

Information for File #2014-04008-TJH

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Primary County	Pine
Section	Sections 25, 26, and 36
Township	T.41N
Range	R.21W
Information Complete On	January 22, 2015
Posting Expires On	February 17, 2015
Authorization Type	LOP-05-MN

This application is being reviewed in accordance with the practices for documenting Corps jurisdiction under Sections 9 & 10 of the Rivers and Harbor Act of 1899 and Section 404 of the Clean Water Act identified in Regulatory Guidance Letter 07-01. We have made a preliminary determination that the aquatic resources that would be impacted by the proposed project are regulated by the Corps of Engineers under Section 404 of the Clean Water Act. Our jurisdictional review and final jurisdictional determination could result in modifications to the scope of the project's regulated waterbody/wetland impacts and compensatory mitigation requirements identified above. An approved jurisdictional determination will be made prior to reaching a permit decision, and will be posted on the St. Paul District web page at <http://www.mvp.usace.army.mil/>.

PROJECT PURPOSE & NEED: Construction of the proposed wye connection and siding extension track are needed to enable smooth NB-SB interchange operation of trains between the BNSF railway and the St. Croix Valley Railroad (SCXY) railway. The existing intersection between the BNSF and SCXY track allows for direct northbound-to-northbound (NB-NB) movements from the Amber Sub to the Hinckley Sub, but NB-SB movements from one track to the other requires considerable switching and blockages of County Highway 61 and other roads in Hinckley. While this condition has been undesirable for decades, recent shipping activity on the both the SCXY and Amber Sub have increased nearly 70 percent since 2013 and it is projected to increase substantially with a sustained higher volume than the line has historically received. Many of the additional trains will require NB-SB movements, and a 25-mph design speed is desired to facilitate those movements. With the existing configuration, the additional NB-SB train movements will produce unacceptable train and motorist delays, create adverse economic impact to shippers and, most importantly, cause numerous new safety concerns.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION: The proposed BNSF Wye Connection and Siding Extension project consists of construction of a wye track between the existing BNSF and SCXY tracks and an

extension of the existing BNSF Amber Subdivision siding track. The wye track consists of connecting two existing railroads, the BNSF Hinckley Subdivision (Hinckley Sub) and the SCXY. Currently the SCXY track connects to the BNSF Hinckley Sub via a roughly one mile-long section of BNSF track called the Amber Subdivision (Amber Sub) at an approximately 50-degree angle. The proposed wye track project consists of construction of a 3,120 linear foot curved track to enable smooth northbound-to-southbound (NB-SB) interchange of trains from one track to the other. Construction of the wye track would impact 2.96 acre of wetlands.

The proposed extension of the Amber Sub siding is needed to provide train storage south of the proposed wye connection to facilitate interchange operations. The existing Amber Sub siding would be extended 1,860 feet to the south. No wetland and/or waterbody impacts would result from the proposed extension of the existing Amber Sub siding.

NAME, AREA AND TYPES OF WATERS (INCLUDING WETLANDS) SUBJECT TO LOSS:

Construction of the Hinckley wye connection will impact 2.96 acres of shrub swamp (Type 6) wetlands. Construction of the Amber Sub siding extension would not impact any wetlands and/or waterbodies.

ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED: A No-Build Alternative, an alternative alignment, and an alternative location were evaluated and eliminated from further consideration.

COMPENSATORY MITIGATION: The applicant has proposed to provide compensatory mitigation by purchasing wetland bank credits from a Corps-approved wetland bank located in Bank Service Area 6.

Drawings: 2014-04008-TJH, 1 of 6 through 6 of 6. See Attached

