's mainline.
Lincoln Ave., Chicago (CSX)	840	Connecting Indiana Harbor Belt (IHB) and B&OCT lines to allow trains to move from the IHB to CSX's Barr Yard.
Kankakee (NS)	1,000	Connecting between Conrail and IC to permit efficient movements from the Conrail Chicago mainline and Chicago Terminal area to Kansas City and St. Louis Gateways via Decatur, IL.
Sidney (NS)*	3,200	Connecting track between NS and UP to permit efficient movement between UP points in the Gulf Coast/Southwest and NS points in the Midwest and Northeast, and passing congestion at E. St. Louis, IL.
Tolono (NS)	1,600	Connecting track between NS and IC to permit efficient movement between Effingham, IL and Lafayette, IN.

*This project is the subject of a Petition for waiver of the STB's "related applications" rule filed with the Surface Transportation Board on May 2, 1997.

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

CSX DISCUSSION

2.1 75TH STREET SOUTHWEST CONNECTION (CSX)

The proposed 75th Street southwest connection is located in the southern portion of the City of Chicago, Cook County, IL (Figure 4-3). The proposed project involves the construction of a wye connection at the intersection of the Baltimore & Ohio Chicago Terminal Railroad Company (B&OCT) and Belt Railway rail lines and is expected to be constructed on existing railroad rights-of-way. B&OCT is a wholly-owned subsidiary of CSX. In addition, two diamonds would be installed for crossing an adjacent Norfolk Southern line. At the site, the Belt Railway rail line runs through Chicago from east to west, and the CSX rail line runs through Chicago from north to south.

The proposed site is in an urban area and is primarily surrounded by existing rail lines, and a mix of urban residences, commercial, and industrial land uses.

2.1.1 Proposed Action and Alternatives

2.1.1.1 Proposed Action

The proposed project, depicted in Figure 4-3, would involve constructing a wye connection in the southwest quadrant of the intersection of the B&OCT and Belt Railway rail lines, enabling westbound trains to CSX's Bedford Park Yard to proceed north on the CSX line from Blue Island, IL, onto the Belt Railway in order to improve the traffic flow of intermodal freight in the Chicago area. The connection would extend from milepost DC-22.43 on B&OCT's north-south line between Cleveland and Brighton Park and approximately milepost 12.95 on the Belt Railway's east-west line between Bedford Park Yard and South Chicago Yard. The proposed connection would be approximately 1,640 feet long and would not require the acquisition of any new property. On average, approximately three trains per day will utilize the connection.

However, the connection provides an alternative means of accessing Chicago-area yards and, depending on variable traffic flows, more or fewer trains may use the connection on any given day. An existing NS rail line runs east to west at the proposed project area and the proposed connection would also require construction of two diamonds to facilitate crossing the NS lines.

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 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 B&OCT rail line would increase from 6 trains per day to 11.4 trains per day, an increase of 5.4 trains per day.
- An average of approximately three trains per day would operate over the new connection; but more or fewer trains may use the connection on any given day depending on traffic flow in the Chicago area.

2.1.1.2 Alternatives

Build Alternatives

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

This connection is required to enhance the efficiency of trains entering and leaving BRC's Clearing Yard and the Bedford Park facility and to avoid interference with the operation of a new intermodal facility at 59th Street, located just north of the proposed connection. The connection will facilitate service to local shippers by making it easier for CSX to switch local traffic to and from other railroads, and will also reduce switching time.

In the absence of its construction, traffic would need to be routed westbound on the Indiana Harbor Belt Railway Corridor from Blue Island Junction to 71st Street. This rerouting would impair the ability of CSX to efficiently route traffic in the Chicago area in a manner that will minimize congestion and delays. Further, the operational benefits to local traffic would be lost if the connection is not built. For these reasons, the no-action alternative was rejected.

2.1.2 Existing Environment

2.1.2.1 Land Use

The site is located in the southern portion of the City of Chicago, with commercial and industrial land uses dominating development. The proposed site is bordered to the north by the existing Belt Railway rail line, to the east by an existing rail line and urban residential areas, to the south by railroad property, and to the west by a truck trailer parking area, a Chicago Water System maintenance yard, and Western Avenue. Topography of the site and general area is relatively flat.

The proposed site is currently owned and utilized for railroad operations. Therefore, zoning for the site currently accommodates railroad uses.

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

According to the Natural Resource Conservation Service, a formal survey to classify soils and identify prime farmland soils has not been conducted for Chicago proper and most of Cook County. The proposed site is not located within a Coastal Zone Management Area.

2.1.2.2 Water Resources

According to USGS topographic maps, no streams or water bodies were identified within 500 feet of the construction area.

According to the National Wetland Inventory (NWI) map of the area, wetlands are not present within 500 feet of the proposed site. However, during the site visit, a potential wetland area, approximately 250 feet by 45 feet, was noted in the southeast quadrant of the existing CSX and Belt Railway rail line intersection, approximately 25 feet from the proposed connection in the southwest quadrant.

According to the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) map, the proposed site is located outside the 100-year and 500-year floodplains in an area of minimal flooding.

2.1.2.3 Biological Resources

Vegetation

The proposed site consists of the existing tracks and a mix of residential, commercial, and industrial land uses with non-woody vegetation, non-native grasses, shrubs, and deciduous trees, on and adjacent to the existing railroad 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 and other urban land uses. The area would mainly be limited to birds and small mammals that have adapted to developed areas.

Threatened and Endangered Species

The United States Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) and Illinois Department of Natural Resources (IDNR) were consulted regarding the potential for federal- or state-listed threatened and endangered species to be present in the proposed project area. Four federally listed and 186 state-listed threatened and endangered species were identified as occurring in Cook County. These lists are contained in Appendix B, Agency Correspondence.

Parks, Forests, Preserves, Refuges and Sanctuaries

Marquette Park and Tarkington Park are both located approximately 5,000 feet northwest of the project site. A Cook County Forest Preserve is located approximately 4,500 feet south of the project site. No other wildlife sanctuaries, refuges, national, state or local forests/parks are located within one mile of the proposed site.

2.1.2.4 Air Quality

Cook County, IL is currently categorized as non-attainment with the National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS). Existing sources of air emissions in the project area include locomotives, vehicles, and industry.

2.1.2.5 Noise

Rail, vehicular, and commercial traffic are the primary sources of noise in the area of proposed construction. Sensitive noise receptors within 500 feet of the proposed construction include approximately 83 residences, and no churches or schools.

2.1.2.6 Historic and Cultural Resources

Dames & Moore visited the Illinois State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) on May 21, 1997 and examined the files of the Illinois Archaeological Survey. Review of a historical topographic

map indicated that a rail connection formerly occupied this area. The area was therefore disturbed with the initial construction of the tracks. It continues to be cleared and maintained to facilitate on-going railroad operations, and it is therefore highly unlikely that archeological resources are located within the area of potential effect.

Based on the investigation at the Illinois SHPO and a review of railroad property inventory records, it was concluded that no recorded or observed cultural resources lie within the area of proposed construction.

2.1.2.7 Transportation and Safety

The rail transportation network consists of an east-west Belt Railway rail line and a north-south B&OCT rail line. There are no existing or planned new grade crossings in the area of the proposed project. The area is bordered by Western Avenue on the west and 79th Street on the south. Existing railroad driveways will provide access to the proposed project area.

A review of the database provided by Environmental Data Research (EDR) indicates that no hazardous waste sites or areas of environmental concern are located within 500 feet of the proposed connection. The database search revealed 16 unmappable sites within the Cook County limits. These sites could not be located because of poor address or geocoding information provided to the state and/or federal databases.

2.1.3 Potential Environmental Impacts of Proposed Action

2.1.3.1 Land Use

The land use in the area of the proposed action will continue to be rail line service, switching from inactive to active status. Access may need to be obtained on a portion of the Chicago Water System maintenance yard property for construction activities only, but it is not anticipated that

additional property will be acquired. Because this area is already dedicated to railroad use, the proposed construction project would not have a significant impact on current land use patterns.

No prime farmland soils will be affected by the proposed construction. The site is not located within a coastal zone area.

2.1.3.2 Water Resources

There are no surface water sources and no NWI wetlands in the vicinity of the subject property. One potential wetland located approximately 25 feet from the proposed connection is potentially subject to increased silt loading as a result of construction activities. These impacts would be temporary and no net loss of potential wetlands are anticipated.

2.1.3.3 Biological Resources

Vegetation

The proposed project is located on railroad rights-of-way and is mainly covered by non-woody vegetation. Therefore, the proposed project is only expected to impact vegetation indicative of disturbed areas and these impacts would be temporary.

Wildlife

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

Threatened and Endangered Species

A site survey to assess the presence of threatened and endangered species was not conducted. However, the occurrence of federal- or state-listed threatened and endangered species within 500 feet of the proposed construction is unlikely due to the area being heavily disturbed and the surrounding area being influenced by urban development. Because suitable habitat is unlikely to exist on-site, the proposed project is not expected to adversely affect threatened or endangered plants or animals. In addition, neither the project site nor areas within 500 feet of the proposed project are considered critical habitat.

Parks, Forests, Preserves, Refuges and Sanctuaries

Three parks, Marquette Park, Tarkington Park, and a Cook County Forest Preserve, are located within one mile of the proposed project site, however, the closest of these is approximately 4,500 feet south of the project site. Therefore, no adverse impacts to these parks are expected.

2.1.3.4 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 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.

2.1.3.5 Noise

In the short term, construction operations associated with the proposed action would cause temporary increases in noise levels. Noise generated by construction equipment would be 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 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 on average only three trains per day and there are no noise-sensitive receptors near the southwest 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.

2.1.3.6 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.

2.1.3.7 Transportation and Safety

The proposed project will not affect existing grade crossings and no new grade crossings are planned. No hazardous waste sites were identified within 500 feet of the proposed construction. The EDR database search identified 16 unmappable sites within Cook 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 observation.

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.

2.1.4 Potential Environmental Impacts of Alternatives

2.1.4.1 Build Alternatives

No build alternatives were identified.

2.1.4.2 No-Action Alternative

Under the no-action alternative, the proposed connection would not be built. 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. The absence of this connection would result in less efficient rail service, which would result in additional fuel consumption and air emissions.

2.1.5 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.

2.1.5.1 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.

2.1.5.2 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 by 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.

2.1.5.3 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 Illinois DNR and USFWS will be conducted.

2.1.5.4 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.

2.1.5.5 Noise

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

2.1.5.6 Historic and Cultural Resources

In the event that potentially significant resources are discovered during the course of the project, the Illinois SHPO will be notified and procedures recommended by the Illinois 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.

2.1.5.7 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.

2.1.6 References

Land Use

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

Personal communication with Mack Hodges, Natural Resource Conservation Service. May 19, 1997.

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USGS, 1993. Topographic Quadrangle, Blue Island, IL.

Personal Communication with Injerd, Dan, Chief of Lake Michigan Management Section, IDNR, May 19, 1997.

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USDI, 1984. National Wetlands Inventory Map, Englewood, IL. April.

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Transportation and Safety

Environmental Data Resource, May 1997.

Noise

Harris, Miller, Miller and Hansen. May 1997.

Air Quality

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

2.2 EXERMONT CONNECTION (CSX)

The proposed connection is located in Exermont, IL, which is located in St. Clair County, approximately three miles northeast of East St. Louis, IL. (Figure 4-4) The proposed project would connect existing parallel east/west Conrail lines with existing east/west CSX main lines, facilitating traffic moving through the St. Louis Gateway Service Route and the Central Service Route.

This proposed connection would allow CSX to efficiently route traffic between points in the Southeast and western points via the St. Louis gateway. The area is bordered to the north by Collinsville Road, to the east by Bluff Boulevard, to the south by Forest Boulevard and to the west by Interstate 255. The proposed site area is a mix of rural residential, commercial and agricultural land uses on and adjacent to the existing railroad rights-of-way. The area located between the existing parallel east/west rail lines includes farmland.

2.2.1 Proposed Action and Alternatives

2.2.1.1. Proposed Action

The proposed project at Exermont involves the construction of a new connection, approximately 3,590 feet in length, between the existing parallel east/west CSX and Conrail tracks which are located about 1000 feet apart. The proposed construction would begin east of Conrail milepost 231.4 and terminate near milepost 328 on the CSX line. This new connection would allow trains to proceed east from Conrail's Exermont Yard near East St. Louis, IL onto the CSX main line and will facilitate swapping of blocks of cars between trains at Conrail's Exermont Yard. Construction of the proposed connection would require raising the area on which the tracks will be placed by approximately eight feet along most of the length of the connection for flood protection. In addition, the acquisition of approximately 5.3 acres of additional land would be

required. The Harding Ditch Levee-Little Canteen Creek will be crossed by the proposed connection using a 90-foot concrete pre-cast bridge with concrete piers and concrete pre-cast decks.

Construction Requirements

It is estimated that a work force of approximately 40 persons will be required to construct the connection and that it will take at least 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 line would decrease from 11.8 to 8.7 trains per day, a decrease of 3.1 trains per day.
- Traffic on the existing east/west Conrail line would decrease from 16 to 9.1 trains per day, a decrease of 6.9 trains per day.
- An average of 8.7 trains per day would operate over the new connection.

2.2.1.2 Alternatives

Build Alternatives

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

In the absence of a connection, westbound traffic moving from and through Nashville destined to St. Louis would not be able to access Exermont Yard to be combined with traffic moving from Indianapolis: combining these traffic flows at Exermont Yard permits efficient movements

through St. Louis. Without this connection, these efficiencies could only be obtained by combining the two flows at Indianapolis, adding 360 miles in circuity and resulting in additional emissions and fuel usage. This additional distance would also render CSX's operations through the St. Louis gateway inefficient and noncompetitive, to the detriment of shippers throughout the southeast and in the St. Louis area. For these reasons, the no-action option was rejected.

2.2.2 Existing Environment

2.2.2.1 Land Use

The proposed construction project would involve the acquisition of approximately 5.3 acres of right-of-way in an area of relatively flat farmland between the two parallel CSX and Conrail tracks.

The general land use bordering the existing CSX rail line consists of agricultural areas to the northwest and north, a residential area and one city park to the northeast; residential areas to the east, southeast, and south; and agricultural areas to the southwest and west. The general land use bordering the existing Conrail line consists of agricultural areas to the northwest, north and east; and agricultural areas to the south, southwest and west.

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

The proposed connection would traverse approximately 0.5 miles of prime farmland soils, according to the Soil Survey of St. Clair County. These soils would include Haymond Silt Loam and Worthen Silt Loam (1-4 percent slope). According to the Illinois Department of Natural Resources (IDNR), the proposed construction area is not located within a Coastal Zone Management area.

2.2.2.2 Water Resources

According to the USGS topographic quadrangle of the site area, an intermittent stream runs east-west along the southern edge of the existing Conrail right-of-way.

Harding Ditch Levee-Little Canteen Creek runs east-west between the rail lines in the proposed construction area, and will be bridged by the proposed connection.

According to the National Wetland Inventory (NWI) map of the site area, one wetland is located within 500 feet of the proposed project site. The Harding Ditch Levee is classified as a wetland with the designation riverine lower perennial unconsolidated bottom permanently flooded excavated.

The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) map for the area shows that the proposed connection would be located within Zone A2; classified as areas of 100-year flood; with base flood elevations and flood hazard factors determined. Approximately 800 feet of the proposed connection at the junction with the CSX rail line would be located within Zone B; classified as areas between limits of the 100-year flood and 500-year flood; or certain areas subject to 100-year flooding with average depths less than one (1) foot or where the contributing drainage area is less than one square mile; or areas protected by levees from the base flood.

According to the IDNR, the proposed project area is located within the floodway of Harding Ditch Levee-Little Canteen Creek and may impact the water surface profile of the ditch.

2.2.2.3 Biological Resources

Vegetation

The proposed project will cross an agricultural area containing row crops which is bisected by the Harding Ditch Levee-Little Canteen Creek. Predominant vegetation present on land bordering the existing railroad rights-of-way includes non-woody vegetation, shrubs and trees.

Wildlife

Since the proposed construction project area is currently farmland, wildlife usage is likely to be low. Forage, breeding, and nesting habitat does not exist on the site for birds and mammals except for marginal habitat that might be present along the Harding Ditch Levee-Little Canteen Creek. The site does not provide utility for travel for larger animals.

Threatened and Endangered Species

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) and IDNR were consulted regarding the presence of threatened or endangered species in the area of the proposed connection. Of the 31 federally listed threatened and endangered species known to inhabit the state of Illinois, (located in Appendix E) two species are known to exist within St. Clair County, including the bald eagle *(Haliaeetus leucocephalus)* and decurrent false aster *(Boltonia decurrens)*. The bald eagle lives in old-growth forest near rivers or other open water areas, and breeds in similar habitat. The decurrent false aster requires disturbed alluvial soils and is known to inhabit the Mississippi River floodplain in St. Clair County. Thirty-nine state-listed threatened and endangered species were reported by IDNR as potentially occurring in St. Clair county.

Parks, Forests, Preserves, Refuges and Sanctuaries

No national or state refuges, sanctuaries, parks or forests are located on or adjacent to the railroad rights-of-way or within 500 feet of the proposed connection. One city park is located between the existing rail lines, approximately 400 feet north of the existing CSX rail line.

2.2.2.4 Air Quality

The proposed connection is located in St. Clair County, IL. This county is categorized as being in non-attainment of the National Ambient Air Quality Standard (NAAQS) for ozone (moderate), and in attainment for all other pollutants. Existing sources of air emissions near the project area include locomotives, vehicles and farm machinery.

2.2.2.5 Noise

Rail, vehicular, and commercial traffic are the primary sources of noise in the project area. Other sources of noise in the vicinity of the proposed connection include traffic on local highways, namely Interstate 255 and State Route 157. Approximately 45 residences and Seton School are located within 500 feet of the point where the proposed connection will intersect the existing CSX rail line. No churches are located within 500 feet of the proposed construction site.

2.2.2.6 Historic and Cultural Resources

The area of the proposed connection is currently used as an agricultural field, and does not appear to have been subject to other prior ground-disturbing activity. Although numerous cultural resource field surveys have taken place in the vicinity of the project area, no previous surveys have been conducted in the area of the proposed connection and no archaeological sites or historic structures have been identified in the area of potential effect.

A letter was sent to the Illinois Historic Preservation Agency on January 6, 1997, notifying them of the proposed project and requesting information about known sites. Their response provided information about potential historic properties in the area and recommended a process for their consideration.

The project area is approximately one mile southeast of Cahokia Mounds State Park (site 11S34), a significant prehistoric archaeological site that was listed in the National Register of Historic Places in 1966, and that has been officially recognized as a National Historic Landmark. In addition to having received federal recognition, Cahokia is one of eight cultural properties in the United States listed on the World Heritage list (along with the Statue of Liberty and Chaco Culture National Historical Park, for example). Because resources associated with Mississippian culture mound sites (of which Cahokia is the premier example) are known to extend well beyond the mounds themselves, the area of potential effect may contain subsurface archaeological remains. Eight additional sites that include a Mississippian-culture component are located within a two-mile radius of the project area.

In addition to sites solely associated with the Mississippian culture, 24 prehistoric and historic sites are located within a two-mile radius from the project area. These sites date primarily to the Archaic and Woodland periods of prehistory; many sites are multi component and were occupied from the Archaic through the Mississippian period. The presence of nearby sites suggests that there may be significant sites in the project area.

In a letter of January 29, 1997, the Illinois Historic Preservation Agency stated:

> "The project area is located within (sic) the Cahokia Mounds National Historic Landmark and may contain prehistoric/historic archaeological resources. Accordingly, a Phase I archaeological reconnaissance survey to locate, identify, and record all archaeological resources within the project area will be required. If the area has been heavily disturbed prior to your project, please contact our office with the appropriate written and/or photographic evidence."

2.2.2.7 Transportation and Safety

The existing transportation network consists of the CSX/Conrail rail lines that run parallel between Collinsville Road to the north, State Route 157 to the east, Forest Boulevard to the south, and Black Lane to the west. Existing crossings occur at Black Lane, Long Street and Main Street.

Access to the rail construction area would be available from O'Fallon Street and Main Street.

An Environmental Data Resource (EDR) database search did not identify any hazardous waste sites within 500 feet of the proposed connection. The database search revealed three unmappable sites within the Exermont city limits. These sites could not be located because of poor address or geocoding information provided to the state and/or federal databases.

2.2.3 Potential Environmental Impacts of Proposed Action

2.2.3.1 Land Use

The proposed construction project would occur on farmland located between existing parallel tracks. Approximately 5.3 acres of farmland, approximately 3.0 acres of which is considered prime farmland soils, would need to be acquired for the right-of-way. Seton School and the residential areas south-southeast of the existing CSX rail line are sensitive receptors located within 500 feet of the proposed connection. These sensitive receptors currently contend with rail line activities from the existing CSX rail line. The proposed project would not occur within a designated coastal zone area.

2.2.3.2 Water Resources

Water resources, including wetlands, will be crossed by the proposed connection. An intermittent stream parallels the south side of the existing Conrail track and the Harding Ditch Levee-Little Canteen Creek bisects the proposed connection area. Construction of a bridge across the Harding Ditch Levee may result in temporary impacts to this resource from site disturbance and potential runoff or silting. These impacts are expected to cease following construction. According to the IDNR, the construction may impact the flow path of the Harding Ditch-Levee-Little Canteen Creek. Approximately 2,700 feet of the proposed connection would be located in Zone A2, 100-year flood plain of the Harding Ditch Levee-Little Canteen Creek, thus flood protection measures (grading and raising the tracks with placement of fill) will be necessary. This may cause the now contiguous floodplain in the area of construction to be interrupted. While the flood plain may be impacted, impacts to water resources and wetlands should not be significant.

2.2.3.3 Biological Resources

Vegetation

Existing vegetation and farmland within the acquired right-of-way for the proposed project would be temporarily disturbed during the construction process. However, opportunistic plant species will quickly revegetate the area. Thus, significant impacts to vegetation resources are not anticipated.

Wildlife

The limited wildlife likely to be present within the proposed construction project corridor may be temporarily disturbed during construction activities. However, considering current land use is primarily farmland and the temporary nature of construction activities, the anticipated impact will be low.

Threatened and Endangered Species

A field survey to assess the presence of threatened and endangered resources has not been conducted, but due to the disturbed nature of the proposed construction area, current land use patterns and general absence of critical habitat suitable to support these resources, it is not likely that threatened and endangered species would be present in the proposed construction area. Thus, impacts are not anticipated.

Parks, Forests, Preserves, Refuges and Sanctuaries

There are no national parks, forests, preserves, refuges or sanctuaries that will be impacted by the proposed construction project.

One city park is present in the area of the proposed construction project, approximately 400 feet north of the point where the proposed connection will intersect the CSX rail line. This park is not expected to be impacted by the proposed project, due to the distance from the project area and the temporary nature of the construction activity.

2.2.3.4 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) result from combustion of diesel fuel. The emissions of these pollutants from construction operations 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.

CSX expects that rail traffic will decrease in this area as a result of CSX's proposed Acquisition of Conrail. As a result, no impact analyses will be conducted for air quality.

2.2.3.5 Noise

Construction operations associated with the proposed action would cause temporary increases in noise levels. These operations require the use of trucks and heavy equipment. Noise generated by such equipment would be temporary. Noise levels are not expected to exceed 65 dBA L_{dn} beyond 200 feet.

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 5 degrees. The proposed connection at Exermont would have a curvature of 3 degrees. Therefore, wheel squeal is not expected to occur.

2.2.3.6 Historic and Cultural Resources

Although no archaeological resources were identified within 500 feet of the proposed construction project, the general area has a potential for the presence of significant archaeological resources. Thus, the proposed construction may have adverse effects on archaeological remains which may require mitigation prior to construction. No potentially significant historic structures were identified for the project area.

2.2.3.7 Transportation and Safety

Temporary disruption of local traffic patterns and increased wear and tear on local 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.

An Environmental Data Resource database search did not identify any hazardous waste sites within 500 feet of the proposed construction project. The database search revealed 3 unmappable sites within the Exermont city limits; however, none of these sites is believed to be within the proposed construction area based on current and historical land uses and site reconnaissance.

The probability of a major spill of hazardous or toxic materials during construction is very small. 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.

2.2.4 Potential Environmental Impact of Alternative Actions

2.2.4.1 Build Alternatives

No build alternatives were identified.

2.2.4.2 No-Action Alternative

Under the no-action alternative, the proposed connection 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 2.2.1.2). The absence of this connection would result in less efficient rail service, which would result in additional fuel consumption and air emissions.

2.2.5 Proposed Mitigation

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

2.2.5.1 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.

2.2.5.2 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 minimize 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 work in wetlands, ponds, lakes or streams or if these activities cause soil or other materials to effect the water resources.

2.2.5.3 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 Illinois DNR and USFWS will be conducted.

2.2.5.4 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.

2.2.5.5 Noise

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

2.2.5.6 Historic and Cultural Resources

A cultural resources survey will be conducted prior to project initiation to identify archaeological sites within the area that will be affected by construction. Adverse effects to significant sites will be mitigated by excavating significant archaeological sites to recover the data they contain.

In the event that potentially significant resources are discovered during the course of the project, the Illinois SHPO will be notified and procedures recommended by the Illinois 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.

2.2.5.7 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 Regulation (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.

2.2.6 References

Land Use

Environmental Data Resources, May 1997.

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

United States Geological Survey topographic quadrangle, Monks Mound, IL, 1954, photo revised 1993.

United States Department of the Interior, Fish and Wildlife Service, Monks Mound, IL, March 1985.

United States Department of Agriculture, Soil Survey of St. Clair County, IL.

Flood Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), Flood Insurance Rate Maps, St. Clair County, IL, Panel Number 170616 0002A, March 16, 1981.

Water Resources and Wetlands

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Biological Resources

United States Department of the Interior, National Wetlands Inventory Map, Monks Mound, IL, March 1985.

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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.

Historic and Cultural Resources

Illinois Historic Preservation Agency, January 1997.

Transportation and Safety

Environmental Data Resources. May 1997.

2.3 LINCOLN AVENUE (CSX)

The proposed project is located on railroad right-of-way in the vicinity of the intersection of Lincoln Avenue and Park Avenue in the Village of Dolton, Cook County, IL, approximately 18 miles south of the City of Chicago, IL (Figure 4-5). The proposed project is the construction of a connection between the existing east/west Baltimore & Ohio Chicago Terminal Railroad Company (B&OCT) and Indiana Harbor Belt (IHB) rail lines which is expected to be constructed on existing railroad rights-of-way. B&OCT is a wholly-owned subsidiary of CSX. At the site, the B&OCT rail line runs through Chicago from the west-northwest, intersects the north/south Union Pacific/Southern Pacific line, and turns and runs parallel to the IHB line which runs through Chicago from east to west.

The proposed site is in an urban area and is primarily surrounded by existing rail lines, and a mix of urban residences, commercial, and industrial land uses.

2.3.1 Proposed Action and Alternatives

2.3.1.1 Proposed Action

The proposed project, depicted in Figure 4-5, involves the construction and operation of a new connection track 840 feet in length between the existing east/west B&OCT and IHB tracks, enabling trains to move from Willow Creek, Indiana to CSX's Barr Yard. The project will be constructed within existing rights-of-way between existing B&OCT and IHB tracks from a northwest to southeast direction. The proposed site is located approximately 700 feet east of the intersection of the intersection of the UP/SP and IHB rail lines. The connection would be built between approximately milepost DC-9.5 on B&OCT's mainline and approximately milepost 10.43 on IHB's mainline.

Construction Requirements

It is estimated that 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 B&OCT line would increase from an average of 28 trains per day to an average of 33 trains per day, an increase of five trains per day.
- An average of approximately 10 trains per day would operate over the proposed connection in the first year following the Acquisition, decreasing to two trains per day by the third year following the Acquisition..

2.3.1.2 Alternatives

Build Alternatives

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

In the absence of this connection, CSX trains would have to operate over a single track to and from the Chicago area. Given the high density of traffic in the area, this would result in significant delays and congestion for local shippers and other shippers utilizing CSX. The Porter Branch between Porter and Gibson, a distance of approximately 21 miles through an urban, industrial area, could be double tracked to relieve congestion in lieu of constructing the proposed Lincoln Avenue connection. A double track project of that magnitude would be significantly

more expensive and would likely cause more significant environmental impacts compared to the proposed action. For these reasons, the no-action alternative was rejected.

2.3.2 Existing Environment

2.3.2.1 Land Use

The area of the proposed construction site is a mix of residential, commercial and industrial land uses. The existing B&OCT and IHB rights-of-way do not include steep topographic gradients or above ground structures. The proposed project is bordered to the north-northeast by two large commercial/industrial facilities, to the east by railroad rights-of-way, to the southeast by Lake Cottage Grove and to the south by residential area, including single family dwellings and apartments. The Dolton City Hall and commercial buildings are located to the southwest of the proposed project. The area west of the proposed project includes railroad rights-of-way. Property located to the west-northwest of Park Avenue consists of residential and commercial/industrial land uses.

The proposed site is currently owned and utilized for railroad operations. Therefore, zoning for the site currently accommodates railroad uses.

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

According to the Natural Resource Conservation Service, a formal survey to classify soils and identify prime farmland soils has not been conducted for Chicago and most of Cook County. However, there is no prime farmland at the proposed site. The proposed site is not located within a Coastal Zone Management Area.

2.3.2.2 Water Resources

Surface water bodies were not identified on the proposed construction site. However, Lake Cottage Grove is located approximately 250 feet south-southeast.

National Wetland Inventory (NWI) maps identified two wetlands within 500 feet of the construction area. The first wetland is located approximately 200 feet north of the proposed site, and is classified as palustrine emergent temporarily flooded. Lake Cottage Grove, as discussed above, is also identified on the NWI map as palustrine forested broad-leaved deciduous seasonally flooded wetland.

The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) map for the area show that the proposed project is located within Zone C, an area of minimal flooding.

2.3.2.3 Biological Resources

Vegetation

The proposed construction site is located in a residential, commercial and industrial land use area. Land bordering the existing railroad rights-of-way includes non-woody vegetation, non-native grasses, shrubs and deciduous trees. This vegetation is not unique or limited in the area. A mixture of asphalt, concrete, gravel, and grasses are present around the residential and commercial/industrial facilities bordering the connection.

Wildlife

The potential for wildlife at the proposed construction site is limited since the site is sparsely vegetated and includes rail, residential, and commercial development. Wildlife would mainly be limited to birds, and small mammals that have adapted to developed areas. Wetlands near the site may support some reptiles and amphibians such as snakes or frogs.

Threatened and Endangered Species

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) and Illinois Department of Natural Resources (IDNR) were consulted regarding the potential for federal- and state-listed threatened and endangered species to be present in the proposed project area. Four federally listed and 186 state-listed threatened and endangered species were identified as occurring in Cook County. These lists are contained in Appendix B, Agency Correspondence.

Parks, Forests, Preserves, Refuges and Sanctuaries

Sunshine Park was identified approximately 1,000 feet east of the proposed construction site. No other parks, forests, preserves, refuges or sanctuaries are located within one mile of the proposed site.

2.3.2.4 Air Quality

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

2.3.2.5 Noise

Rail, vehicular, and commercial/industrial traffic are the primary sources of noise in the area of the proposed rail line connection. Sensitive receptors identified within 500 feet of the proposed site include 16 residences west-northwest of the proposed construction site, several commercial/industrial buildings located east of the residences, 67 residences located to the east-southeast of the proposed project. City Hall is located southwest of the proposed area.

2.3.2.6 Historic and Cultural Resources

To determine if known archaeological or historic resources exist in the area of the proposed action, the Illinois Historic Preservation Office was contacted, a site reconnaissance was performed, and railroad property records were reviewed. Based on this investigation, it was concluded no recorded or observed cultural resources lie within the proposed construction area.

2.3.2.7 Transportation and Safety

The rail transportation network consists of an existing B&OCT track that intersects at-grade with a UP/SP track and a IHB track. This area is bordered on the north by East 138 Street, on the east by Cottage Grove Avenue, to the south by Main Street and to the west by Lincoln Avenue. Existing roads permitting access to the proposed area include Kanawha Street, (located to the north) and Catalpa Lane (located to the south) of the proposed construction.

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 three unmappable sites within the Cook County limits. These sites could not be located because of poor address or geocoding information provided to the site an/or federal databases.

2.3.3 Potential Environmental Impacts of Proposed Action

2.3.3.1 Land Use

The proposed connection would be constructed on existing railroad rights-of-way. Although prime farmland soils information was not available for the project area, the loss of prime farmland soil is not anticipated because the construction area is currently dedicated to railroad use. The proposed construction would not conflict with adjacent land uses or zoning, nor would construction activities occur within a designated Coastal Zone Management Area.

2.3.3.2 Water Resources

No surface water bodies or wetlands are located on the proposed construction site. The two wetlands identified within 500 feet of the site are potentially subject to increased silt loading as a result of construction activities. These impacts would be temporary.

2.3.3.3 Biological Resources

Vegetation

The proposed project site is mainly covered by gravel. The area is heavily disturbed and surrounded by residential, commercial and industrial development. Therefore, the proposed project is only expected to impact vegetation indicative of disturbed areas, and these impacts are expected to be temporary.

Wildlife

No adverse impacts to wildlife populations are anticipated. Wildlife along the proposed connection would be temporarily disturbed during construction activities. However, once construction is complete, this disruption will cease. Because of the nature of the site, the only animal species likely to inhabit the area are those that have adapted to an urban environment.

Threatened and Endangered Species

A site survey to assess the presence of threatened and endangered was not conducted. However, the occurrence of federal- or state-listed threatened and endangered species within 500 feet of the construction site is unlikely due to the area being heavily disturbed, the surrounding area being influenced by urban development and the project site is not considered critical habitat for these species. Therefore, impacts to threatened and endangered species are not anticipated.

Parks, Forests, Preserves, Refuges and Sanctuaries

Sunshine Park is located approximately 1,000 feet east of the proposed construction and may be temporarily disturbed by construction activities. However, once construction is complete, this disruption will cease.

2.3.3.4 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) 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.

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. However, threshold increases in traffic are anticipated on the adjacent B&OCT rail line segment as a result of CSX's proposed Acquisition of Conrail, and impact analyses will be conducted relative to air quality in Part 2 of this ER.

2.3.3.5 Noise

In the short term, construction operations associated with the proposed action would cause temporary increases in noise levels. Noise generated by construction equipment would be temporary.

Generally, wheel squeal is likely to occur on any curve with a radius less than about 100 feet, or when the curvature is greater than approximately 5 degrees. Wheel squeal is not expected to occur along this connection, or would be minimal since the connecting curve would have a

degree of curvature of approximately 2 degrees. Noise-sensitive receptors are not expected to experience any significant future noise level increases as a result of completing the proposed connection.

2.3.3.6 Historic and Cultural Resources

No archaeological sites or potentially significant historic structures have been identified within the project area; therefore, no impacts to these resources are anticipated.

2.3.3.7 Transportation and Safety

The proposed connection may require the relocation of a cantilever signal and highway/pedestrian gates west of Park Avenue. Short-term disruptions to local traffic during construction activities are anticipated to be minimal because the proposed construction is located on existing railroad rights-of-way.

No hazardous waste sites were identified within 500 feet of the proposed rail line construction area from the EDR database search or the Dames & Moore site reconnaissance. The EDR database search identified three unmappable sites within Cook County; however, none of these sites is believed to be within the proposed construction area based on historical land use and visual observation during site reconnaissance.

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.

2.3.4 Potential Environmental Impact of Alternatives

2.3.4.1 Build Alternatives

No build alternatives were identified.

2.3.4.2 No-Action Alternative

Under the no-action alternative, the proposed connection 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 2.3.1.2). The absence of this connection would result in less efficient rail service, which would result in additional fuel consumption and air emissions.

2.3.5 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.

2.3.5.1 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.

2.3.5.2 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 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.

2.3.5.3 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 Illinois DNR and USFWS will be conducted.

2.3.5.4 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.

2.3.5.5 Noise

Temporary noise from construction equipment will be controlled through the use of work hour controls and maintenance of muffler systems on machinery. Should disturbance to a sensitive receptor be unavoidable, Best Management Practices will be employed to minimize impact to those receptors.

2.3.5.6 Historic and Cultural Resources

In the event that potentially significant resources are discovered during the course of the project, the Illinois SHPO will be notified and procedures recommended by the Illinois 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.

2.3.5.7 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 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.

2.3.6 References

Land Use

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

Personal communication with Dan Injerd, Chief, Lake Michigan Management Section, Illinois Department of Natural Resources, May 19, 1997

Personal communication with Hodges, Mack, Natural Resource Conservation Service, May 19, 1997.

Personal communication with Barb Smick, Village of Dolton Building Department, May, 1997.

U.S. Geological Survey, 1991. *1:24,000-scale topographic maps.* Lake Calumet, Illinois-Indiana Quadrangle.

Water Resources and Wetlands

Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), Panel 170083-001C, *FEMA Flood Insurance Rate Map.*

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Department of the Interior, 1983. *National Wetlands Inventory Map.* Lake Calumet, Illinois-Indiana Quadrangle.

Personal communication with Dan Injerd, IL Department of Natural Resources, May 1997.

Biological Resources

Herkert, J.R., editor, 1991. Endangered and Threatened Species of Illinois: Status and Distribution, Volume 1-Plants. Illinois Endangered Species Protection Board, Springfield, IL, p. 158.

Herkert, J.R., editor, 1992. Endangered and Threatened Species of Illinois: Status and Distribution, Volume 2-Animals. Illinois Endangered Species Protection Board, Springfield, IL, p. 142.

Herkert, J.R., editor, 1994. Endangered and Threatened Species of Illinois: Status and Distribution, Volume 3-1994 Changes to the Illinois List of Endangered and Threatened Species. Illinois Endangered Species Protection Board, Springfield, IL, pp. 33.

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, 1995. Distribution List of Federally Threatened and Endangered and Proposed Species in Illinois.

Transportation and Safety

Environmental Data Resource, May 1997.

Noise

Harris, Miller, Miller and Hansen. May 1997.

Air Quality

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

2.4 KANKAKEE (NS)

Kankakee, IL is in Kankakee County, 70 miles south of Chicago (Figure 4-6). Existing rail lines in the area include the north/south-oriented Illinois Central Railroad Company (IC) rail line, over which NS has trackage rights, and the Conrail rail line, which runs east/west.

The proposed construction site is northwest of Mulberry Street and west of Schuyler Avenue and occupies approximately 200 by 1,000 feet (4.1 acres). An area approximately 100 by 1,000 feet (2.3 acres) would comprise the permanent new right-of-way. Land use in the area is residential and commercial. The site is bordered on the north by the Conrail line; on the east by two overgrown fields, a residential lawn and a small garden; on the south by a man-made drainage ditch and on the west by the IC rail line and an adjacent drainage ditch.

2.4.1 Proposed Action and Alternatives

2.4.1.1 Proposed Action

The proposed action at Kankakee would involve the construction and operation of a new connection between the existing IC and Conrail tracks (Figure 4-6). The connection would be southeast of the intersection of the existing rail lines. The connection would permit train movements from Conrail's Chicago mainline and Chicago Terminal areas in Illinois westward to Kansas City and St. Louis Gateways via Decatur, IL, which would add capacity and reduce train delays. The proposed project would allow NS to provide more consistent service for customers on these routes. The design includes new power-operated turnouts from the Conrail and IC mainlines and approximately 1,000 feet of new rail line. The proposed construction would require the acquisition of approximately 2.3 acres of right-of-way. The existing IC/Conrail crossing diamond would be left intact.

Construction Requirements

Estimates for the labor force and duration of construction are not yet available, but are expected to require less than 10 workers, due to the short length of track required. 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 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 IC line south of Kankakee is not expected to change in rail traffic.
- Traffic on the existing Conrail line east of Kankakee would increase from 7 to 11 trains per day.
- Traffic on the new construction would be six trains per day.
- NS traffic on the existing IC line north of Kankakee (on which NS has trackage rights), which is two trains per day, would decrease to zero trains per day.

2.4.1.2 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 IC and Conrail rights-of-way. In addition, the proposed construction would not result in any significant environmental impacts.

No-Action Alternative

Under this no-action alternative, existing and any additional post-Acquisition rail traffic would operate over the expanded NS system. Access between the IC and Conrail lines would be limited to existing interchanges or 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.

2.4.2 Existing Environment

2.4.2.1 Land Use

The proposed construction includes rail and utility uses. The land cover on the proposed construction site consists of disturbed areas and drainage ditches adjacent to existing rail lines, a small portion of land mentioned as a lawn, a small vegetable garden and a portion of two overgrown fields. High voltage transmission lines parallel the IC rail line and local electrical distribution lines parallel the Conrail rail line. A municipal park that includes basketball courts and a shelter house is east and approximately 300 feet from the proposed site. Another park is 0.25 mile northeast of the proposed construction site. Residential properties, railroad facilities and commercial properties exist to the west and southwest of the proposed construction site. Other land uses surrounding the proposed site include residential properties north and southeast of the existing intersection and railroad facilities, including a Conrail rail yard, along the Conrail line north of the intersection. The land on the proposed construction site is currently zoned as single family residential.

The proposed construction would occur on soil listed as prime farmland (if drained).

The proposed 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 Illinois.

2.4.2.2 Water Resources

No surface waters are on or within 500 feet of the proposed construction site. The Kankakee River is 0.75 miles west of the proposed construction (Figure 4-6). A drainage ditch is adjacent to the existing IC rail lines, crossing a portion of the area to be converted for the connecting switch.

National Wetlands Inventory (NWI) maps indicate no wetlands are within 500 feet of the construction site. Part of the drainage ditch, approximately 400 feet south of the proposed construction site and east of the IC rail line, is considered a palustrine forested wetland. An additional palustrine emergent/scrub-shrub wetland is west of the IC rail line adjacent to the other wetland mentioned previously (Figure 4-6). Drainage ditches in the proposed site may hold water temporarily following heavy rains. The proposed construction would occur on soil listed as being hydric.

Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) maps for the area indicate the proposed construction area is not within a 100-year floodplain.

2.4.2.3 Biological Resources

Vegetation

The two overgrown fields and railroad right-of-way within the proposed construction site consist of brush, weeds and grasses, characteristic of disturbed areas. The residential lawn consists of grasses. Because the site is within an area dominated by residential, commercial and railroad use, much of the area has previously been disturbed. The site was not observed to support important native plant communities.

Wildlife

The potential for wildlife at the proposed construction site is limited since the site is sparsely-vegetated and includes rail, residential, and commercial development. Wildlife would mainly be

limited to birds, and small mammals that have adapted to developed areas. Drainage ditches on the site may support some reptiles and amphibians such as snakes or frogs.

Threatened or Endangered Species

No threatened or endangered species or their habitats were observed in the proposed construction area. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) and the Illinois Department of Conservation (DOC) were contacted regarding threatened and endangered species in the area of the proposed rail line construction. Responses from the USFWS and the Illinois DNR have been received, and neither agency expects any threatened or endangered species or their potential habitats to be found within the proposed construction site or within the project area.

Parks, Forests, Preserves, Refuges, and Sanctuaries

No forest preserves, refuges, or sanctuaries are within one mile of the proposed construction site. A municipal park is approximately 300 feet from the site. The park has a basketball court and a gazebo-style shelter house. Another park is within 0.25 mile northeast of the proposed construction. No other parks are within one mile of the site.

2.4.2.4 Air Quality

According to 40 CFR 81, Kankakee County is in attainment with the National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS). Automobiles, trucks, and locomotives are the primary sources of emissions in the project area.

2.4.2.5 Noise

Rail, vehicular and commercial traffic are the primary sources of noise in the project area. Twenty-two residences are within 500 feet of the proposed construction site. No schools or churches are within 500 feet of the site. A rail yard is 750 feet north of the proposed construction site.

2.4.2.6 Historic and Cultural Resources

Records at the Illinois State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) in Springfield were reviewed to identify cultural resources in the project area. No National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) or archaeological sites have been recorded in the vicinity of the proposed construction. The construction would occur to the east/southeast of two foundations that may have supported railroad-related buildings (Figure 4-6). The area where these foundations are located may meet the criteria for inclusion on the NRHP as a historic archaeological site. A determination would require additional research.

2.4.2.7 Transportation and Safety

The existing rail transportation network consists of IC and Conrail rail lines that intersect in Kankakee. Schuyler Avenue, a paved city street, intersects the Conrail main line at-grade just west of the proposed power-operated switch.

ADT data for Schuyler Avenue three blocks north of the Conrail intersection, at the Brookmount Boulevard/Schuyler Avenue intersection, is 10,500 vehicles per day. Average daily traffic data for Schuyler Avenue four blocks south of the Conrail intersection, at the Chestmount Street/Schuyler Avenue intersection, is 10,500 vehicles per day.

The Environmental Data Resources, Inc. (EDR) 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 16 unmappable sites, 14 within the Kankakee city limits, one in Kankakee County, and one in Otto Township. 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.

2.4.3 Potential Environmental Impacts of Proposed Action

2.4.3.1 Land Use

The proposed project would result in minimal impacts to land use. Approximately 2.3 acres would be converted to rail line right-of-way. Land converted would consist of disturbed areas adjacent to existing rail lines, a small portion of land currently maintained as lawn, a small vegetable garden and portions of two overgrown fields. The lawn area and garden are associated with a residence approximately 400 feet east of the IC line and 100 feet south of the Conrail line. Conversion of this land would reduce the size of the lot for the residence. However, it would not restrict access to other portions of the property. Based on preliminary review, a portion of the existing local electrical distribution line adjacent to the Conrail rail line would have to be relocated.

The proposed construction would be compatible with surrounding land uses. Soil at this site is classified as prime farmland. However, current land use patterns are not compatible with agricultural use. Therefore, the project would not result in the loss of any agricultural land.

The proposed site is not in a coastal zone management area.

2.4.3.2 Water Resources

The proposed construction would not have adverse impacts on groundwater. The construction would require a substantial amount of fill, but would be designed to avoid altering storm water drainage or infiltration patterns in the area. Impacts to wetlands and drainage ditches would be temporary. The use of erosion and sediment control measures would minimize impacts until subgrade slope areas are reseeded. The proposed construction would not cross any surface water resources or wetlands. The erosion and sediment control measures would also limit impacts to the drainage ditch and associated wetland.

2.4.3.3 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.

Wildlife

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

Threatened or Endangered Species

Responses from the USFWS and the Illinois 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. No impacts to threatened or endangered species are expected.

Parks, Forest Preserves, Refuges, and Sanctuaries

The city park within 300 feet of the construction site will not be impacted from construction activities, but may experience increased noise and emissions from increased rail traffic. No other state or federally designated parks, preserves, refuges or sanctuaries would be impacted by the proposed construction.

2.4.3.4 Air Quality

Kankakee 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 not meet or exceed STB thresholds for air quality. Therefore, air impacts were not quantified and are expected to be minor. General air quality impacts are discussed in Part 4, Appendix A. Air quality impacts for segments expected to experience increased traffic are discussed in Part 2.

2.4.3.5 Noise

Twenty-two residences would be within 500 feet of the proposed construction. All of these residences are currently within 500 feet of the existing rail lines in the area. Overall post-Acquisition rail traffic would be identical to that currently experienced by local noise receptors. The proposed connection would have six trains per day operating over it. These NS trains currently operate over the IC north line. Residences in the area are already exposed to noise from these trains. This traffic does not exceed STB thresholds for noise evaluation on the connecting line. However, the new connection could create additional noise due to the wheel squeal generated by trains operating on the connection. If wheel squeal occurs, the Ldn 65 distance could be approximately 500 feet from the connection. Only the 22 residences within 500 feet of the proposed connection would experience such noise levels.

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.

2.4.3.6 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. The potential inclusion of the two foundations located northwest of the proposed construction as historic sites still exists. No adverse effects to these foundations are expected as a result of the proposed construction. NS will continue consultations with the Illinois SHPO to determine any further requirements.

2.4.3.7 Transportation and Safety

The proposed construction project would improve train movement to destinations, enhancing the efficiency of the expanded NS system. Pending final design, the existing at-grade crossing at Schuyler Avenue may need to be upgraded. Any necessary upgrades will be completed in cooperation with the Illinois Department of Transportation (DOT). Rail traffic on the proposed connection (six trains per day) would cause minor traffic delays at one city street at-grade crossing in Kankakee. Short-term disruptions of local traffic could occur during construction.

Increased train traffic on the proposed connection would increase the potential for vehicle-train accidents at the Schuyler Avenue crossing. The potential increase in accidents is still low since the Schuyler Avenue crossing has appropriate crossbucks and warning light signals. The potential for at-grade crossing accidents on the IC mainline north of the proposed connection would be reduced due to the rerouting of NS traffic.

The EDR database search did not identify any hazardous waste sites or other sites of environmental concern in the vicinity of the proposed rail construction. The database search revealed 16 unmappable sites, 14 within the Kankakee city limits, one in Kankakee County, and one in Otto Township. 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 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.

2.4.4 Potential Environmental Impact of Alternative Actions

2.4.4.1 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 IC and Conrail rights-of-way and potential environmental impacts.

2.4.4.2 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 train delays, less consistent service and an overall increase in expense to NS and the consumer. The no-action alternative is not considered practical or viable.

2.4.5 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:

2.4.5.1 Land Use

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

2.4.5.2 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.

2.4.5.3 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.

2.4.5.4 Air Quality

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

2.4.5.5 Noise

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

2.4.5.6 Historic and Cultural Resources

- NS will continue the Section 106 consultation process.

2.4.5.7 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 pre-existing conditions.
- NS will cooperate with the Illinois Department of Transportation for any upgrades to warning structures at the expanded at-grade crossing.

2.4.6 References

Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), 1993. *FEMA Flood Insurance Rate Map.*

Personal communication with City of Kankakee Planning Department, April, 1997.

Personal communication with City of Kankakee Engineering Department regarding local street traffic counts, April, 1997.

U.S. Department of Agriculture, 1982. *Soil Survey of Kankakee County, IL.* Soil Conservation Service.

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, 1981. *National Wetlands Inventory Map.* Bradley Quadrangle.

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

U.S. Geological Survey, 1981. *1:24,000-scale topographic maps.* Bradley, IL Quadrangle.

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

2.5 SIDNEY (NS)

Sidney, IL is in Champaign County, approximately 75 miles east of Springfield, IL (Figure 4-7). Existing rail lines in the project area include an east/west-oriented NS line and a north/south-oriented Union Pacific Railroad Company (UP) line. The two lines cross via a UP underpass of the NS line.

The proposed construction site is located approximately 0.5 miles east of Sidney. It encompasses an area approximately 3,200 by 200 feet southwest of UP's underpass with NS. This rural site is primarily cropland with a strip of non-native grasses, scrub brush and deciduous trees adjacent to the existing rail rights-of-way. The area is bordered on the north by County Road 15 and on the east by an electrical substation and grassy field. Land to the south and west is primarily cropland. Two commercial buildings are northwest of the underpass. The commercial property also contains three anhydrous ammonia tanks.

2.5.1 Proposed Action and Alternatives

2.5.1.1 Proposed Action

The proposed action at Sidney would involve the construction and operation of a new connection between the north/south UP and east/west NS tracks. The connection would be southwest of UP's underpass with NS (Figure 4-7). This new construction would permit efficient movement between UP points in the Gulf Coast/Southwest and the Northeast. It will provide a competitive alternative for customers and avoid congestion in E. St. Louis, MO. The design includes approximately 3,200 feet of new rail line and would require approximately 7.3 acres. Approximately 5.3 acres of new right-of-way would be acquired.

Construction Requirements

Estimates for the labor force and duration of construction are not available, but are expected to be minimal due to the short length of track required. 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 Acquisition would result in the following estimated rail traffic changes to the existing rail lines that would be connected by the project:

- Traffic on the existing NS line would increase from 22 to 41 trains per day.
- Traffic on the existing UP St. Elmo, IL to Sydney line would increase by six trains per day.
- Traffic on the new construction would be nine trains per day.

2.5.1.2 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 NS and UP rights-of-way. In addition, the proposed construction would not result in significant environmental impacts.

No-Action Alternative

Under the no-action alternative, existing and additional post-Acquisition rail traffic would operate over existing UP 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 that would be possible as a result of the Acquisition.

2.5.2 Existing Environment

2.5.2.1 Land Use

The area of the proposed construction site is primarily cropland (Figure 4-7). A strip of non-native grasses, scrub brush and deciduous trees borders the existing rail rights-of-way. The UP mainline is located in a ravine, while the NS line and construction site is on higher ground. Land in the rights-of-way contain grasses and gravel ballast. Telephone lines border the southern edge of the NS right-of-way. Other adjacent land uses include a substation that borders approximately 300 feet of the eastern edge of the UP mainline right-of-way, approximately 2,000 feet southeast of the UP/NS crossing. Electrical utility lines are located east of the UP/NS intersection. These cross the NS line east of the intersection and extend north along the eastern edge of the UP right-of-way. Two Farmers Supply (FS) buildings exist adjacent to the north side of the NS right-of-way, approximately 400 feet west of the intersection. This facility is served by an existing NS siding, located on the north side of the mainline. The proposed construction site is zoned agricultural.

Soils at the proposed construction 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 Illinois.

2.5.2.2 Water Resources

No surface waters are present within 500 feet of the construction site. However, the UP rail line is located in a ravine that is prone to flooding from surface runoff and backwater from the Salt

Fork Creek. Warning devices to notify UP of water over its line are currently in place along the UP rail line.

National Wetland Inventory (NWI) maps indicated that no wetlands are crossed or are adjacent to the proposed construction site. However, Burns & McDonnell personnel noted a small potential wetland within the UP rail line corridor. No other surface waters were observed.

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

2.5.2.3 Biological Resources

Vegetation

The proposed construction site is primarily cropland. Land bordering the existing rail rights-of-way includes non-native grasses, shrubs, deciduous trees and crops. This vegetation is not unique or limited in the area. A mixture of gravel and grasses are present around the FS-owned facility, north and east of the UP/NS intersection.

Wildlife

Wildlife habitat found on and adjacent to the construction site is limited to narrow strips of grasses, shrubs and trees adjacent to the existing rail rights-of-way. The area provides suitable habitat for a variety of small mammals, reptiles and songbirds.

Threatened and Endangered Species

The USFWS and the Illinois DNR were contacted regarding threatened and endangered species in the area of the proposed rail line construction at Sidney. Responses from the USFWS and the Illinois DNR indicated that no federally listed threatened or endangered species occur in the project area. No threatened or endangered species or their habitats were observed during a site visit.

Parks, Forests, Preserves, Refuges and Sanctuaries

The Champaign County Conservation Area is approximately 0.5 miles northeast of the proposed construction site. This facility offers public land for recreational uses such as camping and fishing. No other parks, forests, preserves, refuges or sanctuaries are in the vicinity of the proposed construction.

2.5.2.4 Air Quality

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

2.5.2.5 Noise

Rail, vehicular and commercial traffic are the primary sources of noise in the area of the proposed rail line construction. Average Daily Traffic (ADT) data collected in 1991 for roads in the project vicinity were provided by the Illinois Department of Transportation (DOT). The ADT data closest to the proposed construction site are for a section of County Road 15 between the UP rail line overpass and Highway 516, which averaged 2,400 vehicles per day and a section of County Road 15 in Sidney between Highway 516 and Highway 522, which averaged 2,950 vehicles per day. A total of 30 trains per day currently use the NS mainline. There will be a corollary decrease in train traffic of six trains per day on the UP line north of the connection.

One residence exists within 500 feet of the proposed construction site. This residence is approximately 350 feet northeast of the UP/NS intersection on the north side of County Road 15. Mount Hope Cemetery and the Champaign County Conservation Area are located within 0.5 miles of the proposed construction site. Mount Hope Cemetery is approximately 2,500 feet northwest of the site on State Highway 516. The Champaign County Conservation Area is

approximately 2,500 feet northeast of the proposed construction. All of these receptors currently experience noise generated by passing trains.

2.5.2.6 Historic and Cultural Resources

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

2.5.2.7 Transportation and Safety

The rail transportation network consists of a north/south UP track that passes under an east/west NS track. This intersection is bordered on the north by County Road 15 which extends east/west and passes over the UP line. Other roads in the project area include State Highway 516, which passes through Sidney, and numerous residential roads. An existing, private drive for access to the substation is crossed at-grade by the NS line approximately 500 feet east of the UP and NS intersection.

The ADT data available for roads in the project area include a section of County Road 15, between the UP rail line overpass and Highway 516. This section of County Road 15 averaged 2,400 vehicles per day. An additional section of County Road 15 between Highway 516 and Highway 522 averaged 2,950 vehicles per day. A total of 22 trains per day currently use the NS mainline.

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 one unmappable site within the

city limits of Sidney, IL. This site 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.

2.5.3 Potential Environmental Impacts of Proposed Action

2.5.3.1 Land Use

Approximately 7.3 acres of land would be required for the new connection of which 5.3 acres would be newly acquired right-of-way. The land that would be converted to rail use from outside existing rights-of-way is approximately 80 percent cropland. The remaining land contains grasses and woody vegetation. Loss of prime farmland within the right-of-way would be insignificant since it is only a small percentage of the land currently in agricultural production in the project vicinity. Temporary construction impacts to adjacent farmland from excavation, such as mixing of soil profiles or soil compaction are expected to be minor due to the small amount of land affected and because construction would be limited to the proposed new right-of-way. The proposed construction would not conflict with adjacent land uses, utility lines or zoning.

No construction activities would occur within a designated coastal zone.

2.5.3.2 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 would be crossed by the proposed construction. Impacts from soil erosion resulting from cleared vegetation and open soil would be insignificant with BMPs used to control runoff and soil erosion. In addition, NS would restore disturbed areas of soil through reseeding. Storm water drainage patterns are not anticipated to be altered by the proposed project.

2.5.3.3 Biological Resources

Vegetation

The proposed action would impact a narrow strip of grassy and woody vegetation bordering the existing UP and NS rights-of-way. In addition, NS would reseed disturbances outside the subgrade slope of the new connection.

Wildlife

No adverse impacts to wildlife populations are anticipated. The construction site is small and 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 and the Illinois DNR were contacted regarding threatened and endangered species in the area of the proposed rail line construction at Sidney. Responses from the USFWS and the Illinois DNR indicated that no federally listed threatened or endangered species occur in the project area. Due to the lack of habitat, no impacts to threatened or endangered species are expected.

Parks, Forest Preserves, Refuges and Sanctuaries

The Champaign County Conservation Area would not be significantly impacted by the proposed construction. The area is located approximately 0.5 mile from the site and is currently exposed to rail activities from lines closer than the proposed action. Other parks, forest preserves, refuges or sanctuaries are over one mile from the proposed construction and would be unaffected by the proposed project.

2.5.3.4 Air Quality

Champaign 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 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.

2.5.3.5 Noise

As described in Section 2.1.2.5, one residence is within 500 feet of the proposed action. Mount Hope Cemetery and the Champaign County Conservation Area are within 0.5 miles of the site. All of these receptors currently experience noise generated by passing trains on the NS and UP rail lines. Presently these facilities are exposed to 30 trains per day on the NS line. NS estimates nine existing train movements would be diverted per day from the UP line over the proposed connection. This traffic exceeds STB thresholds for noise evaluation. Train traffic operating on the proposed connection would generate an Ldn 65 noise level at approximately 100 feet. No residences would be within this distance.

Some wheel squeal may be generated by trains operating on the proposed connection. At the expected level of nine trains per day operating on the new connection, wheel squeal, should it

occur, could generate a Ldn 65 noise level at a maximum of 700 feet from the track. Only one residence, the same one noted to be within 500 feet, would be within this distance of the 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 period.

2.5.3.6 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 Illinois SHPO regarding the proposed site. NS will continue consultations with the Illinois SHPO until the Section 106 process is complete.

2.5.3.7 Transportation and Safety

The proposed rail line connection would require no new at-grade crossings or additional warning signals. Therefore, no vehicle delays, disruptions or increased potential for train/vehicle accidents would result from the proposed construction. Short-term disruptions to local traffic during construction activities are not anticipated because the nearest at-grade crossing is 0.5 miles from the construction site. The connection would improve train movement, thereby enhancing the efficiency of the expanded NS rail operations in the area.

Review of the EDR database indicated that no hazardous waste sites, e.g., NPL, CERCLIS, RCRIS-TSD, ERNS, SHWS, LUST or SWF/LF, were identified in the vicinity of the proposed rail line construction. The database search revealed one unmappable site within the city limits of Sidney, Illinois. This site could not be located because of poor addres.s 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. Anhydrous-ammonia tanks were observed bordering the north side of the NS right-of-way, approximately 400 feet northwest of the UP underpass. These tanks would be unaffected by the proposed constructions. No hazardous waste sites are expected to be impacted by the proposed project.

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.

2.5.4 Potential Environmental Impact of Alternatives

2.5.4.1 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 within the confines of the electrical substation on the opposite side of the UP line and the overpass. The proposed alternative would minimize the acquisition of new right-of-way, the amount of cut and fill activities, and other environmental impacts.

2.5.4.2 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. Improvements in service and a competitive alternative between the Southwest and Northeast would not be realized. The no-action alternative is not considered practical or viable.

2.5.5 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:

2.5.5.1 Land Use

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

2.5.5.2 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.

2.5.5.3 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.

2.5.5.4 Air Quality

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

2.5.5.5 Noise

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

2.5.5.6 Historic and Cultural Resources

- NS will continue the Section 106 consultation process.

2.5.5.7 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.

2.5.6 References

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

Illinois Department of Transportation (DOT), 1991. *Champaign County Traffic Survey.*

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

U.S. Department of Agriculture, 1982. *Soil Survey of Champaign County, IL.* Soil Conservation Service

U.S. Department of Agriculture, 1983. *Important Farmland Map of Champaign County, IL.* Soil Conservation Service.

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, 1987. *National Wetlands Inventory Map.* St. Joseph, IL

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

U.S. Geological Survey, 1968. *1:24,000-scale topographic maps.* St. Joseph, IL Quadrangle.

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

2.6 TOLONO (NS)

Tolono, IL is in Champaign County, approximately 65 miles east of Springfield, IL (Figure 4-8). Existing rail lines in the project area include a north/south oriented Illinois Central Railroad (IC) line and an east/west oriented NS line. These two lines cross via a frog track structure. Connecting lines between these two lines are currently present northeast and northwest of the intersection of the mainlines. These connections allow southbound IC trains or NS trains (using existing trackage rights) to turn east or west, and allow east or west bound NS trains to turn north.

The proposed construction site at Tolono would include an area approximately 1,600 by 200 feet and include approximately 1,600 feet of new rail line. The permanent new rail right-of-way would be approximately 100 by 1,600 feet (3.7 acres). The site is primarily covered with a mixture of gravel, weedy annuals and two deciduous trees. Located between the proposed connection and the IC/NS intersection are three small railroad-associated buildings and an old concrete foundation. The east/west NS rail line borders these structures on the north. Land use adjacent to the site includes residential and commercial properties east and north of the proposed construction.

2.6.1 Proposed Action and Alternatives

2.6.1.1 Proposed Action

The proposed action at Tolono would involve the construction and operation of a new connection between the existing north/south IC and east/west NS rail lines. The connection would be located southeast of the intersection of the IC and NS lines (Figure 4-8), allowing northbound IC trains to turn east and westbound NS trains to turn south. This new construction would permit efficient train movement between the Northeast and Southwest. This provides an alternative connection with the IC for traffic between the Southwest and Northeast. This will provide a competitive alternative for customers and avoid congested areas including E. St. Louis, IL. The

design includes approximately 1,600 feet of new rail line construction. Approximately 3.7 acres would be required.

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 to the existing rail lines that would be connected by the project:

- Traffic on the existing NS line would increase from 21 to 37 trains per day.
- Traffic on the new connection would be two trains per day.

2.6.1.2 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 land outside existing railroad rights-of-way. Additionally, 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 IC 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.

2.6.2 Existing Environment

2.6.2.1 Land Use

The proposed construction site is primarily covered with a mixture of gravel and weedy annuals (Figure 4-8). Three railroad buildings are located southeast of the IC/NS rail line intersection. An old concrete foundation is also located in this area. Daggy Street and Clark Street border the proposed connection on its eastern side. The proposed construction crosses Benham Street, south of the IC/NS rail line intersection. Two residences are between 125 and 150 feet east of the proposed construction site off Daggy and Clark streets.

Adjacent areas include grass-covered lawns with mixed evergreen and deciduous trees with a mixture of gravel and weedy annuals bordering the rights-of-way. A narrow wooded area runs approximately 250 feet west of the IC and NS intersection, bordering the southern side of NS's right-of-way. Two overhead telephone lines cross the project site. One is adjacent to the southern side of NS's right-of-way while the other borders the eastern side of IC's right-of-way. A fiber optic cable is located along the north side of the existing NS line. Other land uses include a grain elevator owned by the Grand Prairie Company, approximately 500 feet east of the IC and NS intersection. This facility is served by a rail spur off and north of the existing NS line. A residential area begins approximately 500 feet north of the proposed connection. Residences are present south and east of the project area. The project area is zoned residential.

Soils at the proposed construction 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 Illinois.

2.6.2.2 Water Resources

A pond is being constructed approximately 200 feet west of the proposed action. During a site visit, this basin had a small amount of standing water present. This basin is level with the proposed action, but is separated from the project by the subgrade of IC's rail line. No other surface waters are present within or near the proposed construction site.

National Wetland Inventory (NWI) maps indicated that no wetlands are crossed or are adjacent to the proposed construction site, nor were any observed during a site visit.

Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) maps for the area have not yet been received at the time this report was written.

2.6.2.3 Biological Resources

Vegetation

Almost the entire construction site is a mixture of gravel and weedy annuals. Two deciduous trees between 15 and 20 feet tall are in the project area. Surrounding vegetation is typical of residential areas, including grass-covered lawns with evergreen and deciduous trees. A narrow strip of woods borders the south side of NS's right-of-way west of the IC and NS intersection. This vegetation is not unique or limited in the area.

Wildlife

Wildlife habitat in the project area is limited due to the sparse cover present. Habitat would be suitable for songbirds, small mammals and reptiles that are well adapted to urbanized environments. Existing cover would not support significant populations of animals.

Threatened and Endangered Species

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) and the Illinois Department of Natural Resources (DNR) were contacted regarding threatened and endangered species in the project area. The

USFWS and the Illinois DNR indicated that no known occurrences of any threatened or endangered species or their habitats occur within the project area.

Parks, Forest Preserves, Refuges and Sanctuaries

West Side Park is located approximately 2,000 feet northwest of the proposed construction site. Playground and picnic facilities are available. No other parks, forest preserves, refuges or sanctuaries are located within a mile of the project area.

2.6.2.4 Air Quality

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

2.6.2.5 Noise

Rail, vehicular and commercial traffic are the primary sources of noise in the area of the proposed construction. A total of 21 trains per day currently use the NS rail line.

Twenty-two residences are within 500 feet of the proposed construction site. One church and a cemetery are within 1,250 feet of the proposed connection. The church is approximately 1,200 feet north of the site. The Saint Mary's Cemetery is between 1,100 and 1,200 feet southeast of the proposed construction site. All of these receptors currently experience noise generated by passing trains.

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.

2.6.2.6 Historic and Cultural Resources

Records at the Illinois State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) were reviewed to determine if previously identified historic and cultural resources are in the project construction area. A site potentially eligible for NRHP listing was identified approximately 100 feet from the proposed project. This site is an old train depot and marker where President Abraham Lincoln made his last formal address in Illinois on February 2, 1861. Consultation with the Illinois SHPO regarding this site will continue.

2.6.2.7 Transportation and Safety

The rail transportation network consists of a north/south single track IC rail line intersecting with east/west double track NS lines. The northern NS track is a siding, while the southern track is a mainline. A rail spur is located south of the NS mainline and serves a grain elevator. The spur extends westward across the area of the proposed construction. The IC and NS lines are connected via turnouts on the northwest and northeast side of the IC and NS intersection. These connections allow southbound IC trains and NS trains (using existing trackage rights) to turn east or west, and east or westbound NS trains to turn north. Major roads in Tolono include U.S. Route 45, Benham Street and local roads. An existing at-grade crossing of the IC line is located at Benham Street approximately 800 feet south of the IC/NS rail line crossing. The proposed construction would also cross Benham Street at this same location. Immediately east of the site are Daggy Street and Clark Street, which are residential roads.

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

2.6.3 Potential Impacts of Proposed Action

2.6.3.1 Land Use

The proposed project would result in minimal impacts to surrounding land uses. The land to be converted is primarily a mixture of gravel and weedy annuals. Adjacent structures and residences are not anticipated to be disturbed by the proposed construction. Existing utility poles may require relocation. If relocation is required, the expanded NS would coordinate with the local utility companies to determine a suitable location. The fiber optic cable northeast of the proposed construction site would not be impacted. The proposed project would be an expansion of the existing rail use. There would be no conflicts with area zoning.

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

Construction activities would not occur within a designated coastal zone.

2.6.3.2 Water Resources

The construction of the proposed rail line would not have any adverse impacts on groundwater or surface water resources. The pond under construction would not be impacted due to its separation from the project by the existing IC's roadbed. Impacts from soil erosion resulting from cleared vegetation and disturbed soil would be insignificant with BMPs used to control runoff and surface instability. 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. The proposed action is not within the 100 year floodplain.

2.6.3.3 Biological Resources

Vegetation

The proposed action would impact vegetation on the proposed construction site. However, this vegetation, grasses and weedy annuals, is not unique. In addition, NS would reseed outside the subgrade slope of the new connection. Vegetation in adjacent areas would not be impacted.

Wildlife

No adverse impacts to wildlife populations are anticipated. The construction site is small and 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 and the Illinois DNR were contacted regarding threatened and endangered species in the area of the proposed rail line construction at Sidney. Responses from the USFWS and the Illinois DNR indicated that no federally listed threatened or endangered species occur in the project area. Due to lack of habitat, no threatened and endangered species are expected.

Parks, Forest Preserves, Refuges and Sanctuaries

West Side Park would not be significantly impacted due to its distance of approximately 2,000 feet from the proposed action. This park currently experiences train noise from the north/south IC rail line, which is approximately 600 feet closer than the proposed action. No other parks, forests, preserves, refuges and sanctuaries are within one mile of the proposed construction.

2.6.3.4 Air Quality

Champaign 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 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 projected to experience increased traffic are discussed in Part 2.

2.6.3.5 Noise

As described in Section 2.3.2.5, twenty-two residences are within 500 feet of the proposed construction site. One church and Saint Mary's Cemetery are within 1,250 feet of the site. All of these receptors currently experience noise generated by passing trains. Presently, these facilities are exposed to approximately 21 trains per day on the NS. NS estimates two train movements per day on the proposed rail line. This increase does not exceed STB thresholds for noise evaluation and is minor compared to existing rail noise. Noise impacts to local residences are anticipated to be minimal.

Some wheel squeal may be generated by trains operating on the proposed connection. At the expected level of two trains per day operating on the new connection, wheel squeal, should it occur, would generate a Ldn 65 noise level at a maximum of 200 feet from the track. Only 11 residences, of the 22 within 500 feet, would be within this distance of the 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 period.

2.6.3.6 Historic and Cultural Resources

The proposed connecting track has the potential to impact the listed NRHP eligible site, the former train depot where President Abraham Lincoln gave his final speech in Illinois. Consultations with the Illinois SHPO will continue until the Section 106 process is complete.

2.6.3.7 Transportation and Safety

The proposed rail line connection would require an expanded at-grade crossing at Benham Street. Vehicle delays, disruptions and additional opportunities for train/vehicle accidents would result from construction and operation of the proposed connection. These would be minimized by the installation of appropriate warning signals and the low level of both vehicle and train traffic. Short-term delays and disruptions of local traffic could occur during the construction period. The connection would improve train movement, thereby enhancing the efficiency of the expanded NS rail operations in the area and reducing accident exposures associated with longer, less direct routing.

The ADT data available for roads in the project area include a section of U.S. Route 45 between Town Road 528 and the northern city limit of Tolono, which averaged 8,400 vehicles per day and a section of County Road 1000E, between County Road 700N and 600N, which averaged 125 vehicles per day. A total of 21 trains per day currently use the NS rail.

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

of Tolono, IL. 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 were observed in the project area. No such 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.

2.6.4 Potential Environmental Impact of Alternatives

2.6.4.1 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 eliminate the acquisition of new right-of-way and associated environmental impacts.

2.6.4.2 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. Improvements in service and a competitive alternative between the Northeast and Southwest would not be realized. The no-action alternative is not considered practical or viable.

2.6.5 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:

2.6.5.1 Land Use

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

2.6.5.2 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.

2.6.5.3 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.

2.6.5.4 Air Quality

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

2.6.5.5 Noise

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

2.6.5.6 Historic and Cultural Resources

- NS will continue the Section 106 consultation process.

2.6.5.7 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 Illinois Department of Transportation for any needed upgrades to warning structures at the expanded at-grade crossing.

2.6.6 References

Illinois Department of Transportation (DOT), 1991. *Champaign County Traffic Survey.*

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

U.S. Department of Agriculture, 1982. *Soil Survey of Champaign County, IL.*

U.S. Department of Agriculture, 1983. *Soil Conservation Service.* Important Farmland Map of Champaign County, IL.

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, 1988. *National Wetlands Inventory Map.* Tolono Quadrangle.

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

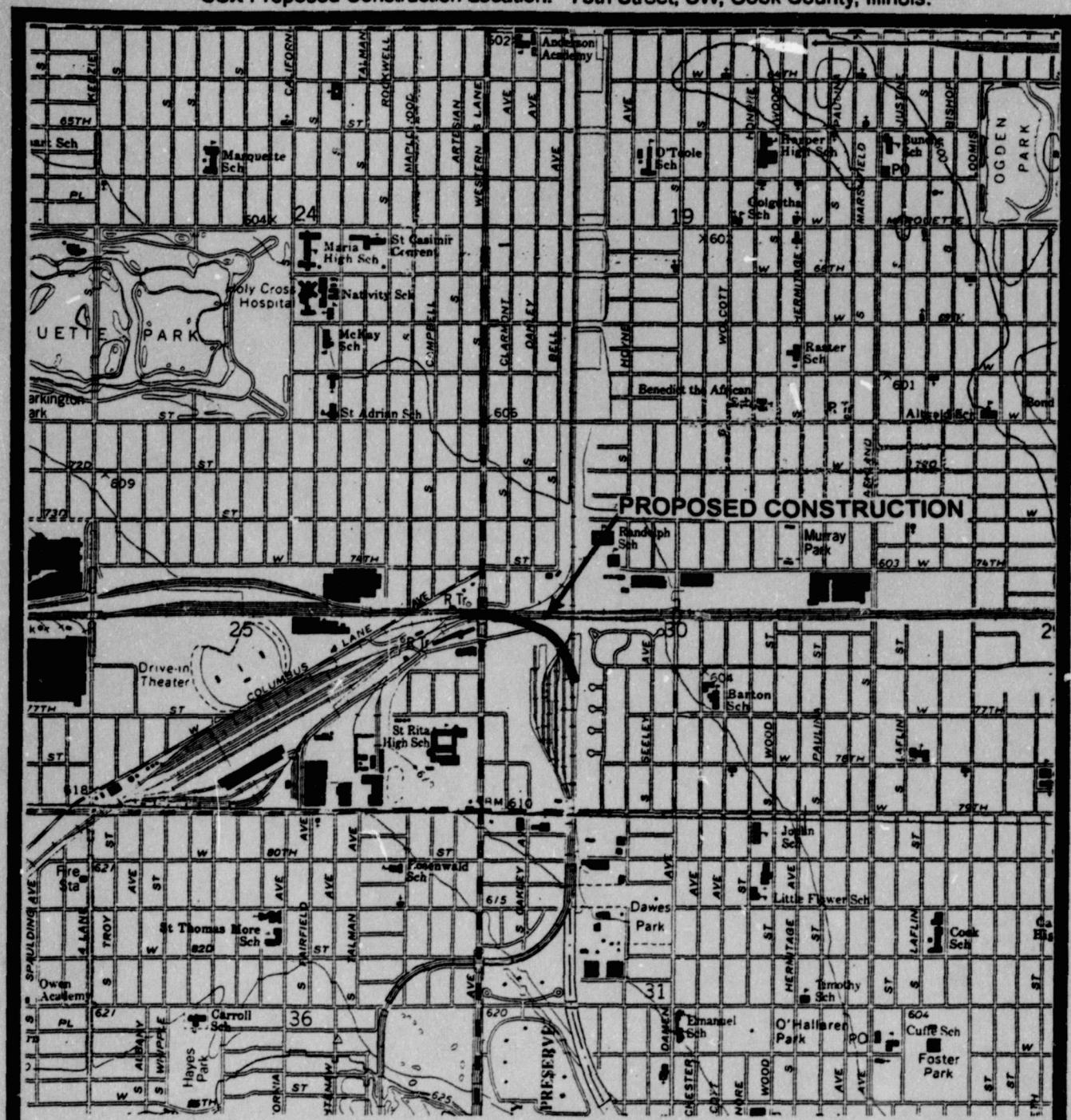
U.S. Geological Survey, 1968. *1:24,000-scale topographic maps*. Tolono, Ill. Quadrangle

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

FIGURES

Figure 4-3

CSX Proposed Construction Location: 75th Street, SW, Cook County, Illinois.



SITE IS NOT IN A DESIGNATED FLOOD ZONE.
NO WETLANDS ARE LOCATED WITHIN 500 FEET OF THE PROPOSED PROJECT.
THERE ARE NO KNOWN HISTORIC SITES IMPACTED BY THE PROPOSED CONSTRUCTION.

DAMES & MOORE
A DAMES & MOORE GROUP COMPANY

SCALE 1:24,000

0 1/2 0 1 MILE

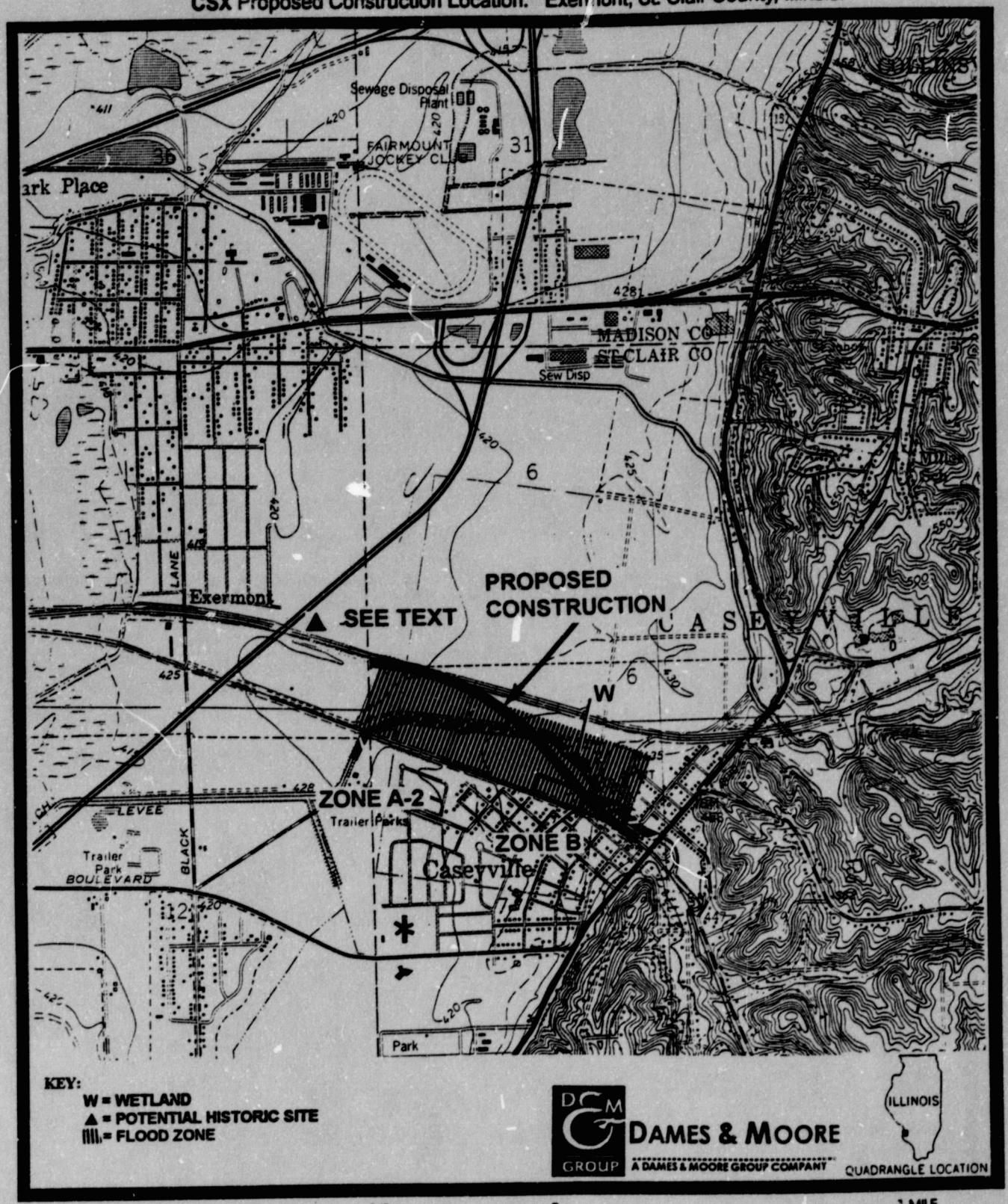
1000 0 1000 2000 3000 4000 5000 6000 7000 FEET

N

Base Map: *USGS 7.5' Topographic Quadrangle: Blue Island, Illinois 1993; Englewood, Illinois 1993*

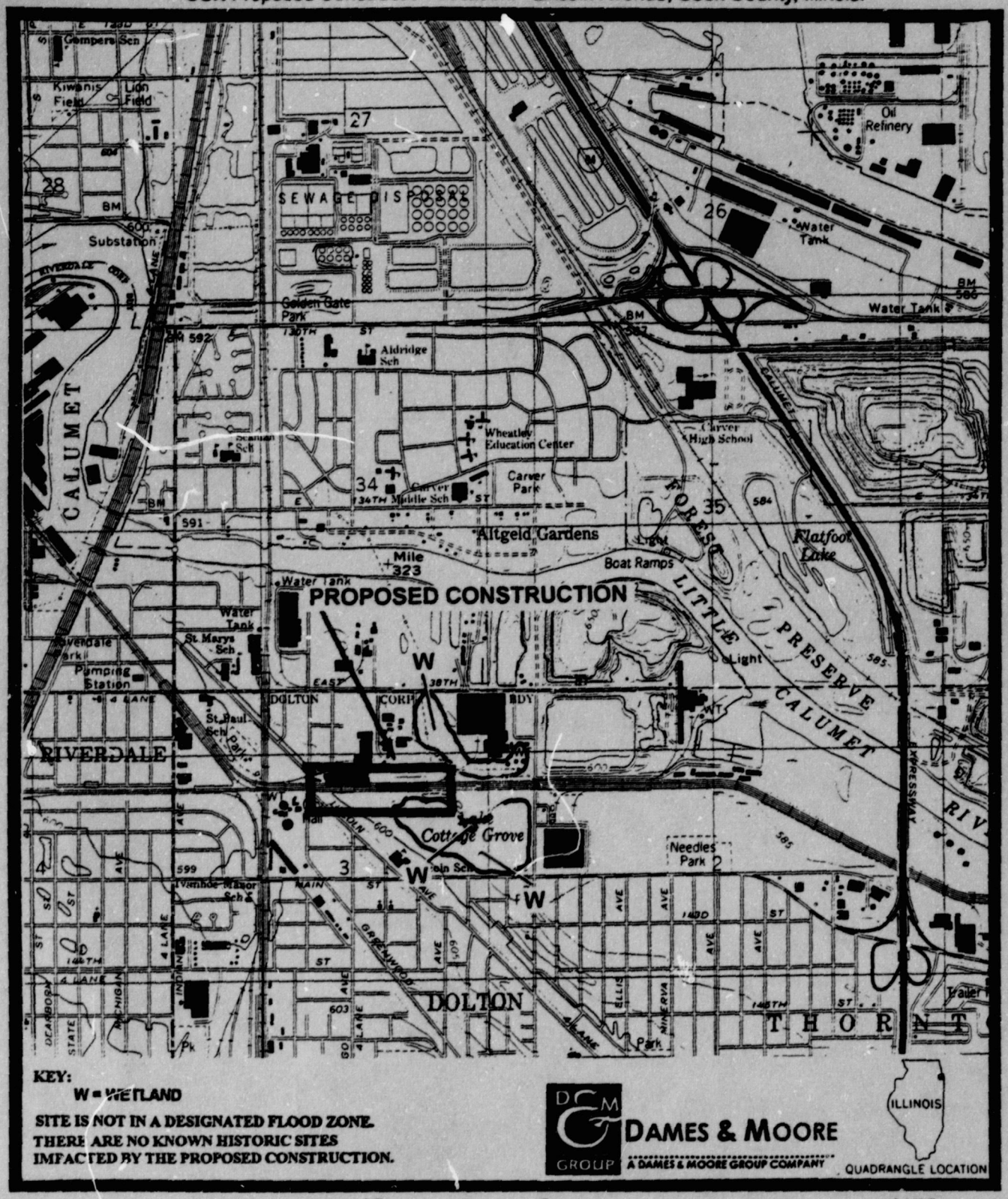
Figure 4-4

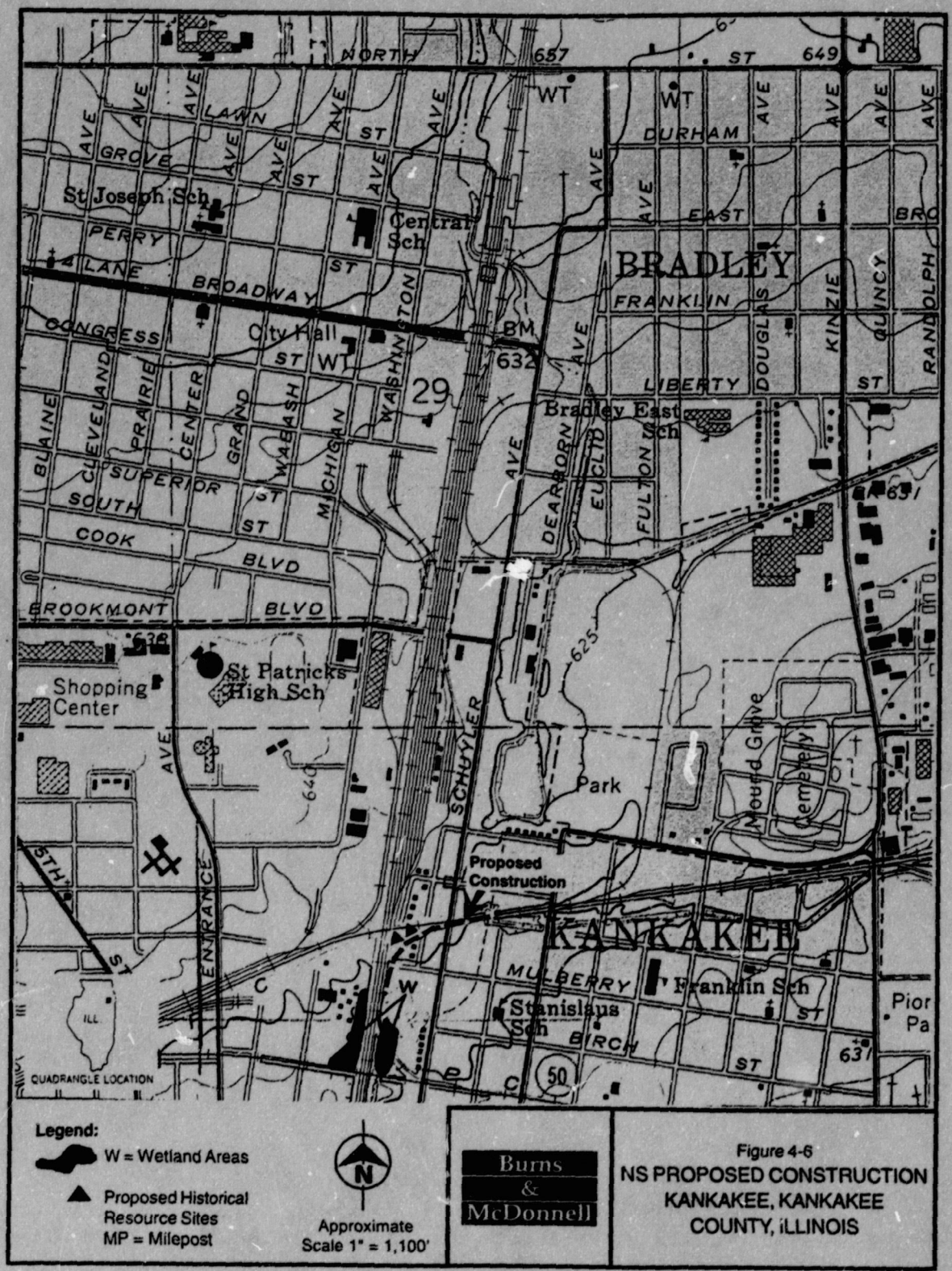
CSX Proposed Construction Location: Exermont, St. Clair County, Illinois.



Base Map: *USGS 7.5' Topographic Quadrangle: Monks Mound, Illinois 1954 (Photorevised 1993)*

Figure 4-5
CSX Proposed Construction Location: Lincoln Avenue, Cook County, Illinois.

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CONGRESS
PERRY LANE
COOK BLVD
BROOKMONT BLVD
SOUTH
SUPERIOR
BUAINE
CLEVELAND
PRAIRIE
CENTER
GRAND
WABASH
MICHIGAN
WASHINGTON
DEARBORN
EUCLID
FULTON
DOUGLAS
KINZIE
QUINCY
RANDOLPH
AVE
631
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625
640
St Patricks High Sch
Shopping Center
Park
Mound Grove Cemetery
SCHUYLER
Proposed Construction
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MULBERRY
Franklin Sch
Stanislaus Sch
BIRCH
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5TH
ENTRANCE
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QUADRANGLE LOCATION
Legend:
W = Wetland Areas
Proposed Historical Resource Sites
MP = Milepost
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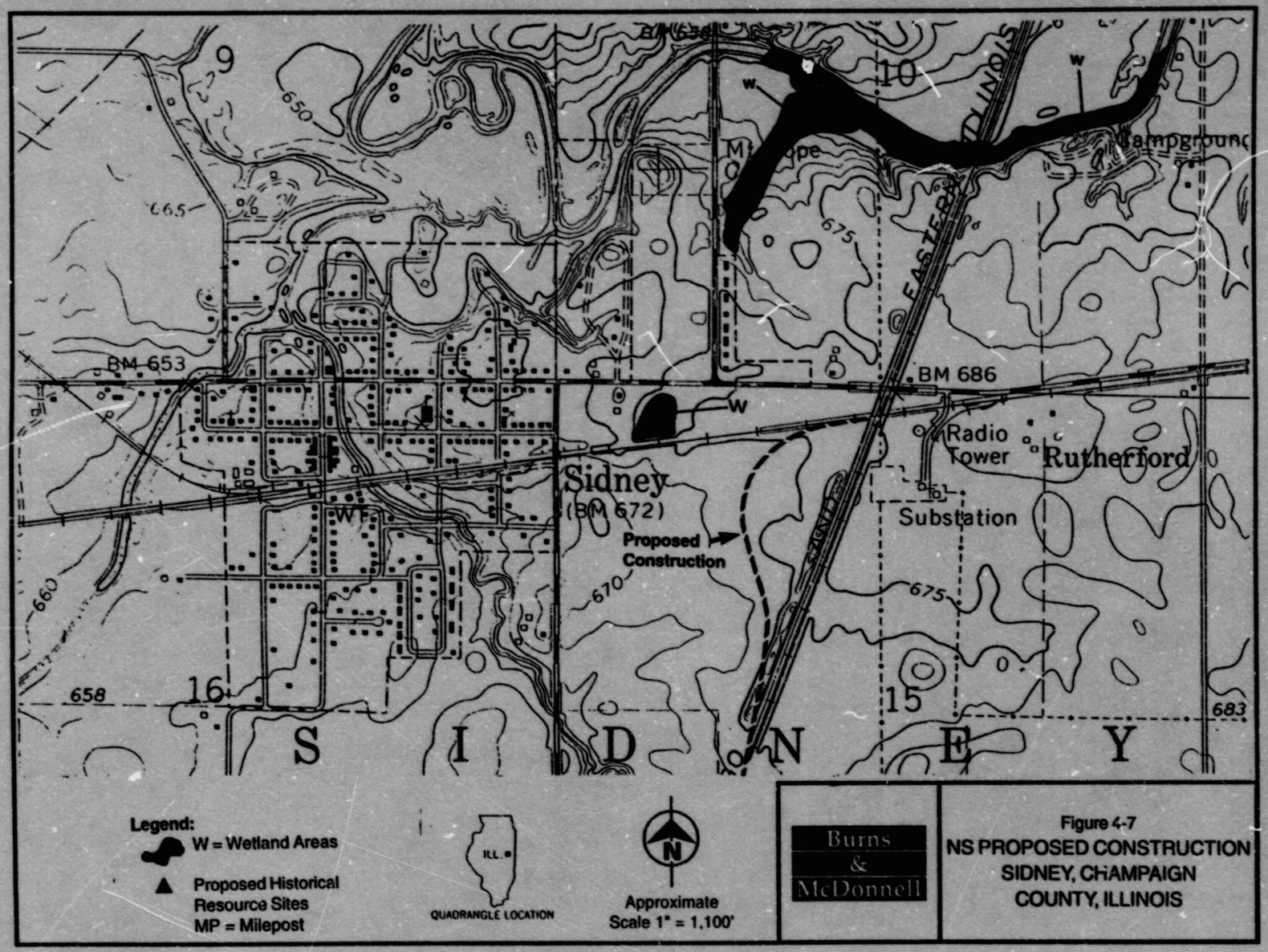
Approximate Scale 1" = 1,100'
Burns & McDonnell
Figure 4-6
NS PROPOSED CONSTRUCTION
KANKAKEE, KANKAKEE COUNTY, ILLINOIS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S I D N E Y
Legend:
W = Wetland Areas
Proposed Historical
Resource Sites
MP = Milepost
ILL.
QUADRANGLE LOCATION
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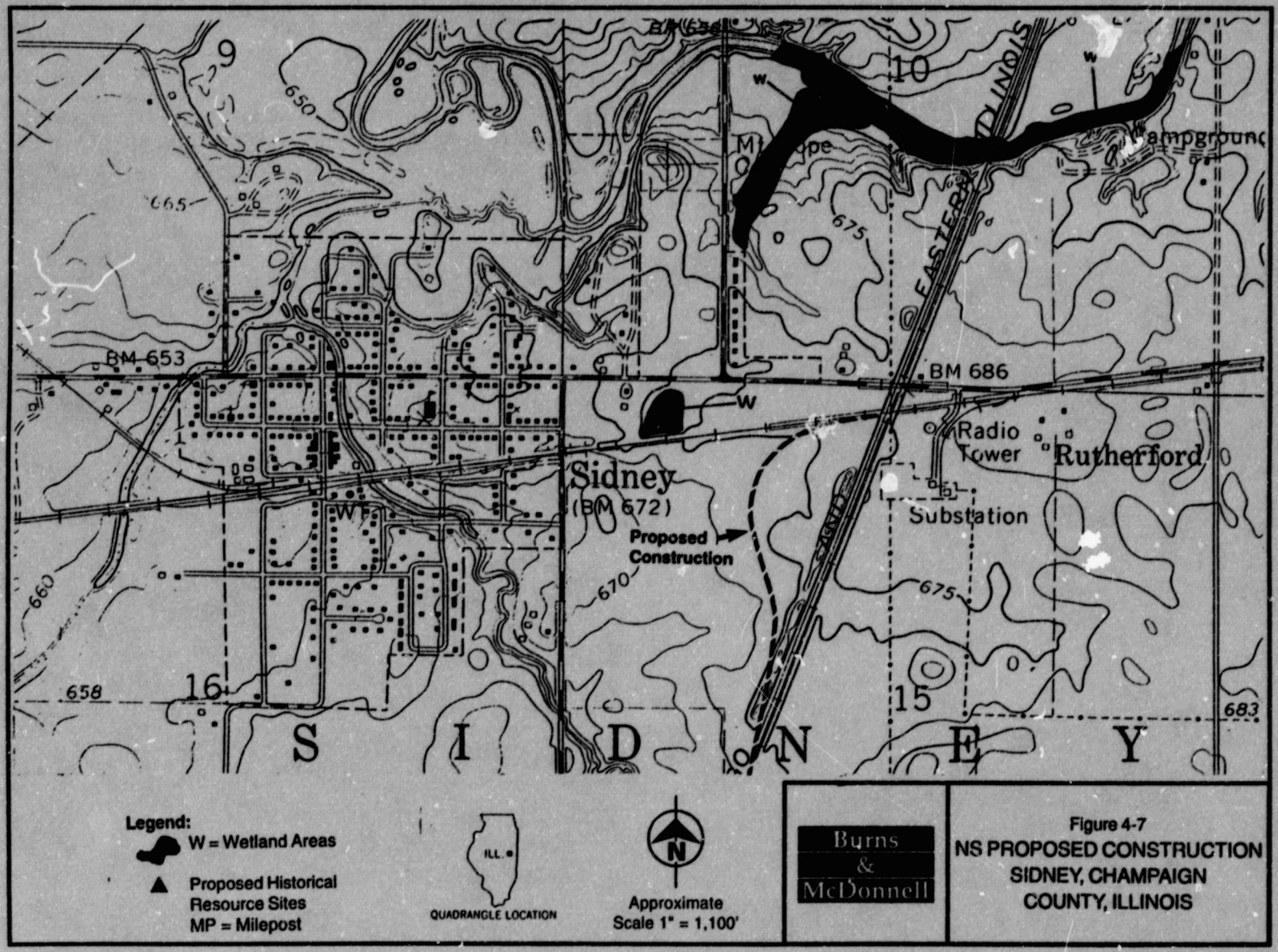
Approximate
Scale 1" = 1,100'
Burns
&
McDonnell
Figure 4-7
NS PROPOSED CONSTRUCTION
SIDNEY, CHAMPAIGN
COUNTY, ILLINOIS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S I D N E Y
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W = Wetland Areas
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Resource Sites
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ILL.
QUADRANGLE LOCATION
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Scale 1" = 1,100'
Burns
&
McDonnell
Figure 4-7
NS PROPOSED CONSTRUCTION
SIDNEY, CHAMPAIGN
COUNTY, ILLINOIS

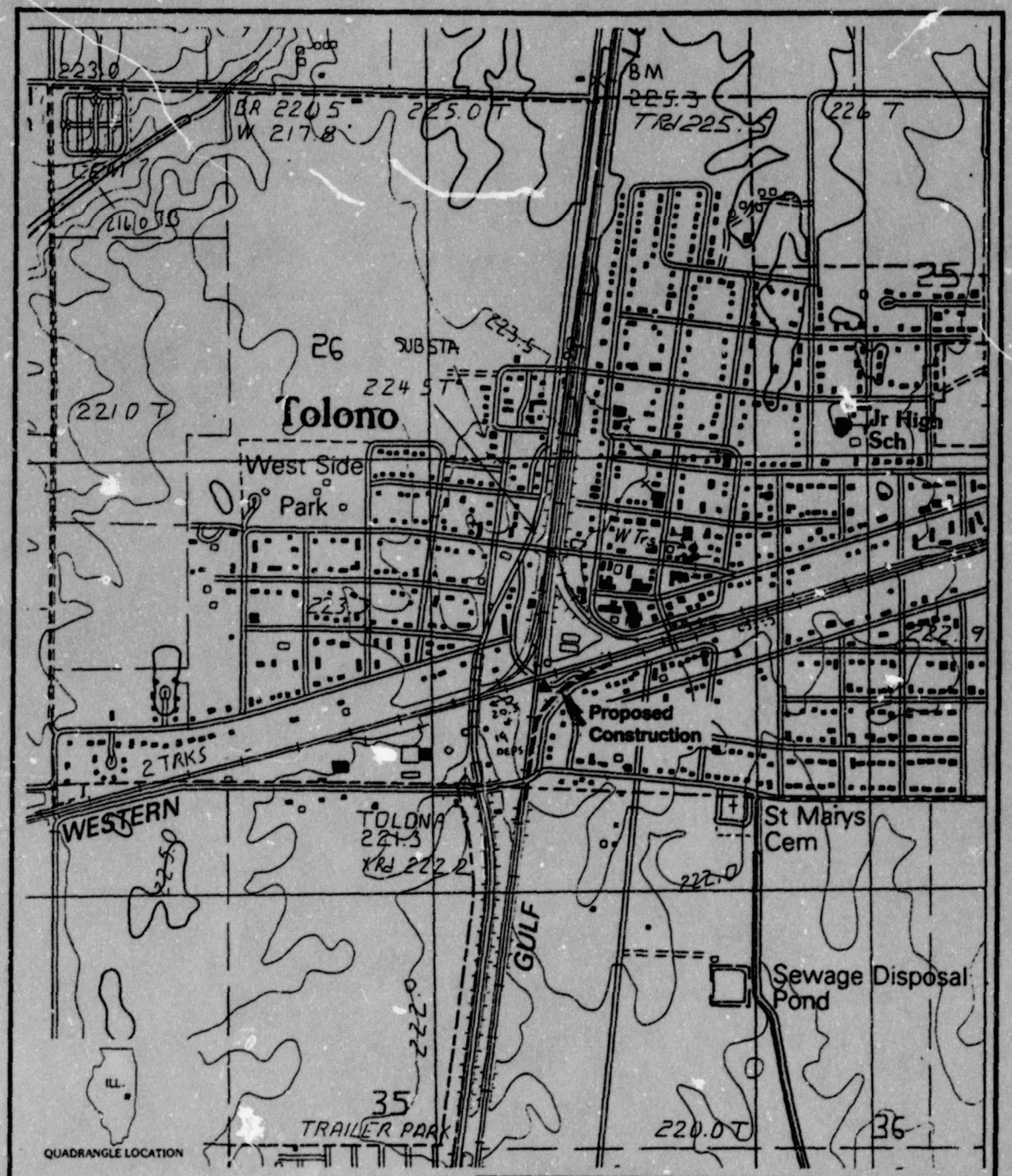

Figure 4-8
NS PROPOSED CONSTRUCTION
TOLONO, CHAMPAIGN COUNTY, ILLINOIS

3.0 INDIANA

3.0 INDIANA

Four proposed connections in Indiana require environmental analysis. One connection is proposed by CSX. Three connections are proposed by NS. This section contains an analysis of the potential environmental impacts associated with the proposed connections. Information on the proposed constructions is provided below:

Location	Length (feet)	Description
Willow Creek (CSX)*	2,800	Connecting CSX and Conrail tracks to facilitate movements between Porter, IN and Chicago, IL.
Alexandria (NS)*	1,000	Connecting track between Conrail and NS to permit creation of a new, efficient and consolidated through-route from Chicago, IL to Cincinnati, OH, Atlanta, GA and the Southeast via Alexandria and Muncie, IN.
Butler (NS)	1,700	Connecting NS and Conrail tracks for direct through-movement of traffic from NS Detroit, MI line to Conrail Chicago, IL line creating an efficient, new route.
Tolleston (NS)	900	Connecting NS and Conrail tracks to serve NS industry at Gary, IN from Conrail line.

*This project is 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, it will be the subject of a separate proceeding and environmental review that may be completed before the STB acts on the control application.

A detailed description of each of these proposed construction projects, including alternative actions considered, the existing environment, the potential environmental impact and proposed mitigation measures are provided in this section.

CSX DISCUSSION

3.1 WILLOW CREEK (CSX)

The proposed construction project is located north of the intersection of Willow Creek Road and Portage Avenue in the City of Portage, Porter County, IN, approximately 20 miles east of Gary, IN (Figure 4-10). The proposed project is within CSX's Northeastern and Eastern Gateway Service Routes and would involve constructing a new 2,800-foot connection between the CSX rail line generally running from northwest to southeast and the Conrail line generally running from northeast to southwest.

The new connection would be built in the southeast quadrant of the intersecting CSX and Conrail lines. The connection is expected to require the acquisition of approximately 0.2 acre of additional land; it will otherwise be constructed on existing right-of-way.

Land use surrounding the proposed site consists of a mix of rural and suburban development.

3.1.1 Proposed Action and Alternatives

3.1.1.1 Proposed Action

Construction of a connection in the southeast quadrant of the existing intersection of the CSX and Conrail rail lines will allow east-west movements between the CSX Garrett Subdivision and Conrail Porter Branch, facilitating the movement of trains, including multilevel traffic, between Garrett, IN and Chicago, Illinois to access Gibson Yard and Blue Island Yard (Figure 4-10). The new connection will extend for a distance of approximately 2,800 feet between approximately milepost BI-236.5 on CSX's mainline between Garrett, IN and Chicago and approximately milepost 248.8 on Conrail's mainline between Porter, IN and Gibson Yard. The connection will cross Willow Creek Road and require relocation of the existing crossing to widen the track corridor to accommodate the new connection.

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 the project. 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 would decrease from an average of 9.6 to 0 trains per day northeast of the proposed connection and would increase from an average of 9.6 to 11.4 trains per day southwest of the proposed connection.
- Traffic on the existing CSX line would increase from an average of 22 to 49.7 trains per day southeast of the proposed connection and would increase from an average 22 to 38.6 trains per day northwest of the proposed connection.
- An average of approximately 11 trains per day would operate over the new connection.

3.1.1.2 Alternatives

Build Alternatives

No build alternatives exist for the proposed rail line connection. The proposed connection is the most direct way to permit movement between these 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

This connection permits CSX to use the Indiana Harbor Belt line for access to the Gibson and Blue Island Yards and other points in the Chicago area. Were the connection not built, CSX would have considerable operational difficulties serving the Gibson (finished auto) yard in the Chicago area. Trains destined to that yard would need to be routed approximately 15 additional

miles, adding about two hours transit time and resulting in additional emissions, congestion and fuel usage. Also, traffic would not be able to efficiently access the Blue Island Yard from the east were the connection not built. Congestion would increase on other lines, to the detriment of local shippers and efficient operations in the Chicago area. As a result of these problems, CSX's ability to maintain an efficient service capable of attracting traffic from motor carriers would be impaired and the environmental benefits of diverting traffic off congested highways lost. For these reasons, the no-action alternative was rejected.

3.1.2 Existing Environment

3.1.2.1 Land Use

The topography of the project area is relatively flat, and the surrounding area is low rolling hills. The current CSX/Conrail track intersection is located in an area of mixed rural and suburban development (scattered residential and commercial land use).

The existing rail lines cross each other at equal grade approximately 30 feet west of Willow Creek Road, a north-south running road. Two recently constructed overpasses (Willow Creek Road/Crisman Road) cross over the CSX rail line southeast of the grade crossing and the Conrail rail line northeast of the grade crossing.

The proposed project will require acquisition of 0.2 acres of property south of the rail intersection which is undeveloped and currently supports trees and non-woody vegetation.

West of the rail line intersection is undeveloped land that supports hardwood trees, small shrubs, non-woody vegetation, and grasses. Southeast of the intersection are two residential properties and the Willow Creek/Crisman Road rights-of-way. Areas of undeveloped property supporting trees, non-woody vegetation, and grasses are located east of the intersection. North of the grade crossing are Old Porter Road, Woodland Park, and a commercial building (AT&T facility) in the area. Land uses within 500 feet include two residences located approximately 150 feet south-

southeast and Woodland Park located approximately 500 feet north of the proposed project. A historical marker (erected in 1995 by the Indiana Historical Bureau) was noted in the southeast corner of this park.

Numerous utilities are located in the vicinity of the connections. These include three fiber optic cables and three petroleum pipelines. Two of the fiber optic cables parallel the CSX line on the south, and the third parallels the Conrail tracks on the west side. The pipelines parallel Conrail's tracks on the east, crossing under the CSX line and Willow Creek Road. One of the pipelines also crosses under the Conrail line approximately 390 feet southeast of the CSX/Conrail rail line intersection. An overhead electric power line crosses over the CSX and Conrail lines approximately 50 feet east of the railroad crossing.

According to local representatives, no local land use plan exists for the City of Portage or the County of Porter, IN. The area surrounding the proposed connection is zoned residential to the east and west, commercial/business to the south for 300 feet and recreational/open area to the north. The City owns the land directly to the north and has designated this land as park land.

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

No prime farmland soils are located within or adjacent to the project site as documented by the Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS) national database of prime farmland and the Porter County, IN, Soil Survey.

According to the Indiana Department of Natural Resources (IDNR), Water Resources Department, there are no federally recognized Coastal Zone Management Programs in Indiana.

3.1.2.2 Water Resources

No surface waters were observed within 500 feet of the project area.

According to the Portage, IN National Wetland Inventory (NWI) map (1981), two wetland areas have been identified within 500 feet of the proposed connection. The wetlands are both approximately 200 feet from the proposed site, one west-northwest of the project, the other southeast of the project. One additional small wetland located approximately 300 feet east of the proposed construction project was identified during site wetland delineations. The locations of wetland areas within 500 feet of the construction project are shown on Figure 4-10.

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

3.1.2.3 Biological Resources

Vegetation

The proposed construction project is located in an area that supports non-woody vegetation and trees. Construction of the connection would require clearing an area approximately 400 feet long and 70 feet wide of non-woody vegetation and trees south-southwest of the intersection.

Wildlife

Wildlife habitat found on and adjacent to the construction site is limited to patches of grasses, shrubs, and trees. The area provides suitable habitat for a variety of mammals and songbirds.

Threatened and Endangered Species

Of the federally listed threatened or endangered animal species and plant species known to occur in the State of Indiana, only two are known to inhabit Porter County. These include the Karner blue butterfly *(Lycaeides melissa samuelis)* and Pitcher's thistle *(Cirsium pitcheri)*. According to

IDNR, no state or federal threatened, endangered, or rare plant or animal species are reported to occur in the project vicinity.

Parks, Forests, Preserves, Refuges and Sanctuaries

With the exception of Woodland Park located approximately 500 feet north of the site, no wildlife sanctuaries, refuges, or national, state or local forests/parks are located within one mile of the project.

3.1.2.4 Air Quality

Porter County is categorized as being in nonattainment with respect to the National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS). Current sources of emissions in the project area include locomotives, vehicles, and industries.

3.1.2.5 Noise

Rail, vehicular, and commercial traffic are the primary sources of noise in the proposed project area. A total of 9.6 trains currently run over the Conrail line per day; 23.4 trains currently run over the CSX line per day.

Noise-sensitive land uses within 500 feet of the project include two residences to the southeast, and Woodland park to the north.

3.1.2.6 Historic and Cultural Resources

According to the March 11, 1997, response letter from Larry D. Macklin, Indiana SHPO, the proposed project area is physiographically suitable to contain archaeological resources; however no known historical or architectural sites are listed in or eligible for inclusion in the National Register of Historic Places within the project area.

Dames & Moore visited the Indiana SHPO the week of May 19, 1997, to review the cultural resources inventory. Review of the inventory for the general vicinity of the area of potential effect confirmed the above preliminary assessment provided by the SHPO. It was found that the SHPO cultural resources inventory contains no known sites in or near the area of potential effect for the project.

The Indiana Historical Bureau has erected a historical marker at the Willow Creek Station, commemorating a conflict in 1874 between the Michigan Central Railroad and the State of Indiana. The historical marker is not believed to have any associated physical or cultural resources of historic significance.

3.1.2.7 Transportation and Safety

The existing Willow Creek rail transportation network consists of existing CSX and Conrail rail lines that intersect at Willow Creek Road. The existing grade crossing is protected by flashing light signals and gates both north and south of the area where the two rail lines currently cross Willow Creek Road. Access to the rail construction area would be from Portage Avenue, and Crisman and Willow Creek Roads.

An Environmental Data Resource (EDR) database search did not identify any hazardous waste sites or other areas of environmental concern within 500 feet of the proposed rail line construction. The database search revealed 5 unmappable sites within the Willow Creek city limits. These sites could not be located because of poor address or geocoding information provided to the state and/or federal databases.

3.1.3 Potential Environmental Impacts of Proposed Action

3.1.3.1 Land Use

The proposed construction project is not expected to have a significant impact on land use on or off existing rail property. Adjacent land uses will continue to function normally with the exception of 0.2 acres of undeveloped land currently supporting trees and non-woody vegetation which would be acquired and converted to railroad use and temporary impacts during construction on Woodland Park aesthetics. Prime farmland soils will not be affected by the proposed construction and the site is not located within a Coastal Zone Management Area.

3.1.3.2 Water Resources

No bodies of water are present in the project area. Therefore, no alterations to creek embankments or channelized flows would result from the proposed construction.

The three wetlands present within 500 feet of the project are not expected to be filled or drained as a result of the proposed project. Erosion and sediment control measures would effectively minimize sediment deposition, turbidity, and related water quality impacts to the wetlands or other more distant water resources near the proposed project.

3.1.3.3 Biological Resources

Vegetation

The proposed project is located in an area of trees and non-woody vegetation. As mentioned in section 3.2.2.3, an area approximately 400 feet by 70 feet would need to be cleared as a result of the project. Several trees would be removed. Non-woody vegetation would be cleared also but opportunistic species would revegetate along new railroad right-of-way.

Wildlife

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

Threatened and Endangered Species

Field surveys to assess the presence of threatened and endangered species were not conducted; therefore, specific impacts to these species could not be assessed.

Parks, Forests, Preserves, Refuges and Sanctuaries

Woodland Park will be temporarily impacted during construction activities. Once construction is complete, this disruption will cease.

3.1.3.4 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 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 CSX 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.

3.1.3.5 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.

Generally, wheel squeal is likely to occur on any curve with a radius less than about 1000 feet, or when the curvature is greater than approximately 5 degrees. The proposed connection at willow Creek would have a curvature of 4 degrees 45 minutes. Therefore, wheel squeal is not expected to occur, or would be minimal since the connecting curve is shallow, and horn noise from trains approaching the grade crossing would outweigh noise from trains on the connection.

3.1.3.6 Historic and Cultural Resources

No known significant archaeological sites have been identified for the project area. The Indiana SHPO has recommended that a reconnaissance level archaeological survey be undertaken prior to ground disturbance because the project area has potential to contain archaeological resources.

No impacts to potentially significant historic structures are expected within the area of potential effect. No potentially significant historic structures have been identified for the project area. The project area is the site of an event in railroad history. However, it is not anticipated that the proposed action will affect the historic significance of the area because the proposed project will continue the association with railroading that is commemorated at the Willow Creek Station.

3.1.3.7 Transportation and Safety

The proposed project is anticipated to require relocation of the existing grade crossing at Willow Creek Road to accommodate the widening of the track corridor. Existing warning signals at the

crossing will remain the same. No impacts are expected at the new connection due to the relocation of the crossing, since an existing crossing is currently located at Willow Creek Road.

No impacts relative to hazardous waste sites or sites of environmental concern are anticipated because no such sites were identified within 500 feet of the proposed rail line construction.

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, drainage ditches are expected to retain the contaminated runoff.

3.1.4 Potential Environmental Impacts of Alternative Actions

3.1.4.1 Build Alternatives

No build alternatives were identified.

3.1.4.2 No-Action Alternative

If the no-action alternative were implemented, the proposed rail line connection would not be constructed and trains could not be efficiently routed between the existing CSX and Conrail lines. This would impair CSX's ability to compete with other carriers in transporting freight in the New York-Chicago service corridor, which would result in less efficient routing, increased congestion, transit time, fuel consumption and emissions (See Section 3.2.1.2). As a result of these problems, CSX's ability to maintain an efficient service capable of attracting traffic from motor carriers would be impaired and the environmental benefits of diverting traffic off congested highways lost. For these reasons, the no-action alternative was rejected.

3.1.5 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.

3.1.5.1 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.

3.1.5.2 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 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.

3.1.5.3 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 Indiana DNR and USFWS will be conducted.

3.1.5.4 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.

3.1.5.5 Noise

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

3.1.5.6 Historic and Cultural Resources

A cultural resources survey would be conducted prior to project initiation to identify archaeological sites within the area that will be affected by construction. Any sites identified would be evaluated and potential adverse effects mitigated.

In the event that potentially significant resources are discovered during the course of the project, the Indiana SHPO will be notified and procedures recommended by the Indiana 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.

3.1.5.7 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.

3.1.6 References

Land Use

USGS, 1992. Topographical Quadrangle, Portage, IN.

USDI, 1981. National Wetlands Inventory Map, Portage, IN, November.

USDA, 1983. Soil Conservation Service, Important Farmlands, Porter County, IN.

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Deaky, Dawn, 1997. Phone conversation. Water Resources, Indiana Department of Natural Resources, March 3.

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USGS, 1992. Topographical Quadrangle, Portage, IN.

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National Flood Insurance Program, 1982. Flood Insurance Rate Map, City of Portage, Porter County, IN, Community Panel Number 180202 0015 B, June.

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Whitaker, J and Gammon, J. 1988. Endangered and Threatened Vertebrate Animals of Indiana: Their Distribution and Abundance. Indiana Academy of Science. Indianapolis, IN.

USDI, 1995. U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service. Threatened and Endangered Species of the State of Indiana. June.

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Macklin, Larry D., State Historic, Preservation Officer, 1997. Correspondence to Dames & Moore. March 11, 1997.

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

Air Quality

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

Noise

Harris. Miller, Miller and Hansen. May 1997.

Transportation and Safety

Environmental Data Resources, May 1997.

3.2 ALEXANDRIA (NS)

Alexandria, IN is in Madison County, 50 miles northeast of Indianapolis (Figure 4-10). Existing lines in the area include the north/south-oriented Conrail Chicago mainline and the east/west-oriented NS mainline.

The proposed construction site is located in the southwestern part of the City of Alexandria. The proposed construction site is southeast of the Berry and Curve Street intersection and would occupy approximately 2.3 acres. The site is bordered on the north by Berry Street, on the east by Curve Street, on the west by Conrail lines and on the south by the NS line. The proposed construction site is dominated by a salvage yard operation. The west and south sides of the site are bordered by 30 foot strips of vegetation dominated by weeds and grasses, characteristic of disturbed areas. A buried AT&T fiber optic cable is along the east side of the Conrail line. A small woodland exists on the south side of the NS line and south of the proposed site. An electrical substation is 500 feet west of the proposed construction. Residential properties are within 500 feet to the north and south of the proposed construction site.

3.2.1 Proposed Action and Alternatives

3.2.1.1 Proposed Action

The proposed action at Alexandria would involve the construction and operation of a new connection between Conrail and NS tracks (see Figure 4-10). The connection would be northeast of the present intersection of the Conrail and NS lines. This new construction would provide a new, more efficient train route from Chicago, IL to Cincinnati, OH; Atlanta, GA; and the southeastern United States and will add capacity and reduce train delays. It will reduce rail traffic congestion in Ft. Wayne. The design includes power-operated turnouts for Conrail and NS mainlines and approximately 1,000 feet of new rail line. The proposed construction would

require acquisition of approximately 2.3 acres of new right-of-way. The existing NS/Conrail crossing diamond would remain 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. 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 connected by the proposed construction:

- Traffic on the existing Conrail line north of the NS/Conrail intersection would increase from five to seven trains per day.
- Traffic on the existing NS line east of the NS/Conrail intersection would increase from 3 to 12 trains per day.
- Traffic on the new construction would be seven trains per day.

3.2.1.2 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 existing rail lines and would minimize the need for new land outside of NS and Conrail rights-of-way. There are no construction, operational, or environmental features that would render another alignment of the proposed rail line more reasonable than the proposed action.

No-Action Alternative

Under the no-action alternative, existing and additional post-Acquisition rail traffic would 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 have been possible under the proposed Acquisition.

3.2.2 Existing Environment

3.2.2.1 Land Use

A salvage yard, owned by Azimow and Culbertson Scrap Company and used for recycling batteries, scrap and other metals, is on the property that would be acquired for the proposed right-of-way (Figure 4-10). The land is currently zoned as B2, business. The area around the proposed construction site is dominated by rail, transportation, and utility uses. A buried AT&T fiber optic cable is along the east side of the Conrail line. Other land uses surrounding the proposed site include residential and commercial properties north of the proposed rail line and more residential properties south of the proposed rail line. A small wooded area is southeast of the intersection of the NS and Conrail rail lines.

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.

3.2.2.2 Water Resources

No surface waters are on the proposed construction site. The nearest surface water, Pipe Creek, is a small intermittent stream, which is approximately 0.25 mile east and slightly down gradient of the proposed construction site (Figure 4-10). However, due to the surface area and proposed mitigation measures, minimal sedimentation or erosion would occur.

National Wetland Inventory (NWI) maps indicated no wetlands on the proposed construction site. Two wetlands are within 500 feet south of the proposed construction site. However, only one could potentially receive surface water runoff from the site.

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

3.2.2.3 Biological Resources

Vegetation

Portions of the existing Conrail and NS rights-of-way are in the proposed construction area. These areas consist of weeds and grasses. Two strips of vegetation consisting of weeds and grasses are bordering the south and west edges of the site. Because the site is within an area dominated by urban and railroad use, much of the area has previously been disturbed. A small woodland is 200 feet south of the proposed site on the south side of the NS rail line. Vegetation within other existing rights-of-way and adjacent areas consists of weedy, early successional species and species planted and maintained as part of residential lawns. This vegetation is not unique or limited in the area.

Wildlife

Because most of the proposed construction is in a developed area (the salvage yard), little wildlife habitat is available. The only existing habitat near the proposed construction is weeds and grasses in railroad rights-of-way and residential yards. The potential for wildlife is low in these areas. Wildlife would mainly be limited to birds and small mammals that have adapted to developed areas. Habitat for small mammals and birds is provided by the small woodland south of the site.

Threatened or Endangered Species

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) and the Indiana Department of Natural Resources (DNR) were contacted regarding threatened and endangered species in the area. The USFWS did

not identify any threatened or endangered species in the project 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 forest preserves, refuges, or sanctuaries are adjacent to or near the proposed construction site. The nearest park is a city park that is approximately 0.5 mile east of the proposed construction. The park is adjacent to the NS rail line.

3.2.2.4 Air Quality

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

3.2.2.5 Noise

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

Thirty seven residences are within 500 feet of the proposed construction site. No schools or churches are within 1,200 feet of the site.

3.2.2.6 Historic and Cultural Resources

Records at the Indiana State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) in Indianapolis were reviewed to determine if previously identified historic and cultural resources are in the project area. No National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) sites or archaeological sites have been recorded in the vicinity of the proposed construction. The construction would cross a portion of a salvage

yard. The structures associated with the salvage yard do not meet the criteria for inclusion on the NRHP. Consultation has been initiated with the Indiana SHPO regarding the proposed site.

3.2.2.7 Transportation and Safety

The existing rail transportation network consists of the NS and Conrail rail lines that intersect in Alexandria. Major roads in Alexandria include State Highways 9 and 28, and some local roads. The Conrail line crosses Berry Street, which has crossbuck warning signs.

The Environmental Data Resources, Inc. (EDR) 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 seven unmappable sites, two within the city limits of Alexandria and five within Madison County. 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.

A salvage yard is on the proposed construction site. The salvage yard accepts used batteries, scrap steel and other metals. Observations of the salvage yard could not be made during the site visit because the yard is surrounded by a high fence. While the site is not listed on any of the databases searched by EDR, the property will be assessed prior to conducting any construction activities.

3.2.3 Potential Environmental Impacts of Proposed Action

3.2.3.1 Land Use

The proposed project would result in minimal impacts to land use. Approximately 2.3 acres would be converted to rail line right-of-way. The majority of the required acreage is currently part of a 3.0 acre salvage yard. Thus, most of the salvage yard property would be converted to rail line right-of-way. NS would purchase all of the salvage yard property. The buried AT&T

fiber optic cable east of the Conrail line potentially may have to be relocated prior to construction. No other land use impacts are expected from the construction of the proposed connection.

The proposed construction would be compatible with surrounding land uses. The soil at the site is not classified as prime farmland.

The proposed site is not in a coastal zone management area.

3.2.3.2 Water Resources

The proposed construction would not have adverse impacts on groundwater or surface water. The construction would require limited earthwork or fill and would not alter storm water drainage or infiltration patterns in the area. No surface waters or wetlands would be crossed by or within the proposed new rail right-of-way.

3.2.3.3 Biological Resources

Vegetation

The proposed construction site is partially on existing rail rights-of-way that is mostly covered by grasses and weedy plant species. The remainder of the site consists of weeds and grasses characteristic of disturbed areas. The loss of this vegetation is not considered significant. This vegetation is not unique or limited in the area. Following construction, NS would reseed bare soils 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 limited and of low quality. The loss of this small amount of habitat would not significantly reduce the availability of wildlife habitat in the area. The construction and operation of this short connecting track should have no impact on local wildlife.