Tier 2

Environmental Assessment

Kankakee River Bridge and Track Improvements (MP 51.88 to MP 53.19)

Will County, Illinois

Supplemental

April 2016

Illinois Department of Transportation

Kankakee River Bridge and Track Improvements (MP 51.88 to MP 53.19) for the Chicago to St. Louis High-Speed Rail Project Tier 2 Supplemental Environmental Assessment

Submitted Pursuant to 64 Federal Register (FR) 28545
by the
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ABSTRACT: The August 2015 Environmental Assessment (EA) for the Kankakee River Bridge and Track Improvements, as approved by the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA), evaluates the construction of a second track along the mainline service of the Union Pacific Railroad (UPRR) from north of East Kankakee River Drive (milepost [MP] 51.88) to south of North 1st Street (MP 53.19) in the City of Wilmington, Will County, Illinois. It is a Tier 2 document for a portion of the Chicago to St. Louis High-Speed Rail Program (HSR Program) that was assessed in a 2012 Tier 1 Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS) and Record of Decision (ROD). This Supplemental EA amends the August 2015 EA based on public and environmental resource and regulatory agencies comments.

The Build Alternative includes: 1) the shifting of existing mainline tracks; 2) construction of new tracks and access roads; 3) railroad bridge crossings replacement; 4) improvements to at-grade rail/roadway crossings; and 5) associated signal upgrades, culvert work, and fencing. The Build Alternative is the Illinois Department of Transportation's (IDOT) and Federal Railroad Administration's (FRA) Preferred Alternative. The Build Alternative would support the purpose of the HSR Program of improving high speed passenger rail service, resulting in a more balanced use of travel options in the Chicago to St. Louis corridor by diverting automobile and air passengers to rail; allow for planned growth in passenger rail trains; improve grade crossing protection devices; and replace existing deteriorated structures.

No significant impacts to community, cultural, or natural resources would occur. Potential impacts include: acquisition of approximately 4.35 acres of additional right-of-way (ROW), 1.08 acres of temporary easements with displacement of storage units from a self-storage facility, and 8.97 acres of private, residental propery that will be isolated by a private crossing closure; a visual change resulting from vegetation loss and construction of retaining walls at North Kankakee Street; permanent impacts to 0.41 acre of wetland, and temporary impact to 0.18 acre of wetland; construction-related impact at the Kankakee River, Forked Creek, Water Street, and North Kankakee Street; and impacts to the habitat of federally and state protected species.

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Abbreviations and Acronyms

This section is unchanged from the August 2015 EA. Any new abbreviations and acronyms in this Supplemental EA are defined when first introduced.

Introduction

Amendments to the Kankakee River Bridge and Track Improvements Environmental Assessment (EA) dated August 2015 (see Attachment) are presented in this Supplemental EA. This Supplemental EA documents environmental impacts resulting from proposed improvements to North Kankakee Street as it approaches the rail crossing. This Supplemental EA also addresses comments received from environmental resource and regulatory agencies, the City of Wilmington, and the public on and after the August 27, 2015 public meeting. Finally, this Supplemental EA updates descriptions of project elements and associated environmental impacts based on more detailed design information.

In response to comments on the August 2015 EA, this Supplemental EA adds an assessment of impacts from approach road improvements at the North Kankakee Street grade crossing, as well as documentation of the consideration of grade separation alternatives at the crossing. It also includes the comments received on the August 2015 EA, responses to those comments and associated refinements to the EA. Updates to the August 2015 EA include discussions of the project's logical termini and independent utility, assessment of air pollutant emissions from construction equipment, the outcome of informal consultation on impacts to threatened and endangered species, and documentation of meetings with the City of Wilmington.

1.0 Purpose and Need

The list of proposed improvements in the Kankakee River Bridge and Track Improvements project (the "Project") presented on page 1-1 of the August 2015 EA is amended to include the following components:

- At-grade crossing approach improvements at North Kankakee Street.
- At-grade crossing protection improvements at East Kankakee River Drive, North Kankakee Street, and North 1st Street. A private crossing at Albany Street north of Forked Creek would be closed and the property it served purchased.

1.1 Illinois High Speed Rail Project History

The list of other Tier 2 documents presented on page 1-5 of the August 2015 EA is deleted and replaced with the following:

1. Double track from Chicago to Joliet (EIS preparation on hold)
2. Joliet to Dwight Track Improvement Project (CE approved November 2014)—double track components MP 37.7 to MP 73.0 (Re-evaluation of the 2011 EA)
3. Double track from Elwood to Braidwood MP 45.0 to MP 55.0 (EA in progress)
4. A flyover grade separating two railroads in Springfield, Illinois (EA in progress)
5. Double track from Granite City, Illinois to St, Louis, Missouri (EIS preparation on hold)

1.2 Project Study Area

This section in the August 2015 EA is unchanged.

1.3 Purpose and Need

Sections 1.3.1 and Sections 1.3.2 in the August 2015 EA are unchanged. The list of specific needs of the proposed Project presented in Section 1.3.3 beginning on page 1-7 of the August 2015 EA is amended to add a description of the need for the North Kankakee Street at-grade crossing approach improvements, including the North Kankakee Street sidewalk improvements, and include the description of the need for at-grade crossing protection improvements:

- North Kankakee Street at-grade crossing approach improvements – The existing North Kankakee Street crossing has substandard stopping sight distances per IDOT

and Illinois Commerce Commission (ICC) design criteria. The stopping sight distance is the length of roadway needed to see motor vehicles, pedestrians, bicyclists, and objects on the road on the other side of the crossing in time to stop if needed to avoid a crash. The current sight distance is adequate for vehicles traveling at 15 miles per hour (mph); however, the posted speed limit is 30 mph. Improvements are expected to increase the safety of the crossing.

- North Kankakee Street sidewalk improvements – There also is a lack of a safe pedestrian sidewalk along the west side of North Kankakee Street between Canal Street and the rail crossing. Improvements are expected to increase the safety of the crossing.

- At-grade crossing protection improvements – Currently, there are no crossing gates at three of the four existing at-grade crossings in the Project study area (East Kankakee River Drive, North 1st Street, and one private crossing at Albany Street). The private crossing at Albany Street (MP 52.42) has stop signs as crossing protection. The East Kankakee River Drive crossing (MP 51.94) and North 1st Street (MP 52.99) use flashers with no gates. The North Kankakee Street grade crossing is protected by two quadrant gates and flashers. With two quadrant gates or no gates, misjudgment or poor judgment by automobile drivers approaching these crossings could result in a fatal motor vehicle/train collision. This risk will rise as population and employment growth in Wilmington increases crossing use and as the number of freight trains increase. Improvements are expected to increase the safety of the crossings.

A full list of the proposed improvements associated with these project needs is provided in Section 2.0.

1.4 Applicable Regulations

The list of applicable regulations beginning on page 1-8 of the August 2015 EA is amended to include the following four additional applicable regulations:

- Migratory Bird Treaty Act, 16 USC § 703-712

- Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act, 16 USC § 668-668d

- Federal Register, General Provisions; Revised List of Migratory Birds; Final Rule, 50 CFR Parts 10 and 21, November 1, 2013.

- Federal Register, Taking, Possession, Transportation, Sale, Purchase, Barter, Exportation, and Importation of Wildlife and Plants, 50 CFR Part 22 – Eagle Permits. 39 FR 1183, January 4, 1974.

2.0 Alternatives

There are two alternatives considered for this proposed Project: the No–Build Alternative and a Build Alternative, which would provide a double track operation from north of East Kankakee River Drive to south of North 1st Street, including the Kankakee River bridge replacement in Wilmington, Illinois. This Supplemental EA adds approach road improvements at the North Kankakee Street grade crossing as a component of the Build Alternative. This chapter includes a description of these improvements and documents the consideration of grade separation alternatives at the crossing. Documentation of the proposed Project's logical termini and independent utility also is added to the chapter. The Build Alternative is IDOT's and FRA's Preferred Alternative.

2.1 No-Build Alternative

This section beginning on page 2-1 of the August 2015 EA is amended to include the following additional information regarding freight train growth and sight distance for motorists at the North Kankakee Street grade crossing:

With the No-Build Alternative, the number of passenger trains would not increase from today's numbers. The number of freight trains is expected to grow at the same rate with either the No-Build or Build Alternatives.

Freight traffic is more dependent on markets and demand than capacity, and is expected to grow, influenced in part by growing rail traffic at the Joliet Intermodal facility in Joliet. Freight train growth is not dependent on the completion of the proposed Project and can occur with the No-Build Alternative. Future freight train operation assumptions for the No-Build and Build Alternatives are estimated to be seven morning trains (7am-10pm) and four night trains (10pm to 7am) with train speeds of 60 mph by 2040. Freight traffic can increase without a second track because freight trains do not have to meet a timetable schedule with consistent on time performance like passenger trains. UPRR can adjust freight movements to accommodate increased freight demand on the existing single track. The second track is only proposed to accommodate future passenger train growth (additional eight trains per day) at higher speeds and with greater reliability. The existing single track between Chicago and St. Louis does not have the capacity to handle additional passenger trains without interfering with UPRR's freight operation.

The existing North Kankakee Street crossing has very substandard stopping sight distances per IDOT and ICC design criteria even with a single track. This substandard sight distance has nothing to do with drivers seeing the gates coming down or with train growth. It is the sight distance needed to see motor vehicles, pedestrians, bicyclists, and objects on the road on the other side of the crossing in time to stop if needed to avoid a crash. With the No-Build Alternative, the sight distance would not be improved.

There are no crossing gates at three of the four existing at-grade crossings in the Project study area (East Kankakee River Drive, North 1st Street, and one private crossing at Albany Street). There are two (2) quadrant gates at the North Kankakee Street crossing. Four-quadrant gates would prevent motorists from driving around lowered gates and would thus reduce the potential for motor vehicle/train collisions now, as well as in the future. Improvements to crossing protection, including four-quadrant gates would not be made with the No-Build Alternative. The private crossing at Albany Street would be closed and the property it served purchased.

2.2 Build Alternative

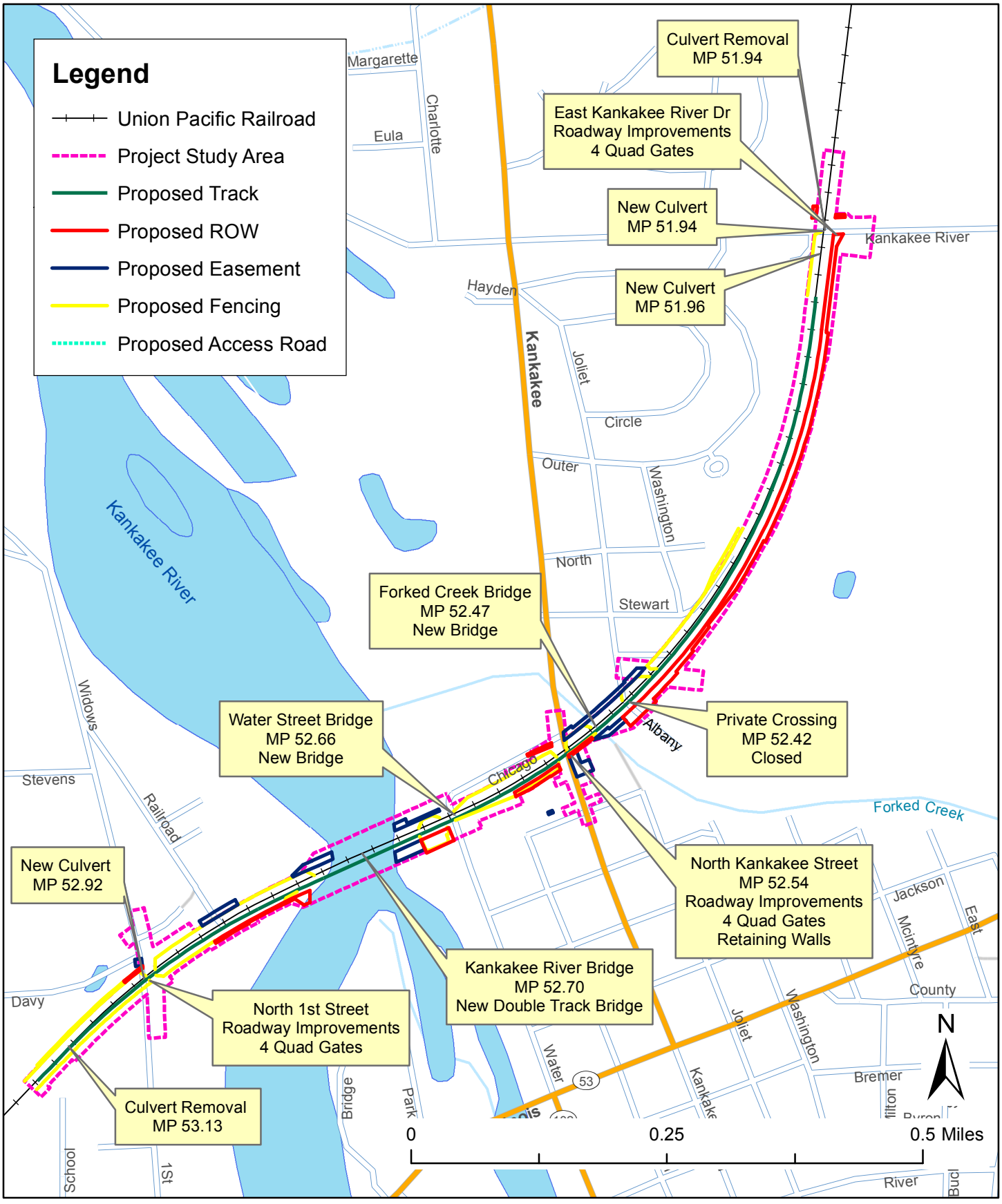
Sections 2.2.1 and 2.2.2 of the August 2015 EA are amended as presented below. Two additional sections have been added under Section 2.2. New Section 2.2.4 discusses logical termini and independent utility of the proposed Project, and new Section 2.2.5 discusses grade separation alternatives considered in Wilmington.

2.2.1 Physical Features

The description of the physical features of the proposed project is amended to add a description of the features associated with the improved North Kankakee Street grade crossing approach and amend the description of grade crossing and culvert improvements. Exhibit 2-1 is updated to include the North Kankakee Street grade crossing approach improvements. The planned improvements will require purchase of approximately 4.35 acres of additional ROW, 1.08 acres of temporary construction easement, and 8.97 acres of private property that would be isolated by a private crossing closure (Albany Street). This is an increase of 0.27 acre of ROW and a decrease of 0.74 acre of temporary construction easement from the August 2015 EA. In the August 2015 EA, the closure of the Albany Street crossing was assessed as a possibility. The closure is now included in the Build Alternative, leaving the 8.97-acre property served by the crossing without access to a public road, thus necessitating purchase of the property.

Added or amended elements of the Build Alternative found beginning on page 2-3 of the August 2015 EA are:

- Kankakee River Bridge – Replace the existing single track Kankakee River bridge and the single bridge approach tracks with a new double track bridge at MP 52.70 with proposed track centers at 20 feet. The existing track would be shifted and replaced to accommodate a new second track on the west side. The existing north and south abutments would be retained while new piers and superstructure would be constructed. The existing Kankakee River bridge is a five-span single track deck plate girder bridge. The new bridge would have two superstructures: an eight-span steel beam bridge structure for the west track and a nine-span steel beam structure for the east track. The new bridge's vertical water clearance over the 100-year flood line would be 10.3 feet, 5.33 feet higher than the existing bridge. Portions of the existing abutments at both ends would be removed and reconstructed.



Date: 1/8/2015

BUILD ALTERNATIVE FEATURES

Exhibit
2-1

The four existing 10-foot-wide piers would be replaced with eight new 4-foot-wide piers reducing the total width of the piers in the river from 40 feet to 32 feet. As with the existing bridge, stormwater runoff from the new bridge would drain directly into the Kankakee River.

- At North Kankakee Street, both approaches to the grade crossing would be reconstructed to lower grades of 4.11 percent on the Canal Street side and 5.82 percent on the Chicago Street side to provide improved stopping sight distance for safer crossing of the railroad tracks. The intersection of North Kankakee Street and Canal Street would be raised and drainage sructures would be installed to provide for improved drainage in the area. Retaining walls would be constructed on either side of North Kankakee Street with heights varying from one foot near Canal Street to six feet near the at-grade crossing. Sidewalks would be constructed along both sides of North Kankakee Street. The sidewalk on the west side of North Kankakee Street would extend only in front of the Milltown Market. The sidewalk on the east side would extend across the UPRR tracks as it does currently. Business driveways would be reconstructed to meet the raised street. Additionally, a parking lane along the east side of North Kankakee Street near Canal Street would be provided to replace the existing parking spaces no longer accessible because of the retaining wall. On the Chicago Street side of the rail crossing, 150 feet of Chicago Street also would be raised and reconstructed to meet the new profile of North Kankakee Street.

- At-grade crossing protection improvements are proposed at East Kankakee River Drive (MP 51.94), North Kankakee Street (MP 52.54), and North 1st Street (MP 52.99). Crossing protection improvements would include installing four quadrant gate systems, railroad signal upgrades, and pedestrian gates at each crossing. Design and construction of these improvements would be coordinated with IDOT. The East Kankakee River Drive crossing (MP 51.94) at the northern end of the proposed Project limit is a candidate for potential closure in the future because of a separate rail improvement project. The private crossing at Albany Street would be closed and the property it currently serves would be purchased.

- Culvert improvements at MP 51.94 (24-inch corrugated steel pipe [CSP]), MP 51.96 (36-inch CSP), and MP 52.92 (48-inch CSP). Two existing culverts on the west side of the tracks and north of Forked Creek would be removed. A new 36-inch CSP culvert would be built in the Stewart Street area paralleling the west side of the tracks. All culverts are associated with stormwater drainage and do not serve streams that carry fish.

2.2.2 Construction Period Assumptions

Section 2.2.2 is amended as follows and now includes a new Section 2.2.2.3 discussing construction period assumptions to the North Kankakee Street at-grade crossing approach improvements:

In general during the first construction phase (first phase), the bridge replacement would occur first, the new single track would then be built, rail traffic would be shifted to the new single track and then improvements to the rest of the existing single track would be made. Construction work would be confined to the existing and purchased railroad ROW, temporary construction easements, and track crossing public road ROW. The second track will be added during the second construction phase (second phase).

2.2.2.3 *North Kankakee Street At-Grade Crossing Approach Improvements*

To minimize disruption and compress the construction duration, North Kankakee Street would be closed to traffic at the crossing temporarily and traffic would be detoured to East Kankakee River Drive and IL 53. Vehicle access would be maintained during construction to the businesses on both sides of North Kankakee Street. Emergency vehicles with heights less than ten feet would use the Water Street underpass during construction. While the Water Street bridge would be replaced as part of the project, the underpass would remain open during the closure of the North Kankakee Street and East Kankakee River Drive would also be kept open during that time to provide higher clearances for fire engines.

2.2.3 Operating Characteristics

This section in the August 2015 EA is unchanged.

2.2.4 Logical Termini and Independent Utility of the Proposed Project

A comment on the August 2015 EA asked for clarification on the independent utility of this project. Project termini have not changed since the August 2015 EA. The Kankakee River Bridge and Track Improvements project:

- Connects logical termini and is of sufficient length to address environmental matters on a broad scope;
- Has independent utility or independent significance, i.e., is usable and is a reasonable expenditure even if no additional transportation improvements in the area are made; and
- Does not restrict consideration of alternatives for other reasonably foreseeable transportation improvements.

A Tier 1 FEIS and ROD were prepared and issued by FRA for two different HSR programs between Chicago and St. Louis, one in 2003 and the other in 2012. These two programs propose: 1) improvements to the existing single track to increase speed and on-time performance for existing passenger trains (single track program) and 2) the addition of a second track so that additional passenger trains can be added to support increased passenger volumes, while still maintaining a high level of on-time performance (double track program). The impacts of the Kankakee River Bridge and Track Improvements project in the context of the environmental impacts,

utility/significance, and consideration of alternatives for the overall Chicago to St. Louis programs and their other individual projects were assessed in these Tier 1 documents.

The Elwood to Braidwood Track Construction project (also assessed in the 2012 Tier 1 FEIS) adjoins the Kankakee River Bridge and Track Improvements project on both the north and south. The Elwood to Braidwood Track Construction project primarily proposes to add a second track to the UPRR. The following subsections detail how the Kankakee River Bridge and Track Improvements project has logical termini and independent utility.

2.2.4.1 *Connects Logical Termini and is of Sufficient Length to Address Environmental Matters of a Broad Scope*

The first phase of the Kankakee River Bridge and Track Improvements project, as defined in Chapter 2 of the August 2015 EA and this Supplemental EA, is focused on replacing the Kankakee River, Forked Creek, Water Street bridges, and improving the sight distance of the North Kankakee Street grade crossing. The termini of the proposed Project are rational end-points in that the area between the termini encompasses the four improvements, as well as the associated realignment and improvement of the track approaching these improvements. The termini also encompass grade crossing protection improvements, culvert improvements, and a maintenance access facility along the improved track as a part of the proposed Project's first phase and the addition of second track as a part of the proposed Project's second phase.

The track components of the first phase would connect back into the existing UPRR track within the Kankakee River Bridge and Track Improvements project study area and would have no effect on the location and impacts of improvements in the Elwood to Braidwood Track Construction project study area.

The first phase of the Kankakee River Bridge and Track Improvements project is scheduled to be built beginning in 2016. The second phase, which would add a second track, is scheduled to be built later and at the same time as the Elwood to Braidwood Track Construction project. Although it would be built in association with the Elwood to Braidwood Track Construction project, the second phase for the Kankakee River Bridge and Track Improvements project is independently assessed in this EA so that environmental matters associated with the combination of the adjusted single track and the parallel second track can be addressed. Since the Kankakee River Bridge and Track Improvements project's second track would be built at the same time as the Elwood to Braidwood Track Construction project, if adjustments to that second track are needed to avoid or minimize impacts in the Elwood to Braidwood Track Construction project study area, such adjustments and consideration of their impacts can and will be made in association with the Elwood to Braidwood Track Construction environmental impact documentation.

Therefore, it is logical to separate this portion of the HSR Program as its own project. The project study area for the assessment of potential environment impact was determined based on the project termini and is consistent with standards used for the assessment of impacts of railroad improvement projects.

2.2.4.2 *Independent Utility*

The components of the first phase of the Kankakee River Bridge and Track Improvements project would be fully functional and achieve the purpose and need documented in Section 1.3.3 of the August 2015 EA and Section 1.3 of this Supplemental EA even if the second phase, and the adjoining Elwood to Braidwood Track Construction project are never built. Specifically, the first phase will improve or replace deteriorating or functionally obsolete components of three bridges and culverts along the track, improve access to the track for maintenance, and increase the safety of four at-grade crossings.

If the second phase and the Elwood to Braidwood Track Construction project are not built, the space for the second track on the new Kankakee River, Forked Creek, and Canal Street bridges would not be used. However, a second track is a component of the larger Chicago to St. Louis double track HSR program assessed in the 2012 Tier 1 FEIS. Therefore, since the addition of the second track is documented as a part of the overall double track program, and it is more economical and less disruptive from a construction perspective to build a double track bridge now at each bridge replacement location than building two separate bridges at each location at different times, building bridges in the first phase that accommodate the second track is a reasonable expenditure of transportation funds.

2.2.4.3 *Does Not Restrict Consideration of Alternatives*

Assessing the impact of the first and second phase of Kankakee River Bridge and Track Improvements project in this EA and constructing the first phase at this time do not restrict the consideration of impact avoidance alternatives within the adjoining Elwood to Braidwood Track Construction project. This includes altering which side of the UPRR ROW the proposed second track and proposed maintenance access facility are placed. Reasonable locations for switching the side of the UPRR ROW where the second track is placed occur both north of the Forked Creek bridge and south of the Kankakee River bridge, as do opportunities to change the maintenance access facility location.

These reasonable locations for switching the side of the UPRR ROW, while north of the Forked Creek bridge and south of the Kankakee River bridge, are within the Kankakee River Bridge and Track Improvements project study area. Therefore, to ensure that the location for the second track assessed in this EA does not potentially restrict the consideration of impact avoidance alternatives on the Elwood to Braidwood Track Construction project, FRA commits to follow its current plan and build the second track of the Kankakee River Bridge and Track Improvements project in conjunction with the Elwood to Braidwood Track Construction project. This commitment will be

documented in the Finding of No Significant Impact, if one is released for this project following public and agency review of this Supplemental EA.

2.2.5 Grade Separation Alternatives Considered in Wilmington

Before finalizing the decision on including the North Kankakee Street grade crossing (see Section 2.2.1) in the Build Alternative, three grade separation alternatives were considered during preliminary design development for improvements at North Kankakee Street. This effort was coordinated with City of Wilmington representatives both before and after the August 27, 2015 public meetings. Since April 2014, 15 meetings were held with City of Wilmington representatives related to the North Kankakee Street grade crossing that included discussions of grade separation options. A listing of the meetings is provided in Section 4.1.

The three grade separation alternatives considered were:

- Closing North Kankakee Street and improving the existing Water Street grade separation
- Grade separation that would raise the railroad tracks over existing North Kankakee Street
- Grade separation that would reconstruct North Kankakee Street under the railroad tracks

Taking North Kankakee Street over the UPRR was not considered because any increase in the elevation of North Kankakee Street would further increase the impacts associated with the proposed grade crossing approach improvement included in the proposed Project.

2.2.5.1 *Closing North Kankakee Street and Improving the existing Water Street Grade Separation*

Closing North Kankakee Street and improving the Water Street grade separation west of North Kankakee Street was considered. Closing North Kankakee Street would eliminate the need to improve the approaches to the North Kankakee Street crossing to accommodate the second track and correct the existing substandard sight distance for crossing motor vehicles and its associated community impacts. The Water Street grade separation would be improved to accommodate emergency vehicles with the increased vertical clearance of 12 feet 6 inches. Pedestrian accommodations also would be added. This option was originally discussed with City of Wilmington officials on January 8, 2015 and revisited on November 12, 2015. It was mutually agreed that it was not a reasonable alternative for the following reasons:

- Business Impact of Adding North Kankakee Street Traffic to Water Street. North Kankakee Street is the main road between the north and south sides of Wilmington.

Heavy traffic, including school buses, traverses this road on a daily basis according to local residents. Closing North Kankakee Street and shifting its traffic to Water Street would have adverse impacts to businesses and residences along Water Street because of increased traffic. The existing angled parking on Water Street would need to be changed to parallel parking, reducing parking capacity in front of businesses. According to City representatives, the additional traffic would create an unacceptable risk of crashes involving through traffic and drivers backing out of angled spaces.

- Increase in Emergency Vehicle Response Times. Closing North Kankakee Street would increase emergency response times. North Kankakee Street is the City's preferred route to respond to emergencies at north side of Wilmington. Using Water Street or going further north to East Kankakee River Drive would increase emergency response times. Wilmington Fire Department representatives indicate they strongly oppose this alternative for the reason noted.

- Flooding. Improving the existing Water Street railroad grade separation by lowering the roadway to achieve a vertical clearance of 12 feet 6 inches would put Water Street at the 50 year flood elevation of the Kankakee River. This would potentially create flooding issues requiring the grade separation to be closed during heavy storms. The current clearance is 10 feet 1 inch, and cannot be used by all City of Wilmington emergency vehicles. Thus, without the increased vertical clearance the closing of North Kankakee Street crossing would create a worse impact on emergency response times than described in the previous bullet.

2.2.5.2 *Grade Separation that Would Raise the Railroad Tracks Over Existing North Kankakee Street*

Raising the railroad tracks to go over North Kankakee Street also was considered. This alternative also would involve removing the existing rise in North Kankakee Street by lowering the profile on both approaches to the existing grade crossing to improve the sight distance.

Raising the railroad tracks profile at North Kankakee Street in combination with removing the rise in North Kankakee Street to achieve a vertical clearance of 14 feet 9 inches (required by IDOT for new grade separations) would require approximately 4,000 feet or 0.74 miles of the railroad track to be raised. The increase in the track elevation would begin at North 1st Street south of the Kankakee River and end at East Kankakee River Drive. Additional railroad ROW would be required for the embankment of the higher railroad tracks. Slopes for the embankment would be 2:1 (2 feet horizontal for every 1-foot of increased track elevation). A visual change of large sloped embankments or retaining walls would occur at the homes and businesses adjacent to the railroad tracks and along the North Kankakee Street.

With this alternative, the proposed new bridges over the Kankakee River and Water Street would be raised over 7 feet. The proposed new bridge over Forked Creek would be raised approximately 10 feet. The track elevation through the center of Wilmington would be raised from 11 feet to 14 feet. Near the Kankakee Street crossing, the tracks would be 12 feet higher than the existing tracks. To provide for UPRR maintenance access, extended driveways would be required along the railroad tracks at both east and west of North Kankakee Street and east and west of Water Street.

It was concluded that this was not a reasonable alternative for the following reasons:

- Displacement of Homes and Businesses. Higher embankments to accommodate the raised railroad tracks result in displacements of the Wilmington Fire House, the rental storage facility associated with Milltown Market, the building at the corner of Water Street and Chicago Street, two structures associated with the business at the corner of North Kankakee Street and Chicago Street because of the realignment of Chicago Street.

- New Railroad ROW Requirements. Property purchase for new ROW to accommodate embankments at residences on the both sides north of North 1st Street and property impacts on both sides north of Forked Creek.

- Visual Change. The existing track profile between North Kankakee Street and Water Street is already higher than adjoining residential and business uses. The taller railroad with associated embankment and retaining walls would create a visual barrier between the two parts of Wilmington on either side of the tracks.

- Noise. The raised track profile would potentially transmit additional train noise over a much broader area in the City of Wilmington.

2.2.5.3 *Grade Separation that Would Reconstruct North Kankakee Street Under the Railroad Tracks*

Lowering North Kankakee Street so it would pass under the UPRR railroad tracks also was considered. This alternative would require reconstruction of North Kankakee Street from 150 feet south of Canal Street to 200 feet north of Chicago Street. The proposed south approach on North Kankakee Street would transition down at a 5 percent grade under the railroad bridge and rise back up at a 5 percent grade to Chicago Street. The Chicago Street and Canal Street intersections would be lowered 15 feet 5 inches and 4 feet 8 inches respectively. Approximately 800 feet of North Kankakee Street, 700 feet of Canal Street and 500 feet of Chicago Street would need to be reconstructed. Retaining walls would be built on both sides of these lowered streets between the lowered streets and surrounding land uses that would remain at the existing elevation. Existing drainage systems, including storm sewers, would be replaced and relocated to accommodate the lowered streets. Sidewalks would be reconstructed and lowered to provide Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) compliant crossings.

It was concluded that this was not a reasonable alternative for the following reasons:

- Residential and Business Impact. The retaining walls on the east and west sides of North Kankakee Street and Canal Street would adversely affect access to businesses and residences. The new street grade would be approximately 10 feet below the current street elevation at the north end of the Milltown Market near the UPRR ROW requiring a retaining wall. The entrance drive to the Milltown Market storage units would be closed. The lowered Canal Street and North Kankakee Street intersection would affect access to residences on all approaches to the intersection. Access to businesses along North Kankakee Street would not be feasible near the railroad crossing. The existing entrance driveway on the east side to the business closest to the crossing would require 27 percent grade transition, too steep for motor vehicles.

- Flooding. The intersection of North Kankakee Street and Canal Street would be 10 feet below the 50 year flood elevation of Forked Creek. The intersection of North Kankakee Street and Chicago Street north of the UPRR would be 7 feet below the 50 year flood elevation.

3.0 Affected Environment, Environmental Consequences and Mitigation

This section presents the environmental setting of the proposed Project, the impacts of the No-Build and Build Alternatives, and potential mitigation measures for notable impacts. The environmental characteristics and impact categories addressed in this Supplemental EA are:

- Physical Environment
  - Air Quality—Amended to add discussion related to potential construction emission impacts, including greenhouse gas emissions, and revised discussion of air quality mitigation and updates to three tables.
  - Energy—Unchanged from the August 2015 EA.
  - Floodplains and Regulatory Floodways—Unchanged from the August 2015 EA.
  - Noise and Vibration—Unchanged from the August 2015 EA.
  - Agricultural—Unchanged from the August 2015 EA.
  - Aesthetic Environment and Scenic Resources—Amended to add a description of visual characteristics, visual changes, and mitigation at the North Kankakee Street grade crossing approach.
- Ecological Systems
  - Vegetation and Habitat—Amended the forest impact acres and amended the invasive species mitigation commitment.
  - Wetlands and Waters of the US—Amended to distinguish causeway and cofferdam impacts at Forked Creek.
  - Water Quality and Water Resources—Amended to clarify that proposed culverts do not serve streams that carry fish.
  - Threatened and Endangered Species—Amended to note the proposed Kankakee River bridge design reduces the chances of a chemical spill or other catastrophic event and to present current mitigation agreements related to the northern long-eared bat and protected mussels.
  - Special Lands—Unchanged from the August 2015 EA.
- Section 4(f) Resources—Unchanged from the August 2015 EA.
- Human Environment
  - Transportation—Amended to include additional information related to at-grade crossing, vehicular traffic, and public parking impacts and associated mitigation.

  - Community and Land Use—Amended to include a description of the land uses along the North Kankakee Street crossing approach, update ROW and easement requirements, residential and business relocations, community service and facility impacts, other community impacts, and mitigation.
  - Demographics—Unchanged from the August 2015 EA.
  - Economics and Employment—Amended to include business and parking impacts associated with improvement of the North Kankakee Street crossing approach.
  - Environmental Justice and Title VI—Unchanged from the August 2015 EA.
  - Barriers and Accessibility—Amended ADA discussion.
  - Public Health and Safety—Amended mitigation discussion related to emergency vehicle operation during grade crossing improvement construction.
  - Hazardous Materials and Waste—Amended to address the demolition of a structure, worker and environmental safety during construction, and new potential recognized environmental condition (REC) sites/acreages, as well as to provide a more detailed explanation to address potential contamination risks.

- Cultural Resources—Unchanged from the August 2015 EA.

- Construction Impacts and Mitigation—Amended to include revised mitigation commitments related to air quality emissions and invasive species.

- Secondary and Cumulative Impacts—Amended discussion of cumulative impacts to threatened and endangered species.

- Permits-- Unchanged from the August 2015 EA.

- Environmental Commitments—Amended commitments related to construction air quality emissions, threatened and endangered species, and hazardous materials.

3.1 Physical Environment

3.1.1 Air Quality

Section 3.1.1.1 to Section 3.1.1.3 of the August 2015 EA are amended with revised Tables 3-1, 3-4, and 3-5. The greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions section is updated along with Exhibit 3-1. An assessment of construction period emissions is added to the construction impacts section and the construction and operation mitigation section is also revised.

3.1.1.1 *National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS)*

Table 3-1 that appears on page 3-3 of the August 2015 EA is revised to update the ozone standard. Will County is classified as an attainment area for all pollutants except ozone. The NAAQS for ozone was strengthened by US Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA) on October 1, 2015, and went into effect December 28, 2015. No attainment determination for the new standard has been yet conducted by USEPA.

Table 3-1. National Ambient Air Quality Standards

Pollutant		Primary/ Secondary	Averaging Time	Level	Form
Carbon Monoxide (CO)		primary	8 hours	9 ppm	Not to be exceeded more than once per year
			1-hour	35 ppm	
Lead (Pb)		primary and secondary	Rolling 3 month period	0.15 µg/m³ (1)	Not to be exceeded
Nitrogen Dioxide (NO_2)		primary	1-hour	100 ppb	98th percentile of 1-hour daily maximum concentrations, averaged over 3 years
		primary and secondary	1 year	53 ppb	Annual Mean
Ozone (O_3)		primary and secondary	8 hours	0.070 ppm (2)	Annual fourth-highest daily maximum 8-hour concentration, averaged over 3 years
Particle Pollution (PM)	$PM_{2.5}$	primary	1 year	12.0 µg/m³	annual mean, averaged over 3 years
		secondary	1 year	15.0 µg/m³	annual mean, averaged over 3 years
		primary and secondary	24 hours	35 µg/m³	98th percentile, averaged over 3 years
	PM_{10}	primary and secondary	24 hours	150 µg/m³	Not to be exceeded more than once per year on average over 3 years
Sulfur Dioxide (SO_2)		primary	1-hour	75 ppb (3)	99th percentile of 1-hour daily maximum concentrations, averaged over 3 years
		secondary	3 hours	0.5 ppm	Not to be exceeded more than once per year

(1) In areas designated nonattainment for the Pb standards prior to the promulgation of the current (2008) standards, and for which implementation plans to attain or maintain the current (2008) standards have not been submitted and approved, the previous standards (1.5 µg/m³ as a calendar quarter average) also remain in effect.

(2) Final rule signed October 1, 2015, and effective December 28, 2015. The previous (2008) O_3 standards additionally remain in effect in some areas. Revocation of the previous (2008) O_3 standards and transitioning to the current (2015) standards will be addressed in the implementation rule for the current standards.

(3) The previous SO_2 standards (0.14 ppm 24-hour and 0.03 ppm annual) will additionally remain in effect in certain areas: (1) any area for which it is not yet 1 year since the effective date of designation under the current (2010) standards, and (2)any area for which implementation plans providing for attainment of the current (2010) standard have not been submitted and approved and which is designated nonattainment under the previous SO_2 standards or is not meeting the requirements of a SIP call under the previous SO_2 standards (40 CFR 50.4(3)), A SIP call is an EPA action requiring a state to resubmit all or part of its State Implementation Plan to demonstrate attainment of the require NAAQS.

Source: http://www3.epa.gov/ttn/naaqs/criteria.html January 5, 2016

3.1.1.1 *Existing Conditions*

Table 3-4 that appears on page 3-6 of the August 2015 EA is revised to include 2014 Will County air quality monitored data.

Table 3-4. Will County Air Quality Monitored Data (2012-2014)

Pollutant	Time Period	Concentration			Unit	Station
		2012	2013	2014		
Ozone	First Highest 8 hour	0.080	0.070	0.069	PPM (parts per million)	36400 S. Essex Rd., Braidwood
	Second Highest	0.076	0.068	0.068	PPM	
	Third Highest	0.074	0.067	0.065	PPM	
	Fourth Highest	0.074	0.066	0.064	PPM	
	# of Days Standard Exceeded	0	0	0		
$PM_{2.5}$	Maximum 24 Hour	24.5	26.9	26.4	µg/m³ (micrograms per cubic meter)	36400 S. Essex Rd., Braidwood
	Second Highest	24.7	23	19.9	µg/m	
	98th Percentile	24	23	26	µg/m³	
	Average Annual	9.3	9.3	9.1	µg/m³	
NO_2	1-Hour Maximum	69	82	91	PPB (parts per billion)	1820 S. 51 Street, Cicero
	Second Maximum	66	76	81	PPB	
	98th Percentile	58	64	64	PPB	
PM_{10}	Maximum 24 Hour	53	71	98	µg/m³	50th Street and Glencoe, McCook
	Second Highest	41	67	93	µg/m³	
SO_2	First Highest 1 hour	58	42	44	PPB	Hurlburt and Macarthur, Peoria
	Second Highest	54	38	42	PPB	
	99th Percentile	44	32	38	PPB	

Source: http://www.epa.gov/airdata/ad_rep_mon.html, December 15, 2015

3.1.1.3 *Potential Impacts*

Additions or revisions are made to the discussions of air quality during proposed project operation, potential regional impacts, GHG emissions, and construction impacts that appeared in the August 2015 EA.

Potential Regional Impacts

The discussion on potential regional air quality impacts on page 3-8 of the August 2015 EA is amended to add the following clarification and an updated Table 3-5. Emissions presented in Table 3-5 were estimated for 59.8 miles, the full length of the ozone non-attainment area within the Chicago to St. Louis HSR Program corridor. CO_2 emissions were updated from that in the August 2015 EA and the reporting measure was changed to million tons per year.

Table 3-5. Emissions Generated by the Proposed Project within the Chicago-Gary-Lake County, IL-IN Non-Attainment Area

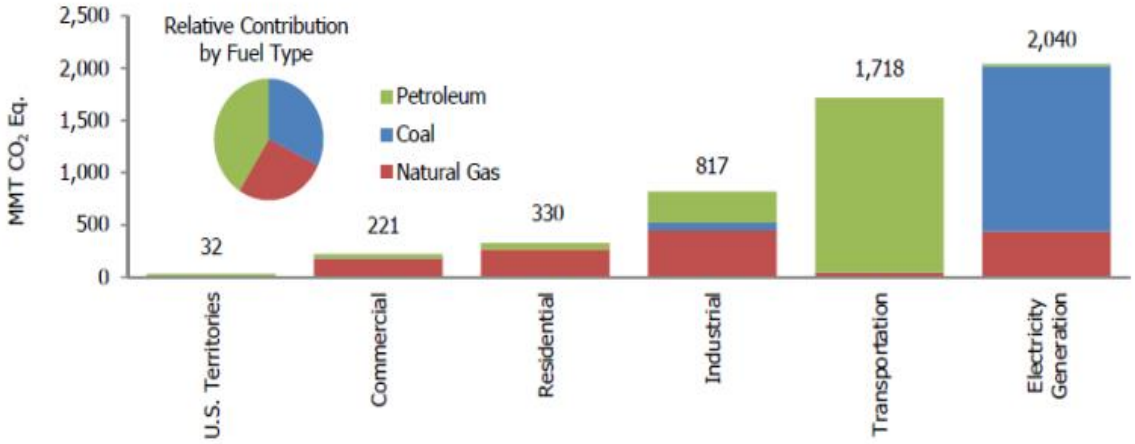
Scenario	CO (tons/year)	NO_x (tons/year)	VOC (tons/year)	PM_{10} (tons/year)	$PM_{2.5}$ (tons/year)	CO_2 (million tons/year)
Existing Conditions	22.1	68.0	3.7	3.2	3.1	0.009
No-Build Alternative	49.4	38.6	1.7	5.8	5.6	0.020
Build Alternative	52.9	45.5	1.9	6.8	6.6	0.022
Change	*3.5*	*6.9*	*0.29*	*1.04*	*1.01*	*0.002*
De minimis Threshold	*NA*	*100*	*100*	*NA*	*100*	*NA*
Threshold Exceeded?	*NA*	*No*	*No*	*NA*	*No*	*NA*

Greenhouse Gas (GHG) Emissions

The discussion on GHG emissions on page 3-12 of the August 2015 EA is amended to read as follows with an updated Exhibit 3-1:

The GHG emissions analysis (see Table 3-5) indicates that the Build Alternative would result in a small increase in regional GHG emissions compared to the No-Build Alternative. The estimated increase associated with the additional eight high-speed trains would constitute approximately 11 percent of rail emissions over the No-Build Alternative and a much smaller increase over the total regional GHG emissions. The August 2015 EA reported approximately 23 percent of rail emissions over the No-Build Alternative. In addition, once the full HSR Program is complete, it would reduce car, bus and airplane trips. This would offset the increase in rail emissions and reduce regional emissions compared with emissions without the upgrade (see 2012 Tier 1 FEIS, section 7.7.2, Table 5.7-2). Thefore, the Build Alternative, in combination with the full HSR Program improvements, would ultimately result in a decrease of GHG emissions over the No-Build Alternative.

Exhibit 3-1. CO2 Emissions from Fossil Combustion by Sector and Fuel Type (2013)



Source: USEPA GHG Inventory, 2015

In addition to changes in rail operation GHG emissions, GHG emissions would be made by Build Alternative construction equipment. During the construction period of the Build Alternative, three other HSR Program projects also will be under construction (see the construction impacts section below). The total CO_2 emissions of HSR Program construction in 2016 within Will and Cook counties would be 4,155.9 tons, of which 2,269.0 tons would be associated with the proposed Project. Construction-related increase in GHG emissions would constitute less than 0.2 percent of the total GHG emissions that will be generated within the corridor and less than 0.1 percent of the current transportation GHG emissions in Will County. This is a small and an insignificant increase.

Construction Impacts

This section, which appeared on page 3-13 of the August 2015 EA, is augmented in response to USEPA comments that requested an estimation of construction period emissions and a determination of whether those emissions would be under General Conformity *de minimis* threshold as follows:

Construction air quality impacts are temporary in nature and localized to the area of construction. As a rule, short-term construction (shorter than three years) on small projects does not warrant a detailed air quality analysis. Construction of the proposed Kankakee River Bridge and Track Improvements project is estimated to take 18 months to two years. However, in 2016 the Build Alternative would be constructed simultaneously with three other HSR Program projects in the Chicago-Gary-Lake County, IL-IN Ozone Non-Attainment and $PM_{2.5}$ maintenance area. This consideration led to conducting an analysis to estimate emissions from construction of the combined projects.

Possible air quality impacts from construction may be caused by dust from earth-moving activities such as cut and fill operations, use of unpaved haul roads, exposed piles, exposed material carried offsite, and by exhaust emissions generated by diesel-fueled equipment during construction. The Build Alternative would replace one-tracked bridges across the Kankakee River, Water Street and Forked Creek with new double-tracked bridges, improve at-grade crossings, construct new access roads and replace culverts, install fencing and add track signaling. The three other concurrent projects are part of the Joliet to Dwight Track Improvement Project. Emissions from construction for all of these projects were estimated for 2016, the only year the three other HSR Program projects in the non-attainment area would be under construction at the same time as the Build Alternative. These emissions were estimated using the following conservative assumptions:

- All construction equipment meets Tier 2 emission standards. Tier 2 standards for non-road equipment were phased in between 2001 and 2006. This means that all diesel-fueled construction equipment used in the project was considered to be 9 years old or older.

- Diesel trucks would idle at the construction site for 15 minutes within every hour. Illinois has an anti-idling law and IDOT restricts idling in construction projects to no more than 10 minutes within a 60 minute period.

- The average trip of a construction truck would be 50 miles. The trucks for this construction may travel in the 20 to 50 mile radius, but the longest trip was assumed.

Emissions were estimated using the current procedures from the latest USEPA NONROAD2008a model. The results are presented in Table 3-6A. Table 3-6A demonstrates that emissions from construction of the Build Alternative combined with the three other projects for the highest activity year of construction estimated using conservative assumptions would be below the General Conformity *de minimis* thresholds. In addition, as demonstrated in the 2012 Tier 1 FEIS, construction emissions from the Build Alternative ultimately would be offset by reduction in vehicular, bus and airplane emissions when the completed HSR Program is in operation.

Table 3-6A. Emissions Generated by Construction of the Build Alternative and Cumulatively with Other Concurrent Construction Projects in 2016 (tons/year)

Scenario	CO	NO_x	VOC	PM_{10}	$PM_{2.5}$	SO_2	CO_2
Build Alternative	9.26	18.30	1.46	1.05	1.00	0.02	2,269.0
Cumulative Emissions	17.17	35.97	2.88	2.08	1.98	0.05	4,155.9
De minimis Threshold	*NA*	*100*	*100*	*NA*	*100*	*100*	*NA*
Threshold Exceeded?	*NA*	*No*	*No*	*NA*	*No*	*No*	*NA*

3.1.1.4 *Mitigation (Construction and Operation)*

This section, which appeared on page 3-13 of the August 2015 EA, is revised in response to USEPA comments. It now also includes a discussion of health impacts on sensitive population groups, expansion of the discussion on dust control measures, and strategies that reduce engine activity and emissions from operations. The revised section is as follows:

Construction

Potentially, construction emissions could cause serious health impacts especially in sensitive population groups including elderly and children. Construction impacts on health could come from the nuisance dust and from the exhaust of construction equipment and trucks. The health impacts of particulates are directly linked to the size of the particles; the smaller the size, the more the potential to damage health. Smaller particles could penetrate deeper into the tissues of lungs and even get into a person's bloodstream affecting heart conditions. NO_x exhausted by diesel equipment and trucks is another pollutant of concern from construction. NO_x is a precursor for ozone formation and could aggravate respiratory and heart conditions. Construction activities also could contribute to the volatile organic compound (VOC) levels. To control local VOC air pollution impacts during Build Alternative construction, coverage under the Illinois General Permit could be required for any portable bituminous and concrete plants that would be used in construction. However, these materials would likely originate from existing permitted plants and would be delivered to the construction site.

Dust control measures during construction are usually included into specifications and dust control plans for contractors. The control measures proposed in such plans typically include minimization of trucking of dirt on public roads, speed reductions on the unpaved surfaces, requirements to cover the haul vehicles and to stabilize/apply suppressants to the unpaved roads and exposed surfaces.

Construction mitigation also includes strategies that reduce engine activity or reduce emissions per unit of operating time, such as reducing the numbers of trips and extended idling. Illinois has an anti-idling law (IL Public Act 094-0845) that prohibits diesel vehicles from idling for more than 10 minutes per hour when parked. Additional measures to reduce fine particle pollution from construction equipment would be to use newer equipment, either Tier 3 with diesel particulate filters or Tier 4 (newer) equipment. Maintenance of equipment in good working order also helps to reduce emissions.

NO_x reduction measures would come from the use of select catalyst systems in the construction equipment and trucks. In 2014, USEPA set standards for a minimum refill intervals for the diesel exhaust fluid in selective catalyst systems in both non-road equipment and trucks that will reduce NO_x emissions from diesel engines. Reduction of NO_x and VOC emissions has an additional benefit of reducing the potential for ozone and particulate pollution formation. Reduction of particulate pollution, especially the

fine particulates (soot, the black carbon emissions) produces an additional effect of reducing GHG emissions.

The project construction would follow applicable State and local regulations regarding dust control and other air quality emission reduction control measures, including reducing GHG by following energy saving strategies. In addition, Best Management Practices (BMPs) would be utilized prior to, during, and after construction for dust suppression. Control measures would be specified in contractor contracts.

Operation

The Build Alternative is part of the Chicago to St. Louis HSR Program. The 2012 Tier 1 FEIS/ROD concluded that the HSR Program would offset an increase in rail emissions with reduction in the regional vehicular, bus and plane emissions. With the introduction of the additional high-speed trains, regional rail emissions are expected to increase insignificantly. Reduction in regional emissions from the operations of the Build Alternative would include reduction of potential for ozone formation and GHG. The local air quality impacts of the Build Alternative would not be significant and could be further reduced by maintaining the locomotives and tracks in good working condition and locomotives in compliance with the latest USEPA regulations.

3.1.2 Energy

This section in the August 2015 EA is unchanged.

3.1.3 Floodplains and Regulatory Floodways

This section in the August 2015 EA is unchanged.

3.1.4 Noise and Vibration

This section in the August 2015 EA is unchanged except for the mention of the private grade crossing in the description of existing conditions on page 3-22 where a closure is now planned in lieu of maintaining crossing gates. This change in the description of the existing setting does not change the results of the noise and vibration impact assessment.

3.1.5 Agricultural

This section in the August 2015 EA is unchanged.

3.1.6 Aesthetic Environment and Scenic Resources

This section is amended to add a description of visual characteristics and visual change at the North Kankakee Street grade crossing approach to Sections 3.1.6.1 and 3.1.6.2 of the August 2015 EA.

A visual change would occur at the one residence on North Kankakee Street where a retaining wall would be introduced to views from the front of the home. A retaining wall in front of Milltown Market along North Kankakee Street would also reduce the visibility of the market from the North Kankakee Street.

3.1.6.1 *Existing Conditions—North Kankakee Street Grade Crossing Approach*

This landscape unit includes residences and businesses along North Kankakee Street between Canal Street and the at-grade railroad crossing. Some trees are along the UPRR and in front of the residence at the corner of Canal Street and North Kankakee Street. The North Kankakee Street existing approach to the crossing rises to the track level. Views are generally not of high quality within this landscape unit because of the presence of business uses, as shown in Exhibit 3-3A.

3.1.6.2 *Potential Impact—Build Alternative at North Kankakee Street Grade Crossing Approach Improvements*

At the North Kankakee Street grade crossing approach, views of the existing roadway would be altered to include views of new retaining walls along the street. The retaining walls would be placed along North Kankakee Street between Canal Street and UPRR. Residences to the south of Canal Street would not have a notable change in view of the retaining walls from windows of their homes. Visual change for land uses adjacent to the approach improvement would be as follows:

- Residence. One residence is north of Canal Street and would have a view of the retaining wall and associated pedestrian railing from the windows and the front entrance. The retaining wall height in front of the residence is expected to be between approximately 2.5 to 4 feet. The current view looks across North Kankakee Street to the Milltown Market. In addition to the change in what is seen, the new view would be shorter and of a confined space.

Exhibit 3-3A. View toward UPRR from North Kankakee Street Looking North

- Businesses on East Side North Kankakee Street. At the two businesses on the east side of North Kankakee Street (513 and 515A North Kankakee Street), the street would be approximately 6 feet higher than it is presently, but views of the businesses from North Kankakee Street would not be obscured, only the angle of the view would change because of the increased street height. Driveways would meet North Kankakee Street and slope down to the businesses for use by customers. Freestanding signage for the businesses near North Kankakee Street could be raised with the driveways so the signage also could still be seen from the street.

- Business on the West Side of North Kankakee Street. On the west side of North Kankakee Street, the street would be raised in front of a business (an antique mall and self-storage units at 508 North Kankakee Street). The primary customer entrance for the antique mall is on North Kankakee Street. The raised street and the associated jersey barrier at the roadway edge would be approximately 6.5 feet high at the business entrance. The raised road and jersey barrier would partially obscure the business' customer entrance from street view. The retaining wall along North Kankakee Street would be approximately 27 feet from the business, including the business entrance. Currently customers can walk to the business entrance either directly from the street's edge-of-pavement or along the street's sidewalk. With the retaining wall, to reach the front entrance, all customers would have to walk on the sidewalk approximately 50 feet from Canal Street. In addition, rather than the building on one side and the open street on the other, customers would be walking within the confined space between the building on one side and the rising street on the other.

3.1.6.3 *Mitigation at North Kankakee Street Grade Crossing Approach Improvements*

During the completion of construction plans and specifications, the UPRR's Real Estate team will continue to coordinate with City of Wilmington representatives and landowners on measures to mitigate visual changes at North Kankakee Street, particularly as it relates to the exposed surface of retaining walls and replacement landscaping.

3.2 Ecological Systems

3.2.1 Vegetation and Habitat

The impact to forested areas presented in Section 3.2.1.2 on page 3-35 of the August 2015 EA is revised from 3.92 acres to 2.99 acres because additional track curve design work reduced the ROW impacts in the Albany Street area. Other vegetation and habitat impacts presented in this section of the August 2015 EA are unchanged.

The discussion of mitigation in Section 3.2.1.3 on page 3-35 of the August 2015 EA is amended to add: Specific measures to avoid and minimize introducing invasive species into the project area will be included in construction contractor contracts.

3.2.2 Wetlands and Waters of the U.S.

The impacts discussion at Forked Creek in Section 3.2.2.2 on page 3-39 of the August 2015 EA is amended to read:

- Forked Creek
  - Permanent New Bridge Pile Impact: 0.03 acre
  - Temporary Construction Causeway Fill impacts: 0.14 acre
  - Temporary Construction Cofferdam Fill Impacts: 0.06 acre

Impacts to Forked Creek have not changed since the August 2015 EA. The impact list was revised in response to comments received on the August 2015 EA to identify temporary impacts by causeway versus cofferdam.

Because of the narrow width of Forked Creek, a temporary partial causeway appears to be the most practicable way of providing equipment access for the erection of the superstructure (spans). Final decisions related to the use of a temporary partial causeway at Forked Creek will be agreed to with USACE during the permit process.

3.2.3 Water Quality and Water Resources

Section 3.2.3.2 of the August 2015 EA is amended to add the following clarification: All culvert improvements are associated with stormwater drainage and do not serve streams that carry fish.

3.2.4 Threatened and Endangered Species

Since the release of the August 2015 EA, threatened and endangered species consultation under Section 7 of the Endangered Species Act was completed. Given the species identified in the project area, a final informal Biological Assessment (BA) was submitted to USFWS for all listed species in Will County on February 3, 2016. The effects determination resulted in a "may affect, not likely to adversely affect" determination for two species: Northern long-eared bat (*Myotis septentrionalis)* and sheepnose mussel (*Plethobasus cyphyus*) and a "no effect" determination for all other listed species in Will County. On February 4, 2016, the USFWS concurred with the "may affect, not likely to adversely affect" determination on the northern long-eared bat and sheepnose mussel and a "no effect" determination for all other listed species in Will County, which concluded the informal consultation (see Appendix E).

The operational impacts discussion related to the federally listed sheepnose mussel on pages 3-54 to 3-55 is amended to add the following clarification related to the new bridge design's contribution to minimizing the risk of chemical spills: The proposed bridge design reduces the chances of a chemical spill or other catastrophic event. The existing bridge has an open deck system, where the ties sit directly on the steel girders. Gaps between the ties are open to the air below it, therefore, debris and runoff flows directly into the Kankakee River. The proposed bridge is a closed system, which would

have a 5/8-inch thick steel deck plate welded to the steel beam superstructure, with a steel curb section along the side. To allow rain water to escape the closed system, four 2.5-inch steel drains would be installed on each span. The proposed closed design would minimize the spill risk compared to the existing conditions.

Section 3.2.4.3 describing threatened and endangered species that begins on page 3-60 is updated to include the final mitigation program.

Mitigation measures for the northern long-eared bat will include preservation of approximately 9 acres of riparian forested habitat along Forked Creek. High quality habitat would be preserved at a greater than 2:1 ratio. In addition, IDOT will perform two years of northern long-eared bat monitoring, in years 1 and 3. Monitoring will take place two nights with two nets for a total of four mist net nights. Mist nets would be set up across Forked Creek if possible, otherwise IDOT will locate a suitable netting site within or as close to the mitigation site as possible.

Also, efforts would be made to reduce the number of potential roost trees removed, as well as conducting tree removal activities between October 15 and March 31 from areas of potential summer bat habitat. Additional surveys to determine if bats are present would occur if tree removal is required outside of this time-frame.

Prior to construction, all state and federally listed mussels will be moved out of the impact area in the Kankakee River. Sheepnose mussel were not found within the project limits. If sheepnose mussels are found during the pre-construction surveys, prior to the relocation efforts, malacologists would work with the Illinois Department of Natural Resources (IDNR) and USFWS to develop protocols in the handling, transport, and relocation of any living sheepnose mussels.

3.2.5 Special Lands

This section is unchanged from the August 2015 EA.

3.3 Section 4(f) Resources

This section is unchanged from the August 2015 EA.

3.4 Human Environment

3.4.1 Transportation

The "At-Grade Crossing" discussion under Section 3.4.1.2 beginning on page 3-67 of the August 2015 EA, the "Vehicular Traffic" section beginning on page 3-68, "Public Parking" section beginning on page 3-69, and Section 3.1.4.3 regarding mitigation on page 3-69 are amended to reflect the impacts of the revised North Kankakee Street crossing approach.

The Build Alternative would have permanent impacts to vehicular traffic by improving safety elements at grade crossings. Permanent impacts to parking spaces and access (both vehicular and pedestrian) at North Kankakee Street would occur. As discussed in Section 3.4.6, no accommodations for bicycles or pedestrians would be impacted.

3.4.1.2 *Potential Impacts*

At-Grade Crossings

There are three public at-grade crossings: East Kankakee River Drive (MP 51.94), North Kankakee Street (MP 52.54), and North 1st Street (MP 52.99) and one private road crossing, Albany Street (MP 52.42). With the No-Build Alternative, at-grade crossing protection would not be improved and the associated motor vehicle travel safety benefit would not be achieved. The number of accidents occurring at the existing at-grade crossings could increase with community growth. Community growth would result in more travelers using public crossings at their current low level of protection described below.

The Build Alternative would increase the number of times per day the gates come down for passenger trains to 18 from the current 10. The number of freight trains and associated gate down time are expected to grow at the same rate with either the No-Build or Build Alternatives to 11 trains per day from 5 currently. Because the tracks in Wilmington are considered mainline tracks, UPRR standard operation typically does not stop trains on the mainline unless it is an emergency, hence freight train growth would increase only the number of times the gates go down. There would not be freight trains stopped at crossings for extended periods.

The existing North Kankakee Street crossing has substandard stopping sight distances per IDOT and ICC design criteria. This is the sight distance required to see motor vehicles, pedestrians, bicyclists, and objects on the road on the other side of the crossing in time to stop if needed to avoid a crash. The current speed limit is 30 miles per hour at North Kankakee Street; however, the existing stopping sight distance is only sufficient for travelers going 15 miles per hour. The Build Alternative would increase the sight distance to 20 mph, while lowering the speed limit on Kankakee Street approaching the crossing to 20 mph. Attempting to increase the driver sight distance to accommodate the current 30 mph speed limit would increase the impact on the community by necessitating changes in North Kankakee Street south of Canal Street.

The private road crossing at Albany Street would be closed and the property it serves purchased. The East Kankakee River Drive is a potential candidate for closure, but its closure is not a part of either the No-Build or Build Alternative. Impacts of closure and associated mitigation would be handled in another environmental document in association with the City of Wilmington. FRA guidance related to railroad grade crossing consolidation and closure would be followed. Communication is on-going with the City of Wilmington related to the East Kankakee River Drive closure.

The East Kankakee River Drive crossing currently has flashers and no crossing gates. With the Build Alternative, four-quadrant gates would be installed, if the crossing is not closed. The installation of four-quadrant gates would make it difficult for motorists to go around the gates when they are down, a safety benefit important to the operation of more frequent and higher speed trains. If the crossing were to be closed, those living and working along East Kankakee River Drive or in Wilmington west of the railroad tracks would need to use North Kankakee Street to reach IL 53 either at its intersection with North Kankakee Street or its intersection with East Kankakee River Drive. IL 53 is the primary north-south through highway in and out of Wilmington.

The private crossing at Albany Street has stop signs as crossing protection. With its closure, the private property served by the grade crossing would no longer have access to a public road. Purchasing the entire property prior to crossing closure will serve as mitigation.

The North Kankakee Street and North 1st Street grade crossings both have flashers as existing warning devices and four-quadrant gates would be installed with the Build Alternative. This is a safety benefit important to the operation of more frequent and higher speed trains.

Crossings would be equipped with a constant warning time. Currently, crossing gates are activated approximately 20 to 30 seconds prior to a train reaching the grade crossing. For high-speed passenger trains, crossing gates would activate 80 seconds before a train reaches the crossing. This increase in time would cause additional vehicular delay for motorists using the highway-rail grade crossing. The combination of additional passenger trains and longer gate down times would increase the amount of time that a crossing is blocked by approximately 20 minutes per day. This change would not be notable given that it would be split among 18 passenger trains passing through at different times of day and the potential for the additional wait time to generate traffic congestion is negligible given that the crossings are within a small rural city. With the No-Build Alternative the number of passenger train gate closures would not change.

During construction, each public at-grade crossing and the North Water Street grade separated crossing would be closed at different times during the installation of the second track at the crossings. The construction contractor would coordinate the timing of public crossing temporary closures with the City of Wilmington to minimize impacts to traffic flow across the tracks. Detours to alternate crossings would be marked. At the private crossing at Albany Street, the property served would be purchased before the permanent closure of the crossing. The timing of any full closures would be coordinated with the property owner. During construction, full closure of the North Kankakee Street crossing would be coordinated with the Wilmington Fire Protection District because this crossing is the primary route to the north side of Wilmington for emergency vehicles (fire and medical). Further discussion regarding this impact and associated mitigation is presented in Section 3.4.7.2.

Vehicular Traffic

The No-Build Alternative would not have any impacts on vehicular traffic.

Vehicular safety at improved grade crossings is addressed in the previous section. The Build Alternative also would result in temporary impacts to vehicular operations related to emergency services, schools, businesses, and other local activities during construction. At-grade crossing improvements would, at a minimum, require traffic to slow down as it passes through the construction zone. The re-building of the approach to the North Kankakee Street crossing would have the greatest effect on railroad crossing traffic. To minimize disruption and compress the construction time required, the North Kankakee Street crossing would be closed for approximately three to four months to construct the new roadway. Attempting to maintain traffic through the crossing while the approach is being rebuilt, would result in a longer construction period and associated inconvenience. Driveway access would be maintained during construction for the businesses on the east side of North Kankakee Street. Emergency vehicles with heights less than 10 feet would use the Water Street underpass during construction. While the bridge at Water Street will be replaced as part of the project, the underpass will remain open during the closure of North Kankakee Street. To maintain access for the fire engines that require higher clearance, the crossing at East Kankakee River Drive would be kept open while North Kankakee Street is closed. During temporary crossing closures, temporary diversion of traffic to adjacent crossings along marked detours would be required. The contractor would coordinate the timing of public crossing closures with the City of Wilmington to minimize impacts to traffic flow across the tracks in Wilmington, including travel to the north side of Wilmington by emergency vehicles. A portion of Railroad Road south of the Kankakee River would be closed during a part of construction. However, alternate access to homes on Railroad Road is available. Traffic maintenance planning would be coordinated with the City of Wilmington, schools, and emergency service providers.

The railroad improvement component of the Build Alternative would have no permanent impacts to vehicular traffic and no changes to access.

The gradient of the business driveways would increase. On the east side of North Kankakee Street truck movement to and from a loading dock would be affected, particularly during icy conditions.

The Build Alternative would have a positive safety impact on bicycle and pedestrian movement in association with at-grade crossing protection improvements. Fencing installed along the UPRR ROW at the at-grade crossings would channel pedestrians and bicyclists wanting to cross the tracks to the improved at-grade crossings.

Overall traveler safety in the Chicago to St. Louis HSR Program corridor would increase as travelers divert from automobile to rail since rail is a safer mode of travel.

Public Parking

There would be no displacements of public parking spaces with the No-Build Alternative. The improvement to the approach to the North Kankakee Street grade crossing would affect business parking as follows:

- Business parking in front of 513 North Kankakee Street would change. The businesses at 513 North Kankakee Street have four perpendicular parking spaces along the street, which would be removed and replaced by four parallel parking spaces just south of the businesses. Two parking spaces would remain at a small parking lot near the building entrance. Businesses at 513 North Kankakee Street include Brown's Carpet Care, Brown's Floor Covering, Brown's Building Maintenance, and Puro Clean. The existing parking is used by both employees and customers.

- The four to six spaces in front of Milltown Market (508 North Kankakee Street) would be removed. On-site parking and parking along Canal Street would remain.

3.4.1.3 *Mitigation*

During the construction period, coordination would occur between the contractor and the railroads, wayside industries, local government and school officials, and the Wilmington Fire Protection District to minimize construction period transportation impacts. Additionally, to minimize disruption during construction and to compress the construction period, North Kankakee Street would be closed to traffic at the crossing during reconstruction of the approach. Traffic will be detoured to East Kankakee River Drive and IL 53. Vehicle access would be maintained during construction to the businesses on the east side of North Kankakee Street. Emergency vehicles with heights less than 10 feet would use the Water Street underpass during construction. To maintain access for the fire engines that require higher clearance, the crossing at East Kankakee River Drive will be kept open while North Kankakee Street is closed to through traffic.

Access to businesses on the east side of North Kankakee Street would be maintained by raising the driveways for those businesses to meet the higher elevation of North Kankakee Street. In addition, an alternative access point would be provided from the north end of Joliet Street.

Four parallel parking spaces along the east side of North Kankakee Street would be built across from Milltown Market and just south of the businesses on the east side of North Kankakee Street.

3.4.2 Community and Land Use

This section is amended to reflect the community and land use impacts of the improved approach to the North Kankakee Street grade crossing. This includes amending the existing conditions discussion in Section 3.4.2.1 beginning on page 3-69 to include the list of businesses and residences along North Kankakee Street. Section 3.4.2.2 on

potential impacts beginning on page 3-70 is amended with a revised Table 3-17, a revised discussion on residential and business relocations, community service and facility impacts, and reference to visual changes associated with the improved North Kankakee Street grade crossing approach. Section 3.4.2.3 on mitigation on page 3-74 also is amended.

The Build Alternative would involve the acquisition of approximately 4.35 acres of additional railroad ROW, 1.08 acres of temporary easements, and 8.97 acres isolated by a private crossing closure (Albany Street) and generally would not result in a notable change to the surrounding community and existing land use. This is an increase of 0.27 acre of railroad ROW and a decrease of 0.74 acre of temporary construction easements from the August 2015 EA. In August 2015 EA, the closure of the Albany Street crossing was assessed as a possibility. The closure is now included in the Build Alternative, leaving the 8.97-acre property served by the crossing without access to a public road; thus necessitating the property's purchase. Primary community impacts include visual changes along the North Kankakee Street approach and at the neighborhood west of the UPRR between East Kankakee River Drive and Stewart Street (see Section 3.1.6.2), as well as changes to vehicular access and public parking along North Kankakee Street (see Section 3.4.1.2).

3.4.2.1 *Existing Conditions*

Along the central portion of the Project study area, the Wilmington central business district is to the south and industrial operations are to the north. Businesses along the North Kankakee Street approach (the block between Canal Street and UPRR) include Milltown Market (an antique mall and self-storage units at 508 North Kankakee Street), Brown's Carpet Care, Brown's Floor Covering, Brown's Building Maintenance, and Puro Clean (all at 513 North Kankakee Street), and Wilmington Overhead Door (515 North Kankakee Street). One residence also is on this block at the corner of Canal Street and North Kankakee Street. Additional residences are located further south of Canal Street along the east and west sides of North Kankakee Street.

3.4.2.2 *Potential Impacts*

The No-Build Alternative would not affect the Wilmington community or its land use. As shown in Table 3-17, the Build Alternative would involve the acquisition of approximately 4.35 acres of additional ROW and 1.08 acres of temporary easements. This is an increase of 0.27 acre of railroad ROW and a decrease or 0.74 acre of temporary construction easements from the August 2015 EA.

The closure of the Albany Street private crossing will leave the 8.97-acre residential property with one home that is currently served by the crossing without access to a public road; thus necessitating the property's purchase.

Table 3-17. New ROW and Temporary Construction Easements

Land Use	Residential	Industrial	Commercial	Total
ROW (acres, %)	1.96 (45%)	2.23 (51%)	0.16 (4%)	4.35
Temporary Easement (acres, %)	0.76 (70%)	0.31 (29%)	0.01 (1%)	1.08

Residential and Business Relocations

No residential or business relocations would occur with the No Build Alternative. One residential relocation would occur with the Build Alternative as a result of the Albany Street crossing closure. The residential property served by the crossing would no longer have access to a public road and the entire property would be acquired. No business relocations would occur with either the No Build or Build Alternative. One self-storage shed containing 5 storage units at the Milltown Market property would be displaced in association with changes in access to North Kankakee Street. Direct driveway access would be removed and a cul-de-sac would be built to allow vehicles to turn around on the business' property and return to the remaining Canal Street access point. Coordination with the property owners has started and impacts are being considered in the ROW acquisition process.

ROW and temporary construction easement purchases would be conducted in compliance with the Uniform Relocation Assistance and Real Property Acquisition Act of 1970 (Uniform Relocation Act) (42 USC Sections § 4601 et seq.), as amended, and the USDOT implementing regulations, 49 CFR part 24. The Uniform Relocation Act applies to all federal or federally assisted activities that involve the acquisition of real property or the displacement of residences or business. The Uniform Relocation Act would be followed to allow for fair compensation and relocation of the household displaced. There is sufficient replacement housing in the Wilmington area (U.S. Census, 2010-2014 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates).

Community Service and Facility Impacts

There would be no displacement or other direct impacts to City of Wilmington community services or facilities with either the No-Build or Build Alternatives.

There would be no alteration to traffic patterns along the existing street grid, except for short-term temporary closures during construction; impacts to these services and facilities would be minimal. In some cases, temporary diversion of traffic to adjacent crossings would be required, affecting emergency services, schools, businesses, and other local activities requiring vehicular movement across the tracks (see Section 3.4.1.2

under "Vehicular Traffic"). Construction closure would be longest at the North Kankakee Street crossing because a notable improvement is being made to the approach in addition to improving crossing protection devices. North Kankakee Street is the City's preferred route to respond to emergencies at the north side of Wilmington. North Kankakee Street traffic would be detoured to East Kankakee River Drive and IL 53. Vehicle access would be maintained during construction to the businesses on the east side of North Kankakee Street. Emergency vehicles with heights less than 10 feet could use the Water Street underpass during construction. To maintain access for the fire engines that require higher clearance, the crossing at East Kankakee River Drive would be kept open while North Kankakee Street is closed to through traffic.

Other Community Impacts

At the North Kankakee Street grade crossing approach, views of the existing roadway would be altered to include views of new retaining walls along the street. Businesses and a single residence would be affected. On the west side of North Kankakee Street, a raised North Kankakee Street would be approximately 6.5 feet high at the business entrance. The customer entrance would be obscured from drive-by view.

3.4.2.3 *Mitigation*

Permanent property and temporary construction easement purchases, including the self-storage sheds at the Milltown Market property and the residential relocation, would be conducted in compliance with the Uniform Relocation Act. Mitigation measures are currently being coordinated with property owners to mitigate impacts to residences or businesses.

Mitigation, in the form of detours, would be provided when at-grade crossings are closed during construction (see Section 3.4.1.3 of this Supplemental EA and the August 2015 EA [page 3-69]). Mitigation, associated with noise and vibration impacts, is described in Section 3.1.4.1 of the August 2015 EA under "Noise Impact Abatement Measures" (page 3-22) and in Section 3.1.4.2 of the August 2015 EA under "Vibration Mitigation" (page 3-26).

3.4.3 Demographics

This section is unchanged from the August 2015 EA.

3.4.4 Economics and Employment

This section is revised from the August 2015 EA to include impacts on businesses along the improved North Kankakee Street grade crossing approach, including Section 3.4.4.2 on potential impacts and 3.4.4.3 on mitigation.

The top three major employment industries in the City of Wilmington and Will County are educational services, health care, and social assistance (grouped together), retail trade, and manufacturing. The No-Build Alternative would not impact employers or industries as there would be no change to the existing conditions. With the Build

Alternative, businesses along the North Kankakee Street approach, between Canal Street and UPRR, would have reduced visibility and several business parking spaces would be displaced. One self-storage shed containing 5 storage units at the Milltown Market property would be removed to create a cul-de-sac on the property. A cul-de-sac would be built to allow vehicles to turn around on the business' property and return to the remaining Canal Street access point to the property. No other businesses or business parking would be displaced by the Build Alternative.

3.4.4.2 *Potential Impacts*

As discussed in Section 3.4.1.2, the businesses at 513 North Kankakee Street have four perpendicular parking spaces along the street, which would be displaced. Two parking spaces would remain at a small parking lot near the building entrance. Businesses at 513 North Kankakee Street include Brown's Carpet Care, Brown's Floor Covering, Brown's Building Maintenance, and Puro Clean. The existing parking is used by both employees and customers. The four to six spaces in front of Milltown Market (508 North Kankakee Street) would be removed. On-site parking and parking along Canal Street would remain.

One self-storage shed containing five self-storage units would be removed on the Milltown property. In addition to the displacement of parking spaces and the self-storage units, the businesses along the North Kankakee Street approach also would have reduced visibility, as described in Section 3.1.6.2.

No additional businesses or access to parking would be displaced by the Build Alternative. The Build Alternative would create construction jobs.

3.4.4.3 *Mitigation*

As indicated in Section 3.4.1.2 under "Public Parking," four parallel parking spaces along the east side of North Kankakee Street would be built across from Milltown Market and just south of the businesses on the east side of North Kankakee Street.

As indicated in Section 3.4.2.2, ROW and temporary construction easement purchases, including the self-storage sheds at Milltown Market property, would be conducted in compliance with Uniform Relocation Act.

Mitigation measures for businesses could include improved signage.

3.4.5 Environmental Justice and Title VI

This section is unchanged from the August 2015 EA.

3.4.6 Barriers and Accessibility

Section 3.4.6.2 on page 3-83 of the August 2015 EA regarding potential impacts is amended as follows to acknowledge the planned addition of ADA compliant sidewalk ramps at Canal Street: Grade crossing improvements at North Kankakee Street would

meet the requirements of ADA and would be extended to connect to the sidewalk crossing on the north side of Chicago Street. ADA compliant sidewalk ramps will be provided at all four corners of intersection at Canal Street.

3.4.7 Public Health and Safety

Section 3.4.7.3 beginning on page 3-85 of the August 2015 EA is amended to include additional construction mitigation measures.

3.4.7.3 *Mitigation*

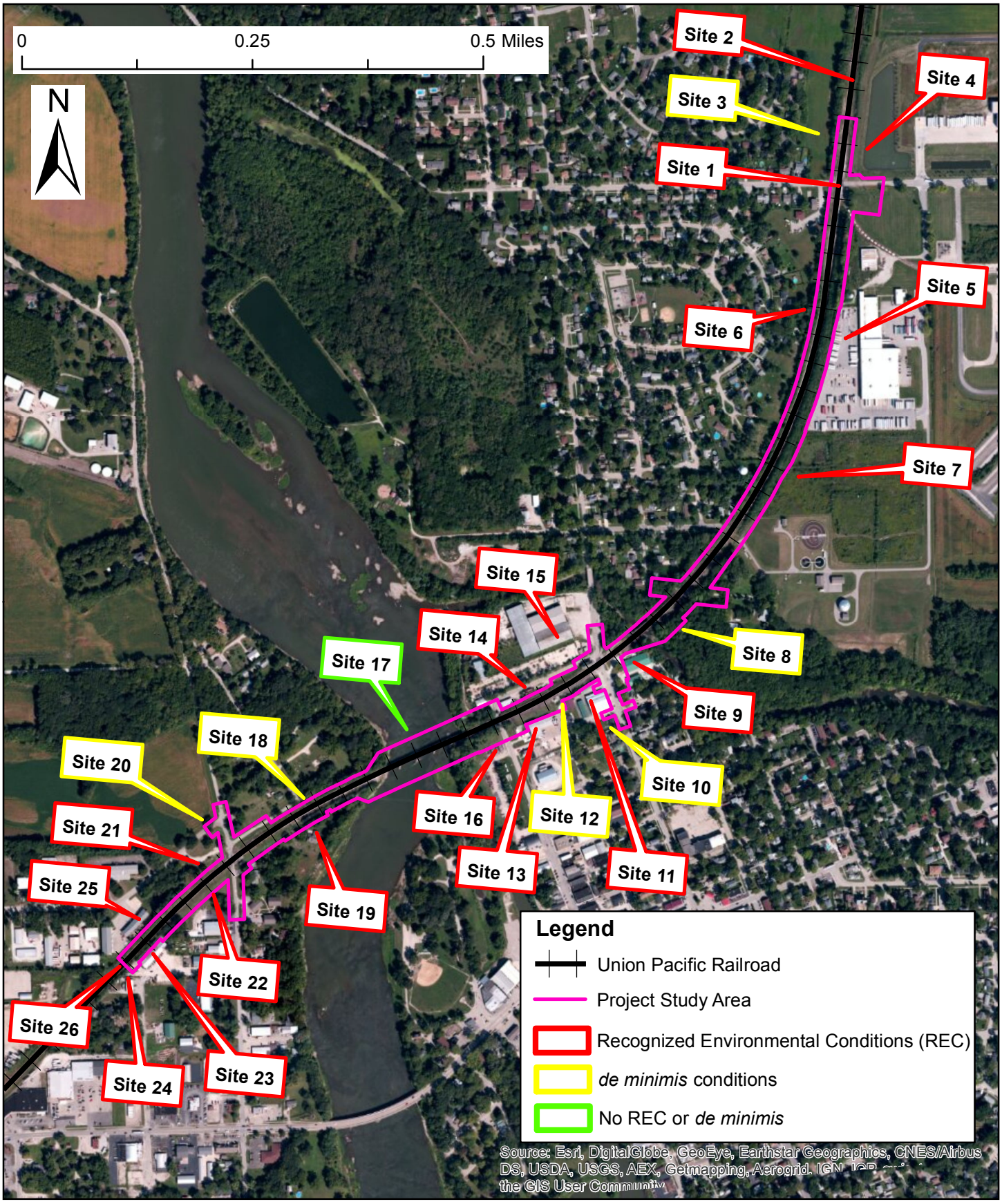
Measures would be taken during the construction phase to coordinate with the City of Wilmington and emergency service providers to minimize the effects of railroad crossing improvement construction on emergency vehicle travel. To minimize disruption during construction and to compress the construction time period, North Kankakee Street would be closed to traffic at the crossing during reconstruction of the approach. Traffic will be detoured to East Kankakee River Drive and IL 53. Vehicle access would be maintained during construction to the businesses on the east side of North Kankakee Street. Emergency vehicles with heights less than 10 feet would use the Water Street underpass during construction. To maintain access for the fire engines that require higher clearance, the crossing at East Kankakee River Drive will be kept open while North Kankakee Street is closed to through traffic.

3.4.8 Hazardous Materials and Waste

Section 3.4.8.1 on existing conditions (beginning on page 3-86 of the August 2015 EA) is amended to add clarification of potential contamination risks at REC sites. Section 3.4.8.2 on potential impacts (beginning on page 3-88 of the August 2015 EA) is amended with a revised Table 3-24 with updated ROW and easement acreages. Section 3.4.8.3 on mitigation (beginning on page 3-89 of the August 2015 EA) is amended with new mitigation measures for the demolition of a structure used as storage units, to address worker and environmental safety during construction. Nineteen sites with potential hazardous materials potentially affecting the Project study area were identified and are shown in an updated Exhibit 3-11.

3.4.8.1 *Existing Conditions*

The PESA identified 19 sites with RECs out of 26 potential contamination sites in the project area. Potential contamination risk was screened by considering sites that were proposed as new ROW or easements, or were associated with existing railroad use. Five sites were identified as having potential contamination risk to the UPRR within proposed ROW; six sites were identified as having potential contamination risk to the UPRR within both proposed ROW and construction easement, and three sites were identified as RECs within the existing UPRR ROW. Therefore, potential contamination risk is at 14 sites out of the 19 REC sites identified for the Kankakee River Bridge and Track Improvements project because of use by proposed ROW, proposed easement, or existing UPRR.



Date: 02/04/2015

POTENTIAL HAZARDOUS MATERIALS SITES

Exhibit 3 -11

Table 3-24. Potential REC Impacts

Site ID #	MP	Side of Track	Acres Potentially Impacted (Approximate)	Reason for Potential Impact
1	51.88 to 53.20	N/A	27.20	UPRR Existing ROW
2	51.84 to 51.88	N/A	0.54	UPRR Existing ROW
4	51.88 to 51.93	East	0.18	Proposed ROW
5	51.94 to 52.20	East	1.14	Proposed ROW
6	51.93 to 52.48	West	1.20 (0.92 ROW and 0.28 Easement)[1]	Proposed ROW and Construction Easement
7	52.20 to 52.33	East	0.44	Proposed ROW
9	52.47 to 52.52	East	0.27 (0.04 ROW and 0.23 Easement)[1]	Proposed ROW and Construction Easement
11	52.53 to 52.57	East	0.17 (0.16 ROW and 0.01 Easement)[1]	Proposed ROW and Construction Easement
13	52.59 to 52.63	East	0[1]	N/A
14	52.56 to 52.63	West	0	N/A
15	52.65 to 52.69	West	0.10 (0.04 ROW and 0.06 Easement)[1]	Proposed ROW and Construction Easement
16	52.65 to 52.69	East	0.43 (0.26 ROW and 0.17 Easement)[1]	Proposed ROW and Construction Easement
19	52.77 to 52.81	East	0.18[1]	Proposed ROW
21	53.02 to 53.17	West	0.14 (0.11 ROW and 0.03 Easement)[1]	Proposed ROW and Construction Easement
22	53.04 to 53.11	East	0	N/A
23	53.13 to 53.19	East	0	N/A
24	53.19 to 53.21	East	0	N/A
25	53.17 to 53.19	West	0.08	Proposed ROW
26	53.18 to 53.22	N/A	0.77	UPRR Existing ROW
Total			32.84	

[1] Change from August 2015 EA. The total area potentially impacted rose 0.50 acre from 32.34 acres in the August 2015 EA to 32.84 acres.

3.4.8.2 *Potential Impacts*

Table 3-24 indicates the REC sites identified in the Project study area and the potential impacts resulting from construction of the Build Alternative. The total potentially impacted area increased 0.50 acre from 32.34 acres in the August 2015 EA to 32.84 acres. The No-Build Alternative would not impact these sites.

3.4.8.3 *Mitigation*

Special waste issues that may arise in the construction phase would be managed in accordance with Union Pacific Railroad Hazardous Material Procedures. Prior to earthwork operations, a decision will be made by UPRR, in accordance with their Hazardous Materials Procedures on how specifically to address the potential contamination at the 14 sites. It would be either disposal/handling by risk management, or by environmental testing and development of a disposal/handling program based on testing results.

Accidental spills of hazardous materials and wastes during construction or operation of the transportation system require special response measures. Occurrences would be handled in accordance with local government response procedures of the City of Wilmington and Wilmington Fire Protection District. Refueling, storage of fuels, or maintenance of construction equipment would not be allowed within 100 feet of wetlands or water bodies to avoid accidental spills impacting these resource. The UPRR has and the contractor would have an Emergency Response Plan that would be used during Project construction.

Three structures are proposed for displacement as part of the Build Alternative, a self-storage facility storage building, a residence, and an out-building associated with the residence. (See the discussion of residential and business relocations inSection 3.4.2.2) None of these building are listed on or eligible for inclusion in the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP). Section 3.5 of the August 2015 EA documents that there are no architectural resources eligible for inclusion in NRHP within the proposed Project's Area of Potential Effect. Pre-demolition building surveys will be conducted prior to the building demolition to ensure proper abatement (including appropriate regulatory notifications in accordance with National Emission Standards for Hazardous Air Pollutants (NESHAP) of Asbestos-containing material (ACM) and lead based paint (LBP) is completed and to help limit the volume of materials that would need to be removed and placed in permitted landfills. Because of the commercial use of the self-storage structure, identified as part of REC Site 11, LBP in particular, which has not been banned for industrial use, may be present. The presence or absence of ACM or LBP would be determined during pre-demolition building surveys. In the event of any future design changes that require additional building demolitions, pre-demolition surveys will be completed for those structures, too.

To ensure worker and environmental safety during construction, UPRR will communicate known site hazards and/or risk management procedures with construction

contractors during pre-construction meetings. The communication would include emergency notifications to make and contacts in the event that an unforeseen environmental condition is encountered. Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) guidelines will be followed for Personal Protective Equipment. Dust control BMPs will be followed to reduce the exposure of potential contaminants.

3.5 Cultural Resources

This section is unchanged from the August 2015 EA.

3.6 Construction Impacts and Mitigation

Sections 3.6.1, 3.6.3, 3.6.4 and 3.6.5 are unchanged from the August 2015 EA. Section 3.6.2 on air quality (page 3-92 of the August 2015 EA) is amended to include findings of additional construction emission analysis. Section 3.6.6 on invasive species (beginning on page 3-93 of the August 2015 EA) is amended to add a specific mitigation measure related to the introduction of invasive species during construction.

3.6.2 Air Quality

Construction air quality impacts are temporary in nature and localized to the area of construction. As a rule, short-term construction (shorter than three years) on small projects does not warrant a detailed air quality analysis. Construction of the proposed Kankakee River Bridge and Track Improvements project is estimated to take 18 months to two years. However, in 2016 the Build Alternative would be constructed simultaneously with three other HSR Program projects in the Chicago-Gary-Lake County, IL-IN Ozone Non-Attainment and PM2.5 maintenance area. This consideration led to conducting an analysis to estimate emissions from construction of the combined projects. The findings of this analysis are addressed in Section 3.1.1.3 under "Construction Impacts." It was found that emissions from the projects together would be below the General Conformity *de minimis* thresholds.

The project construction would follow applicable State and local regulations regarding dust control and other air quality emission reduction control measures, including reducing GHG by following energy saving strategies. In addition, BMPs would be utilized prior to, during, and after construction for dust suppression. Control measures would be specified in contractor contracts.

GHG emissions also would be generated during the construction phase of the Build Alternative. The total CO2 emissions of HSR Program construction in 2016 within Will and Cook counties would be 4,155.9 tons, of which 2,269.0 tons would be associated with the Build Alternative. However, these emissions are considered minor given the limited duration of the construction activities, and would be eventually offset by the reduction in GHG emissions by the mode shift from automobiles to passenger rail.

3.6.6 Invasive Species

Specific measures to avoid and minimize introducing invasive species into the project area will be included in construction contractor contracts.

3.7 Secondary and Cumulative Impacts

Section 3.7 is unchanged from the August 2015 EA except for a clarification on future train growth impacts at crossings and to update the discussion of cumulative impacts on threatened and endangered species to reflect the cumulative impacts finding in the BA prepared for consultation under the Endangered Species Act.

3.7.2 Cumulative Impacts

3.7.2.1 Impact Causing Activities

The second bullet under future activities on page 3-98 is revised to read:

- Freight train growth from five daily trains to 11. Because the tracks in Wilmington are considered mainline tracks, UPRR standard operation typically does not stop trains on the mainline unless it is an emergency, hence freight train growth would increase only the number of times the gates go down. There would not be freight trains stopped at crossings for extended periods of time.

3.7.2.2 *Potential Cumulative Impacts*

Threatened and Endangered Species

A cumulative impact assessment for the Threatened and Endangered Specis is included in the final informal Biological Assessment (BA), which was submitted to USFWS for all listed species in Will County on February 3, 2016. The BA concluded the cumulative impacts to the two federally endangered species in the project area, the sheepnose mussel and the northern long-eared bad, are negligable.

3.8 Permits

This section is unchanged from the August 2015 EA.

3.9 Environmental Commitments

This section is amended from the August 2015 EA to include mitigation measures as it relates to construction vehicle emissions, threatened and endangered species, demolition of one structure, and worker and environmental safety during construction. The revised list is presented in its entirety.

The following environmental commitments would be fulfilled in association with the design, construction, and/or operation of the Build Alternative:

- Air Quality

    1. The project construction would follow applicable State and local regulations regarding dust control and other air quality emission reduction control measures, including reducing GHG, by following energy saving strategies. In addition, Best Management Practices (BMPs) would be utilized prior to, during, and after construction for dust suppression. Control measures would be specified in contractor contracts.

- Noise and Vibration

    2. If the City of Wilmington wishes to designate a quiet zone after completion of the Build Alternative's grade crossing improvements, FRA would work with the City of Wilmington, while also coordinating with the UPRR and Amtrak, so that the Project study area becomes a quiet zone.

    3. To minimize vibration impacts in the Build Alternative, UPRR and Amtrak would use maintenance procedures such as regularly scheduled rail grinding, wheel truing programs, vehicle reconditioning programs, and use of wheel flat detectors.

- Aesthetic Environment and Scenic Resources

    4. The UPRR ROW would be re-vegetated with a ground cover at the end of construction, including the east and west sides of the UPRR ROW from East Kankakee River Drive to Stewart Street.

    5. For the North Kankakee Street crossing approach road improvements, during the completion of construction plans and specifications, the UPRR's Real Estate team would continue to coordinate with City of Wilmington representatives and landowners on measures to mitigate visual changes, particularly as it relates to the exposed surface of retaining walls and replacement landscaping.

- Vegetation and Habitat

    6. Temporary impacts would be mitigated by restoring the ground surface to the pre-construction contour and planting exposed areas of soils with a cover crop.

    7. Areas of temporary impact should be graded back to the original contour and then seeded with modified IDOT Class 4 Native Grass mix. Perennial ryegrass will not be included in the Class 4 mix. Seed will be planted according to Articles 250.05 and 250.06 of the IDOT Standard Specifications for Road and Bridge Construction (adopted 01-01-2012) or equivalent UPRR specifications.

- Wetlands and Waters of the U.S.

    8. IDOT and UPRR would work to first avoid and minimize impacts to wetlands locations during final design development to the extent practicable. Unavoidable adverse wetland impacts would be subject to the applicable replacement ratios specified in 17 IAC Part 1090.50 (c)(8). The replacement ratio for unavoidable adverse impacts to wetlands with a Mean C value of four or above would be 5.5:1.0. A bank site to be determined is proposed as the compensation site for impacts requiring mitigation.

- Water Quality and Water Resources

    9. Appropriate BMPs would be utilized prior to, during, and after construction as part of the soil erosion and sediment control plan for the Build Alternative included in the stormwater pollution prevention plan (SWPPP).

    10. In the event that an unknown or undocumented well is encountered during construction, the water well(s) identified would be properly capped and abandoned. If the dwelling where the water well is located would remain after construction is completed, the water well would be replaced or other suitable alternative would be provided. The replacement water well, if necessary, would be constructed such that susceptibility to surficial contamination is minimized, for example, by constructing the well in a deeper aquifer.

- Threatened and Endangered Species

    11. To minimize direct effects to the protected sheepnose mussel, all living sheepnose mussel specimens found during a pre-construction mussel survey would be removed from the impacted area and relocated. Live individuals would be relocated into suitable habitat, preferably upstream of the construction area. Prior to the relocation efforts, malacologists would work with IDNR and USFWS to develop protocols in the handling, transport, and relocation of any living sheepnose mussels, if found.

    12. BMPs also would be implemented by UPRR contractors in proximity to the bridge over the Kankakee River, as well as in proximity to tributaries of the Kankakee River, to minimize impacts to water quality. In-stream work in the Kankakee River would be performed in accordance with USACE, Chicago District – Regulatory Branch Requirements for In-stream Construction Activities. To the extent practicable, this may include the use of non-erodible cofferdams, filtering of dewatering operations, timber/work mats and the use of low ground-pressure equipment for work in wetlands.

    13. To minimize impacts to the northern long-eared bat habitat, efforts would be made to reduce the number of roost trees removed, as well as conducting tree

removal activities between October 15 and March 31 from areas of potential summer bat habitat. Additional surveys to determine if bats are present would occur if tree removal is required outside of this time frame. Impacts to trees would be quantified and mitigated by IDOT and this information coordinated with IDOT BDE and USFWS prior to construction.

14. Nine acres of preservation of habitat for the northern long-eared bat also will be used as northern long-eared bat mitigation. A site in the Wilmington area is under consideration. IDOT will coordinate the preservation site with the USFWS. The site will be secured via acquisition or through conservation easement on land that will continue to be privately held and for which IDOT will be responsible for identifying the owning/managing entity. Land that is used for mitigation will be protected in perpetuity. IDOT will perform a two year northern long-eared bat monitoring program at the mitigation site in years 1 and 3. Monitoring will take place two nights with two nets for a total of four mist net nights. Mist nets would be set up across Forked Creek if possible, otherwise IDOT will locate a suitable netting site within or as close to the mitigation site as possible. IDOT will provide the monitoring plan for USFWS approval and review. Reports will be provided to the USFWS following years 1 and 3 during the monitoring period for the habitat preservation site documenting conditions and results of the northern long-eared bat surveys. Monitoring details will be coordinated with the USFWS.

15. Mitigation related to the purple wartyback, black sandshell, pallid shiner, western sand darter, and river redhorse is subject to the completion of on-going Incidental Take Authorization. To minimize direct impacts to listed mussels, all living specimens found would be removed prior to construction. Appropriate BMPs, including cofferdams and silt curtains, would minimize impacts to these species. Turbidity monitoring will occur during certain construction activities during the fish spawning period of March 15 to July 15 to reduce impacts to state-listed fish. Worker awareness training will be provided by a qualified environmental professional contracted by UPRR to help minimize and avoid impacts.

- Community and Land Use / Public Health and Safety

16. During the construction period, coordination would occur between the contractor and the railroads, wayside industries, the City of Wilmington, the Wilmington Fire Protection District, and school officials, to minimize construction period transportation impacts, such as access restrictions or detours during improvement of at-grade crossings and modifications to the industrial spur line. The Chicago to St. Louis HSR program website would be used to announce to the public at-grade railroad crossing closures during the construction period.

- Hazardous Materials and Waste

17. Special waste issues that may arise in the construction phase would be managed in accordance with Union Pacific Railroad Hazardous Material Procedures. Prior to start of earthwork operations, a decision will be made by UPRR, in accordance with their Hazardous Materials Procedures on how specifically to address the potential contamination at the 14 sites. It would be either disposal/handling by risk management, or by environmental testing and development of a disposal/handling program based on testing results.

18. Accidental spills of hazardous materials and wastes during construction or operation of the transportation system require special response measures. Occurrences would be handled in accordance with local government response procedures. Refueling, storage of fuels, or maintenance of construction equipment would not be allowed within 100 feet of wetlands or water bodies to avoid accidental spills impacting these resource. The UPRR has and the contractor would have an Emergency Response Plan that would be used during Project construction.

19. Pre-demolition building surveys will be conducted prior to building demolition associated with the Project to ensure proper abatement of ACM and LBP is completed, and to help limit the volume of materials that would need to be removed and placed in permitted landfills.

20. To ensure worker and environmental safety during construction, UPRR will communicate known site hazards and/or risk management procedures with construction contractors during pre-construction meetings. The communication would include emergency notifications to make and contacts in the event that an unforeseen environmental condition is encountered. Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) guidelines will be followed for Personal Protective Equipment. Dust control BMPs will be followed to reduce the exposure to potential contaminants.

4.0 Coordination and Consultation

Section 4.1 on agency coordination is amended from the August 2015 EA to include BA coordination and concurrence with USFWS and coordination meetings with the City of Wilmington. Section 4.2 Public Meetings is amended to include the future public meeting to be held concurrent with the issuance of this Supplemental EA.

4.1 Agency Coordination

Bullet two of the list of meetings held with environmental resource and regulatory agencies in addition to the quarterly meetings presented beginning on page 4-1 of the August 2015 EA is changed to read:

- Conference call with USFWS on October 24, 2014 to discuss potential threatened and endangered species impacts with the proposed Project and the need for formal consultation or conferencing. It was agreed that FRA would submit at BA to USFWS with FRA's findings on potential effects. The BA was submitted in January 2015. USFWS provided comments on the BA in a letter dated February 2015. The letter indicated agreement on determinations of No Effect included in the BA for most species. The letter asked for more information related to impacts to the sheepnose mussel and northern long-eared bat. A meeting was held with USFWS on March 9, 2015 to discuss USFWS comments. A follow-up meeting was held with the USFWS on October 28 to further discuss USFWS comments. Agreement was reached on revisions to be made prior to re-submission of the BA to USFWS. Subject to USFWS's review of the final BA, a biological conclusion of May Affect, Not Likely to Adversely Affect was tentatively agreed to for the sheepnose mussel and northern long-eared bat.

The discussion of meetings with the City of Wilmington beginning on page 4-2 of the August 2015 EA is amended to add meetings held regarding the North Kankakee Road grade crossing approach improvements and the potential for a grade separation. To date, there have been 16 meetings held with City of Wilmington representatives to specifically address improvements to the North Kankakee Street at-grade crossing, including consideration of grade separation options. Their dates, the focus of discussion and understandings reached are:

- April 18, 2014: IDOT transmitted two concept options for North Kankakee Street designs to the City of Wilmington.

- May 19, 2014: The City of Wilmington provided comments to IDOT on the two concept options. The city found both concept options unacceptable.

- December 1, 2014: IDOT transmitted a new concept design at Water Street which would allow for the closure of the North Kankakee Street crossing.

- January 8, 2015: IDOT met with the City of Wilmington to discuss the Water Street concept design. The city indicated that the North Kankakee Street crossing must remain open and stated their preference for continuing to evaluate design improvements at both North Kankakee Street and Water Street.

- February 16, 2015: IDOT transmitted a new design option for North Kankakee Street.

- February 27, 2015: IDOT and the HSR Program Management Team (PMT) met with the City of Wilmington to discuss the North Kankakee Street design option transmitted on February 16, 2015.

- March 17-23, 2015: IDOT completed the 60 percent design for the North Kankakee Street crossing and transmitted the design option to the City of Wilmington.

- March 24, 2015: The City of Wilmington transmitted comments pertaining to potential profile changes of Chicago and Canal Streets.

- June 24, 2015: UPRR transmitted 90 percent design of the North Kankakee Street crossing option to the City of Wilmington.

- July 14, 2015: The City of Wilmington transmitted comments on the 90 percent design of North Kankakee Street. The comments were pertaining to the location of utilities, signage, and future meetings to discuss construction issues.

- July 16, 2015: The City of Wilmington transmitted additional comments on the 90 percent design of North Kankakee Street. The comments were pertaining to construction issues, temporary crossing closure concerns, and use of an adjacent property for staging.

- August 14, 2015: IDOT, UPRR and their consultants, and the HSR PMT met with the City of Wilmington to discuss the North Kankakee Street design and remaining issues related to construction, emergency access, contractor insurance, and public outreach about construction. UPRR agreed to check on emergency vehicle turning radii, material haul routes, and develop graphics for use in public presentations. The City of Wilmington agreed to document their remaining comments in a letter to IDOT.

- August 19, 2015: A public meeting was held in the City of Wilmington to present project design.

- September 15, 2015: The City of Wilmington issued a resolution calling the EA for the Kankakee River Bridge and Track Improvements project flawed in that it did not include an assessment of the North Kankakee Street approach improvement. The resolution asked that the crossing at North Kankakee Street be revised to provide for a grade separation.

- November 12, 2015: IDOT and the HSR PMT met with the City of Wilmington to discuss the Kankakee River Bridge and Track Improvements project, including grade separation options. The City of Wilmington felt strongly that the North Kankakee Street crossing should remain open. Other items discussed at the meeting included 1) the process of applying for a quiet zone; 2) the length of time the gates would be down; 3) the City of Wilmington's concerns about ice jams in the river at the new bridge; and 4) the planned bridge improvements at Water Street. An underpass design concept at the North Kankakee Street was discussed. The HSR PMT explained concerns about an underpass, which would be below the 50-year flood level and require walls in front of businesses. The HSR PMT agreed to provide more information on signal timing at the crossing, bridge clearance, and pier widths for the Kankakee River bridge, North Kankakee Street underpass constraints, and information about the spacing of grade crossings in Wilmington.

- December 8, 2015: IDOT and the HSR PMT met with the City of Wilmington to follow up on the November 12, 2015 meeting. Discussions included the planned Kankakee River bridge structure height that would contribute to minimizing the potential for ice jams and construction staging of the bridge. Conceptual sketches for an underpass at North Kankakee Street were presented and the City of Wilmington concurred that the underpass alternative would not be desirable because of potential frequent flooding. The City agreed that the grade separation or closing North Kankakee Street would not be preferred. The City Fire Department requested the Water Street bridge improvements design be reviewed to determine if increasing the bridge vertical clearance would be feasible. The HSR PMT agreed to provide the upcoming public meeting materials to the City of Wilmington for review and an update of the UPRR real estate team discussions with Kankakee Street business owners.

Copies of the 2011 EA, 2012 Tier 1 FEIS/ROD, and the August 2015 EA for this project were sent to City of Wilmington officials for comment during their comment periods.

Agencies and local governments listed in Chapter 5.0 will be provided a copy of this Supplemental EA with a request that comments be received within 30 days. Comments received and responses will be incorporated in a Finding of No Significant Impact. If the outcome of considering agency and public is that the Build Alternative would cause significant environmental impacts, responses to EA comments would be included in a Draft Environmental Impact Statement.

4.2 Public Meetings

The list of public meetings to which citizens of the City of Wilmington could attend that began on page 4-3 of the August 2015 EA is amended to add the public meetings held to discuss the August 2015 EA:

- A public meeting was held August 27, 2015 on the August 2015 EA for the Kankakee River Bridge and Track Improvements project. A public review copy of the Draft EA was placed in the Wilmington Public Library. Original written comments received on the EA are included in Appendix C. Written comments and responses to those comments are included in Appendix D.

- An additional Public Meeting will be scheduled for the proposed Project. The availability of this Supplemental EA for public review at the City of Wilmington library will coincide with the announcement of the Public Meeting purpose, format, and date and time. The Public Meeting announcement also will include a request for additional written comments on the EA and this Supplemental EA. Comments generated from this meeting and written comments submitted would be incorporated in a Finding of No Significant Impact, including responses to comments made. If the outcome of considering agency and public comments is that this proposed Project would cause significant environmental impacts, responses to Supplemental EA comments would be included in a Draft Environmental Impact Statement, which would be made available for public comment and a public hearing held.

5.0 Distribution List

The Kankakee River Bridge and Track Improvements Supplemental EA is being distributed to the following federal, regional, state, and local agencies and other interested parties for their review and comments. Those who commented on the August 2015 EA for the Kankakee River Bridge and Track Improvements project are indicated with an asterisk.

5.1 Federal

- Advisory Council on Historic Preservation
- Department of the Army, Chicago District, Corps of Engineers
- Federal Emergency Management Agency
- Federal Highway Administration
- U.S. Department of Agriculture Natural Resource Conservation Service – Will-South Cook County
- U.S. Department of Commerce
- U.S. Department of Energy
- U.S. Department of Health and Human Services
- U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development
- U.S. Department of the Interior, Fish and Wildlife Service, Chicago Field Office*
- U.S. Department of the Interior, Office of Environmental Policy and Compliance
- U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Region V, Office of Environmental Review*
- U.S. Senator Richard J. Durbin
- U.S. Senator Mark Kirk
- U.S. Representative Adam Kinzinger, District No. 16

5.2 State

- Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning
- Illinois Bureau of the Budget
- Illinois Commerce Commission
- Illinois Department of Agriculture
- Illinois Department of Natural Resources
- Illinois Department of Natural Resources, Office of Mines and Minerals
- Illinois Department of Natural Resources, Office of Water Resources
- Illinois Department of Public Health
- Illinois Department of Transportation, Division of Aeronautics
- Illinois Department of Transportation, Division of Highways
- Illinois Environmental Protection Agency
- Illinois Geological Survey
- Illinois Historic Preservation Agency
- Illinois Natural History Survey

- Illinois Nature Preserves Commission
- Illinois State Clearinghouse
- Illinois State Library
- Illinois Water Survey

5.3 County

Will County Planning and Zoning Commission

5.4 Local Communities and Jurisdictions

City of Wilmington*

Wilmington Public Library

5.5 Other Agencies or Groups

- CREATE Program
- Illinois Farm Bureau
- Midewin Tallgrass Prairie Alliance*
- South Suburban Mayors and Managers Association
- United Counties Council of Illinois
- Will County Governmental League

5.6 Operating Railroads

- Amtrak
- Union Pacific Railroad

6.0 References

The list of references from the August 2015 EA is amended to add the following:

ICF International, prepared for Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning, Chicago *2010 Regional Greenhouse Gas Emissions Inventory*. May 2012.

Illinois Department of Transportation, *Standard Specifications for Road and Bridge Construction*, January 2012.

Nonroad Diesel Engines: Emission Standards, USA: https://www.dieselnet.com/standards/us/nonroad.php, December 2015.

Shrouds, J.M., *AASHTO report: Air Quality Community of Practice, Short Term Impacts from Construction Equipment and Operation, State-of-the Practice*, March 2010.

Appendix C

Public and Agency Comments on August 2015 EA

Appendix C
Public and Agency Comments on August 2015 EA

CITIZEN COMMENTS **C-2**

LOCAL GOVERNMENT **C-10**

Wilmington Township Representative **C-10**

City of Wilmington **C-11**

NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS – MIDEWIN TALLGRASS PRAIRIE ALLIANCE **C-15**

FEDERAL AGENCIES

US Department of Interior, US Fish and Wildlife Service **C-17**

US Environmental Protection Agency **C-20**

ILLINOIS HIGH-SPEED RAIL
CHICAGO TO ST. LOUIS

Comment Form

Illinois High-Speed Rail
Chicago to St. Louis

The Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT) would like your comments on the Illinois High-Speed Rail Chicago to St. Louis Program. IDOT encourages your input throughout the development process of this Program.

Please place your comment forms in the box marked COMMENTS; **or** fax to (312) 793-1251; **or** fold in thirds, tape closed, place a stamp, and mail. Visit www.idothsr.org for project specific information and to comment on the Illinois High-Speed Rail Program; or call 1-855-IDOT-HSR (436-8477).

Meeting location attended: VFW - WILMINGTON, IL. 60481

Comment/Question:

1) WILL THE HIGH SPEED RAIL HELP OR HURT WILMINGTON?

2) WILL THE RAIL CREATE POSSIBLE FLOODING CONCERNS ALONG THE RAILS?

3) HOW MANY BUSINESS WILL THIS POSSIBLY HURT OR PUT OUT OF BUSINESS

4) WILL THE CITY OF WILMINGTON HAVE ANY SAYING IN THE MATTER?

5) WILL THE RAILWAY BE WILLING TO CHANGE A SMALL COURSE GOING OVER THE RIVER TO KANKAKEE STREET + SO FORTH?

6) WILMINGTON RESIDENTS ARE CONCERNED ABOUT THE IMPACT IT WILL HAVE ON THE SMALL TOWN

(Optional, Please Print)

Name STEVEN G. EVANS

Affiliation

Address 522 RAILROAD ST.

City/State WILMINGTON, IL 60481 **Zip Code**

Phone No. 815-585-2546

E-Mail Address evanslawnandgarden@yahoo.com

Please do NOT add me to the mailing list: ☐

Illinois Department of Transportation

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CHICAGO TO ST. LOUIS

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Meeting location attended: WILMINGTON, ILL. VFW

Comment/Question: THE TRAINS ARE APPROX. 125' FROM MY HOUSE, THE NOISE IS A GREAT PROBLEM FOR ME. EVEN IF THE HORNS GO AWAY THIS NOISE FROM THE FREIGHT TRAINS LAST FOR 2 OR 3 MINUTES. ALSO THE RAILROAD WANTS SOME OF MY PROPERTY, I THIS COMES ABOUT I WILL HAVE A FENCE ABOUT 4' FROM MY DRIVEWAY. NOT A GOOD THING FOR ME. THIS WHOLE THING IS LOWERING MY PROPERTY VALUE DUE TO THE NOISE.

(Optional, Please Print)

Name FLORENT GALASS

Affiliation _____

Address 369 N. FIRST

City/State WILMINGTON, ILL. ***Zip Code*** 60481

Phone No. 815 258-5923

E-Mail Address _____

Please do NOT add me to the mailing list: ☒

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Meeting location attended: V. F. W.

Comment/Question: I, Ann M. Hillis has a business with Milltown Market, if the train crossing gets raised six feet, it will kill my business with Milltown Market. I'm sure there can be better options, and also that take a look at the revenue that the state and our town will be losing.
I support the grade seperation and I know it can be done, because Fork Creek is only about one block away.
Thank you
Ann Hillis.

(Optional, Please Print)

Name ANN MACK HILLIS
Affiliation Business
Address 830 Kristin Lane
City/State Wilmington - IL **Zip Code**
Phone No. 815-476-2388
E-Mail Address -8-27-2015

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Illinois Department of Transportation

ILLINOIS HIGH-SPEED RAIL
CHICAGO TO ST. LOUIS

8/27/2015

Page 1

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Meeting location attended: VFW,

Comment/Question: I Feel your current Plan will effect the City of Wilmington by Decreasing revenue by building a big wall in front of Milltown Market and it effects Tourism. Kankakee Street is considered the Historic Deistric. It will totally impact my neighbors house + mine. Basically making them unsaleable + reducing the property value. I live in the 400 Block only 3 house Down from the intersection of Kankakee + Canal. Raising the Grade of the crossing another 6 ft. will cause severe flooding at my house because of the water Run off. At the present time the track crossing is already 5 ft higher + if you raise it another 6 ft + raise the grade as a Train overpass

(Optional, Please Print)

Name Marianne Quirk.

Affiliation Home Owner.

Address 408 N. Kankakee St.

City/State Wilmington Il **Zip Code** 60481

Phone No. (815) 476-1058.

E-Mail Address mquirk@SBCGlobal.net

Please do NOT add me to the mailing list: ☐

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8/27/2015

ILLINOIS HIGH-SPEED RAIL
CHICAGO TO ST. LOUIS

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Meeting location attended: VFW

Comment/Question: Wouldn't it ~~[illegible]~~ be better to just do the Grade Seperation. It would Be much safer. The tracks/crossing is dangerous now. When you have high Speed trains going through, wouldn't it be safer to have a sideway + traffic going underneath. I live here, there is alot of Pedistrain traffic & crossing the tracks. Alot of Children everyday ! Walking + on Bikes. Shouldn't U.P. think more about the safty of the Children + People Walking and Driving through the crossing instead of their own pocket book. Raising the grade and make the train Bridge high enough 13'6 to →

(Optional, Please Print)

Name _____

Affiliation _____

Address _____

City/State _____ ***Zip Code*** _____

Phone No. _____

E-Mail Address _____

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Meeting location attended: VFW

Comment/Question: accomidate the fire trucks + ambulance. Isn't our health + safty worth more than the U.P. pocket's book. Taxs payers are paying for this. We live here. Shouldnt you truly consider our concerns. The home owners in the 500 + 400 Block had to read this in the paper Couldnt you even contact us? How would you feel if you owned a buisness in the area or a home. I will not even be able to sale my house. I will have to deal with my house shaking from the train + I will have more air pollution because of this. You should try to make the Buisness + home owners happy and at least consider their concerns. The Best option is grade elevation or close KKK Street and re work Water street + Chicago Street. The current plan is the stupidest thing I even heard of its going to cost more money. No one wants it but I believe everyone would support 'Grade Elevation'

(Optional, Please Print)

Name

Affiliation

Address

City/State **Zip Code**

Phone No.

E-Mail Address

Please do NOT add me to the mailing list: ☐

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Meeting location attended: VFW Wilmington

Comment/Question:

Having retaining wall in front of my residence will significantly lower the property value of my house. We will never be able to sell our property if we need to. We have had this property in our family since 1960. By raising the road, we will no longer have privacy even though we have a fence. Flooding will be a problem. We are also very upset that NO ONE contacted us regarding the plans! All of the surrounding businesse were contacted, but we were NOT!!

(Optional, Please Print)

Name Curt & Joyce Swick

Affiliation

Address 502 N Kankakee St

City/State Wilmington, IL **Zip Code** 60481

Phone No. 815-476-2435

E-Mail Address curt_swick@comcast.net

Please do NOT add me to the mailing list: ☐

over

Illinois Department of Transportation

Comment Form

www.idothsr.org

We support the grade separation!!

place
stamp
here

Illinois Department of Transportation
Division of Public & Intermodal Transportation
James R. Thompson Center
100 W. Randolph Street, Suite 6-600
Chicago, IL 60601-3229

Affix tape here

ILLINOIS HIGH-SPEED RAIL
CHICAGO TO ST. LOUIS

Comment Form

Illinois High-Speed Rail
Chicago to St. Louis

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Meeting location attended: Wilmington VFW

Comment/Question:

Kankakee ST Crossing needs To be a grade seperation. This project should not have any negitive impact on Wilmington

(Optional, Please Print)

Name William Weidling

Affiliation Wilmington Township Road Commissioner

Address P.O Box 396

City/State Wilmington ***Zip Code*** 60481

Phone No. 815-931-9079

E-Mail Address billweidling@gmail.com

Please do NOT add me to the mailing list: ☐

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CHICAGO TO ST. LOUIS

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Meeting location attended: Wilmington VFW

Comment/Question: City would like to discuss Wetland Bank Mitigation for the Project Area in the Will County Area and/or the entire Project Area. The City has a proposed 20 acres area which has been identified for Wetland Mitigation Bank Site.

(Optional, Please Print)

Name Tony Graff, City Administrator

Affiliation City of Wilmington

Address 1165 S. Water St

City/State Wilmington IL ***Zip Code*** 60481

Phone No. 815-476-2115 EXT 232

E-Mail Address tgraff@wilmington-il.com

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Illinois High-Speed Rail
Chicago to St. Louis

The Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT) would like your comments on the Illinois High-Speed Rail Chicago to St. Louis Program. IDOT encourages your input throughout the development process of this Program.

Please place your comment forms in the box marked COMMENTS; **or** fax to (312) 793-1251; **or** fold in thirds, tape closed, place a stamp, and mail. Visit www.idothsr.org for project specific information and to comment on the Illinois High-Speed Rail Program; or call 1-855-IDOT-HSR (436-8477).

Meeting location attended: Wilmington VFW

Comment/Question: ① Request to explore a grade separation crossing design for the Kankakee Street Railroad Crossing as an alternative to the Proposed pre-Liminary design being considered which impacts Business access south of the crossing.

② Please consider Tier span Width for the Kankakee River Bridge to eliminate Piers which impact ice jams on the River which causes catastrophic damage to the Downtown + 1753 Businesses + Residents & Roadway

(Optional, Please Print)

Name Tony Graff City Administrator

Affiliation City of Wilmington

Address 1165 S Water St

City/State Wilmington IL **Zip Code** 60481

Phone No. 815 476 2175 Ext 232

E-Mail Address tgraff@wilmington-IL.com

Please do NOT add me to the mailing list: ☐

Illinois Department of Transportation

RESOLUTION NO. 2015-10

A RESOLUTION ADDRESSING THE SHORTCOMINGS AND INACCURACIES IN THE TIER 2 ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT FOR HIGH-SPEED RAIL THROUGH THE CITY OF WILMINGTON
and
REQUESTING THAT ANY HIGH SPEED RAIL PROJECT MAINTAIN EMERGENCY PERSONNEL REPONSE TIME, ENSURE THE SAFETY OF PEDESTRIANS, MOTOR VEHICLE OCCUPANTS, AND RAIL PASSENGERS AND TO PRESERVE THE ECONOMIC VITALITY OF THE CITY OF WILMINGTON

WHEREAS, the Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT) and the U.S. Department of Transportation Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) has submitted a Tier 2 Environmental Assessment of the proposed Kankakee River Bridge and Track Improvements and have identified ñThe Build Alternativeò as both agenciesô ñPreferred Alternativeò for the Wilmington area portion of the Chicago to St. Louis High-Speed Rail Program; and

WHEREAS, the City has reviewed said Environmental Assessment (EA) and has found that the EA fails to identify and address specific matters that would either require a grade separation or the ñNo Buildò alternative; and

WHEREAS, the EA fails to even address a grade separation which indicates that not all safety considerations were reviewed in advocating the ñBuild Alternativeò; and

WHEREAS, little, if any, in depth analysis or objective facts are demonstrated in the EA to establish that the ñNo Buildò alternative would not further the plan for High Speed Rail; and

WHEREAS, the ñBuild Alternativeò is not consistent with the City of Wilmingtonôs planning goals as it does not include a high-speed rail station in Wilmington; and

WHEREAS, the currently proposed construction plans involve elevating the railroad crossing with Kankakee Street to such an extent that businesses to the south of the crossing will lose their current access onto Kankakee Street (if they are able to stay in business) and in place thereof will have barricade walls installed posing fire and emergency hazards; and

WHEREAS, the EA fails to address this issue and instead states that there would be no business impacts because of loss of parking or change in access; and

WHEREAS, it is further planned to lower the speed limit over the crossing which is indicative of attempting to reduce a safety hazard caused by the high speed rail plans for this crossing and which lowered speed plan will reduce the effectiveness of the Kankakee Street thoroughfare; and

WHEREAS, the City of Wilmington is effectively divided by the North/South Kankakee River and is also effectively divided by the East/West Union Pacific Railroad right of way; and

WHEREAS, the City of Wilmingtonôs emergency responders are all located in the Southwest quadrant of the Kankakee River/UPRR division and the addition of the currently planned construction for high speed rail and additional train traffic will severely impact the timely provision of emergency aid to portions of the City and also increase the possibility of a blockage of travel through the crossing for emergency responders; and

.

WHEREAS, the currently designed plans for the rail crossing at Kankakee Street can be revised to provide for a grade separation which will increase rail capacity and provide for uninterrupted flow, increased safety, enhanced emergency response time, and reduce if not eliminate vehicle-train conflict and delay. .

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the City Council of the City of Wilmington, Will County, Illinois, that the City strongly supports a revision to the current high speed rail plans for the crossing at Kankakee Street so as to include a grade separation and in the absence thereof the City wholly supports a more thorough analysis by IDOT and FRA of the no-build option for the present crossing.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Mayor and City Administrator are specially authorized in the name of the City of Wilmington to advocate for and advance the interests of the City and its residents as it relates to the rail crossing at Kankakee Street.

PASSED this 15th day of September, 2015 with 8 members voting aye, 0 members voting nay, the Mayor N/A voting, with 0 members abstaining or passing and said vote being:

John Persic, Jr.	aye	Kevin Kirwin	aye
Larry Hall	aye	Kirby Hall	aye
Fran Tutor	aye	Joe VanDuyne	aye
Steve Evans	aye	Frank Studer	aye

Approved this 15th day of September, 2015

CITY OF WILMINGTON CORPORATE SEAL 1865 STATE OF ILLINOIS

J. Marty Orr, Mayor

Attest:

Judith Radosevich, City Clerk

9/7/2015

Submitted via HSR Program website

Gerald Heinrich
Midewin Tallgrass Prairie Alliance
1770 Vista Drive
Wilmington, IL 60481
815-476-6171
g.heinrich@sbcglobal.net

PS # 3746

CS # 9747

The Kankakee River HSR Bridge (Wimington), as proposed, could contribute to and directly result in formation of ice jams that might affect the integrity of the HSR bridge itself and cause damage to local businesses and homes located near and along the the Kankakee River.

Damaging Ice Jams have occurred in the past, and unless the bridge design is modified, the bridge /bridge piers will likely restrict the flow of ice and directly contribute to formation of damaging ice jams. Consider - a nuclear power plant currently diverts warm effluent into the Kankakee River, thus significantly reducing the probability of ice jams at at the proposed HSR Kankakee River Bridge. Upon closure of the nuclear power plant, discharge of warm effluent into the KKK River will cease, and the probability of damaging ice jams will re-occur.

CS # 9748

Regarding Tier 2 EA - Kankakee River Bridge and Track Improvements - August, 2015:

If the Build Alternative is moved forward as proposed, the construction of a second bridge and track over the Kankakee River will allow for a significant increase in Amtrak Rail Passenger Service and UP Freight Service on the existing Union Pacific Rail Line that runs between Chicago and St. Louis.

Per EA, a significant increase in rail traffic is anticipated as result of the construction of a double rail track over the Kankakee River and new rail sidings elsewhere. i.e. No second track(s), No increase in rail traffic. While not opposed to HSR and not opposed to improved Rail infrastructure, the installation of a second track over the Kankakee River and additional rail sidings would directly facilitate an increase in rail traffic on the Union Pacific Line between Chicago and St. Louis.

An increase in rail traffic WILL result in far reaching negative impacts on a number of local businesses and homes, and have far reaching negative impacts on nearby 4(f) entities such as the USFS Midewin National Tallgrass Prairie and Abraham Lincoln National Cemetery.

Per Section 3.7.1 of the noted EA, it is provided that "the program would result in negligible secondary impacts" and in Section 3.7.2 "would offer cumulative benefits".

Please consider, nowhere in Section 3.7, i.e. particularly within Section 3.71 - Secondary Impacts, and/or within Section 3.72 - Cumulative Impacts are the negative impacts of increased rail traffic discussed as might affect 4(f) properties such as Midewin National Tall Grass Prairie, Abraham Lincoln National Cemetery, the Kankakee River, and associated wildlife and endangered species.

Please note: a significant increase in rail traffic (nearly doubling) should not be considered "insignificant". Nearby 4(F) properties will significantly be affected if rail traffic is significantly increase. Also consider that the probability of a rail spill affecting the Kankakee River statistically doubles if the rail traffic is doubled.

Subject to further review and study, a FONSI or "finding of no significant impact" is not appropriate. Before any build alternative is moved forward concerning defined improvements to the Kankakee River Rail Bridge, cumulative and secondary impacts as might affect nearby 4(f) properties need to be addressed and/or mitigated.

United States Department of the Interior

US FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE REGION 3
Chicago Ecological Services Field Office
1250 S. Grove Suite103
Barrington, IL 60010-5010
Phone: (847) 381-2253 Fax: (847) 381-2285

IN REPLY REFER TO:
FWS/AES-CIFO

September 29, 2015

David Valenstein
Chief, Environment and Corridor Planning
U.S. Department of Transportation
Federal Railroad Administration
1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE
Washington, DC 20590

Dear Mr. Valenstein:

This letter responds to the Federal Railroad Administration's (FRA) and the Illinois Department of Transportation's (IDOT) requests for comments on the Kankakee River Bridge and Track Improvements Tier 2 Environmental Assessment (EA). The proposed action is a portion of the Chicago to St. Louis High Speed Rail (HSR) Program approved by FRA under a Tier 1 Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS) and Record of Decision (ROD), dated 2012.

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Service) reviewed the information provided in your EA. With respect to those portions of the EA for which the Service has jurisdiction or special expertise, we offer the following comments and recommendations, which should be addressed in the Final EA.

General Comments

Section 7 of the Endangered Species Act (Act) [16 U.S.C. 1531 et seq.] outlines the procedures for Federal interagency cooperation to conserve Federally listed species and designated critical habitats. Section 7(a)(1) directs all Federal agencies to utilize their authorities in furtherance of the purposes of the Act by carrying out programs for the conservation of species listed pursuant to the Act. Section 7(a)(2) states that each Federal agency shall, in consultation with the Secretary of the Interior, insure that any action they authorize, fund, or carry out is not likely to jeopardize the continued existence of a listed species or result in the destruction or adverse modification of designated critical habitat. Federal agencies are required to determine whether their actions may affect listed or proposed species and designated and proposed critical habitat. Once a "may affect" determination is made, the Federal agency must either request our concurrence with a "may affect, but not likely to adversely affect" finding or request initiation of formal consultation. Both require a written analysis to be submitted to us. This analysis is

typically transmitted in a document referred to as a Biological Assessment or Biological Evaluation. A Biological Assessment (BA) documents an agency's conclusions regarding the effects of their proposed action on listed species, and the rationale to support those conclusions. FRA has developed a draft BA which is currently being revised in consultation with our office. The EA should be revised to be consistent with changes made in the Biological Assessment (BA).

Train collisions with wildlife are only evaluated in this EA for the northern long-eared bat (*Myotis septentrionalis*). However, research (*e.g.,* documentation and studies conducted for the EJ&E railway acquisition) has shown that train collisions occur with other species (*i.e.,* besides listed species) on rail lines. An increase in train numbers and frequency could result in an increase in wildlife collisions. The EA should include information about wildlife collisions. Information could be obtained from studies completed for the EJ&E railway acquisition, authorized by the Surface Transportation Board, or other studies.

Section 1.0 - Purpose and Need
1.4 - Applicable Regulations

The FRA should include the Migratory Bird Treaty Act and the Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act to the list of applicable Federal laws found in the EA, especially since the natural resource sections discuss migratory birds (*e.g.*, Section - 3.2.1 Vegetation and Habitat).

Section 3.0 - Affected Environment, Environmental Consequences and Mitigation
3.2 - Ecological Systems
3.2.4 - Threatened and Endangered Species

The EA should acknowledge that the BA is being finalized and that applicable conservation measures will be identified in the Final EA. FRA should consider adding a link to the BA in the Final EA. All final changes made to the BA, which revise information and commitments provided in the Draft EA, should be reflected in the Final EA.

3.6 - Construction Impacts and Mitigation
3.6.5 - Threatened and Endangered Species

This section discusses mitigation to offset impacts to listed species. Mitigation for tree loss should be added to this section. The Final EA should be updated to reflect this conservation measure, which is currently being discussed with FRA.

3.7 - Secondary and Cumulative Impacts
3.7.1 - Secondary Impacts

Section 3.7.1 indicates that, "the Build Alternative would not induce changes in development patterns or new development that would result in secondary impacts to community, cultural, and natural resources." However, indirect impacts to mussel colonies, including impacts from siltation, sedimentation, and contaminants, are anticipated and described in Section 3.2.4 (on pages 3-58 and 3-59). Section 3.7.1 only acknowledges secondary and indirect impacts from new

development and growth inducing effects. The Final EA should update this section to include the indirect impacts to listed species, listed in Section 3.2.4.

3.7.2.2 Potential Cumulative Impacts

The impact acreage area for the sheepnose (*Plethobasus cyphyus*) should be revised to reflect the acreage identified in the BA.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide comments. This letter provides comment under the authority of, and in accordance with, the provisions of the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (83 Stat. 852, as amended P.L. 91-190, 42 U.S.C. 4321 et seq.), the Fish and Wildlife Coordination Act of 1956 (48 Stat. 401, as amended; 16 U.S.C. 661 et seq.), the Endangered Species Act of 1973 (87 Stat. 884, as amended; 16 U.S.C. 1531 et seq.), the Migratory Bird Treaty Act (40 Stat. 755, as amended; 16 U.S.C. 703 et seq.), and the Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act (54 Stat. 250, as amended; 16 U.S.C. 668-668d).

If you have any questions, please contact Mr. Shawn Cirton at 847/381-2253, ext. 19.

Sincerely,

Louise Clemency

Louise Clemency
Field Supervisor

cc: FRA, Andrea Martin
ACOE, Ron Abrant
USEPA, Jen Blonn
IDOT, John Oimoen, Tom Brooks
IDNR, Nathan Grider, Sheldon Fairfeild

UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY
REGION 5
77 WEST JACKSON BOULEVARD
CHICAGO, IL 60604-3590

SEP 15 2015

REPLY TO THE ATTENTION OF: E-19J

Andrea Martin
Federal Railroad Administration
1200 New Jersey Avenue S.E.
Mail Stop 20
Washington, District of Columbia 20590

Francesco Bedini Jacobini
Illinois Department of Transportation
2300 South Dirksen Parkway, Room 339
Springfield, Illinois 62764

Re: Kankakee River Bridge and Track Improvements Tier 2 Environmental Assessment, Wilmington, Will County, Illinois

Dear Ms. Martin and Mr. Jacobini:

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency has reviewed the Draft Environmental Assessment (EA) for the Kankakee River Bridge and Track Improvements Project in the City of Wilmington, Will County, Illinois. Our comments are provided pursuant to the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), the Council on Environmental Quality's NEPA Implementing Regulations (40 CFR 1500-1508), and Section 309 of the Clean Air Act. The Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) is the lead agency for this project under NEPA, and the Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT) is the project sponsor.

FRA assessed the Chicago to St. Louis high-speed rail (HSR) corridor in an October 2012 Tier 1 Final Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) and issued a Record of Decision in December 2012. The Tier 2 Draft EA currently under review provides more detailed, project-level information for a 1.31 mile section of the overall Chicago to St. Louis corridor. The section extends from north of East Kankakee River Drive at railroad milepost 51.88 to south of North 1st Street at railroad milepost 53.19. Proposed actions include: (1) replacing bridges over the Kankakee River, North Water Street, and Forked Creek with new double-tracked bridge structures; (2) shifting the existing mainline and adding a second track; (3) constructing new access roads; (4) improving at-grade road crossings; (5) replacing and improving culverts; (6) installing fencing; and (7) adding positive train control signaling.

EPA recognizes that improving rail service can reduce vehicle miles traveled and associated air emissions, resulting in long-term air quality and energy efficiency benefits. We offer the following recommendations for FRA and IDOT's consideration as the project team prepares the

Final EA and moves forward with the environmental process for other projects in the Chicago to St. Louis HSR corridor.

NEPA Process

We recognize the value of tiering as a way to avoid repetition and focus on issues ripe for decision at each level of review. FRA has divided the overall Chicago to St. Louis HSR corridor into numerous projects for the purpose of Tier 2 project-level analysis. Some projects share the same geographic area. For example, this Kankakee River Bridge and Track Improvements Project EA falls within the boundaries of the Elwood to Braidwood Track Improvement Project EA, as displayed in Exhibit 1-2. It is important for each project to be clearly defined, including its relationship to any overlapping or neighboring projects, its logical termini, and its independent utility. Such information facilitates a transparent and robust NEPA process and helps to ensure consideration of all relevant environmental impacts in the decision-making process.

Recommendations for the Final EA:

- Fully describe the relationship between this project and any related overlapping or neighboring projects that FRA has or will assess through categorical exclusions, environmental assessments, or environmental impact statements.
- Clearly define the logical termini and independent utility for this project.

Waters of the U.S.

The Draft EA states that the proposed project would require a Clean Water Act (CWA) Section 401 Certification and permits under the CWA Section 404 and the Rivers and Harbors Act Section 10 due to impacts to Waters of the U.S. The project team conducted wetland delineations in 2011 and found that the proposed project would permanently impact 0.41 acre and temporarily impact 0.18 acre of waters, with jurisdictional waters accounting for 0.17 acre of permanent impacts and all 0.18 acre of temporary impacts. The Draft EA does not state whether the Corps has issued a jurisdictional determination for the project area.

We understand that temporary bridges would be constructed on the east and west sides of the existing Kankakee River Bridge to facilitate demolition of the existing bridge and construction of the new bridge. Instead of a temporary bridge over Forked Creek, the Draft EA explains that the project team will submit an application to place temporary fill in the creek to create a causeway for construction access. The Draft EA explains that use of temporary bridges, rather than causeways, minimizes sedimentation. Based on the information provided, it seems that use of a temporary bridge, rather than a causeway, for Forked Creek could minimize fill of Waters of the U.S. and better protect water quality.

Placement of fill materials into Waters of the U.S. requires that the project comply with the CWA Section 404(b)(1) guidelines. These guidelines are summarized as follows:

- LEDPA – There must be no practicable alternative to the proposed discharge (impacts) which would have less adverse impacts on the aquatic ecosystem, so long as the alternative does not have other significant adverse environmental consequences;
- No Violation of Other Laws – The proposed project must not cause or contribute to a violation of state water quality standards or toxic effluent standards, and must not jeopardize

the continued existence of federally listed endangered or threatened species or their critical habitat(s);
- No Significant Degradation – The project must not cause or contribute to significant degradation of Waters of the U.S.; and
- Minimization and Mitigation of Adverse Impacts – The project must include appropriate and practicable steps to avoid impacts to regulated Waters of the U.S. Where impacts are unavoidable, there must be documentation on how impacts have been minimized. Finally, compensatory mitigation to offset unavoidable, minimized impacts to the aquatic ecosystem must be provided.

Our comments on Waters of the U.S. are based on information FRA has provided to date, and we look forward to further commenting on this project through the CWA Section 404 process when more information on project impacts and compliance with CWA regulations becomes available.

Recommendations for the Final EA:

- Clarify whether the Corps has approved the jurisdictional delineation for the project area and include any updated information on impact acreages in the Final EA.
- Align NEPA and CWA Section 404 processes to ensure that the proposed project, alternatives, and impacts in the EA will be consistent with those in the applicant's future CWA Section 404 permit application. To demonstrate consistency, summarize or include a copy of the draft CWA Section 404(b)(1) analysis as an appendix to the Final EA.
- Discuss any proposed mitigation, including mitigation sequencing per the CWA Section 404(b)(1) guidelines, and describe of how mitigation will comply with the 2008 Mitigation Rule (40 CFR 230).
- If a mitigation bank will be used, identify the name and location of the bank and the status of available credits.
- Describe how cumulative impacts to Waters of the U.S. from the overall Chicago to St. Louis HSR corridor will be considered in CWA Section 404 permitting and mitigation for this section.

Threatened and Endangered Species

As discussed in the Draft EA, the sheepnose mussel (*Plethobasus cyphyus)* is endangered and the northern long-eared bat (*Myotis septentrionalis)* is threatened under the federal Endangered Species Act; both have habitat in the project area. State-listed species with habitat in the project area include the endangered pallid shiner fish (*Hybopsis amnis)* and western sand darter fish (*Ammocrypta clarum)*, as well as the threatened purple wartyback mussel (*Cyclonaias tuberculate)*, black sandshell mussel (*Ligumia recta)*, and river redhorse fish (*Moxostoma carinatum)*.

The Draft EA discusses past bat, mussel, and fish surveys and commits to mitigate impacts through limiting roost tree removal to specific seasons and relocating federal and state listed mussel species prior to construction, among other measures. We understand that FRA and IDOT are working with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) and Illinois Department of Natural Resources (IDNR) to fulfill their regulatory obligations and minimize impacts.

Recommendations for the Final EA:

- Update the status of coordination with FWS and IDNR. Include a summary of any outstanding FWS and IDNR concerns and FRA and IDOT's plans to address such concerns.
- Work with FWS and IDNR to: (1) determine whether any additional federal or state-listed species may have habitat in the project area, and (2) strengthen mitigation measures to protect identified federal and state-listed species. Include any new commitments in the Final EA. Consider adding seasonal restriction dates for in-water work and additional mitigation for tree removal.

Culverts

The proposed project includes the installation of new 24-inch, 36-inch, and 48-inch corrugated steel pipe culverts. Given the long linear nature of the Chicago to St. Louis HSR corridor, culverts will play important roles in water movement and wildlife crossings. The design of culverts is important to minimizing project impacts on natural resources.

Recommendations for the Final EA:

- Consult with FWS and IDNR on best practices for designing culverts to minimize impacts to species and facilitate wildlife crossings.
- In the Final EA, assess options for using open bottom culverts. If four-sided culverts must be used, consider imbedding them into river/creek beds at least one foot below the natural river/creek bottom in order to provide natural bottoms and continuous aquatic habitat.

Air Quality

As discussed in the Draft EA, the project is within an area that does not fully meet the National Ambient Air Quality Standards; it is designated as non-attainment for ozone and maintenance for fine particulates ($PM_{2.5}$). Of the overall Chicago to St. Louis HSR corridor, 59.8 miles of trackway fall within an ozone non-attainment area. Table 3-5 compares regional emissions generated by the proposed project with the de minimis thresholds for general conformity. It is unclear whether the table captures emissions from the 1.31 mile section evaluated in this Draft EA or from the full 59.8 mile portion of the Chicago to St. Louis corridor that falls within an ozone non-attainment area. While the full corridor was considered in the Tier 1 analysis, it is important for air quality impacts to be analyzed with project-level information.

The Draft EA does not disclose project-specific or cumulative construction emissions. It states that, "[a]s a rule, short-term construction impacts (shorter than three years) does not warrant a detailed air quality analysis" (pages 3-13 and 3-92). EPA disagrees with this statement and regularly sees detailed air quality analyses for short-term construction impacts. Short-term construction impacts have the potential to impact health, especially in children, elderly, and those with impaired respiratory systems. While we recognize that this construction project is only 1.31 miles in length, the overall Chicago to St. Louis HSR project covers 284 miles. The cumulative air analysis should disclose construction emissions from other portions of the Chicago to St. Louis HSR project that could occur during the same time period. Estimating project-specific and cumulative construction emissions and assessing potential health impacts in the Final EA could: more fully disclose potential impacts, lead to the identification of avoidance and minimization measures, and result in more informed decision making.

Recommendations for the Final EA:

- Clarify whether Table 3-5 includes emissions from the 1.31 mile project covered by this EA or the full 59.8 miles of the Chicago to St. Louis HSR corridor within an ozone nonattainment area. If not already included, disclose emissions for the full 59.8 miles stretch.
- Assess air emissions from project construction and potential health impacts. Include direct, indirect, and cumulative emissions. Ensure that other projects along the Chicago to St. Louis HSR corridor with overlapping construction schedules are included. Commit to specific measures to avoid and minimize emissions, such as those in the enclosed Diesel Emission Reduction Checklist.

Climate Change

The Council on Environmental Quality's December 2014 revised draft guidance for Federal agencies' consideration of greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions and climate change impacts under NEPA outlines a reasonable assessment framework. The guidance explains that agencies should consider both the potential effects of a proposed action on climate change, as indicated by its estimated GHG emissions, and the implications of climate change for the environmental effects of a proposed action. We recognize that the Draft EA included GHG estimates.

The National Climate Assessment provides an in-depth look at climate change impacts on the U.S. now and in the future. The report was produced by a team of over 300 experts guided by a 60-member Federal Advisory Committee and was extensively reviewed by the public and experts, including federal agencies and a panel of the National Academy of Sciences. The report finds that in the Midwest extreme heat, heavy downpours, and flooding will affect infrastructure, health, air and water quality, and more.[1] The National Climate Assessment section on the Midwest provides a useful starting place for examining climate change impacts in the project area.

Recommendations for the Final EA:

- Consider resiliency and adaptation to changing climate conditions when making decisions about infrastructure design. We recommend reviewing climate predictions for the Midwest in the U.S. Global Change Research Program's National Climate Assessment report.
- Examine opportunities to minimize GHG emissions from construction and operations. Consider energy efficiency, renewable energy, electric motors, and cleaner diesel strategies in planning documents and construction contractor scopes of work. Reducing diesel emissions has the added benefit of reducing black carbon emissions, which have climate forcing effects orders of magnitude larger than carbon dioxide on a per mass basis.

Invasive Species

The Draft EA lists measures to minimize the spread of invasive species that could potentially be taken, including: rapid seeding and re-vegetation of bare soil with native species, cleaning

[1] U.S. Global Change Research Program, 2014 National Climate Assessment, available at: http://nca2014.globalchange.gov/report

construction equipment prior to entering areas near sensitive habitats, and active management of invasive plants. The Draft EA does not commit to undertake these measures.

Recommendation for the Final EA:
Clearly commit to specific measures to avoid and minimize introducing invasive species into the project area.

Hazardous Materials

The project team identified 26 locations with potential contamination in the project area; six were deemed to have de minimis conditions. The Draft EA lists the reasons for the de minimis determination as "[p]otential asbestos containing material and lead based paint," and "[l]ikely agriculture pesticide or herbicide use" (page 3-86). It is unclear why FRA considers the presence of these types of contaminants to be too minor to warrant consideration. In addition, Section 3.9, *Environmental Commitments*, does not discuss plans for further testing and classification of potentially contaminated sites.

Recommendations for the Final EA:

- Further identify and assess potential contamination risks in the Final EA.
- Explain why construction activities on sites with potential asbestos, lead, pesticide, and herbicide contamination are not of concern, or further assess impacts from those sites.
- Describe how FRA and IDOT will ensure worker and environmental safety from existing contamination in the project area prior to earth moving activities.

Coordination

Given the large scale and complex nature of the overall Chicago to St. Louis HSR corridor, a high level of coordination among resources agencies on individual Tier 2 projects is critical to streamlining and coordinating various environmental requirements to help avoid future challenges. We appreciate the on-going quarterly meetings on the entire length of the HSR corridor.

Recommendation for the Overall Chicago to St. Louis HSR Effort:
To guide future work along the Chicago to St. Louis HSR corridor, EPA recommends that FRA continue to engage the resource agencies through regular meetings. A communications strategy and/or a coordination plan would be helpful.

Thank you for considering of our comments. If you have any questions or would like to discuss our recommendations, please contact me or Jen Blonn, the lead reviewer for this project, at 312-886-6394 or blonn.jennifer@epa.gov.

Sincerely,

Kenneth A. Westlake
Chief, NEPA Implementation Section
Office of Enforcement and Compliance Assurance

Cc via email:

Shawn Cirton, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
Ron Abrant, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers – Chicago District
Eric Runkle, Illinois Environmental Protection Agency
Tim Selover, Parsons Brinkerhoff
Meghan Hamilton, Kaskaskia Engineering Group

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
Diesel Emission Reduction Checklist

- Use low-sulfur diesel fuel (15 ppm sulfur maximum) in construction vehicles and equipment.
- Retrofit engines with an exhaust filtration device to capture diesel particulate matter before it enters the construction site.
- Position the exhaust pipe so that diesel fumes are directed away from the operator and nearby workers, reducing the fume concentration to which personnel are exposed.
- Use catalytic converters to reduce carbon monoxide, aldehydes, and hydrocarbons in diesel fumes. These devices must be used with low sulfur fuels.
- Use enclosed, climate-controlled cabs pressurized and equipped with high efficiency particulate air (HEPA) filters to reduce the operators' exposure to diesel fumes. Pressurization ensures that air moves from inside to outside. HEPA filters ensure that any incoming air is filtered first.
- Regularly maintain diesel engines, which is essential to keep exhaust emissions low. Follow the manufacturer's recommended maintenance schedule and procedures. Smoke color can signal the need for maintenance. For example, blue/black smoke indicates that an engine requires servicing or tuning.
- Reduce exposure through work practices and training, such as turning off engines when vehicles are stopped for more than a few minutes, training diesel-equipment operators to perform routine inspection, and maintaining filtration devices.
- Repower older vehicles and/or equipment with diesel- or alternatively-fueled engines certified to meet newer, more stringent emissions standards. Purchase new vehicles that are equipped with the most advanced emission control systems available.
- Use electric starting aids such as block heaters with older vehicles to warm the engine to reduce diesel emissions.
- Per Executive Order 13045 on Children's Health[2], EPA recommends operators and workers pay particular attention to worksite proximity to places where children live, learn, and play, such as homes, schools, and playgrounds. Diesel emission reduction measures should be strictly implemented near these locations in order to be protective of children's health.

[2] Children may be more highly exposed to contaminants because they generally eat more food, drink more water, and have higher inhalation rates relative to their size. Also, children's normal activities, such as putting their hands in their mouths or playing on the ground, can result in higher exposures to contaminants as compared with adults. Children may be more vulnerable to the toxic effects of contaminants because their bodies and systems are not fully developed and their growing organs are more easily harmed.

Appendix D

Response to Public and Agency Comments on August 2015 EA

Appendix D
Response to Public and Agency Comments on August 2015 EA

D.1 Local Citizen and Government Comments

A public meeting was held on Thursday, August 27, 2015 at the Wilmington V.F.W, 557 West Baltimore Street, Wilmington, IL 60481. The meeting was held from 4:00 PM to 7:00 PM in an open house format with a live presentation at 5:30 PM; exhibit boards and aerial maps for review; individual question/answer chats with team members; and the opportunity to provide comments.

This public meeting was attended by 40 people. Seven comment forms were received. One additional comment regarding the Environmental Assessment (EA) was submitted via the Illinois High-Speed Rail (HSR) Program website. Local government officials and members of the public made comments. A resolution with comments and supporting a grade separation at North Kankakee Street was submitted by the City of Wilmington City Council. The most prominent themes of the public and local government comments included:

- Impacts on property and businesses of grade crossing improvements at North Kankakee Street
- Consideration of a grade separation at North Kankakee Street
- Safety
- Noise
- Mitigation

Specific comments from citizens and local government representatives and responses are presented below. Because citizens often had similar or identical comments, their comments are organized by topic rather than by individual commenter so a complete response to similar or identical comments can be provided in one place. The original comment sheets and the City Council resolution are in included in Appendix C.

D.1.1 Citizen Comments

1. Comment: At the Kankakee Street crossing improvement, a wall in front of my residence will significantly lower the property value of my house and I will be unable to sell the property. We will no longer have privacy.

   Response: The comments and concerns are noted. Additional impact assessment related to grade crossing improvements is added in this document.

2. Comment: Businesses affected by the crossing improvement were contacted but home owners in the 400 and 500 block were not directly contacted.

   Response: The Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ) regulations require public involvement of Environmental Assessments (EA) to the extent practicable. The sponsoring agency (Federal Rail Administration) and Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT) follow a thorough public involvement process. The extent and scale to which the process is followed is tailored to the specific project. Fourteen coordination meetings were conducted with the City of Wilmington officials prior to the August 27, 2015 public meeting starting in May 2014 to discuss the proposed improvements and its potential impacts to the community. A general concurrence amongst all parties was reached on the proposed improvements. Public meetings were held in August 2015 to afford an opportunity for all interested parties to have direct contact with study team members and an opportunity to comment on the proposed project. Comments on the August 2015 EA led to additional meetings with City of Wilmington officials on November 12, 2015 and December 8, 2015 since the release of the August 2015 EA, and an additional public meeting is planned for early 2016 after the release of this Supplemental EA.

3. Comment: Raising the grade crossing 6 feet will cause severe flooding from water runoff. It already is 5 feet higher than my home and raising it 6 feet more will cause severe flooding at homes on Kankakee Street because of water runoff. Will the rail create flooding concerns along the rail line?

   Response: The highest point in the grade crossing area would be approximately 3 feet higher than today. However, the change in the slope at North Kankakee Street will not create a flooding problem downhill from the grade crossing. The amount of impervious area (e.g. pavement) is not changing so the amount of runoff will not increase. Catch basins at the intersection of Canal Street and North Kankakee Street will be adjusted to take into account changed patterns of water flow. Along the tracks the drainage design will accommodate any changes in the quantity and pattern of runoff from the addition of the second track.

4. Comment: The at-grade crossing at Kankakee Street should be replaced with a grade separation. Another option would be to close Kankakee Street and rework the grade separation serving Water Street/Chicago Street. The grade crossing is dangerous now. A grade separation would be safer. A lot of pedestrians cross the tracks, including children walking and on bikes. A grade separation would better accommodate fire trucks and ambulances that need to cross the tracks.

   Response: An assessment of grade separation options has been added to Section 2.2.5 of this Supplemental EA. Grade separation options were discussed with the City of Wilmington, including representatives of the police and fire departments, at meetings on November 12, 2015 and December 8, 2015. The reasons why a grade separation was found not to be a reasonable option are discussed in Section 2.2.5. Grade crossing improvements at North Kankakee Street would include two pedestrian gates at the

sidewalk crossing on the east side of the North Kankakee Street. The pedestrian crossing at North Kankakee Street also would include an escape walk and push gate.

5. Comment: The retaining wall associated with the change in the slope of Kankakee Street leading from the Kankakee street grade crossing to Canal Street will decrease the revenue of the Milltown Market, effecting tourism. Kankakee Street is considered an historic district. In general, how many businesses will possibly be hurt and put out of business?

   Response: The impact of the retaining wall associated with the North Kankakee Street grade crossing improvement is addressed in Section 3.1.6.2 of this Supplemental EA. The North Kankakee Street area is not a designated Historic District by the Illinois Historic Preservation Agency (IHPA). Concurrence was received from the State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) that there were no architectural resources eligible for National Register consideration in the project's Area of Potential Effect and that no historic properties subject to protection under Section 106 of the National Historical Preservation Act of 1966 would be affected by the project.

6. Comment: Additional high speed trains will shake houses and increase air pollution.

   Response: The concern is noted. Vibration impacts were assessed in Section 3.1.4.2 of the EA. The ground-borne vibration analysis indicated that vibration impacts would potentially occur with the Build Alternative at the two receptors that are within 100 feet of the tracks. The assessment lists practices followed by the Union Pacific Railroad (UPRR) and Amtrak to minimize vibration impacts. Air quality impacts were assessed in Section 3.1.1 of the EA. The conclusion was that the Build Alternative would not produce any significant air quality impacts along the UPRR right-of-way.

7. Comment: Trains are 125 feet from my home. Noise is currently a great problem. Even if horns are not blown, the noise from freight trains last 2 to 3 minutes. The noise is lowering my property value.

   Response: The concern is noted. Noise impacts were assessed in Section 3.1.4.1 of the EA. As indicated, the implementation of a quiet zone by the City of Wilmington once grade crossing improvements are in place would result in Build Alternative noise levels between 7 dB(A) and 10 dB(A) less than existing noise levels. A 7 dB(A) to a 10 dB(A) decrease in noise levels is generally considered to range from a readily perceptible decrease in noise (7 dBA) to being half as loud as the original noise level (10 dBA decrease).

8. Comment: A new railroad right-of-way fence will be four feet from my driveway. That is not a good thing for me.

   Response: The concern is noted.

9. Comment: Does the City of Wilmington have any say on this project?

Response: Yes. A list of 14 meetings with the City of Wilmington held prior to the release of the August 2015 EA and two additional meetings held prior to the release of this Supplemental EA are presented in Section 4.1 of this Supplemental EA. The City of Wilmington's request in their comments on the August 2015 EA that grade separation alternatives at North Kankakee Street be considered was discussed at the two additional meetings and the merits of grade separation alternatives are discussed in Section 2.2.5 of this Supplemental EA.

10. Comment: Will high speed rail help or hurt Wilmington? Wilmington residents are concerned about the impact it will have on this small town.

    Response: The primary potential benefits to the City of Wilmington are associated with public safety, as discussed in Section 3.4.7 of the EA. As stated in that section, the Build Alternative would include railroad right-of-way fencing on the west side of the tracks adjacent to development in the East Kankakee River Drive area and from the development in the Stewart Street area to Forked Creek. Fencing would be installed on both sides of the railroad right-of-way from Forked Creek to the Kankakee River and from the Kankakee River to the southern end of the Build Alternative at MP 53.19. Public at-grade crossings would be upgraded to include four quadrant gates that make it difficult for drivers to drive around the gates. Grade crossing improvements at North Kankakee Street would include two pedestrian gates at the sidewalk crossing on the east side of the North Kankakee Street. The pedestrian crossing at North Kankakee Street also would include an escape walk and push gate. Improved gates and fencing will encourage pedestrians crossing the tracks to do so safely. Improvements to North Kankakee Street as it approaches the crossing will improve crossing safety by increasing sight distances across the tracks. Improved sight distance will allow drivers to see motor vehicles, pedestrians, bicyclists, and objects on the road on the other side of the crossing in time to stop if needed to avoid a crash. Potential impacts of construction and operation of the Build Alternative were discussed in the August 2015 EA and discussions have been expanded in response to public and agency comments in this Supplemental EA.

D.1.2 Wilmington Township Representative Comment

1. Comment: Grade separate Kankakee Street.

    Response: An assessment of grade separation options has been added as Section 2.2.5 of this Supplemental EA. Grade separation options were discussed with the City of Wilmington at meetings on November 12, 2015 and December 8, 2015. The reasons why a grade separation was found not to be a reasonable option are discussed in Section 2.2.5.

2. Comment: This project should not have any negative impact on Wilmington.

    Response: The commenter's position is noted.

D.1.3 City of Wilmington Comments

1. Comment: The EA fails to identify and address specific matters that would either require a grade separation or the No Build Alternative. The EA fails to even address

a grade separation which indicates that not all safety considerations were reviewed in advocating the Build Alternative.

Response: The range of specific issues reflected in the remaining comments from the City of Wilmington was discussed with City of Wilmington representatives, including representatives of the police and fire departments, at meetings on November 12, 2015 and December 8, 2015. The outcome of those discussions are taken into consideration in the revisions to the EA in this Supplemental EA, including an assessment of grade separation options in Section 2.2.5, and in the responses to more specific comments below.

2. Comment: Little, if any, in depth analysis or objective facts are demonstrated in the EA to establish that the No-Build Alternative would not further the plan for High Speed Rail.

   Response: When considering the merits of the No-Build Alternative it is important to keep in mind the following characteristics of the No-Build Alternative:

   - *From the perspective of the number of freight trains operating in Wilmington, the No-Build Alternative does not represent the status quo. Freight traffic is growing at the Joliet Intermodal facility and in response to other market demands and growth is expected to continue with or without the Illinois High-Speed Rail (HSR) Program. Freight traffic can increase without a second track because freight trains do not have to meet a daily timetable schedule with consistent on-time performance like passenger trains. The UPRR can adjust freight movements to accommodate increased freight demand on the current single track. The railroad tracks in and through Wilmington are privately owned and the UPRR has the right to increase the number of freight trains on those tracks.*

   - *The existing North Kankakee Street crossing has very substandard and unsafe stopping sight distances per IDOT and Illinois Commerce Commission (ICC) design criteria even with a single track. This substandard sight distance has nothing to do with drivers seeing the gates coming down or with train growth. It is the sight distance needed to see motor vehicles, pedestrians, bicyclists, and objects on the road on the other side of the crossing in time to stop if needed to avoid a crash. With the No-Build Alternative, the substandard sight distance would not be improved.*

   - *Finally, the current crossing has gates in only two quadrants. The Build Alternative would have four-quadrant gates that would prevent motorists from driving around lowered gates and would thus reduce the potential for motor vehicle/train collisions now, as well as in the future. To minimize the chance that a motor vehicle can be caught between the gates, gate warning lights begin to flash 5 seconds before the gates begin to descend and an exit gate management system with a vehicle detection system is used. Both the entrance and exit gates descend in tandem. If a vehicle is detected within the crossing, the exit gates will cease lowering and begin to ascend. Once the detection system verifies the crossing is unoccupied, the exit gates will resume descending. In addition, Amtrak locomotives, which will be operating up to*

110 mph, will have on-board computers. The on-board system will be in radio communication with the grade crossings to advise the status of crossings even before the point where the on-board system starts a crossing warning system (flashers and gates). If the crossing gates are not working properly or if a vehicle is detected for more than two minutes by the loop vehicle detector in the pavement area covered by the gates, the on-board system will slow the train. Track curves on either side of the North Kankakee Street crossing will limit passenger train speeds through the crossing to 75 mph. The UPRR freights, which are limited to a maximum of 60 mph, will still activate the gates as they do currently, with track circuits that detect the presence of the train and start the crossing warning system.

The objectives of railroad improvements proposed between Chicago and St. Louis include:

- *Reducing travel times and improving on-time performance between Chicago and St. Louis for existing passenger trains, which would be accomplished by numerous trackwork and grade crossing improvements.*

- *Improving grade crossing safety for motorists and pedestrians, including the introduction of four quadrant gates and, where needed, improving motorist sight distances.*

- *Adding eight additional passenger trains between Chicago and St. Louis that also operate at lower than existing travel times and have a high level of on-time performance.*

Improvements to the Kankakee Street grade crossing and other crossings in the Wilmington area are a part of meeting the first two objectives.

The second track of the Build Alternative for the Kankakee River Bridge and Track Improvements Project will make a contribution to meeting the third objective. Unlike freight trains, passenger trains must follow a published daily schedule. In addition, their operation cannot be at the cost of interfering with the freight business of the host freight railroad. A single track between Chicago and St. Louis does not have the capacity to handle eight additional passenger trains at a high level of performance without interfering with the UPRR freight business.

3. Comment: The Build Alternative is not consistent with the City of Wilmington's planning goals as it does not include a high-speed rail station in Wilmington.

Response: Section 3.4.2.1 of the EA acknowledges that the City of Wilmington would like a HSR station, and that a passenger rail station does not currently exist in Wilmington. However, in accordance to the FRA funding grant agreement with IDOT on the HSR program, the approved statement of work specifically references the municipalities designated to receive station upgrades and the City of Wilmington is not designated as one of the locations.

4. Comment: The currently proposed construction plans involve elevating the railroad crossing with Kankakee Street to such an extent that businesses to the south of the crossing will lose their current access onto Kankakee Street (if they are able to stay in business) and in place thereof will have barricade walls installed posing fire and emergency hazards. The EA fails to address this issue and instead states that there would be no business impacts because of loss of parking or change in access.

   Response: The city is correct in that the impacts of the North Kankakee Street grade crossing approach improvement should have been presented in the EA alongside the impacts of the Kankakee River bridge, the second track and other trackwork improvements, and grade crossing protection improvements. This Supplemental EA assesses those impacts in amendments to Chapter 3, including the impact on businesses.

5. Comment: It is planned to lower the speed limit over the crossing which is indicative of attempting to reduce a safety hazard caused by the high speed rail plans for this crossing and which lowered speed plan will reduce the effectiveness of the Kankakee Street thoroughfare.

   Response: Lowering the speed limit over the crossing to 20 mph is unrelated to drivers seeing the gates coming down or high-speed rail plans. The speed limit proposed for the improved approach is appropriate for driver sight distance from one side of the crossing to the other with the approach improvement. Drivers crossing the grade crossing at a faster speed might not have time to stop if a person or obstruction were in North Kankakee Street on the opposite side of the track. The current speed limit of 30 mph is too high for existing sight distance conditions (sufficient only for 15 mph). A further increase in the driver sight distance at the improved crossing so it would accommodate the current 30 mph speed limit, rather than the proposed 20 mph speed limit, would further increase community impacts.

6. Comment: The City of Wilmington is effectively divided by the North/South Kankakee River and is also effectively divided by the East/West Union Pacific Railroad right of way and the City of Wilmington's emergency responders are all located in the Southwest quadrant of the Kankakee River/UPRR division. The addition of the currently planned construction for high speed rail and additional train traffic will severely impact the timely provision of emergency aid to portions of the City and also increase the possibility of a blockage of travel through the crossing for emergency responders.

   Response: Grade separation options and their pros and cons were discussed with the City of Wilmington, including representatives of the police and fire departments, at meetings on November 12, 2015 and December 8, 2015. A comparison of those options and the reasons why a grade separation was found not to be a reasonable option are discussed in Section 2.2.5 of this Supplemental EA. It is acknowledged that train growth will increase the time each day that the gates are closed and while the Water Street underpass can serve most of the City of Wilmington emergency vehicles, its clearance is not sufficient to allow the city's largest fire trucks to pass through the underpass. As such, there arrival at a west side fire can be delayed by a passing train. The City of

Wilmington indicated that the city is constructing a fire station on the northwest side of the UPRR tracks (opposite side from the current fire station), which would reduce this potential impact. The proposed project would increase the number of passenger trains and gate down times. This impact is discussed in Section 3.4.12 under "At-Grade Crossings" of the EA. With either the Build or No-Build Alternative, the number of freight trains also is expected to increase from five to 11, which also will increase the number of times a day that the North Kankakee Street crossing will be closed. Freight trains would increase based on economic demand and could be accommodated with the existing single track, thus an increase in freight traffic could occur with or without the project.

7. Comment: The currently designed plans for the rail crossing at Kankakee Street can be revised to provide for a grade separation which will increase rail capacity and provide for uninterrupted flow, increased safety, enhanced emergency response time, and reduce if not eliminate vehicle-train conflict and delay. It is resolved by City Council of the City of Wilmington, Will County, Illinois, that the City strongly supports a revision to the current high speed rail plans for the crossing at Kankakee Street so as to include a grade separation and in the absence thereof the City wholly supports a more thorough analysis by IDOT and FRA of the No-Build option for the present crossing.

   Response: Grade separation options and their pros and cons were discussed with the City of Wilmington, including representatives of the police and fire departments, at meetings on November 12, 2015 and December 8, 2015. Those conversations concluded that no potential grade separation is a reasonable alternative. A comparison of those options and the reasons why a grade separation was found not to be a reasonable option are discussed in Section 2.2.5 of this Supplemental EA. Additional discussion on the No-Build Alternative is presented in section 2.1 of this Supplemental EA.

8. Comment: The city would like to discuss wetland impact mitigation for impacts in Will County and/or the entire project. The city has a proposed 20-acre area that has been identified as a Wetlands Mitigation Bank site.

   Response: Mitigation banks approved by the US Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) can be used for wetland mitigation. If the city's proposed 20-acre area is approved by the USACE, it can be considered for mitigating HSR program wetland impacts in Will County.

9. Comment: Consider the distance between the piers of the proposed new Kankakee River Bridge from the perspective of their potential to cause ice jams on the river. Ice jams cause catastrophic damage to downtown and IL 53 businesses, residents, and roadways.

   Response: The I-55 bridge over the Kankakee River downstream of Wilmington and the Warner Bridge upstream in Kankakee County both experienced ice jams in 2014. The I-55 northbound bridge has a 3-foot 10-inch minimum water clearance above the 100-year water level. The Warner Bridge has a similar low clearance. The IL 53 Baltimore

Street bridge in downtown Wilmington just upstream of the UPRR bridge, which did not experience an ice jam in 2014, has a minimum water clearance of 7.2 feet. The current UPRR bridge has a minimum water clearance of 4.5 feet. The proposed UPRR bridge would have a minimum water clearance of 9.9 feet, 5.4 feet higher than the current UPRR bridge and 2.7 feet higher than the IL-53 bridge. The current UPRR bridge has four piers, 10 feet wide for a total width of 40 feet. The proposed UPRR bridge has eight piers, 4 feet wide for a total width of 32 feet. The existing bridge has an opening of 10,480 square feet, while the proposed UPRR bridge would have an opening of 13,770 square feet, an increase of 31 percent. Therefore, the proposed UPRR bridge is expected have less potential for ice jams than the current UPRR bridge, which did not experience an ice jam in 2014.

D.2 Non-Governmental Organizations – Midewin Tallgrass Prairie Alliance

1. Comment: The Kankakee River HSR Bridge (Wilmington), as proposed, could contribute to and directly result in formation of ice jams that might affect the integrity of the HSR bridge itself and cause damage to local businesses and homes located near and along the Kankakee River. Damaging Ice Jams have occurred in the past, and unless the bridge design is modified, the bridge/bridge piers will likely restrict the flow of ice and directly contribute to formation of damaging ice jams. Consider - a nuclear power plant currently diverts warm effluent into the Kankakee River, thus significantly reducing the probability of ice jams at the proposed HSR Kankakee River Bridge. Upon closure of the nuclear power plant, discharge of warm effluent into the KKK River will cease, and the probability of damaging ice jams will re-occur.

   Response: A similar comment was received in the public and local official's comments. See the response above.

2. Comment: Regarding Tier 2 EA - Kankakee River Bridge and Track Improvements - August, 2015: If the Build Alternative is moved forward as proposed, the construction of a second bridge and track over the Kankakee River will allow for a significant increase in Amtrak Rail Passenger Service and UP Freight Service on the existing Union Pacific Rail Line that runs between Chicago and St. Louis. Per EA, a significant increase in rail traffic is anticipated as result of the construction of a double rail track over the Kankakee River and new rail sidings elsewhere (i.e., No second track(s), No increase in rail traffic). While not opposed to HSR and not opposed to improved Rail infrastructure, the installation of a second track over the Kankakee River and additional rail sidings would directly facilitate an increase in rail traffic on the Union Pacific Line between Chicago and St. Louis. An increase in rail traffic WILL result in far reaching negative impacts on a number of local businesses and homes, and have far reaching negative impacts on nearby 4(f) entities such as the USFS Midewin National Tallgrass Prairie and Abraham Lincoln National Cemetery. Per Section 3.7.1 of the noted EA, it is provided that "the program would result in negligible secondary impacts" and in Section 3.7.2 "would offer cumulative

benefits". Please consider, nowhere in Section 3.7, i.e. particularly within Section 3.7.1 - Secondary Impacts, and/or within Section 3.7.2 - Cumulative Impacts are the negative impacts of increased rail traffic discussed as might affect 4(f) properties such as Midewin National Tall Grass Prairie, Abraham Lincoln National Cemetery, the Kankakee River, and associated wildlife and endangered species. Please note: a significant increase in rail traffic (nearly doubling) should not be considered "insignificant". Nearby 4(f) properties will significantly be affected if rail traffic is significantly increased.

Response: Increased Rail Traffic and Its Impact. The Build Alternative for the Kankakee River Bridge and Track Improvements Project will make a contribution to meeting the passenger rail travel objectives of the Chicago to St. Louis High-Speed Rail (HSR) program, including accommodating eight additional passenger trains operating at a high level of performance. Freight traffic is growing at the Joliet Intermodal facility and in response to other market demands and growth is expected to continue with or without the HSR program. Freight traffic can increase without a second track because freight trains do not have to meet a daily timetable schedule with consistent on-time performance like passenger trains. The Union Pacific Railroad (UPRR) can adjust freight movements to accommodate increased freight demand on the current single track. The railroad tracks in and through the resources listed in the comment are privately owned and the UPRR has the right to increase the number of freight trains on those tracks. Passenger trains not only must follow a published daily schedule but their operation cannot be at the cost of interfering with the freight business of the host freight railroad. A single track between Chicago and St. Louis does not have the capacity to handle eight additional passenger trains at a high level of performance and reliability without interfering with the UPRR freight business.

The 2012 Tier 1 FEIS addressed impacts associated with the entire Chicago to St. Louis HSR program, including community, cultural, natural, and Section 4(f) resources as direct impacts. This included impacts of the increased number of trains. The 2012 Tier 1 FEIS also addresses the cumulative impacts of the Chicago to St. Louis HSR program in combination with other rail improvements planned in the Chicago to St. Louis corridor.

Relation of the 2012 Tier 1 Selected Alternative to Tier 2 Alternatives. The 2012 Tier 1 Record of Decision selected a corridor in which passenger rail service would be improved and the increased passenger rail capacity and on-time performance objectives of the HSR program's purpose and need would be met. The selection was based on the impact findings of the 2012 Tier 1 FEIS and public and agency comment on the Tier 1 Draft Environmental Impact Statement. The Selected Alternative includes the existing UPRR corridor that passes through Midewin National Tallgrass Prairie. The Tier 1 Selected Alternative does not specify a particular track design or location within the selected corridor. These details are being developed and assessed in the Tier 2 environmental documentation. That documentation will include consideration of alternative designs with the objective of ultimately identifying a preferred alternative that meets the project and program's purpose and need while minimizing impacts to resources in the location of each Tier 2 project. The purpose and need of each Tier 2 document will retain the

corridor-wide passenger rail capacity and on-time performance objectives of the Chicago to St. Louis HSR program and each individual Tier 2 project must make its contribution to the objectives of the whole HSR program or the Tier 2 project fails to meet its purpose and need.

Secondary and Cumulative Impact Assessment in Kankakee River Bridge and Track Improvements Project EA. The secondary (indirect) and cumulative impact assessment of the 2012 Tier 1 FEIS (Section 5.19) indicated that a more detailed analysis of secondary (indirect) cumulative impact would be conducted in Tier 2 environmental documentation for each Tier 2 project, if deemed necessary. As noted in the comment, such a cumulative impact assessment is included in the EA for the Kankakee River Bridge and Track Improvements Project. As with the direct impact assessment, its focus is on the secondary and cumulative impacts associated with the Kankakee River Bridge and Track Improvements Project.

The assessment concluded that the Kankakee River Bridge and Track Improvements Project would not induce changes in development patterns or new development that would result in secondary impacts to community, cultural, and natural resources..

For each resource directly impacted by the Kankakee River Bridge and Track Improvements Project, the cumulative impact assessment considered the aggregate impact of this project and other past, present, or reasonably foreseeable future actions that affect the same resources as this project, including other rail projects in this project's study area. The Kankakee River Bridge and Track Improvements Project will have no direct impacts on the Midewin National Tallgrass Prairie or the Abraham Lincoln National Cemetery. In addition, the trackwork design of the Kankakee River Bridge and Track Improvements Project will not limit the consideration of alternatives at the Midewin National Tallgrass Prairie or the Abraham Lincoln National Cemetery. Therefore, for these reasons combined with a Tier 1 FEIS having been prepared for the entire program and the relationship of the 2012 Tier 1 Selected Alternative to the consideration of Tier 2 projects that is described above, these two resources do not need to be addressed in the Kankakee River Bridge and Track Improvements Project EA. This project will impact the Kankakee River. Therefore, the cumulative impacts to the Kankakee River and associated wildlife and endangered species of this project in combination with other past, present, or reasonably foreseeable future actions is addressed in the EA.

Secondary and Cumulative Impact Assessment for Planned Elwood to Braidwood Track Construction Project Environmental Document. The Elwood to Braidwood Track Construction Project is on UPRR right-of-way that passes through Midewin National Tallgrass Prairie and the Abraham Lincoln National Cemetery. The Tier 2 environmental document for that project will address impacts to these two resources and mitigation. That impact assessment will again consider the impact of the increase in rail traffic over existing conditions. The Tier 2 document will consider design alternatives that minimize impacts to these resources while still achieving the track capacity and on-time performance objectives of the Chicago to St. Louis HSR program. For each resource

directly impacted by the Elwood to Braidwood Track Construction Project the cumulative impact assessment will consider the aggregate impact of that project in combination with other past, present, or reasonably foreseeable future actions, including other rail projects, in that project's study area.

3. Comment: Also consider that the probability of a rail spill affecting the Kankakee River statistically doubles if the rail traffic is doubled.

   Response: A catastrophic event such as a rail spill could impact the Kankakee River, but such an event is considered very unlikely, both with the current number of trains and a future increase number of freight and passenger trains. Although they may attract media attention, derailments or other similar incidents on railroad lines are extremely rare. UPRR has well-established protocols in place both to prevent such rare occurrences, as well as to respond quickly to these rare incidents when they do occur. The protocols of the UPRR's Hazardous Materials Group for preventing, preparing for, responding to, and recovering spilled material from catastrophic events are summarized at the following website:

   http://www.uprr.com/newsinfo/media_kit/cbr/prevention.shtml#

   Agency notifications in the event of an incident at the Kankakee River would be made to the National Response Center and the Illinois Emergency Management Agency, as required by the US Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA).

   The planned new bridge design also reduces the chances of a spill into the Kankakee River or other catastrophic event. The existing bridge has an open deck system, where the ties sit directly on the steel girders. Gaps between the ties are open to the air below it, therefore, debris and runoff flows directly into the Kankakee River. The planned new bridge is a closed system, which would have a 5/8-inch thick steel deck plate welded to the steel beam superstructure, with a steel curb section along the side. To allow rain water to escape the closed system, four 2.5-inch steel drains would be installed on each span. The proposed closed design would lower the spill risk compared to the existing conditions.

4. Comment: Subject to further review and study, a FONSI or "finding of no significant impact" is not appropriate. Before any build alternative is moved forward concerning defined improvements to the Kankakee River Rail Bridge, cumulative and secondary impacts as might affect nearby 4(f) properties need to be addressed and/or mitigated.

   Response: The commenter's position on the appropriate environmental document is acknowledged. See the response to comment #2 above on why secondary and cumulative impacts on the nearby properties of Midewin National Wildlife Prairie and Abraham Lincoln National Cemetery do not need to be addressed in the Kankakee River Bridge and Track Improvements Project EA and indicating that they will be addressed in the Tier 2 document for the Elwood to Braidwood Track Construction Project that uses the railroad right-of-way that passes through these two resources.

D.3 Environmental Resource and Regulatory Agency Comments

Written comments were received from two environmental resource and regulatory agencies, the US Department of Interior, US Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) and the US Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA). The original comment letters are presented in Appendix C. The comments and responses are presented below.

D.3.1 US Department of Interior, US Fish and Wildlife Service

1. Comment: Section 7 of the Endangered Species Act (Act) [16 U.S.C. 1531 et seq.] outlines the procedures for Federal interagency cooperation to conserve Federally listed species and designated critical habitats. Section 7(a) (1) directs all Federal agencies to utilize their authorities in furtherance of the purposes of the Act by carrying out programs for the conservation of species listed pursuant to the Act. Section 7(a)(2) states that each Federal agency shall, in consultation with the Secretary of the Interior, insure that any action they authorize, fund, or carry out is not likely to jeopardize the continued existence of a listed species or result in the destruction or adverse modification of designated critical habitat. Federal agencies are required to determine whether their actions may affect listed or proposed species and designated and proposed critical habitat. Once a "may affect" determination is made, the Federal agency must either request our concurrence with a "may affect, but not likely to adversely affect" finding or request initiation of formal consultation. Both require a written analysis to be submitted to us. This analysis is typically transmitted in a document referred to as a Biological Assessment or Biological Evaluation. A Biological Assessment (BA) documents an agency's conclusions regarding the effects of their proposed action on listed species, and the rationale to support those conclusions. FRA has developed a draft BA which is currently being revised in consultation with our office. The EA should be revised to be consistent with changes made in the Biological Assessment (BA).

   Response: Section 3.2.4 of this Supplemental EA includes the findings of Section 7 consultation through December 2015.

2. Comment: Train collisions with wildlife are only evaluated in this EA for the northern long-eared bat (*Myotis septentrionalis*). However, research (e.g., documentation and studies conducted for the EJ&E railway acquisition) has shown that train collisions occur with other species (i.e., besides listed species) on rail lines. An increase in train numbers and frequency could result in an increase in wildlife collisions. The EA should include information about wildlife collisions. Information could be obtained from studies completed for the EJ&E railway acquisition, authorized by the Surface Transportation Board, or other studies.

   Response: Animals living in and passing through areas along the UPRR may have a higher risk of being struck by trains because of increased train traffic. However, animals in the area have adapted to existing train traffic and the increased potential for animal/train collisions would not affect any particular animal populations. In addition,

most of the Project study area consists of urban land uses, and contains limited areas of wildlife habitat that have not been extensively disturbed. The primary upland cover types providing habitat for wildlife are near the Kankakee River and Forked Creek stream corridors. Both streams will continue to be bridged. The Kankakee River Bridge and Track Improvement Project's Build Alternative would not result in habitat fragmentation or create additional forest edges since it would follow the existing rail line. Thus, any increase in the annual number of wildlife collisions by train would be insignificant.

3. Comment: Section 1.0 - Purpose and Need, 1.4 - Applicable Regulations. The FRA should include the Migratory Bird Treaty Act and the Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act to the list of applicable Federal laws found in the EA, especially since the natural resource sections discuss migratory birds (e.g., Section - 3.2.1 Vegetation and Habitat).

   Response: These laws are now listed in Section 1.4 of this Supplemental EA.

4. Comment: Section 3.0 - Affected Environment, Environmental Consequences and Mitigation, 3.2 - Ecological Systems, 3.2.4 - Threatened and Endangered Species. The EA should acknowledge that the BA is being finalized and that applicable conservation measures will be identified in the Final EA. FRA should consider adding a link to the BA in the Final EA. All final changes made to the BA, which revise information and commitments provided in the Draft EA, should be reflected in the Final EA.

   Response: Section 3.2.4 of this Supplemental EA includes the findings of Section 7 consultation through December 2015. The BA is being finalized.

5. Comment: 3.6 - Construction Impacts and Mitigation, 3.6.5 - Threatened and Endangered Species. This section discusses mitigation to offset impacts to listed species. Mitigation for tree loss should be added to this section. The Final EA should be updated to reflect this conservation measure, which is currently being discussed with FRA.

   Response: Section 3.2.4 of this Supplemental EA includes the findings of Section 7 consultation through December 2015.

6. Comment: 3.7 - Secondary and Cumulative Impacts, 3.7.1 - Secondary Impacts. Section 3.7.1 indicates that, "the Build Alternative would not induce changes in development patterns or new development that would result in secondary impacts to community, cultural, and natural resources." However, indirect impacts to mussel colonies, including impacts from siltation, sedimentation, and contaminants, are anticipated and described in Section 3.2.4 (on pages 3-58 and 3-59). Section 3.7.1 only acknowledges secondary and indirect impacts from new development and growth inducing effects. The Final EA should update this section to include the indirect impacts to listed species, listed in Section 3.2.4.

Response: The direct, operational, interrelated and interdependent, indirect, and cumulative impacts described in the BA for threatened and endangered species are presented in Section 3.2.4 of the August 2015 EA and this Supplemental EA. Indirect impacts from siltation, sedimentation, and contaminants during construction are not presented in the secondary impacts discussion of Section 3.7.1 of the August 2015 EA, "Secondary Impacts." The reason for this is secondary impacts in Section 3.7.1 are defined as impacts caused by actions taken by others in response to the presence of the Kankakee River Bridge and Track Improvement Project, such as induced development. By this definition, impacts from siltation, sedimentation, and contaminants during construction are not secondary impacts but direct impacts because they result from project construction even though the resources affected are downstream from the proposed bridge. Thus, the indirect impact information from the BA is presented in Section 3.2.4.

7. Comment: 3.7.2.2 Potential Cumulative Impacts. The impact acreage area for the sheepnose (*Plethobasus cyphyus*) should be revised to reflect the acreage identified in the BA.

   Response: The discussion of potential cumulative impacts in the August 2015 EA has been revised in Section 3.7.2.2 of this Supplemental EA to note the findings of Section 7 consultation.

D.3.2 US Environmental Protection Agency

1. Comment: NEPA Process: We recognize the value of tiering as a way to avoid repetition and focus on issues ripe for decision at each level of review. FRA has divided the overall Chicago to St. Louis HSR corridor into numerous projects for the purpose of Tier 2 project-level analysis. Some projects share the same geographic area. For example, this Kankakee River Bridge and Track Improvements Project EA falls within the boundaries of the Elwood to Braidwood Track Improvement Project EA, as displayed in Exhibit 1-2. It is important for each project to be clearly defined, including its relationship to any overlapping or neighboring projects, its logical termini, and its independent utility. Such information facilitates a transparent and robust NEPA process and helps to ensure consideration of all relevant environmental impacts in the decision-making process.

   Recommendations for the Final EA:

   - Fully describe the relationship between this project and any related overlapping or neighboring projects that FRA has or will assess through categorical exclusions, environmental assessments, or environmental impact statements.

   - Clearly define the logical termini and independent utility for this project.

   Response: The information requested is included in Section 2.2.4 of the Supplemental EA.

2. Comment: Waters of the U.S. The Draft EA states that the proposed project would require a Clean Water Act (CWA) Section 401 Certification and permits under the CWA Section 404 and the Rivers and Harbors Act Section 10 due to impacts to Waters of the U.S. The project team conducted wetland delineations in 2011 and found that the proposed project would permanently impact 0.41 acre and temporarily impact 0.18 acre of waters, with jurisdictional waters accounting for 0.17 acre of permanent impacts and all 0.18 acre of temporary impacts. The Draft EA does not state whether the Corps has issued a jurisdictional determination for the project area. We understand that temporary bridges would be constructed on the east and west sides of the existing Kankakee River Bridge to facilitate demolition of the existing bridge and construction of the new bridge. Instead of a temporary bridge over Forked Creek, the Draft EA explains that the project team will submit an application to place temporary fill in the creek to create a causeway for construction access. The Draft EA explains that use of temporary bridges, rather than causeways, minimizes sedimentation. Based on the information provided, it seems that use of a temporary bridge, rather than a causeway, for Forked Creek could minimize fill of Waters of the U.S. and better protect water quality. Placement of fill materials into Waters of the U.S. requires that the project comply with the CWA Section 404(b) (1) guidelines. These guidelines are summarized as follows:

   - LEDPA – There must be no practicable alternative to the proposed discharge (impacts) which would have less adverse impacts on the aquatic ecosystem, so long as the alternative does not have other significant adverse environmental consequences;

   - No Violation of Other Laws – The proposed project must not cause or contribute to a violation of state water quality standards or toxic effluent standards, and must not jeopardize the continued existence of federally listed endangered or threatened species or their critical habitat(s);

   - No Significant Degradation – The project must not cause or contribute to significant degradation of Waters of the U.S.; and

   - Minimization and Mitigation of Adverse Impacts – The project must include appropriate and practicable steps to avoid impacts to regulated Waters of the U.S. Where impacts are unavoidable, there must be documentation on how impacts have been minimized. Finally, compensatory mitigation to offset unavoidable, minimized impacts to the aquatic ecosystem must be provided.

     Our comments on Waters of the U.S. are based on information FRA has provided to date, and we look forward to further commenting on this project through the CWA Section 404 process when more information on project impacts and compliance with CWA regulations becomes available.

Recommendations for the Final EA:

- Clarify whether the Corps has approved the jurisdictional delineation for the project area and include any updated information on impact acreages in the Final EA.

- Align NEPA and CWA Section 404 processes to ensure that the proposed project, alternatives, and impacts in the EA will be consistent with those in the applicant's future CWA Section 404 permit application. To demonstrate consistency, summarize or include a copy of the draft CWA Section 404(b) (1) analysis as an appendix to the Final EA.

- Discuss any proposed mitigation, including mitigation sequencing per the CWA Section 404(b)(1) guidelines, and describe of how mitigation will comply with the 2008 Mitigation Rule (40 CFR 230).

- If a mitigation bank will be used, identify the name and location of the bank and the status of available credits.

- Describe how cumulative impacts to Waters of the U.S. from the overall Chicago to St. Louis HSR corridor will be considered in CWA Section 404 permitting and mitigation for this section.

Response: The jurisdictional delineations were prepared by a private contractor. Per IDOT policy, the delineations will be submitted to USACE as a part of the permit application. The final jurisdictional impact acres will be presented in the permit application and, if available, within the currently expected Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI). Wetland mitigation is proposed to occur at a bank within the watershed at a ratio determined by USACE. There are banks within the watershed with adequate credits. This is consistent with the 2008 mitigation rule, which states that mitigation should be first considered at a bank within the watershed. The name and location of the mitigation bank used and final decisions on the use of a causeway at Forked Creek will be agreed to with USACE during the permit process.

As stated in Section 5.9.2.1 of the 2012 Tier 1 FEIS the total HSR program assessed in that document would cross 191 surface waters over the program's 284-mile length, which passes through 10 drainage basins. As stated in Section 5.11.2 of the 2012 Tier 1 FEIS, the total HSR program assessed in that document would impact 55 acres of wetlands over the program's 284-mile length. Regarding compensatory wetland mitigation, the 2012 Tier 1 FEIS states that mitigation may be provided by purchasing credits from an established wetland mitigation bank if an approved bank is available. If an approved bank is not available, the conversion of non-wetland areas into wetlands may be required. Mitigation requirements will be determined during the permitting process following completion of final design and right-of-way plans.

Waters of the U.S. impacts have been and will be permitted and mitigated for each HSR program project. To comply with the Interagency Wetland Policy Act, all wetland impacts have been and will be mitigated, regardless of threshold or isolated status.

3. Comment: Threatened and Endangered Species. As discussed in the Draft EA, the sheepnose mussel *(Plethobasus cyphyus)* is endangered and the northern long-eared bat *(Myotis septentrionalis)* is threatened under the federal Endangered Species Act; both have habitat in the project area. State-listed species with habitat in the project area include the endangered pallid shiner fish *(Hybopsis amnis)* and western sand darter fish *(Ammocrypta clarum),* as well as the threatened purple wartyback mussel *(Cyclonaias tuberculate),* black sandshell mussel *(Ligumia recta),* and river redhorse fish *(Moxostoma carinatum).*

   The Draft EA discusses past bat, mussel, and fish surveys and commits to mitigate impacts through limiting roost tree removal to specific seasons and relocating federal and state listed mussel species prior to construction, among other measures. We understand that FRA and IDOT are working with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) and Illinois Department of Natural Resources (IDNR) to fulfill their regulatory obligations and minimize impacts.

   Recommendations for the Final EA:

   - Update the status of coordination with FWS and IDNR. Include a summary of any outstanding FWS and IDNR concerns and FRA and IDOT's plans to address such concerns.

   - Work with FWS and IDNR to: (1) determine whether any additional federal or state listed species may have habitat in the project area, and (2) strengthen mitigation measures to protect identified federal and state-listed species. Include any new commitments in the Final EA. Consider adding seasonal restriction dates for in-water work and additional mitigation for tree removal.

     Response: Since the release of the August 2015 EA, Section 7 consultation with the FRA has advanced. A Biological Assessment (BA) was submitted to USFWS that included mitigation for federally-listed species. Consultation has occurred to discuss the BA's findings and finalize mitigation. A discussion of impacts and current mitigation commitments for threatened and endangered species are presented in Sections 3.2.4 of this Supplemental EA.

4. Comment: Culverts. The proposed project includes the installation of new 24-inch, 36-inch, and 48-inch corrugated steel pipe culverts. Given the long linear nature of the Chicago to St. Louis HSR corridor, culverts will play important roles in water movement and wildlife crossings. The design of culverts is important to minimizing project impacts on natural resources.

   Recommendations for the Final EA:

- Consult with FWS and IDNR on best practices for designing culverts to minimize impacts to species and facilitate wildlife crossings.

- In the Final EA, assess options for using open bottom culverts. If four-sided culverts must be used, consider imbedding them into river/creek beds at least one foot below the natural river/creek bottom in order to provide natural bottoms and continuous aquatic habitat.

  Response: No culverts are proposed for streams that carry fish or other aquatic fauna. The purpose of all project culverts is transmitting stormwater. The two streams that carry fish and other aquatic fauna are the Kankakee River and Forked Creek. Both are bridged.

5. Comment: Air Quality. As discussed in the Draft EA, the project is within an area that does not fully meet the National Ambient Air Quality Standards; it is designated as non-attainment for ozone and maintenance for fine particulates (PM25). Of the overall Chicago to St. Louis HSR corridor, 59.8 miles of trackway fall within an ozone non-attainment area. Table 3-5 compares regional emissions generated by the proposed project with the de minimis thresholds for general conformity. It is unclear whether the table captures emissions from the 1.31 mile section evaluated in this Draft EA or from the full 59.8 mile portion of the Chicago to St. Louis corridor that falls within an ozone non-attainment area. While the full corridor was considered in the Tier I analysis, it is important for air quality impacts to be analyzed with project-level information. The Draft EA does not disclose project-specific or cumulative construction emissions. It states that, "[a]s a rule, short-term construction impacts (shorter than three years) does not warrant a detailed air quality analysis" (pages 3-13 and 3-92). EPA disagrees with this statement and regularly sees detailed air quality analyses for short-term construction impacts. Short-term construction impacts have the potential to impact health, especially in children, elderly, and those with impaired respiratory systems. While we recognize that this construction project is only 1.31 miles in length, the overall Chicago to St. Louis HSR project covers 284 miles. The cumulative air analysis should disclose construction emissions from other portions of the Chicago to St. Louis HSR project that could occur during the same time period. Estimating project-specific and cumulative construction emissions and assessing potential health impacts in the Final EA could: more fully disclose potential impacts, lead to the identification of avoidance and minimization measures, and result in more informed decision making.

   Recommendations for the Final EA:

   - Clarify whether Table 3-5 includes emissions from the 1.31 mile project covered by this EA or the full 59.8 miles of the Chicago to St. Louis HSR corridor within an ozone nonattainment area. If not already included, disclose emissions for the full 59.8 miles stretch.

   - Assess air emissions from project construction and potential health impacts. Include direct, indirect, and cumulative emissions. Ensure that other projects

along the Chicago to St. Louis HSR corridor with overlapping construction schedules are included. Commit to specific measures to avoid and minimize emissions, such as those in the enclosed Diesel Emission Reduction Checklist.

Response: Table 5-3 of the EA includes the emissions for the full 59.8 miles of the Chicago to St. Louis HSR corridor within the ozone nonattainment area. A construction equipment emissions analysis is included in Section 3.1.1.3 of this Supplemental EA under "Construction Impacts." It is expected that during the first year of the construction of the Kankakee River Bridge and Track Construction Project (2016) that three other HSR program projects will be ongoing in the ozone nonattainment area. The emissions of all four projects are included in the construction emissions analysis. Additional discussion of construction emission avoidance and minimization is included in Sections 3.1.1.4 and 3.6.2 of this Supplemental EA.

6. Comment: Climate Change. The Council on Environmental Quality's December 2014 revised draft guidance for Federal agencies' consideration of greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions and climate change impacts under NEPA outlines a reasonable assessment framework. The guidance explains that agencies should consider both the potential effects of a proposed action on climate change, as indicated by its estimated GHG emissions, and the implications of climate change for the environmental effects of a proposed action. We recognize that the Draft EA included GHG estimates. The National Climate Assessment provides an in-depth look at climate change impacts on the U.S. now and in the future. The report was produced by a team of over 300 experts guided by a 60-member Federal Advisory Committee and was extensively reviewed by the public and experts, including federal agencies and a panel of the National Academy of Sciences. The report finds that in the Midwest extreme heat, heavy downpours, and flooding will affect infrastructure, health, air and water quality, and more. The National Climate Assessment section on the Midwest provides a useful starting place for examining climate change impacts in the project area.

   Recommendations for the Final EA:

   - Consider resiliency and adaptation to changing climate conditions when making decisions about infrastructure design. We recommend reviewing climate predictions for the Midwest in the U.S. Global Change Research Program's National Climate Assessment report.

   - Examine opportunities to minimize GHG emissions from construction and operations. Consider energy efficiency, renewable energy, electric motors, and cleaner diesel strategies in planning documents and construction contractor scopes of work. Reducing diesel emissions has the added benefit of reducing black carbon emissions, which have climate forcing effects orders of magnitude larger than carbon dioxide on a per mass basis.

   Response: The climate predictions for the Midwest in the U.S. Global Change Research Program's National Climate Assessment were reviewed. The assessment summarizes

climate change issues for the Midwest as: "Extreme heat, heavy downpours, and flooding will affect infrastructure, health, agriculture, forestry, transportation, air and water quality, and more. Climate change will also exacerbate a range of risks to the Great Lakes." Increased rainfall and flooding is the issue raised in the assessment that affects transportation infrastructure and its resilience, including the proposed Project. At this time, there were no regulatory permits or American Railway Engineering and Maintenance-of-Way Association (AREMA) standards that address the effects of climate change on railroad drainage design. Therefore, the two bridges and other drainage components of the proposed Project meet current requirements for hydraulic capacity. The design of the Kankakee River bridge does represent a hydraulic improvement over the existing bridge. The proposed bridge has a 31 percent increase in opening area because of reduced overall pier width and higher low chord elevation. As a result of the improved hydraulic performance of the bridge the 100-year water surface elevation at the upstream face would be reduced by 1-inch.

Additional discussion of construction emission avoidance and minimization is included in Sections 3.1.1.4 and 3.6.2 of this Supplemental EA. As indicated in Section 3.1.1.3 of the August 2015 EA under "Greenhouse Gas (GHG) Emissions": "As shown in Table 5.7-2 of the 2012 Tier 1 FEIS, from the perspective of the entire HSR Program corridor, there would be a reduction in GHG emissions. The HSR Program would increase passenger rail proportion of travel in the HSR corridor. Since travel by rail is the most energy efficient mode of transportation, an overall decrease in GHG emissions of 20,150 metric tons per year (from 1,980,270 to 1,960,130) would occur in the HSR corridor. The completion of the proposed Kankakee River Bridge and Track Improvements project would contribute to this overall HSR Program GHG emissions benefit."

7. Comment: Invasive Species. The Draft EA lists measures to minimize the spread of invasive species that could potentially be taken, including: rapid seeding and re-vegetation of bare soil with native species, cleaning construction equipment prior to entering areas near sensitive habitats, and active management of invasive plants. The Draft EA does not commit to undertake these measures.

   Recommendation for the Final EA: Clearly commit to specific measures to avoid and minimize introducing invasive species into the project area.

   Response: As indicated in Sections 3.2.1.3 and 3.6.6 of the EA, the requirements of Executive Order 13112 to combat the introduction and spread of invasive plant species during construction would be met. Specific measures to avoid and minimize introducing invasive species into the project area will be included in construction contractor contracts.

8. Comment: Hazardous Materials. The project team identified 26 locations with potential contamination in the project area; six were deemed to have de minimis conditions. The Draft EA lists the reasons for the *de minimis* determination as "[p]otential asbestos containing material and lead based paint," and "[l]ikely agriculture pesticide or herbicide use" (page 3-86). It is unclear why FRA considers the presence of these types of contaminants to be too minor to warrant consideration.

In addition, Section 3.9, *Environmental Commitments,* does not discuss plans for further testing and classification of potentially contaminated sites.

Recommendations for the Final EA:

- Further identify and assess potential contamination risks in the Final EA.
- Explain why construction activities on sites with potential asbestos, lead, pesticide, and herbicide contamination are not of concern, or further assess impacts from those sites.
- Describe how FRA and IDOT will ensure worker and environmental safety from existing contamination in the project area prior to earth moving activities.

  Response: Section 3.4.8.1 of the EA lists all of the Recognized Environmental Conditions (REC) sites identified by the Draft Preliminary Environmental Site Assessment (PESA) for the proposed Project. The Draft PESA was prepared in accordance with the Illinois State Geological Survey (ISGS) PESA Manual entitled "A Manual for Conducting Preliminary Environmental Site Assessments for Illinois Department of Transportation Infrastructure Projects." The PESA identified 19 sites with RECs out of 26 potential contamination sites in the project area. Potential contamination risk was screened by considering sites which were proposed as new right-of-way or easements, or were associated with existing railroad use. Potential contamination risk is at 14 sites out of the 19 REC sites identified for the Kankakee River Bridge and Track Improvements Project within proposed right-of-way, proposed easement, or existing UPRR right-of-way. Five sites were identified as having potential contamination risk to the UPRR within proposed right-of-way; six sites were identified as having potential contamination risk to the UPRR within both proposed right-of-way and construction easement; and three sites were identified as having potential contamination risk within the existing UPRR right-of-way. No work is proposed at the remaining five of 19 REC sites. Prior to earthwork operations, a decision will be made by UPRR, in accordance with their Hazardous Materials Procedures on how specifically to address the potential contamination at the 14 sites. It would be either disposal/handling by risk management, or by environmental testing and development of a disposal/handling program based on testing results.

  One structure is proposed for displacement as part of the Kankakee River Bridge and Track Improvements Project. The presence or absence of asbestos or lead based paint within the structure has not yet been confirmed. However, as stated in Section 3.4.8.3 in the EA, pre-demolition building surveys would be conducted prior to building demolition to ensure proper abatement, if required. Notifications in accordance with National Emission Standards for Hazardous Air Pollutants (NESHAP) would be made, and abatement and demolition debris would be disposed of accordingly.

  Sites 3 and 20 were identified as sites with de minimis conditions because of likely agriculture pesticide or herbicide use. There is no work planned within Sites 3 and 20 (refer to Exhibit 2-1 Build Alternative Features and Exhibit 3-11 Potential Hazardous

Materials Sites), and therefore, are not considered a concern to the Kankakee River Bridge and Track Improvements Project.

To ensure worker and environmental safety during construction, UPRR will communicate known site hazards and/or risk management procedures with construction contractors during pre-construction meetings. The communication would include emergency notifications to make and contacts in the event that an unforeseen environmental condition is encountered. Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) guidelines will be followed for Personal Protective Equipment (PPE). Dust control Best Management Practices (BMPs) will be followed to reduce the exposure of potential contaminants.

9. Comment: Coordination. Given the large scale and complex nature of the overall Chicago to St. Louis HSR corridor, a high level of coordination among resources agencies on individual Tier 2 projects is critical to streamlining and coordinating various environmental requirements to help avoid future challenges. We appreciate the on-going quarterly meetings on the entire length of the HSR corridor.

   Recommendation for the Overall Chicago to St. Louis HSR Effort: To guide future work along the Chicago to St. Louis HSR corridor, EPA recommends that FRA continue to engage the resource agencies through regular meetings. A communications strategy and/or a coordination plan would be helpful.

   Response: IDOT plans to continue the quarterly meetings as the primary mechanism for interagency coordination.

Appendix E

USFWS Concurrence Letter

United States Department of the Interior

US FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE REGION 3
Chicago Ecological Services Field Office
1250 S. Grove Suite103
Barrington, IL 60010-5010
Phone: (847) 381-2253 Fax: (847) 381-2285

IN REPLY REFER TO:
FWS/AES-CIFO/2009-FA- 0558

February 3, 2016

Andrea Martin
Federal Railroad Administration
1200 New Jersey Avenue SE, Mail Stop 20, W38-215
Washington, DC 20590

Dear Ms. Martin:

This serves as a follow-up to email correspondence and telephone calls between our offices, and responds to your email dated February 3, 2016, requesting concurrence that the proposed bridge and track improvement project may affect, but is not likely to adversely affect the northern long-eared bat (*Myotis septentrionalis*), a federally threatened species, and the sheepnose mussel (*Plethobasus cyphyus*), a federally endangered species. Based on the information provided, we concur with your determination of "may affect, not likely to adversely affect" for the sheepnose mussel and the northern long-eared bat. Our concurrence letter concludes informal consultation with the Federal Railroad Administration for the Kankakee River Bridge and Track Improvements Project.

This letter provides comment under the authority of, and in accordance with, the provisions of the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (83 Stat. 852, as amended P.L. 91-190, 42 U.S.C. 4321 et seq.), the Fish and Wildlife Coordination Act of 1956 (48 Stat. 401, as amended; 16 U.S.C. 661 et seq.), and the Endangered Species Act of 1973 (87 Stat. 884, as amended; 16 U.S.C. 1531 et seq.).

If you have any questions, please contact Mr. Shawn Cirton at 847/381-2253, ext. 19.

Sincerely,

Louise Clemency

Louise Clemency
Field Supervisor

cc: IDNR, Jenny Skufca
Parsons, Selover