

the current status of electronic security technology and will make recommendations about consistent minimum standards for its use in the transmission and storage of drug testing results. Additionally, the Committee will examine the formats and methodologies used in transmitting electronic information, as well as the concept, parameters, and procedures used in implementing electronic signature technology within the framework of the DOT drug and alcohol testing program. The Committee will advise DOT regarding these findings. The Department anticipates that, following the receipt of the Committee's final recommendations, DOT will propose changes to Part 40 through a notice of proposed rulemaking that will result in minimum standards for security in transmission and storage of drug testing information and would result in a more widespread use of electronic technology in the program.

The Committee held its first public meeting on June 18–19, 2002 in Washington, DC and the second on April 7–8, 2003 in Arlington, VA. The first meeting was used to introduce the Committee Members, review the purpose of the Committee, and to review some of the issues that the Committee needed to address as part of the process to develop appropriate recommendations to the DOT. Presentations from the major sections of interested stakeholders were conducted by Committee members, invited guests, and by the general public. Additionally, three sub-committees composed of Committee members were established to research, develop, and provide information to the whole Committee at future meetings. These sub-committees addressed the following three areas: 1. Format of electronic reports; 2. Security of electronic transmission and digital signatures; and 3. Storage security of electronic information. The second meeting focused on specific findings, issues, and recommendations of the sub-committees related to these three areas. A complete transcription of all discussions for both meetings is available at the above-cited Internet web site. Opportunity will be available at the upcoming meeting for the general public to comments on information presented by the committee members.

Tentative agenda: Monday, September 22, 2003, 08:30 a.m.–12 p.m.: General presentations by the sub-committee chairpersons, 12 p.m.–1:15 p.m.: Lunch, 1:15 p.m.–3:30 p.m.—Continued presentations, 3:30 p.m.–5 p.m.: Public Comments or Presentations, 5 p.m.—End of First Day. Tuesday, September 23, 2003, 08:30 a.m.–12:00 p.m.:

Discussion of Options and Future Committee Actions, 12 p.m.—Closing Comments, 2 p.m.—End of Meeting. A final agenda will be available to the public prior to the beginning of the meeting.

The meeting will be open to the public on a first-come first-seated basis. Anyone needing special accommodations for persons with disabilities please notify Minnie McDonald at (202) 366–3784 at least two weeks prior to the meeting.

Members of the public wishing to file a written statement with the DOT Electronic Transmission and Storage of Drug Testing Information Federal Advisory Committee may do so by submitting comments by mail or by delivering them to the Docket Clerk, Attn: Docket No. OST–02–12148, Department of Transportation, 400 7th Street, SW., Room PL401, Washington, DC, 20590. Comments may also be faxed to the Docket Clerk at (202) 493–2251. Persons wishing their comments to be acknowledged should enclose a stamped, self-addressed postcard with their comments. The docket clerk will date stamp the postcard and return it to the sender. For the convenience of persons wishing to review the docket, it is requested that paper comments be sent in triplicate in an unbound format, no larger than 8½ by 11 inches, suitable for copying and electronic filing. Comments may be reviewed at the above address from 9 a.m. through 5 p.m. Monday through Friday. Commenters may also submit their comments electronically. Instructions for electronic submission may be found at the following Web address: <http://dms.dot.gov/submit/>. The public may also review docket comments electronically (docket number is 12148). The following web address provides instructions and access to the DOT electronic docket: <http://dms.dot.gov/search/>. Please use only one method for submission of your comments. Please do not send duplicates by submitting a written and an electronic version.

There will be a time allocated for the public to speak on any of the above agenda items. Please make your request for the opportunity to make a public comment in writing to Minnie McDonald, ODAPC, at (202) 366–3784, FAX (202) 366–3897, or e-mail address: [minnie.mcdonald@ost.dot.gov](mailto:minnie.mcdonald@ost.dot.gov) two weeks prior to the meeting. Your notification should contain your name and corporate designation, consumer affiliation, or government designation. Please include your address, telephone number and e-mail in case there is reason to contact you regarding your presentation. Those wanting to make a

verbal statement should also include a short statement describing the topic to be addressed. Requestors will ordinarily be allowed up to 10 minutes to present a topic, however, the time may be limited depending on the number of requestors. If you have submitted a written statement to the docket, there is no need to subsequently duplicate this information by an oral presentation.

The Committee meeting will be recorded and transcribed. Within a short time after the meeting, copies of the transcripts will be available on the DOT electronic docket.

**DATES AND TIME:** The Electronic Transmission and Storage of Drug Testing Information Federal Advisory Committee will meet in open session on September 22, 2003, from 8:30 a.m. to 5 p.m. and on September 23, 2003, from 8:30 a.m. to 2 p.m.

**ADDRESSES:** The meeting will take place at the Key Bridge Marriott Hotel, 1401 Lee Highway, Arlington, VA 22209, (703) 524–6400, Guest Fax: (703) 524–8964. The hotel is close to the Rosslyn, VA METRO stops and can be reached via the blue or yellow lines. Attendees, other than Committee members, who need lodging, may obtain a discounted room rate directly from the hotel by referring to the “DOT Federal Advisory Committee” meeting. The hotel reservation telephone number is (800) 228–9290. A limited number of rooms will be available at the discounted rate and reservations must be made by September 11, 2003.

Dated: August 18, 2003.

**Kenneth C. Edgell,**  
*Acting Director, Office of Drug and Alcohol,  
Policy and Compliance, Department of  
Transportation.*

[FR Doc. 03–21603 Filed 8–21–03; 8:45 am]

**BILLING CODE 4910–62–P**

## DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

### Federal Transit Administration

#### Preparation of Alternatives Analysis and Environmental Impact Statement for the Commuter Rail Project in Sonoma and Marin Counties, California

**AGENCY:** Federal Transit Administration (FTA), Department of Transportation (DOT).

**ACTION:** Notice of Intent to prepare an Alternatives Analysis and Draft Environmental Impact Statement (AA/DEIS).

**SUMMARY:** The Federal Transit Administration (FTA) as lead agency and the Sonoma Marin Area Rail Transit (SMART) Commission intend to

conduct an Alternatives Analysis and prepare a Draft Environmental Impact Statement (AA/DEIS) on a proposal by SMART for the proposed introduction of commuter rail service along an existing railroad right-of-way extending approximately 75-miles from Cloverdale in Sonoma County to a San Francisco/East Bay bound ferry terminal in Marin County. The EIS will be prepared as a joint EIS and Environmental Impact Report (EIR) to satisfy the requirements of both the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (NEPA) and the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA).

The purpose of this notice is to notify interested individuals, organizations, and business entities, affected Native American Tribes and Federal, State, and local government agencies of the intent to prepare an AA/DEIS and to invite participation in the study. At present three alternatives are proposed for evaluation in the EIS/EIR. In addition, reasonable alternatives identified through the scoping process will be evaluated in the EIS/EIR.

Scoping will be accomplished through correspondence and discussion with interested persons, organizations, and Federal, State and local agencies, and through public and agency meetings.

**DATES: Comment Due Date:** Written comments on the scope of the alternatives and impacts to be considered should be received no later than October 1, 2003. Written comments should be sent to the SMART AA/DEIS/DEIR Outreach at the address given below in **ADDRESSES**.

**Scoping Meeting Dates:** Two public open-house scoping meetings will be held from 6 p.m. to 8 p.m. on September 4 and 10, 2003 at the location given below in **ADDRESSES**. An interagency scoping meeting will also be held on September 17, 2003 from 10 a.m. to 12 noon at Novato City Council Chambers located at 917 Sherman Avenue, Novato, California 94947.

The two scoping meetings will be held at the following dates and locations:

1. September 4, 2003 from 6 p.m. to 8 p.m. at the San Rafael Corporate Center located at 750 Lindero Street, San Rafael, California 94901.
  2. September 10, 2003 from 6 p.m. to 8 p.m. at the Petaluma Community Center located at 320 N. McDowell Boulevard, Petaluma, California 94954.
- All locations are accessible to people with disabilities.

**ADDRESSES:** Written comments should be sent to Ms. Lillian Hames, Project Director SMART (Sonoma Marin Area

Rail Transit), 520 Mendocino Avenue, Suite 240, Santa Rosa, California 95401. Phone: 415-461-00630 Fax: 415-464-1285. E-mail:

*LHames@sonomamarintrain.org*. To be added to the mailing list, contact Ms. Hames at the address listed above. Please specify the mailing list for the SMART Alternatives Analysis/Draft Environmental Impact Statement/Report (SMART AA/DEIS/R). Persons with special needs should leave a message at either of the phone numbers indicated above.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Ms. Lorraine Lerman, Community Planner, FTA Region IX, 201 Mission Street, Suite 2210, San Francisco, CA 94105. Phone: (415) 744-2735 Fax: (415) 744-2726. Information about the project can also be obtained from the SMART Web site, <http://www.sonomamarintrain.org/>.

#### **SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:**

#### **I. Description of Study Area**

The FTA, as joint lead agency with the SMART Commission, will prepare an AA/DEIS/DEIR on a proposal to provide commuter rail service along an existing railroad right-of-way extending approximately 75-miles in Sonoma and Marin counties. The study area begins in Cloverdale in Sonoma County. The southern terminus of the project area is in Marin County at a San Francisco/East Bay bound ferry terminal. Along the project route, the rail right-of-way runs parallel to Highway 101. The rail right-of-way south of Healdsburg has been transferred to a new statutorily-created entity, the Sonoma Marin Area Rail Transit District. North of Healdsburg the North Coast Railroad Authority (NCRA) owns it. The project area also includes the locations of up to 15 stations and maintenance facility sites. Conceptual engineering of the rail alignment, a pedestrian and bicycle path, the station facilities, and the maintenance facility will be included in AA/DEIS/DEIR that satisfies both NEPA and CEQA requirements. In addition, a financial plan will be developed that examines the capital and operating funding needs and sources.

#### **II. Purpose and Need**

Highway 101 is the primary mode of north-south movement connecting Sonoma and Marin counties with the City and County of San Francisco. The existing congested conditions in this corridor are expected to worsen as the area's population and job base continue to grow. The SMART corridor offers an opportunity to provide additional transportation capacity along a currently congested corridor. Implementation of

the proposed actions will provide transit service to key employment areas along the corridor, maximize and maintain the viability of residential communities, encourage smart growth in city centers along the corridor, and reduce reliance on private automobile usage and the congested Highway 101 corridor.

#### **III. Alternatives**

Alternatives proposed for evaluation include but are not limited to:

(1) No-build alternative, which consists of the existing highway and transit systems plus any ongoing or programmed improvements. It serves as the baseline condition against which the transportation, environmental, and community impacts of the other alternatives are compared.

(2) Introduction of commuter rail service along an existing railroad right-of-way extending approximately 75-miles from Cloverdale in Sonoma County to a San Francisco/East Bay bound ferry terminal in Marin County.

(3) Enhanced bus service on Highway 101 from Cloverdale in Sonoma County to Larkspur in Marin County, including bus enhancements and capital improvements along the Highway 101 corridor.

#### **IV. Probable Effects**

The purpose of the EIS/EIR is to fully disclose the environmental consequences of building and operating a major capital investment in the SMART corridor in advance of any decisions to commit substantial financial or other resources towards its implementation. The EIS/EIR will examine the transportation benefits and environmental impacts of the alternatives that emerge from the scoping process. In addition, it will discuss actions to reduce or eliminate such impacts.

Environmental issues to be analyzed in the EIS/EIR include: potential consistency with local plans and policies with regard to possible station sites; possible flooding along portions of the rail line and stations; potential traffic delays and change in traffic levels of service at several rail crossings; potential impacts to wetland areas paralleling the corridor; increased noise to sensitive receptors adjacent to the track; changes in views and vistas due to elevated structures; and potential impacts to historic and cultural resources. In addition, the EIS/EIR will examine potential impacts to population and housing; air quality; energy and mineral resources; contaminated property; public services; utilities; and recreation features; as well as

cumulative and growth-inducing impacts. Impacts will be evaluated for both the temporary construction period and for the long-term operation of each alternative. Measures to mitigate any adverse impacts will also be identified.

To ensure that the full range of issues related to this proposed action will be addressed and all significant issues identified, comments and suggestions are invited from all interested parties. Comments or questions concerning this proposed action and the EIS/EIR should be directed to the SMART Project Director as noted in the **ADDRESSES** section above.

#### V. FTA Procedures

To streamline the NEPA process and to avoid duplication of effort, the agencies involved in the scoping process will consider the results of any previous planning studies or financial feasibility studies prepared in support of the decision by the Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC) to include a particular alternative in the regional transportation plan. Prior transportation planning studies may be pertinent to establishing the purpose and need for the proposed action and the range of alternatives to be evaluated in detail in the EIS/EIR. The Draft EIS/EIR will be prepared simultaneously with conceptual engineering for the alternatives, including station and alignment options. The Draft EIS/EIR process will address the potential use of federal funds for the proposed action, as well as assessing social, economic, and environmental impacts of the station and alignment alternatives. Station designs and alignment alternatives will be refined to minimize and mitigate any adverse impacts. After publication, the Draft EIS/EIR will be available for public and agency review and comment, and a public hearing will be held. Based on the Draft EIS/EIR and comments received, SMART will select a Locally Preferred Alternative for further assessment in the Final EIS/EIR and will apply for FTA approval to initiate Preliminary Engineering of the preferred alternative.

Issued on: August 19, 2003.

**Leslie T. Rogers,**

*Regional Administrator.*

[FR Doc. 03-21604 Filed 8-21-03; 8:45 am]

**BILLING CODE 4910-57-P**

## DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

### Surface Transportation Board

[Finance Docket No. 30186 (Sub-No. 3)]

#### Tongue River Railroad Co.— Construction and Operation—Western Alignment

**AGENCY:** Surface Transportation Board.

**ACTION:** Amended Final Scope of the Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement.

**SUMMARY:** On April 27, 1998, the Tongue River Railroad Company (TRRC) filed an application with the Surface Transportation Board (Board) under U.S.C. 10901 and 49 CFR 1150.1 through 1150.10 seeking authority to construct and operate a 17.3-mile line of railroad in Rosebud and Big Horn Counties, Montana, known as the "Western Alignment." The line that is the subject of this application is an alternative routing for the portion of the 41-mile Ashland to Decker, Montana rail line that was approved by the Board on November 8, 1996 in Finance Docket No. 30186 (Sub-No. 2), referred to as the "Four Mile Creek Alternative." On July 10, 1998, the Board's Section of Environmental Analysis (SEA) served a Notice of Intent to prepare a Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement (SEIS) to evaluate and consider the potential environmental impacts that might result from the construction and operation of the Western Alignment, and requested comments on the scope of the SEIS. SEA served its final scope of the SEIS on February 3, 1999. On March 2, 2000, before SEA completed its Draft SEIS, TRRC requested that SEA suspend its environmental work. On December 19, 2002, TRRC advised SEA that it was now in a position to move forward and asked SEA to resume its environmental review of the application. On January 17, 2003, TRRC filed a request with the Board seeking to update its previously submitted evidence on the transportation merits. The Board served its decision allowing TRRC to file its supplemental evidence on the transportation merits on March 11, 2003. On March 26, 2003, SEA served an amended Notice of Intent to prepare a SEIS and requested comments on the adequacy of the final scope of the SEIS dated February 3, 1999. SEA has reviewed and considered all eight of the comments received in preparing the amended final scope of the SEIS, which is discussed below.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Kenneth Blodgett, (202) 565-1554. Federal Information Relay Service

(FIRS) for the hearing impaired: 1-800-877-8339.

#### SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

##### Proposed Action and Background

This proceeding involves an alternate route (the Western Alignment) to the route the Board previously approved (the Four Mile Creek Alternative) for the southernmost 17.3-mile portion of the Ashland to Decker, Montana line in *Tongue River II*.

In 1983, TRRC sought approval from the Interstate Commerce Commission (ICC, the Board's predecessor agency) to construct and operate 89 miles of railroad between Miles City, Montana, and two termini located near Ashland, Montana, subsequently referred to as *Tongue River I*. In a decision served May 9, 1986, the ICC approved *Tongue River I*. TRRC then sought, in *Tongue River II*, approval to construct a contiguous 41-mile line from Ashland to Decker, Montana. The Board approved *Tongue River II*, via the Four Mile Creek Alternative, in November 1996.<sup>1</sup>

The ICC/Board's environmental staff, now the Section of Environmental Analysis (SEA), prepared Environmental Impact Statements (EISs) for both *Tongue River I* and *Tongue River II*. TRRC has reported to the Board that it has conducted various preconstruction activities on both segments, but actual construction has not yet begun.

On April 27, 1998, TRRC filed an application with the Board in Finance Docket No. 30186 (Sub-No. 3) seeking authority to construct and operate the Western Alignment subsequently referred to as *Tongue River III*. In *Tongue River I* and *Tongue River II*, the Board determined that the public convenience and necessity required or permitted TRRC's proposed rail line construction and operation, in accordance with former 49 U.S.C. 10901, and the Board does not intend to reopen the transportation merits of the authority granted in these proceedings. The action proposed to be taken in *Tongue River III* necessitates SEA's review of associated potential environmental impacts and a subsequent decision by the Board as to whether the proposed Western Alignment satisfies the criteria of 49 U.S.C. 10901, as amended in the ICC Termination Act of 1995 (ICCTA).<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Petitions for review of *Tongue River II* are pending in the Ninth Circuit. Those cases are being held in abeyance until this case is decided.

<sup>2</sup> Pub. L. 104-88 109 stat. 803 (1995). In ICCTA, Congress abolished the ICC and transferred its rail regulatory functions and proceedings to the Board. Section 10901(c), as amended by ICCTA, now