



U.S. Department
of Transportation
**Federal Transit
Administration**

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July 31, 2017

David F. Simmons
Director, Grant Administration
Metra
547 W. Jackson Blvd.
Chicago, IL 60661

RE: Environmental Review Approval for the Metra Union Pacific-West Line Third Mainline Western Section Track Project, DuPage County and Kane County, Illinois

Dear Mr. Simmons:

The Federal Transit Administration (FTA) has evaluated environmental review documents submitted by Metra for the proposed Union Pacific-West (UP-W) Line Third Mainline Western Section Track Project in DuPage County and Kane County, Illinois. FTA finds that the project meets the criteria for a National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) categorical exclusion in accordance with 23 C.F.R. § 771.118(d).

The proposed Project consists of constructing a third mainline track from Kress Road in West Chicago to Peck Road in Geneva. The third mainline track would be added primarily on the south side of the existing tracks with the exception of an approximately 1.8-mile section from 0.7 miles east of the bridge at Kirk Road to the bridge at Crissey Avenue (IL Route 25), where the third track would be located on the north side. A majority of the third mainline track addition would occur within UP's existing right-of-way. However, approximately 6.59 acres of additional land acquisition and 8.39 acres of temporary construction and permanent easements directly adjacent to the existing UP right-of-way would also be required to accommodate the third mainline track. Improvements would be required for the at-grade crossings, a grade separated crossing, Fox River Bridge structure, passenger shelters, and parking lots to accommodate the addition of the third mainline track. At-grade crossing and grade separated crossing improvements include the addition of ornamental fences, driveway access, sidewalks, gates, and landscaping. The Fox River Bridge improvements are limited to repair and rehabilitation of the existing structure. The Geneva Station parking lots would also be reconfigured.

The environmental records reviewed by FTA consisted of a Documented Categorical Exclusion (DCE) checklist dated July 2017, and additional supporting information provided in Appendices A and B. After reviewing this documentation, FTA finds pursuant to 23 C.F.R. § 771.118(d) that the proposed Project will have no significant adverse impact on the environment. The

record provides sufficient evidence and analysis for determining that a categorical exclusion classification is proper.

On October 20, 2016, in accordance with 36 C.F.R. Part 800 – Protection of Historic Properties and the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA), FTA provided the Illinois Historic Preservation Agency (IHPA) with its determination for the Area of Potential Effect (APE). The IHPA provided its concurrence in correspondence dated November 1, 2016. FTA provided draft Section 106 documentation to Consulting Parties on April 18 and 19, 2017 for review and comment. On May 16, 2017, FTA provided IHPA with the following determinations: historic districts and properties listed in or eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Properties (NRHP); and finding of no adverse effect. The IHPA provided its concurrence in correspondence dated June 6, 2017. FTA finds, in accordance with 36 C.F.R. § 800, that the Section 106 coordination and consultation requirements for the proposed Project have been fulfilled.

Coordination with the U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) is on-going for the rusty patched bumble bee. A no effect determination has been made for all other federally listed threatened and endangered species within Kane and DuPage County. Coordination with IDNR was concluded on March 17, 2017.

For a Section 404/401 permit, coordination with United States Corps of Engineers (USACE) and Illinois Environmental Protection Agency (IEPA) is on-going. A mitigation plan for replacement of wetland and impacted WOUS has been submitted to the USACE and IEPA. The mitigation plan specifies the intent to purchase wetland bank credits and the ratios for replacement.

Coordination with the Illinois Department of Natural Resources (IDNR) under the Illinois Interagency Wetlands Policy Act has been initiated. IDNR Project approval is pending approval of the mitigation plan by the USACE. A permit application for the work within the floodway, rehabilitation of the Fox River bridge piers, has been submitted to the IDNR Office of Water Resources (OWR) and coordination is on-going.

The use of any Federal funds for this project is contingent upon the following:

- Conclusion of the Section 7 consultation process with USFWS.
- Approval of the Section 404 Permit application, which was submitted to the USACE on July 25, 2016. Approval of the floodway construction permit, which has been submitted to the IDNR-OWR. Coordination with USACE and IDNR-OWR is on-going. Determination of commitments and/or mitigation, if needed, through the Section 404 permit and floodway construction permit process.

This NEPA determination applies only to the proposed project as described in the DCE checklist and supporting materials. Any changes to the proposed project which could result in significant environmental impacts not outlined in the DCE checklist, including the disclosure of

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new information or previously unidentified environmental concerns, will require re-evaluation of this proposed project.

This confirmation of a categorical exclusion does not provide FTA commitment that future Federal funds will be approved for this proposed project. Any costs incurred under FTA pre-award authority must meet all Federal requirements prior to those costs being incurred in order to retain eligibility of those costs for future FTA grant assistance.

If you have further questions regarding this determination, please contact Tony Greep, Community Planner, at 312-353-1646 or anthony.greep@dot.gov.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Kelley Brookins", with a stylized flourish at the end.

Kelley Brookins
Deputy Regional Administrator

cc: Tony Greep, FTA
Elizabeth Breiseth, FTA
Brian Stepp, Metra