

APPENDIX D Agency Scoping Comments

ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW PROCESS



Meeting Purpose: Agency Scoping Meeting
 Location: The Center for Visual and Performing Arts, 1040 Ridge Rd, Munster, IN 46321
 Date: Tuesday, October 28, 2014 Time: 2:00 PM to 4:00 PM

SIGN-IN SHEET

Name	Agency or Organization	Phone	E-mail	Address
RESSIE PARKER	FDA	172-886-7704	RESIDUAL, PARKER PARKER	200 W. ADAMS, CHICAGO, IL 60606
TONY GREEP	PTA	312-353-1646	anthony.greep@atgou	200 W ADAMS, SUITE 320, CHICAGO, 60606
Mary Tanis	River Town Council	219.308.3515	mtanis5229@aol.com	2610 Lakewood Dr. River 46311
John Yoran	Cook County	312/603-1601	john.yoran@cookcountyil.gov	62 W. Washington, Chicago, IL 60602
JOHN PARSONS	NICTD	219-926-5744 x204	john.parsons@nictd.com	33 E U.S. Highway 12, Chesterfield, IN 46305
LOBI White	DNR-IN	765-	lwhite1@dnr.in.dnr	
Peter Fahrenwald	Regional Transp. Auth.	312-913-7244	fahrenwaldp@rtachicago.com	175 W. Jackson Chgo 60604
JOSEPH M. CRIVONICH	NICTD			
Sarah Gerhos	NIAPC		sgcrinosky@niapc.org	

ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW PROCESS



MEETING PURPOSE: Agency Scoping Meeting
DATE & TIME: October 28, 2014, 2:00 to 4:00 PM
LOCATION: The Center for Visual and Performing Arts
 1040 Ridge Road, Munster, IN 46321
ATTENDEES: List of attendees is provided in the attached sign-in sheets

MEETING NOTES

Purpose:	
The purpose of the Agency Scoping meeting was to meet with federal, state, regional, and local agencies that were invited to participate in the environmental review process for the West Lake Corridor Project (Project). The attendees were provided with an overview of the Project and invited to submit comments or questions on the Project.	
Discussion Points / Comments:	Commenter
1. Northern Indiana Commuter Transportation District (NICTD) jointly owns the former Monon corridor with Hammond and Munster between the Maynard Junction with the Canadian National and Sibley Street in Hammond.	John Parsons, NICTD
2. It is anticipated that the route would be primarily single-tracked, with passing sidings north of Maynard; the extent of passing sidings would depend on the location of the maintenance facility. The CSX-owned portion of the alignment may need to be double-tracked since it would be shared with freight service.	John Parsons, NICTD
3. The river crossings were mentioned, with a concern for potential piers in the river. Rehabilitation of the existing bridges would be preferred by the resource agencies since it would generally have less impact than replacement. A mitigation strategy of the potentially impacted waterways will need to be considered and coordinated.	Elizabeth McCloskey, United States Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) Lori White, Indiana Department of Natural Resources (INDNR)
4. It was noted that the United States Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA) and INDNR are managing the Grand Calumet River Cleanup Project. The INDNR is also starting a statewide wetland and stream remediation program that will be implemented by Summer 2015.	Carl Wodrich, INDNR

NICTD Contract No. 78011 / Project No. 60321036 / Task No. 01

ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW PROCESS



Purpose:	
The purpose of the Agency Scoping meeting was to meet with federal, state, regional, and local agencies that were invited to participate in the environmental review process for the West Lake Corridor Project (Project). The attendees were provided with an overview of the Project and invited to submit comments or questions on the Project.	
Discussion Points / Comments:	Commenter
5. It is anticipated that the Monon Trail would be maintained along the corridor, but the current alignment of the trail may need to be shifted in some locations.	Lisa Ives, AECOM
6. Gary Public Transportation Corporation runs a bus route at Calumet Avenue and Ridge Road; they may want to consider rerouting this bus line to serve the Ridge Road Station.	Sarah Geinosky, Northwestern Indiana Regional Planning Commission (NIRPC)
7. The potential effects to NICTD's existing South Shore Line (SSL) were discussed. Some existing SSL riders may shift to the West Lake Corridor Project; the potential impacts to the SSL will be assessed.	Jack Eskil, NIRPC John Parsons, NICTD
8. The need for local police and fire coverage was questioned, as well as the community's ability to collect revenue for managing parking. NICTD anticipates that it would utilize local police and fire coverage similar to its current SSL service. Charging a fee for parking could be a possibility. NICTD would coordinate with the local communities on the management of police/fire coverage, stations, and parking.	Jeff Dekker, Dyer Town Council John Parsons, NICTD

c Document Control

Attachment: Meeting Sign-in Sheets

-----Original Message-----

From: Leffler, Paul M LRC [<mailto:Paul.M.Leffler@usace.army.mil>]
Sent: Wednesday, November 19, 2014 2:28 PM
To: Arkell, Reginald (FTA)
Cc: Assam, Mark (FTA)
Subject: RE: NICTD West Lake Corridor Project (UNCLASSIFIED)

Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Caveats: NONE

Reginald,

Yes our agency would like to be a cooperating agency for this project. Any impacts to wetlands and waterways will require a permit from our office under the authority of Section 404 of the Clean Water Act. Efforts to avoid and minimize these impacts must be made and my participation will likely focus on this goal.

In addition it is worth noting that our office address changed last summer to:
231 S. LaSalle Street, Suite 1500
Chicago, IL 60604

Please address all correspondence to my attention. However email is the preferred method of coordination.

Sincerely,

Paul M. Leffler
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers - Chicago District Regulatory Branch, Project Manager
231 S. LaSalle Street, Suite 1500
Chicago, Illinois 60604

Office: 312-846-5529
Website: <http://www.lrc.usace.army.mil/Missions/Regulatory.aspx>

-----Original Message-----

From: reginald.arkell@dot.gov [mailto:reginald.arkell@dot.gov]
Sent: Tuesday, November 18, 2014 3:13 PM
To: Leffler, Paul M LRC
Cc: Mark.Assam@dot.gov
Subject: [EXTERNAL] NICTD West Lake Corridor Project

Paul:

Pursuant to our conversation today, attached is an electronic copy of the letter we sent by U.S. Mail to your office regarding the NICTD West Lake Corridor Project. Based on our discussion, I understand you have not seen this letter but your agency would likely want to be a Cooperating Agency as the corridor traverses sensitive waterways/wetlands in NW Indiana. Please confirm or clarify this by email and/or U.S. Mail at your earliest convenience along with any other input you would like to provide at this time. Thank you for your interest in this project.

Reginald Arkell, AICP - Community Planner
U.S. DOT, Federal Transit Administration, Region 5
200 West Adams Street, Suite 320
Chicago, Illinois 60606
Telephone: 312-886-3704
Facsimile: 312-886-0351
Email: reginald.arkell@dot.gov <mailto:Reginald.arkell@dot.gov>
<http://www.fta.dot.gov/>
Facebook icon <<https://www.facebook.com/FTADOT>> Twitter Icon <https://twitter.com/FTA_DOT>

Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Caveats: NONE

From: Martin, Andrea (FRA)
Sent: Wednesday, November 19, 2014 9:49 AM
To: Arkell, Reginald (FTA); Assam, Mark (FTA)
Cc: Noblet, Lori (MDOT) (NOBLETL@michigan.gov)
Subject: RE: Chicago/Detroit Corridor and NICTD West Lake Corridor Projects

Hi Reggie; thank you for your voicemail. I apologize for not getting back to you until now about the NICTD project. At this time, FRA will decline cooperating agency status, and work with FTA on the West Lake Corridor Project in a participating agency capacity.

The proposed NICTD project would only affect the South-of-the-Lake alternative that using the historic Michigan Central Route, and luckily would not further complicate the Chicago to Detroit/Pontiac alternatives that would swing south from Indiana Harbor down to Tolleston.

Please forward future information about the proposed project as it relates to the Michigan Central Route (capacity numbers, modeling, routing), and we will be happy to provide input, and it is also important to our decision-making process for the Chicago to Detroit/Pontiac Passenger Rail Corridor Program.

Thank you, and please do not hesitate to contact me if you have further questions. I look forward to working with you throughout the NEPA process.

Andrea

ANDRÉA E. MARTIN
Environmental Protection Specialist

[FRA | Federal Railroad Administration](#)
1200 New Jersey Avenue SE, Mail Stop 20, W38-215
Washington, DC 20590

(d) 202.493.6201 (f) 202.493.6333

andrea.martin@dot.gov

From: Savko, Terry [<mailto:Terry.Savko@Illinois.gov>]
Sent: Wednesday, October 15, 2014 2:01 PM
To: Assam, Mark (FTA)
Cc: Chard, Steve
Subject: Decline Invitation for Participating Agency - West Lake Shore Corridor Project

October 15, 2014

Ms. Marisol R. Simón
U.S. Dept. of Transportation
Federal Transit Administration
200 W. Adams Street, Suite 3120
Chicago, IL 60606-2789

Attention: Mark Assam

Re: Invitation for Participating Agency
West Lake Shore Corridor Project
Environmental Impact Statement Review Process
Cook County, Illinois and Lake County, Indiana

Dear Ms. Simón:

Thank you for your agency's October 1, 2014 correspondence notifying the Illinois Department of Agriculture (IDOA) that the U.S. DOT Federal Transit Administration is initiating an Environmental Impact Statement for the West Lake Shore Corridor Project in Cook County, Illinois and Lake County, Indiana. Your letter invites the IDOA to be a Participating Agency in the EIS process for the project.

The project is located within a highly urbanized area that is planned and zoned for non-agricultural development. Because productive agricultural land is not involved with this project, the IDOA respectfully declines your invitation to become a participating agency in the development of the West Lake Shore Corridor Project.

Terry Savko, IL Dept of Agriculture
Bureau of Land and Water Resources
State Fairgrounds, P.O. Box 19281, Springfield, IL 62794-9281
217.785.4458 terry.savko@illinois.gov

From: Rick Eberly [<mailto:reberly@townofdye.net>]
Sent: Friday, October 10, 2014 2:07 PM
To: Assam, Mark (FTA)
Subject: Invitation to participate in EIS

Mark,

I recently received an invitation to participate in the Environmental Review Process for the West Lake Corridor Project, Lake County, Indiana and Cook County, Illinois. The letter of invitation does not indicate how one is to accept the invitation. It only indicates how to decline the invitation, but I hope that I can accept the invitation by contacting you via this email. Please let me know if there is some other way that I need to indicate my acceptance of this invitation. I would be representing the interests of the Town of Dyer as I am the Town Administrator for Dyer.

Rick Eberly
Dyer Town Administrator

From: Jeffrey J Sriver [<mailto:Jeffrey.Sriver@cityofchicago.org>]
Sent: Wednesday, October 08, 2014 3:15 PM
To: Assam, Mark (FTA)
Subject: Re: Invitation to be a Participating Agency in West Lake Corridor Environmental Review Process

Hi Mark,

I am in receipt of Regional Administrator Simón's memo on this subject dated October 1, 2014. CDOT would like to be a Participating Agency in NICTD's West Lake Corridor Environmental Review Process, and we appreciate FTA's invitation. Please direct or copy further CDOT correspondence on this subject to me, and I or another CDOT Planning Section staff will represent CDOT at project meetings as required.

Thank you and please let me know if there are any questions.

-Jeff

Jeffrey Sriver
Director of Transportation Planning and Programming
Chicago Department of Transportation
30 N. LaSalle Street, Suite 500
Chicago, Illinois 60602
Tel. 312-744-7080
Mob. 312-287-7790

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From: Hippensteel, Beth [<mailto:BHippensteel@dnr.IN.gov>]
Sent: Tuesday, October 07, 2014 7:28 AM
To: Assam, Mark (FTA)
Subject: ER-17897, Lake Co.

Dear Mr. Assam:

This is a standard informational email in response to your request for an Environmental Review, which was received on October 6, 2014 for the following project:

West Lake Corridor Project, Lake Co., IN and Cook Co., IL EIS: new track improvements, four (4) new stations, and a maintenance facility along a 9 mile southern extension along the Northern Indiana Commuter Transportation District (NICTD) existing South Shore Line (SSL) between Dyer and Hammond, IN

We would like you to know that the review is in process and a formal response will be forthcoming. Please refer to the ER number in the subject line on all future correspondence regarding this project.

Please note that you can submit future requests electronically to the following email address:
environmentalreview@dnr.in.gov.

If you have any questions or comments, please contact Christie Stanifer, Environmental Coordinator, at 317-232-8163 or cstanifer@dnr.in.gov, or to check on the status of a review, please contact Beth Hippensteel at: bhippensteel@dnr.in.gov, or at 317-234-1092.

Christie Stanifer
Environmental Coordinator
Indiana Department of Natural Resources
Division of Fish and Wildlife
402 West Washington St, Room W273
Indianapolis, IN 46204-2781
(317) 232-8163
Fax: (317) 232-8150

From: Fahrenwald, Peter [<mailto:FahrenwaldP@RTACHICAGO.ORG>]
Sent: Thursday, October 30, 2014 3:58 PM
To: Assam, Mark (FTA)
Subject: West Lake Corridor Project

Mark – thanks for the opportunity to attend the agency scoping meeting for the FTA/NICTD EIS, and the invitation for the RTA to be a Participating Agency.

This is to affirm that the RTA does want to be included as a Participating Agency, and I will serve as the primary point of contact. My contact information is listed below.

Regards,
Peter Fahrenwald

Peter Fahrenwald
Manager, Regional and Corridor Planning
Regional Transportation Authority • 175 W. Jackson Blvd • Suite 1650 • Chicago, IL 60604-2705
312-913-3247 • fahrenwaldp@rtachicago.org
[Securely send me files](#)

From: Laszewski, Virginia [<mailto:Laszewski.Virginia@epa.gov>]
Sent: Monday, October 27, 2014 5:09 PM
To: Assam, Mark (FTA)
Cc: Westlake, Kenneth
Subject: FTA's letter to EPA re: West Lake Corridor Project

Good Afternoon Mr. Assam,

As we just discussed over the phone regarding EPA's receipt of FTA's 10/01/2014, letter concerning the proposed West Lake Corridor project EIS:

- EPA's NEPA Implementation Section just received FTA's letter this afternoon.
- Yes, EPA agrees to be a participating agency in FTA's EIS process for the West Lake Corridor project.
- I will not be able to attend tomorrow's Agency Scoping meeting due to the short notice.
- EPA requests copies of the meeting handouts and any other project information.
- Please also send me a copy of the meeting minutes w/list of attendees and their contact information, when available.
- Please send all West Lake Corridor project information to my attention at the address below (make sure to include the mail code).
- For other future FTA projects, please send notices directly to Kenneth Westlake, Chief, NEPA Implementation Section at the same below address.

Thank you,

Virginia Laszewski
Environmental Scientist
US EPA, Region 5
Office of Enforcement and Compliance Assurance (OECA)
NEPA Implementation Section
77 West Jackson, Mail Code E-19J
Chicago, IL 60604
312/886-7501 (voice)
312/679-2097 (fax)
Laszewski.virginia@epa.gov



Chicago Metropolitan
Agency for Planning

233 South Wacker Drive
Suite 800
Chicago, IL 60606
312-454-0400
www.cmap.illinois.gov

November 5, 2014

Ms. Marisol R. Simon
Regional Administrator
U.S. Department of Transportation
Federal Transit Administration
Region V
200 West Adams Street, Suite 320
Chicago, Illinois 60606

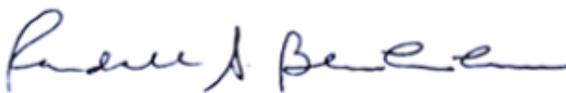
Dear Ms. Simon:

Thank you for your letter of October 1, 2014. In accordance with Title 40 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) 1501.6 and 23 CFR 771.111(d), the FTA has invited CMAP to be a Participating Agency in the Environment Review Process for the West Lake Corridor Project, Lake County Indiana and Cook County, Illinois.

CMAP is pleased to accept this invitation and as such agrees to provide the following regarding development of the Project EIS:

- Participation in coordination meetings, and/or field visits, as appropriate; and
- Identification of the impacts and important issues to be addressed in the EIS pertaining to the intersection of the Project alternatives with the resource(s) in our jurisdiction.

Sincerely,



Randall S. Blankenhorn
Executive Director

TG:RSB/stk

Via e-mail:
mark.assam@dot.gov

Board Members

Gerald Bennett, Chair
Rita Athas
Frank Beal
Roger Claar
Elliott Hartstein
Al Larson
Lisa Laws
Andrew Madigan
Raul Raymundo
Rick Reinbold
William Rodeghier
Carolyn Schofield
Peter Silvestri
Rae Rupp Srch
Thomas Weisner

Non-voting Members

Bola Delano
Juan Morado, Jr.
Leanne Redden

Executive Director
Randy Blankenhorn



Michael R. Pence, Governor
Cameron F. Clark, Director

November 10, 2014

Marisol Simón
Regional Administrator
U.S. Department of Transportation
Federal Transportation Administration – Region 5
200 West Adams Street, Suite 320
Chicago, IL 60606-5253

RE: West Lake Corridor Project
Lake County, IN and Cook County, IL

Dear Ms. Simón,

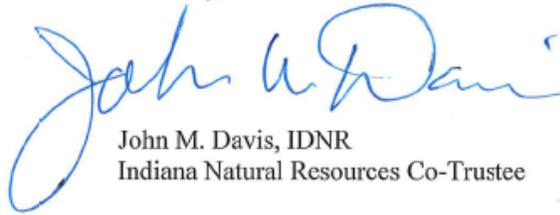
The Indiana state natural resources co-trustees would like to be considered a “Participating Agency” in the environmental review process for the West Lake Corridor Project, Lake County, Indiana and Cook County, Illinois. Correspondence can be coordinated through Carl Wodrich, IDNR Director of Ecological Services on behalf of the Indiana natural resources trustees.

Mr. Wodrich attended the Agency Scoping Meeting on October 28, 2014 in Munster, IN and provided the following comments at that meeting to the project team;

- the Grand Calumet River (GCR), which flows through the northern Lake County cities of Gary, East Chicago and Hammond, is one of the most contaminated rivers in the country due to a long history of chemical dumping and discharges prior to environmental regulations in the 1970s, 80s and 90s; and,
- contaminated sediments in the GCR average 8-10 feet in depth; and,
- the natural resource trustees have settled claims for injury to natural resources in and adjacent to the Grand Calumet River and have used these settlement funds to leverage funding from the U. S. Environmental Protection Agency’s (USEPA) Great Lakes National Program Office under the Great Lakes Legacy Act to remediate and restore the West Branch of the GCR and portions of the East Branch of the GCR; and,
- the USEPA, IDEM, IDNR and the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service (USFWS) have partnered together on these projects and by mid-2015, the West Branch of the GCR from Indianapolis Boulevard to the IL/IN state line will have been remediated through a combination of dredging and disposal of approximately two (2) feet of contaminated sediments with the remaining contaminated sediments being isolated by an approximately two (2) foot thick reactive cap material that varies a bit in its design between the different reaches of the river; and,
- the Indiana natural resources trustees do not want to see the nearly \$150 million in remediation and restoration efforts in the GCR damaged by new bridge piers in the river channel through this reactive cap.

Any and all correspondence regarding the West Lake Corridor Project can be sent to Mr. Wodrich at cwodrich@dnr.in.gov, or mailed to 402 W. Washington Street, W261, Indianapolis, IN 46204. If you would like to speak to Mr. Wodrich, he can be reached at 317-232-1291. Thank you very much for your consideration of our concerns with respect to our remediation and restoration efforts of the Grand Calumet River in northern Lake County, Indiana.

Sincerely,



John M. Davis, IDNR
Indiana Natural Resources Co-Trustee

Cc: Mark Assam, USDOT FTA (via email)
Elizabeth Admire, IDEM/Indiana Natural Resource Co-Trustee (via email)
Scott Pruitt, USFWS/Indiana Natural Resource Co-Trustee (via email)
Carl Wodrich, IDNR (via email)
Anne Remek-Kominowski, IDEM (via email)
Daniel Sparks, USFWS Bloomington Field Office (via email)
Marc Tuchman, USEPA GLNPO (via email)
Diana Mally, USEPA GLNPO (via email)
NICTD (via email to project.email@nictdwestlake.com)

**CHICAGO TRANSIT AUTHORITY**

567 West Lake Street
Chicago, Illinois 60661-1498
TEL 312 664-7200
www.transitchicago.com

November 11, 2014

Marisol Simon, Regional Administrator
Federal Transit Administration Region 5
200 West Adams Street, Suite 320
Chicago, Illinois 60606-5252

RE: Invitation to be a Participating Agency in the Environmental Review Process for the West Lake Corridor Project, Lake County, Indiana and Cook County, Illinois (the "West Lake Corridor Project")

Dear Marisol:

The Chicago Transit Authority accepts the FTA's invitation to be a Participating Agency in the EIS process for the West Lake Corridor Project. As you know, the CTA is currently preparing an EIS for the Red Line Extension Project (RLE). The preferred alternative for the RLE project is a 5.3 mile extension at the southern end of CTA's Red Line, utilizing right of way to be acquired along the east or west sides of the Union Pacific Railroad right of way. The proposed alignment for NICTD's West Corridor Project, utilizing the Metra Electric District's line, runs through the proposed RLE transit shed. Accordingly, the CTA has both expertise and information relevant to, and intend to submit comments on, the West Corridor Lake Project.

The CTA appreciate the opportunity to participate in this process. If you have any further questions or concerns, please don't hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Carole Morey".

Carole Morey
Chief Planning Officer



Thomas M. McDermott, Jr.
Mayor

DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT

CITY OF HAMMOND

DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING

BRIAN L. POLAND, AICP
Director of City Planning

TO: Lisa Ives, AECOM

FROM: Brian L. Poland, AICP, Director of City Planning 

RE: NICTD South Shore Westlake Corridor

DATE: November 7, 2014

CC: Thomas M. McDermott, Jr., Mayor
Mark McLaughlin, Chief of Staff

On behalf of the City of Hammond, we appreciate meeting with you and your team as well as John Parsons and NICTD's team on October 7, 2014. It was a great opportunity for various City representatives to hear about the West Lake Corridor project and the Environmental Impact Statement process and provide you with our initial feedback.

I personally attended the scoping session at the Munster Center for Performing Arts on October 28. It was a great opportunity to seek as much public comment as possible at the beginning of the project.

As you explained on October 7, the Environmental Impact Statement process is directed by Federal regulations in which you must address a full gamut of areas of interest. My intention herein is to reiterate the City's comments and input from the October 7th meeting and supplemented by additional feedback subsequent to that meeting.

- 1) Ownership of the Railroad property.
As was discussed, the West Lake Corridor is intended for the Monon RR corridor. The Erie Lackawanna runs NW to SE through Hammond from the Little Calumet River at Indianapolis Blvd. through the downtown to where it the RR crosses the State Line near Gostlin Street. In downtown Hammond, the Monon RR corridor merges with the former Erie Lackawanna RR corridor at Douglas Street. The City of Hammond acquired the Erie Lackawanna RR corridor in a quit claim deed recorded as document number 647657 in October of 1981.

649 Conkey Street
Hammond, Indiana 46324

219.853.6397

fax: 219.853.6334

www.gohammond.com

e-mail: planner@gohammond.com

Around 1983, the City of Hammond applied for funding to construct a linear trail on the Erie Lackawanna line as well as construct the Dan Rabin Transit Plaza. The City of Hammond obtained Land and Water Conservation Fund grant and an Urban Mass Transit Association grant. The land value of a minimum of 20' width of the 100' right-of-way of the Erie Lackawanna was used as local match. The Erie Trail land was restricted to be used for open space in perpetuity and I believe the UMTA grant restricted the Dan Rabin Plaza for Transit use for 40 years.

In reviewing Lake County's GIS system, it appears that it does not accurately show the City's ownership of the Erie ROW between Douglas and the Dan Rabin plaza.

- 2) **Maintaining the Monon Trail with the Rail use.**
The City wishes to retain the Monon Trail and is concerned on how the railroad use can function. Are there appropriate fencing or other separations between the trains and trail users? Where would be the crossing points? Would any fencing become barriers between the neighborhoods and downtown areas on either side of the railroad corridor? What would any fencing look like? Is there appropriate fencing for security but provide an inviting architecturally sensitive design to the residential areas and the downtown?
- 3) **Dan Rabin Plaza**
It was stated at the October 7th meeting, you were looking into removing/relocating the Dan Rabin Plaza. The structure was built about 1984 for the local bus service. With its regional services, GPTC has looked into reopening the Plaza after it was shuttered after the RBA shutdown. The City would be concerned that its responsibilities under the grant obligations are addressed.
- 4) **Maintenance Facility south of 173rd Street**
It was indicated at the October 7th and the October 28th meeting that one of the locations NICTD is considering for the maintenance facility is the property south of 173rd. This area of Hammond is residential and one of the more stable neighborhoods of Hammond. Locating a maintenance facility which is more of an industrial use would not be appropriate for this area of Hammond. It is my understanding from the October 28th meeting that the facility would potentially have a fueling station for diesel engines, the trains would have to run overnight to keep the engine warm, the engine could be kept warm by electricity but would result in a diesel engine being restarted in the early morning hours. This would be an adverse effect on the residential neighborhood from the noise, fumes, and fuel delivery vehicles.

- 5) Diesel versus electric trains
It is our understanding that both diesel and electric trains are being considered. Electric trains bring up the concern of how the electric lines are constructed. Diesel trains bring up the concerns of noise and fumes.
- 6) Freight Traffic
The City has well expressed its opposition to the line being used for freight purposes.
- 7) Route through Downtown Hammond
On October 7th it was discussed how the route would run north of the Dan Rabin Plaza to go under the Hohman overpass, then start to elevate to go over the E-W railroad tracks before returning to grade near Gostlin Street. We discussed the engineering of the route of making the "left" and "right" turns. The City is concerned about how street crossings will be affected at State Street and Willow Court. The City is also concerned about how the route may affect the Chicago Street/Gostlin Street reconstruction project.
- 8) Station locations
Three potential locations were being investigated for Hammond: 173rd Street, downtown Hammond, and the Gateway Station. Some of the concerns common to all of these potential locations would be the size and location of parking facilities, impacts from lighting from the parking area, buffering from adjacent uses, etc. as well as an Individual concern about the potential of using the existing parking structure in Downtown Hammond.
- 9) TOD (Transit oriented development)
The opportunity for sensitive and appropriate transit oriented development is tremendous for the station locations, which has the potential of providing new housing and economic development opportunities. Subsequent to the meetings, the City has provided the requested information for the grant application that was discussed at the October 7th meeting. We look forward to pursuing this with NICTD.
- 10) Environmental Concerns
Concerns about noise and fumes have been referenced above. Also, there are concerns about any ground contamination that may exist in the former Monon yards or along the railroad corridor. Hammond's Department of Environmental Management can provide you any assistance that is requested.
- 11) Impacts on Historic Areas
At the October 7th meeting, the National Register Historic Districts in the Forest Avenue area and Downtown Hammond were discussed. The City Planning Department is available to assist in the Section 106/ 4f process.



United States Department of the Interior
Fish and Wildlife Service



Bloomington Field Office (ES)
620 South Walker Street
Bloomington, IN 47403-2121
Phone: (812) 334-4261 Fax: (812) 334-4273

November 4, 2014

NICTD
West Lake Corridor Project
33 East U.S. Highway 12
Chesterton, Indiana 46304

Dear Sir:

This is in reference to the September 30, 2014 Federal Register Notice of Intent to Prepare an Environmental Impact Statement for development of a commuter rail line within an approximate 9-mile corridor between Dyer and Hammond, with a possible extension southeast to St. John, all in Lake County, Indiana. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) offers the following comments.

A coalition of the Northern Indiana Commuter Transportation District (NICTD), Town of Munster, and City of Hammond owns the abandoned right-of-way of the Monon Railroad between the 45th/Fisher Streets area in Munster and Sibley Street in Hammond and proposes using this corridor, in conjunction with the active CSX track, currently utilized by Amtrak and freight trains, south of 45th Street, as the primary route of the proposed commuter rail line. New tracks will be required beyond Sibley Street. Use of a portion of the existing South Shore Line (SSL) and Metra Electric District (MED) facilities or alternative existing rail lines between Hammond and Chicago will also be addressed. Several alternatives for a rail yard/maintenance facility will be considered, including near US 41 at St. John, near Main Street in Dyer, and at the site of the former Monon rail yard in southern Hammond.

There may be wetlands in the Fisher/45th Streets area in southern Munster because numerous other proposed developments in that area have encountered wetlands. However, we do not know what specific parcel has already been purchased by the NICTD/Munster/Hammond coalition in anticipation of a passenger station in that area, so we do not know if wetlands are involved or not. Wetland delineations will therefore be necessary in this area.

There may also be wetlands associated with the proposed crossings of the West Branch Little Calumet River, West Branch Grand Calumet River, and/or Calumet River/Calumet Sag Channel, depending upon the route chosen. The crossing of the West Branch Little Calumet will likely be at the site of the existing abandoned bridge, and a crossing of the Calumet River/Cal Sag Channel would be in the vicinity of the existing Indiana Harbor Belt (IHB) Railroad bridge in Burnham. The IHB route bisects Beaubien Woods Forest Preserve in Illinois, which contains numerous wetlands, including adjacent to the existing single railroad track; in Burnham, the IHB is also adjacent to wetlands, plus the Burnham Prairie Nature Preserve. Since entirely new tracks will be required in the downtown Hammond area to connect the old Monon right-of-way with the existing SSL tracks north of the West Branch Grand Calumet River, it is currently unknown where there may be a new crossing of the West Branch Grand Calumet.

The existing bridge over the West Branch Little Calumet River includes several piers within the river channel which are known to collect debris and contribute to flooding problems during high water events. Therefore, the DEIS needs to evaluate the impacts of leaving this bridge in place to serve the commuter line versus removing it and replacing it at the same site with a clear span bridge with no in-channel piers.

The FWS will request mitigation for wetland losses; the mitigation ratio for the loss of forested wetland is 4:1, with 2: or 3:1 for emergent and scrub-shrub wetlands. The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Chicago District, will have to determine whether or not a Section 404 permit would be required for the filling of wetlands due to the rail project. However, the Federal Transit Administration has an obligation to minimize the destruction, loss, or degradation of wetlands pursuant to Executive Order 11990, as amended by Executive Order 12608, concerning protection of wetlands, regardless of the need for a wetland fill permit.

Of particular concern to the FWS is the possibility of a new crossing of the West Branch Grand Calumet River in Hammond. The FWS, in conjunction with the other Natural Resources Trustees (Indiana Departments of Natural Resources and Environmental Management) has been working with the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to remediate the severely polluted sediments within both the West and East Branches of the Grand Calumet River in Indiana utilizing Great Lakes Legacy Act and the Great Lakes Restoration Initiative funding. This multi-year project has been proceeding along various distinct segments of the river, with the westernmost portion, Reaches 6 and 7 between Hohman Avenue and the State Line, being the last segment to be remediated within the West Branch Grand Calumet; permits have been received and work will begin shortly. The work involves dredging of some of the contaminated sediments and capping of the remaining sediments with a geosynthetic grid, organoclay, and/or granulated activated carbon a minimum of 2 feet deep, topped with several feet of clean sand. Because of the dredging and capping, the Trustees are opposed to any construction activities that could compromise the integrity of the cap, including the placement of piers and abutments for a new railroad bridge. If it is determined by the FTA that a new bridge will be necessary to cross the West Branch Grand Calumet within Hammond, this bridge must be a clear span, with no

piers or abutments within the river channel. We are not aware of similar constraints to the construction of a new bridge over the river in Illinois, because to our knowledge the State of Illinois has not proposed to dredge and cap the river in that state.

Executive Order 13186, issued on January 10, 2001, directs each Federal agency taking actions having or likely to have a negative impact on migratory bird populations to work with the FWS to develop an agreement to conserve those birds under the Migratory Bird Treaty Act (MBTA). In addition to avoiding or minimizing impacts to migratory bird populations, agencies will be expected to take reasonable steps that include restoring and enhancing habitat and incorporating migratory bird conservation into agency planning processes whenever possible. Therefore, the DEIS you are preparing will need to address this issue. Included in the migratory bird issue is the presence of bald eagles nesting/attempting to nest within wetland and woodland habitats in the Grand Calumet/Cal-Sag Channel/Lake Calumet area in Illinois during the past 4-5 years. An adult eagle pair has attempted to nest at several locations in this area, but we do not have information about the success of the most recent nesting attempt, although the first several attempts were not successful. Bald eagles are protected by the MBTA and also by the Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act; please refer to the National Bald Eagle Management Guidelines available on the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's Website.

As discussed in the Federal Transit Administration's October 1, 2014 letter to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, our agency agrees to be a Participating Agency during the EIS process. Staff at our Northern Indiana Suboffice is available to attend the interagency meetings and/or field reviews and to provide early coordination comments on the proposal. Please address correspondence to Mrs. Elizabeth McCloskey, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Northern Indiana Suboffice, P.O. Box 2616, Chesterton, Indiana 46304, phone (219) 983-9753, elizabeth_mccloskey@fws.gov.

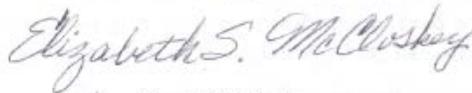
ENDANGERED SPECIES

Lake County, Indiana is within the range of the Federally endangered Indiana bat (*Myotis sodalis*) and Karner blue butterfly (*Lycaeides melissa samuelis*), the proposed endangered northern long-eared bat (*Myotis septentrionalis*), and the threatened Pitcher's thistle (*Cirsium pitcheri*) and Mead's milkweed (*Asclepias meadii*). Cook County, Illinois is within the range of the Federally endangered piping plover (*Charadrius melodus*), Hine's emerald dragonfly (*Somatochlora hineana*), and leafy-prairie clover (*Dalea foliosa*), the proposed endangered northern long-eared bat, the threatened prairie bush clover (*Lespedeza leptostachya*), eastern prairie fringed orchid (*Platanthera leucophaea*), and Mead's milkweed, and the candidate eastern massasauga rattlesnake (*Sistrurus catenatus*) and rattlesnake-master borer moth (*Papaipema eryngii*). Also in Cook County there is designated Critical Habitat for the Hine's emerald dragonfly.

None of the Lake County listed species are known within the West Lake Corridor Project Study Area. Most of the Cook County listed species are also not known within the Corridor, including the Hine's emerald dragonfly and its Critical Habitat. However, we do not know the status of some of the species within the Forest Preserves, Nature Preserves, and other protected habitats within the Corridor.

We appreciate the opportunity to provide input during this environmental scoping process. If you have any questions about our comments, please contact Elizabeth McCloskey at (219) 983-9753 or elizabeth_mccloskey@fws.gov.

Sincerely yours,



Acting for Scott E. Pruitt
Supervisor

cc: Regional Director, FWS, Ft. Snelling, MN (HC/EC/NWI) (ER 14/0622)
USDI, Office of Environmental Policy and Compliance, Washington, DC. (PEP/NRM)
Shawn Cirton, USFWS, Chicago Field Office, Barrington, IL
Carl Wodrich, IDNR, Land Acquisition, Indianapolis, IN
Lori White, IDNR, Regional Environmental Biologist, West Lafayette, IN
Christie Stanifer, IDNR, Environmental Coordinator, Indianapolis, IN
Marty Maupin, IDEM, Office of Water Quality, Indianapolis, IN
Paul Leffler, USACE, Regulatory Branch, Chicago, IL
Kenneth Westlake, USEPA, NEPA Implementation Section, Chicago, IL

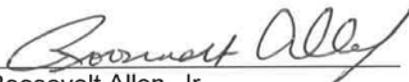
NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Commission hereby endorses increased investment in commuter rail connecting the Chicago market to northwest Indiana in general. The Commission also specifically endorses any opportunity for the development of the West Lake Corridor expansion.

Duly adopted by the Northwestern Indiana Regional Planning Commission on this 16th day of October, 2014.



Brian Snedecor
Chairperson

ATTEST:



Roosevelt Allen, Jr.
Secretary

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State of Indiana
DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES
Division of Fish and Wildlife
Early Coordination/Environmental Assessment

DNR #: ER-17897

Request Received: October 6, 2014

Requestor: US Department of Transportation
 Mark Assam
 Federal Transit Administration
 200 West Adams Street, Suite 320
 Chicago, IL 60606-5253

Project: West Lake Corridor Project, Lake Co., IN and Cook Co., IL EIS: new track improvements, four (4) new stations, and a maintenance facility along a 9 mile southern extension along the Northern Indiana Commuter Transportation District (NICTD) existing South Shore Line (SSL) between Dyer and Hammond, IN

County/Site info: Lake

The Indiana Department of Natural Resources has reviewed the above referenced project per your request. Our agency offers the following comments for your information and in accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969.

If our agency has regulatory jurisdiction over the project, the recommendations contained in this letter may become requirements of any permit issued. If we do not have permitting authority, all recommendations are voluntary.

Regulatory Assessment: This proposal may require the formal approval of our agency pursuant to the Flood Control Act (IC 14-28-1) for any proposal to construct, excavate, or fill in or on the floodway of a stream or other flowing waterbody which has a drainage area greater than one square mile, or the Lake Preservation Act (IC 14-26-2) for any construction that will take place at or lakeward of the legal shoreline of a public freshwater lake. Please submit more detailed plans to the Division of Water's Technical Services Section if you are unsure whether or not a permit will be required.

Natural Heritage Database: The Natural Heritage Program's data have been checked. This project does not impact any DNR owned nature preserves. Also, no plant or animal species listed as state or federally threatened, endangered, or rare have been reported to occur within the proposed corridor. However, a historical record of the northern leopard frog (*Lithobates pipiens*), a state species of special concern, and a wet-mesic sand prairie "between EJE Railroad and Conrail Railroad tracks" near Dyer about 0.4 mile east of project, have been documented with 1/2 mile of the proposed corridor.

This review is based on the current proposed alignment. Once stations and maintenance sites are determined, or if the proposed alignment is changed, further review and comments may be needed.

Fish & Wildlife Comments: We do not foresee any impacts to the Northern leopard frog as a result of this project.

Avoid and minimize impacts to fish, wildlife, and botanical resources to the greatest extent possible, and compensate for impacts. The following are recommendations that address potential impacts identified in the proposed project area:

- 1) Stream Crossings:
 Utilizing existing structures will produce fewer impacts to streams, wetlands, and surrounding habitats. If the rehabilitation of an existing structure is not feasible, consider the following:

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DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES
Division of Fish and Wildlife
Early Coordination/Environmental Assessment

Using a three span structure without piers within the Little Calumet River could provide benefits to the river by removing the existing structure and piers and allowing the river to flow unobstructed. Locating a new structure within the footprint of the existing structure and minimizing impacts to surrounding habitat will aid to further minimize impacts to the river, wetlands, and surrounding habitat.

For purposes of maintaining fish passage through a crossing structure, the Environmental Unit recommends bridges rather than culverts and bottomless culverts rather than box or pipe culverts. Wide culverts are better than narrow culverts, and culverts with shorter through lengths are better than culverts with longer through lengths. If box or pipe culverts are used, the bottoms should be buried a minimum of 6" (or 20% of the culvert height/pipe diameter, whichever is greater up to a maximum of 2') below the stream bed elevation to allow a natural streambed to form within or under the crossing structure. Crossings should: span the entire channel width (a minimum of 1.2 times the bankfull width); maintain the natural stream substrate within the structure; have a minimum openness ratio (height x width / length) of 0.25; and have stream depth and water velocities during low-flow conditions that are approximate to those in the natural stream channel.

2) Bank Stabilization:

Establishing vegetation along the banks is critical for stabilization and erosion control. In addition to vegetation, some other form of bank stabilization may be needed. While hard armoring alone (e.g. riprap or glacial stone) may be needed in certain instances, soft armoring and bioengineering techniques should be considered first. In many instances, one or more methods are necessary to increase the likelihood of vegetation establishment. Combining vegetation with most bank stabilization methods can provide additional bank protection while not compromising the benefits to fish and wildlife. Information about bioengineering techniques can be found at <http://www.in.gov/legislative/lac/20120404-IR-312120154NRA.xml.pdf>. Also, the following is a USDA/NRCS document that outlines many different bioengineering techniques for streambank stabilization: <http://directives.sc.egov.usda.gov/17553.wba>.

The new, replacement, or rehabbed structure, and any bank stabilization under or around the structure, should not create conditions that are less favorable for wildlife passage under the structure compared to the current conditions. A level area of natural ground under the structure is ideal for wildlife passage. If hard armoring is needed, we recommend a smooth-surfaced material such as articulated concrete mats (or riprap at the toe and turf reinforcement mats above the riprap toe protection) be placed on the side-slopes instead of riprap. Such materials will not impair wildlife movement along the banks under the bridge.

Riprap must not be placed in the active thalweg channel or placed in the streambed in a manner that precludes fish or aquatic organism passage (riprap must not be placed above the existing streambed elevation). Riprap may be used only at the toe of the sideslopes up to the ordinary high water mark (OHWM). The banks above the OHWM must be restored, stabilized, and revegetated using geotextiles and a mixture of grasses, sedges, wildflowers, shrubs, and trees native to Northern Indiana and specifically for stream bank/floodway stabilization purposes as soon as possible upon completion.

3) Riparian Habitat:

We recommend a mitigation plan be developed (and submitted with the permit application, if required) if habitat impacts will occur. The DNR's Floodway Habitat Mitigation guidelines (and plant lists) can be found online at: <http://www.in.gov/legislative/lac/20140806-IR-312140295NRA.xml.pdf>.

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DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES
Division of Fish and Wildlife
Early Coordination/Environmental Assessment**

Impacts to non-wetland forest over one (1) acre should be mitigated at a minimum 2:1 ratio. If less than one acre of non-wetland forest is removed in a rural setting, replacement should be at a 1:1 ratio based on area. Impacts to non-wetland forest under one (1) acre in an urban setting should be mitigated by planting five trees, at least 2 inches in diameter-at-breast height (dbh), for each tree which is removed that is 10" dbh or greater (5:1 mitigation based on the number of large trees).

Remediation efforts along the west and east branches of the Grand Calumet River under the Great Lakes Legacy Act and Great Lakes Restoration Initiative have been on-going, and the last segment of remediation work along the Grand Calumet River from Hohman Avenue to the state line will begin soon. Any work proposed within the Grand Calumet River floodway for this project should avoid impacts to any mitigation planting areas from the remediation project.

4) Wetlands:

A formal wetland delineation should be conducted in order to determine the presence of and extent of any wetland habitat within the project corridor. Impacts should be avoided and minimized to the greatest extent possible.

Due to the presence or potential presence of wetlands on site, we recommend contacting and coordinating with the Indiana Department of Environmental Management (IDEM) 401 program and also the US Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) 404 program. Impacts to wetlands should be mitigated at the appropriate ratio (see guidelines above).

5) Exposed Soils:

All exposed soil areas must be stabilized with temporary or permanent vegetation by November 1. Between November 1 and April 1, all exposed soils idle for longer than 7 days must be stabilized with erosion control blankets or with a bonded fiber matrix hydro-mulch. Sites must be protected from seasonal flooding by keeping traffic areas covered with stone and soil stockpiles seeded, stable and contained with silt fencing.

The additional measures listed below should be implemented to avoid, minimize, or compensate for impacts to fish, wildlife, and botanical resources:

1. Revegetate all bare and disturbed areas with a mixture of grasses (excluding all varieties of tall fescue), legumes, and native shrub and hardwood tree species as soon as possible upon completion.
2. Minimize and contain within the project limits inchannel disturbance and the clearing of trees and brush.
3. Do not work in the waterway from April 1 through June 30 without the prior written approval of the Division of Fish and Wildlife.
4. Do not cut any trees suitable for Indiana bat roosting (greater than 3 inches dbh, living or dead, with loose hanging bark) from April 1 through September 30.
5. Do not excavate in the low flow area except for the placement of piers, foundations, and riprap, or removal of the old structure.
6. Do not construct any temporary runarounds, causeways, or cofferdams.
7. Use minimum average 6 inch graded riprap stone extended below the normal water level to provide habitat for aquatic organisms in the voids.
8. Do not use broken concrete as riprap.
9. Minimize the movement of resuspended bottom sediment from the immediate project area.
10. Do not deposit or allow demolition materials or debris to fall or otherwise enter the waterway.
11. Appropriately designed measures for controlling erosion and sediment must be implemented to prevent sediment from entering the stream or leaving the construction site; maintain these measures until construction is complete and all disturbed areas are stabilized.
12. Seed and protect all disturbed streambanks and slopes that are 3:1 or steeper with

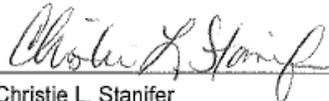
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DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES
Division of Fish and Wildlife
Early Coordination/Environmental Assessment

erosion control blankets (follow manufacturer's recommendations for selection and installation); seed and apply mulch on all other disturbed areas.

Contact Staff:

Christie L. Stanifer, Environ. Coordinator, Fish & Wildlife
Our agency appreciates this opportunity to be of service. Please contact the above staff member at (317) 232-4080 if we can be of further assistance.



Date: November 7, 2014

Christie L. Stanifer
Environ. Coordinator
Division of Fish and Wildlife



United States Department of the Interior

National Park Service

Midwest Region
601 Riverfront Drive
Omaha, Nebraska 68102-4226



NOV 12 2014

1.D(MWR-PCL/PC)

Mr. Mark Assam
Environmental Protection Specialist
Federal Transit Administration, Region 5
200 W. Adams Street, Suite 320
Chicago, Illinois 60606

Dear Mr. Assam:

As requested by the Department of the Interior (Department), the Midwest Regional Office of the National Park Service (NPS) has reviewed Notice of Intent (NOI) to prepare an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS), by the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA), for the West Lake Corridor Project in Lake County, Indiana and Cook County, Illinois. The NPS offers the following comments and recommendations for your consideration:

There are 21 Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) projects sponsored by various entities within Lake County, Indiana, that may be within or close to the proposed West Lake study area. Each of these sites is encumbered by the LWCF Act (Public Law 88-578, as amended) and specifically Section 6(f)(3) of the Act which states: "No property acquired or developed with assistance under this section shall without the approval of the Secretary (of the Interior), be converted to other than public outdoor recreation uses. The Secretary shall approve such conversion only if he finds it to be in accord with the then existing comprehensive statewide outdoor recreation plan and only upon such conditions as he deems necessary to assure the substitution of other recreation properties of at least equal fair market value and of reasonably equivalent usefulness and location."

We therefore recommend officials preparing the West Lake document contact Robert Bronson with the Indiana Department of Natural Resources for additional consultation in determining the exact location for each of these assisted sites. Mr. Bronson is the administrator for the LWCF program in Indiana and can be contacted at the locations below:

Mr. Robert Bronson
Division of Outdoor Recreation
Indiana Department of Natural Resources
402 West Washington Street, W271
Indianapolis, Indiana 46204
317-232-4075
bbronson@dnr.in.gov



The LWCF projects are:

18-00005, Edward C. Dowling Park	18-00059, Wadsworth Park
18-00063, Ellendale Park	18-00071, Wadsworth Park
18-00087, Sheppard Park	18-00137, Northgate Park
18-00150, Meadows Park Acquisition	18-00189, Dowling Park Tennis Court Lighting
18-00194, Maywood Park Annex	18-00193, Harrison Park Tennis Court Lighting
18-00199, Ridgeway Park	18-00206, Meadows Park Development
18-00226, Hoosier Prairie Acquisition	18-00231, Pheasant Hills Park
18-00239, Bluebird Park	18-00302, Munster Community Park
18-00369H, Harrison Park Renovation	18-00413, State Park & Preserve Improvements
18-00417, Centennial Plaza and Trail	18-00523, Centennial Park Phase II
18-00586, Teibel Nature Park	

The Department has a continuing interest in working with the Federal Railroad Administration to ensure impacts to resources of concern to the Department and the NPS are adequately addressed. For questions or additional information regarding these sites, please contact Bob Anderson, Chief, Recreation Grants Division, Midwest Region, National Park Service, 601 Riverfront Drive, Omaha, Nebraska, telephone 402-661-1540, email Bob_L_Anderson@nps.gov.

We appreciate the opportunity to provide these comments.

Sincerely,



Patricia S. Trap
Acting Regional Director, Midwest Region

bcc:
NPS-EQD-Denver
NPS-MWR-PC (Chevance)
NPS-MWR-Grants (Anderson)

From: Dustin Anderson [<mailto:danderson@munster.org>]
Sent: Monday, November 17, 2014 4:33 PM
To: Assam, Mark (FTA)
Subject: West Lake Corridor Project - Environmental Review Process

Mark,

It was a pleasure speaking to you this afternoon.

As I mentioned, the invitation letter came to me later than intended.

While I did miss the initial project scoping conversation, I would very much like Munster to be included as a Participating Agency in the EIS Project.

Thank you very much,

Dustin Anderson
Town of Munster Indiana
O: 219 836 6905
C: 219 712 8752
www.munster.org



OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS OF COOK COUNTY
 118 NORTH CLARK STREET
 CHICAGO, ILLINOIS 60602
 (312) 603-6400
 TDD (312) 603-5255

TONI PRECKWINKLE
 PRESIDENT

October 24, 2014

Marisol R. Simón
 Regional Administrator
 U.S. Department of Transportation
 Federal Transit Administration
 200 West Adams Street, Suite 320
 Chicago, IL 60605-5253

Dear Ms. Simón:

I am in receipt of your letter dated October 1, 2014 inviting Cook County to participate in the Environmental Review Process for the West Lake Corridor Project, Lake County, Indiana. Cook County appreciates being asked to serve as a participating agency in the EIS process for this project and accepts your invitation. The County will be represented by John Yonan, Superintendent, Department of Transportation and Highways, and by María Choca Urban, Deputy Chief Administrative Officer, Bureau of Administration. Contact information for both John and María is as follows:

John Yonan
 Superintendent
 Department of Transportation and Highways
 69 W. Washington Street, Suite 2300
 Chicago, IL 60602
 312-603-1601
John.Yonan@cookcountyil.gov

María Choca Urban
 Deputy Chief Administrative Officer
 Bureau of Administration
 69 W. Washington Street, Suite 2300
 Chicago, IL 60602
 312-603-1652
María.ChocaUrban@cookcountyil.gov

Send meeting materials for the Agency Scoping Meeting on October 28th to John and María.

Sincerely,

Toni Preckwinkle
 President, Cook County Board of Commissioners

cc: Mark Assam, FTA Region V
 Reginald Arkell, FTA Region V
 John Parson, NICTD Director of Marketing and Planning
 Lisa Ives, West Lake Corridor Project Manager



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

NOV 26 2014

REPLY TO THE ATTENTION OF:

E-19J

Marisol R. Simon
Regional Administrator
Federal Transit Administration
200 West Adams Street, Suite 320
Chicago, Illinois 60606

John Parsons
Project Manager
Northern Indiana Commuter Transportation District
33 East U.S. Highway 12
Chesterton, Indiana 46304

Re: Scoping Comments – Federal Transit Administration (FTA) Notice of Intent (NOI) to Prepare an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for the West Lake Corridor Project in Lake County, Indiana and Cook County, Illinois.

Dear Ms. Simon and Mr. Parsons:

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) reviewed the Federal Transit Administration's (FTA) September 30, 2014, Federal Register Notice of Intent (NOI) to prepare an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) in cooperation with the Northern Indiana Commuter Transportation District (NICTD) for the West Lake Corridor Project (Project). EPA also reviewed NICTD's West Lake Corridor Project Scoping Booklet (dated October 2014) (Scoping Booklet). EPA accepted participating agency status in FTA's environmental review process for the Project (per October 27, 2014 5:09 PM email from V. Laszewski, EPA to M. Assam, FTA). In accordance with EPA's responsibilities under Section 102(2)(C) of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), and Section 309 of the Clean Air Act (CAA), we are providing scoping comments regarding issues that we believe should be considered during the preparation of the EIS for this transit project.

The NOI and Scoping Booklet identify that the purpose of the Project is to expand NICTD's transit service coverage in high-growth areas of Lake County, Indiana in order to improve mobility and accessibility, and stimulate local job creation and economic development opportunities for Lake County. Alternatives to be considered in the DEIS include a No-build alternative and a Commuter Rail alternative. The Commuter Rail alternative has several alignment design options for route alignments, station locations, maintenance facility sites, and vehicle mode (i.e., electric heavy rail, diesel heavy rail, and combined electric/diesel rail).

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Sediment remediation

In an effort to clean up the most polluted areas in the Great Lakes, the United States and Canada committed to working with State and Provincial governments to develop Remedial Action Plans for designated Areas of Concern (AOC) in the Great Lakes Basin. The northern portion of the Project study area in Indiana is located within a designated AOC. This portion of the study area includes the West Branch Grand Calumet River. On-going remediation efforts by EPA and the Indiana Department of Natural Resources (IDNR) to address polluted sediments in the West Branch Grand Calumet River in Indiana have been and continue to take place up to the Indiana/Illinois state line. Remediation work involves dredging of some of the polluted sediments and capping the remaining sediments. EPA and IDNR are particularly concerned that the integrity of the cap is maintained and that remediation efforts are not disturbed and/or disrupted.

The DEIS will need to address these concerns. The West Lake Corridor Project should be located, designed, constructed and operated to avoid impacts to past, present and future remediation efforts on the West Branch of the Grand Calumet River. If a new bridge crossing is necessary in this area, then we recommend the bridge be designed to span the river without piers or abutments placed in the river channel that would compromise the integrity of the cap. For additional information, contact Diana Mally, EPA Great Lakes National Program Office at 312/886-7275 or mally.diana@epa.gov.

Air quality

Lake County, Indiana and Cook County, Illinois are designated non-attainment for the 2008 8-hour ozone standard. EPA plans to propose a revised ozone standard December 1, 2014 and finalize October 2015. For information regarding the ozone standard, you may contact Edward Doty of our Air and Radiation Division at 312/886-6057 or at doty.edward@epa.gov.

Other issues

EPA concurs with the 21 general categories of environmental resources and potential impacts identified in the Scoping Booklet (page 5) and NOI (V. Probable Effects/Potential Impacts for Analysis) for proposed detailed examination in the EIS. The enclosure to this letter provides additional comments for FTA and NICTD consideration while preparing the DEIS. Our comments, in part, regard identification and assessment of alternatives/alternative options, and subjects to be evaluated, including transit-dependent populations, populations with environmental justice concerns, air quality, water resources, vegetation and wildlife habitat, induced development, and mitigation. We also recommend the project proponents consider incorporating green building strategies into the West Lake Corridor Project. By adopting green building strategies, the project proponents can maximize economic and environmental performance. Green building methods can be integrated into buildings (e.g., transit stations) at any stage, from design and construction, to renovation and deconstruction.

EPA understands that the FTA environmental review will culminate in a combined Final EIS (FEIS)/Record of Decision (ROD). We recommend FTA convene a meeting of the participating resources agencies to present and discuss FTA's proposed draft written responses to DEIS comments prior to FTA issuing an FEIS/ROD. This will provide the resources agencies an

opportunity to react to the proposed responses to the agencies' DEIS comments and for resolution of these issues to be pursued prior to release of the FEIS/ROD.

Virginia Laszewski, of my staff, is EPA's lead NEPA reviewer for this project. She may be reached by calling 312/886-7501 or by email at laszewski.virginia@epa.gov. As a participating agency, EPA will attend project meetings/conference calls and review project materials as staff time and resources allow. EPA requests at least a two-week advance notice prior to our receipt of project materials for review and prior to project meetings/conference calls.

Sincerely,



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

Enclosure: EPA Scoping Comments - FTA West Lake Corridor Project EIS

Cc: Scott Pruitt, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Bloomington Field Office (ES),
620 South Walker Street, Bloomington, Indiana 47403-2121
Elizabeth McCloskey, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Northern Indiana Suboffice,
P.O. Box 2616, Chesterton, Indiana 46304
Shawn Cirton, U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Chicago Ecological Field Office,
1250 South Grove Avenue, Suite 103, Barrington, Illinois 60010
Paul Leffler, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Regulatory Branch, 231 South LaSalle
Street, Suite 1500, Chicago, Illinois 60604
Carl Wodrich, Indiana Department of Natural Resources, Land Acquisition, 402 W.
Washington, Rm W261, Indianapolis, Indiana 46204
Christie Stanifer, Environmental Coordinator, Indiana Department of Natural Resources,
Division of Fish and Wildlife, 402 W. Washington Street, Rm W273,
Indianapolis, Indiana 46204-2748
Marty Maupin, Indiana Department of Environmental Management, Office of Water
Quality, 100 N. Senate Avenue, MC 65-42 IGCN 1255, Indianapolis, Indiana
46204-2251

EPA Scoping Comments - Federal Transit Administration (FTA) Notice of Intent (NOI) to Prepare an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for the West Lake Corridor Project Lake County, Indiana and Cook County, Illinois.

Project Description: The NOI and the West Lake Corridor Project (Project) Scoping Booklet (dated October 2014) describe the Project as an approximately 9-mile southern extension of the Northern Indiana Commuter Transportation District's (NICTD) existing South Shore Line (SSL) between Dyer and Hammond, Indiana. In addition, the Project would operate on about 15 miles of existing SSL and Metra Electric District's (MED) line to the Millennium Station in downtown Chicago. The Project would involve new track improvements along the existing CSX Transportation and former Monon railroad corridors, with a flyover to the existing SSL in Hammond. Four potential stations would be included at the Munster/Dyer Main Street, Munster Fisher/45th Streets, South Hammond, and Downtown Hammond. A maintenance facility would also be needed to store and maintain the vehicles. Two alignment design options are also being considered for the Project, including a possible extension to St. John, Indiana on the southern end, and another along the Indiana Harbor Belt Kensington Branch through Calumet City, Burnham and Chicago, Illinois on the north end. To facilitate this Project, core capacity improvements to the existing MED line and Millennium Station may be required to accommodate the Project.

The project overlaps the study area for the Federal Railroad Administration's (FRA) Chicago-Detroit/Pontiac Passenger Rail Improvement Project, whose DEIS is currently available for public comment. That project is evaluating multiple rail corridor alternatives between Downtown Chicago and Porter, Indiana, in the heavily congested "South of the Lake" area.

Recommendation: In addition to the Project's 9-mile extension with its associated facilities and the two alignment design options, EPA recommends the DEIS evaluate and identify the specific capacity improvements to the existing MED line and Millennium Station that may be required for the Project. Impacts associated with any needed improvements and extensions should be disclosed and potential mitigation measures identified in the DEIS. FTA and NICTD should coordinate closely with FRA and the Illinois, Indiana, and Michigan Departments of Transportation to ensure that the West Lake Corridor Project and the Chicago-Detroit/Pontiac Passenger Rail Project are integrated and do not conflict in infrastructure and operations.

Purpose and Need: According to the documents "[t]he Project would expand NICTD's service coverage, improve mobility and accessibility, and stimulate local job creation and economic development opportunities for Lake County." "Specifically the Project is intended to: 1) Serve high-growth areas in central, southern, and western Lake County, Indiana, 2) Conveniently connect more Northwest Indian residents to downtown Chicago jobs and major activity centers, 3) Establish a solid modal alternative between the two metropolitan regions other than driving, 4) Lower commuting travel times and costs, 5) Increase NICTD system ridership, 6) Promote economic development opportunities, 7) Create local jobs in Northwest Indian, 8) Attract and retain families and younger residents, and 9) Provide a valued transportation asset for us by all northwest Indiana residents."

Recommendation: We recommend NICTD and FTA consider prioritizing the Project's goals based on substantiated need/s. Identify objectives for each goal and then identify the evaluation measures that will be used to assess how well various alternatives/options meet each goal's objective/s.

For example, one of the goals of the Project is to: *"Provide a valued transportation asset for use by all Northwest Indiana Residents."* One of the objectives under this goal might be: *"Help address unmet transit needs of people who depend on transit."* Evaluation measures to assess, disclose and compare how well proposed station locations and alternative alignment options specifically meet the transit needs of transit dependent populations might be: *"The ease (number of times/day and amount of time it takes) for identified transit dependent populations to get to and from a potential transit station location via existing and/or proposed connecting bus service route/s and/or pedestrian/bike routes."*

Recommendation: The DEIS should identify and discuss the specific needs of transit-dependent populations in and near the transit corridor/s, and the region.

Alternatives: Alternatives to be considered in the DEIS include a No-build alternative and a Commuter Rail alternative. The Commuter Rail alternative has several alignment and design options in terms of route alignment, station locations, maintenance facility sites, and vehicle mode (i.e., electric heavy rail, diesel heavy rail, and combined electric/diesel rail).

Recommendation: The DEIS alternative route alignments should be assessed for their potential to impact past, present and future ongoing remediation efforts of contaminated sediments in the West Branch Grand Calumet River in Indiana. (See our detailed comments regarding this issue later under "Water Resources" and the cover letter to this enclosure.)

Recommendation: We recommend the build alternatives also include connecting pedestrian/bikeway routes.

Recommendation: To help enhance the environment for communities in the project area, we recommend that brownfield sites in the corridor be identified and assessed for their potential as transit station locations, park-and-ride lots, and/or other supporting transit facilities.

Environmental Justice (EJ): Communities with environmental justice concerns may constitute one portion of the potential ridership along this corridor.

Recommendation: We recommend communities that may experience disproportionate impacts or barriers to participation ("EJ communities") be identified, including through use of demographic mapping, in the region and along the proposed corridor. We recommend considering the potential for disproportionate impacts at a local scale (census block levels), especially in the denser urban areas related to the project. All potential and applicable impacts to these communities, such as air quality, noise, health, fare pricing, station locations, impacts to businesses, and related changes should be assessed in the DEIS.

Recommendation: We recommend the DEIS include specific information that substantiates that representatives from affected communities and transit-dependent populations have been actively involved in the development of NICTD's 2011 West Lake Corridor Study. The DEIS should document ongoing efforts to engage EJ communities and transit-dependent populations through the remainder of the NEPA process.

Air Quality/National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS)/Transportation Conformity/Air Toxics: Lake County, Indiana and Cook County, Illinois are designated non-attainment for the 2008 8-hour ozone standard. EPA plans to propose a revised ozone standard December 1, 2014 and finalize October 2015. For information regarding the ozone standard you may contact Edward Doty of our Air and Radiation Division at 312/886-6057 or at doty.edward@epa.gov.

Recommendation: The DEIS should discuss local and regional air quality, the project's impacts on air quality and transportation conformity with the State Air Quality Implementation Plan.

While a transit project may be anticipated to maintain or reduce emissions from private vehicles, the system may add bus or train diesel exhaust and/or electric generation emissions for trains.

Recommendation: We recommend the DEIS quantify these emissions, including emissions of greenhouse gases, and identify possible measures to reduce these emissions. Best management practices (BMPs) that will be followed to reduce emissions, particularly of diesel-related air toxics during construction and operation, should be identified. Such measures may include, but should not be limited to, strategies to reduce diesel emissions, such as project construction contracts that require the use of equipment with clean diesel engines and the use of clean diesel fuels, and limits on the length of time equipment is allowed to idle when not in active use (EPA recommends idling not exceed 5 minutes).

Climate Change/Green House Gases GHG/Increased Frequency and Intensity of Precipitation Events: Increased frequency and intensity of precipitation events can be anticipated due to climate change.

Recommendation: We recommend the DEIS identify and discuss how such precipitation events might impact the proposed project and its associated facilities during construction and operation. We recommend that the DEIS identify and discuss any anticipated effects of climate change on the project and possible adaptation measures. For example, discuss any effects that predicted increases in the number and/or intensity of precipitation events associated with climate change may have on sizing bridge spans, culvert openings, and stormwater management measures in order to accommodate such events and ensure project longevity, public health, and safety.

Water Resources: The wetlands, lakes, rivers and streams and their associated floodplains in the project area could be directly and/or indirectly impacted by construction and/or operation of the proposed transit project.

A portion of the project study area includes the West Branch Grand Calumet River. On-going remediation efforts to address polluted sediments in the West Branch Grand Calumet River in

Indiana have been and continue to take place up to the Indiana/Illinois state line. Remediation work involves dredging of some of the polluted sediments and capping the remaining sediments. Of particular concern is making sure that the integrity of the cap is maintained and remediation efforts are not disrupted. The DEIS will need to address these concerns.

Recommendation: The Project should be located, designed, constructed and operated to avoid any impacts to past, present and future remediation efforts on the West Branch of the Grand Calumet River. If a new bridge crossing is necessary, then the bridge should be designed to span the river without piers or abutments in the river channel that would compromise the integrity of the cap.

Recommendation: The DEIS should identify and assess floodplain impacts and potential mitigation measures to avoid and reduce impacts.

We expect a Clean Water Act (CWA) Section 404 permit will be required from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (Corps) for proposed discharges of dredged or fill materials to Waters of the United States. The Section 404 approval is contingent upon the project complying with the Section 404(b)(1) guidelines under the CWA. These guidelines are summarized as follows:

- Least Environmentally Damaging Practicable Alternative (LEDPA) – There must be no practicable alternative to the proposed discharge (impacts) which would have less adverse impact 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 the violation of state water quality standards or toxic effluent standards, and must not jeopardize the continued existence of federally-listed endangered or threatened species of their critical habitat(s);
- No Significant Degradation – The project must not cause or contribute to significant degradation of Waters of the United States; and
- Minimization and Mitigation of Adverse Impacts – The project must include appropriate and practicable steps to avoid impacts to regulated Waters of the United States; where impacts are unavoidable, demonstration of how impacts have been minimized; and must provide compensatory mitigation to offset unavoidable, minimized impacts to the aquatic ecosystem.

Recommendations:

- We recommend the DEIS identify the various water resources in the project area, disclose their existing conditions, and quantify impacts associated with each alternative.
- We recommend the water resources information and discussion in the DEIS demonstrate that the rail rights-of-way, potential park-and-ride lots, stations and

other ancillary project facilities avoid wetland, lake and stream impacts, to the extent feasible. Where water resources cannot be avoided, the DEIS should discuss how impacts to water resources will be minimized.

- The rationale and justification for recommending or selecting one component/option over others should be presented in the DEIS.
- We recommend that wetland delineations, and wetland and stream assessments be included in the DEIS.
- We recommend the DEIS include draft wetland and stream mitigation plans, for those impacts that cannot be avoided or minimized.
- We recommend the DEIS discuss how project alternatives will address stormwater management in order to protect and, if feasible, enhance water resources in the watershed. For information regarding stormwater management and stormwater management best practices see EPA's website: http://www.epa.gov/greeningepa/stormwater/best_practices.htm.

Federal and State Listed Species: The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) in its scoping letter for this project, dated November 4, 2014, noted multiple species, including endangered and proposed-as-endangered species, as being located in Lake County, Indiana and Cook County, Illinois. Additionally, many state-listed, threatened, endangered, and special concerns species are found in these counties.

Recommendation: EPA recommends that FTA/NICTD continue to coordinate with USFWS and the Indiana Department of Natural Resources (IDNR) to determine if any of the proposed activities would or could detrimentally affect any Federally- or state-listed species, species proposed for listing, or their critical habitat. The DEIS should include the results to-date of the coordination with USFWS and IDNR regarding the proposals potential to affect any Federally- or state-listed threatened or endangered species, including the northern-long eared bat.

Vegetation and Wildlife Habitat: According to the above referenced USFWS letter, the project corridor includes Forest Preserves, Nature Preserves and other protected habitats. These areas contain, in part, wetlands, prairie and forests that provide valuable wildlife habitat. These areas also protect water quality and quantity in their watersheds, and the soil and vegetation provide carbon sinks to help ameliorate climate change.

Recommendation: Impacts to these resources should be avoided. The DEIS will need to assess the various Project components for potential impacts to these resources. If impacts cannot be avoided mitigation measures should be identified in coordination with the USFWS and IDNR.

Noxious Weeds/Invasive Species: Noxious weeds/invasive species may occur within or near the existing right-of-way (ROW). Early recognition and control of new infestations is essential to

stopping the spread of infestation and avoiding future widespread use of herbicides, which could correspondingly have more adverse impacts on biodiversity and nearby water quality.

Recommendations: We recommend the DEIS include a vegetative management plan that addresses the identification and control of noxious weed/invasive species in and near the project ROW and associated facilities during project construction and operation. The plan should list the noxious weeds and exotic plants that occur in the resource area. In cases where noxious weeds are a threat, EPA recommends the document detail a strategy for prevention, early detection of invasion, and control procedures for each species.

Induced Development: The project is intended to serve and draw ridership, in part, from rapidly developing areas in Lake County. Transit stations and associated transit park-and-ride lots may induce and accelerate development such as convenience stores, gas stations, restaurants. Induced development could have adverse impacts. For example, increases in impervious surfaces due to induced development may have the potential to cause or increase flooding, and/or impact surface and ground water quality. The project also has the potential to spur energy-efficient transit-oriented development in the vicinity of its stations.

Recommendation: We recommend the project’s potential for causing induced/accelerated development be assessed and disclosed in the DEIS. Impacts associated with induce/accelerated development should be identified in the DEIS and potential mitigation measures to avoid and reduce potential impacts identified. Of particular concern are increases noise, vibration and air quality impacts for residents and other sensitive receptors, and impacts to water resources and wildlife.

Sustainability and Greening: By adopting green building strategies, the project proponents can maximize economic and environmental performance. Green building methods can be integrated into buildings such as the transit stations at any stage, from design and construction, to renovation and deconstruction. For additional information on green building, we recommend you visit our website at www.epa.gov/greenbuilding/.

Recommendation: We recommend project proponents consider using green building strategies for this transit proposal.

Section 106 Consultations

DNR

Indiana Department of Natural Resources

Michael R. Pence, Governor
Cameron F. Clark, Director

Division of Historic Preservation & Archaeology • 402 W. Washington Street, W274 • Indianapolis, IN 46204-2739
Phone 317-232-1646 • Fax 317-232-0693 • dhp@dnr.IN.gov



November 3, 2014

Marisol R. Simón
Regional Administrator
Federal Transit Administration, Region V
200 West Adams Street, Suite 320
Chicago, Illinois 60606-5253

Federal Agency: Federal Transit Administration (“FTA”)

Re: FTA Section 106 Historic Review Initiation: Northern Indiana Commuter Transportation District, West Lake Corridor Project (DHPA No. 16774)

Dear Ms. Simón:

Pursuant to Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C. § 470f) and 36 C.F.R. Part 800, the staff of the Indiana State Historic Preservation Officer (“Indiana SHPO”) has reviewed your letter dated September 29, 2014, and received on October 2, for the aforementioned project in Lake County, Indiana, and Cook County, Illinois.

Thank you for notifying us of the initiation of the Section 106 review process for this Federal undertaking.

We thank you, as well, for notifying us of the FTA’s authorization of the Northern Indiana Commuter Transportation District (“NICTD”) to undertake coordination activities with the Indiana SHPO.

In Section 106 reviews, we typically request the following, additional kinds of information to facilitate the identification and evaluation, under 36 C.F.R. §§ 800.3 and 800.4, of historic properties in the project area and in the broader area of potential effects:

- 1) Provide a list of all proposed or invited consulting parties with the name and e-mail address or postal address of the appropriate contact person.
- 2) Provide a more specific description of the project and its location.
 - Include address, city, township, and county.
 - Detail any construction, demolition, and earthmoving activities.
- 3) Define the area of potential effects¹ and provide a map or a good quality photocopy of a map containing the following:
 - The boundaries of the area of potential effects and the precise location of the project area within those boundaries clearly outlined in dark ink on a copy of the relevant portion of a town, city, county, or U.S. Geological Survey quadrangle map.
 - The names of nearby landmarks clearly labeled (e.g., major streets, roads, highways, railroads, rivers, lakes).

¹ “Area of potential effects” means the geographic area or areas within which an undertaking may directly or indirectly cause changes in the character or use of historic properties, if any such properties exist. The area of potential effects is influenced by the scale and nature of an undertaking and may be different for different kinds of effects caused by the undertaking (see 36 C.F.R. § 800.16[d]).

Marisol R. Simón
November 3, 2014
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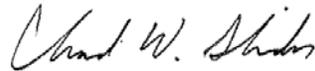
- 4) Give the precise location of any buildings, structures, and objects *within the area of potential effects* (e.g., addresses and a site map with properties keyed to it).
- 5) Give the known or approximate date of construction for buildings, structures, objects, and districts *within the area of potential effects*.
- 6) Submit historical documentation for buildings, structures, objects, and districts *within the area of potential effects*.
- 7) List all sources checked for your historical research of the *area of potential effects*.
- 8) Provide clear, recent photographs or good quality computer-generated images (not photocopies or aerial photographs), keyed to a site plan, showing any buildings, structures, objects, or land *that could be affected in any way by the project*. These photographs should be of the project area and the defined area of potential effect.
- 9) Describe the current and past land uses within the project area; in particular, state whether or not the ground is known to have been disturbed by construction, excavation, grading, or filling, and, if so, indicate the part or parts of the project area that have been disturbed and the nature of the disturbance; agricultural tilling generally does not have a serious enough impact on archaeological sites to constitute a disturbance of the ground for this purpose.

Although we realize that this project would be funded by FTA, rather than by the Federal Highway Administration or the Indiana Department of Transportation ("INDOT"), we would commend to FTA's and NICTD's review INDOT's *Cultural Resources Manual*, which can be found at www.in.gov/indot/crm/. The *Cultural Resources Manual* provides specific guidance on applying the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation's 36 C.F.R. Part 800 regulations to highway, bridge, and transportation enhancement projects, which we think could be useful to FTA and NICTD in working through the Section 106 process for this Federal undertaking.

The 36 C.F.R. Part 800 regulations governing the Section 106 review process may be found at www.achp.gov.

If you have questions about archaeological issues, please contact Wade T. Tharp at (317) 232-1650 or wtharp1@dnr.IN.gov. Questions about buildings or structures should be directed to John Carr at (317) 232-1949 or jcarr@dnr.IN.gov. In all future correspondence regarding the Northern Indiana Commuter Transportation District, West Lake Corridor Project, please refer to DHPA No. 16774.

Very truly yours,



Mitchell K. Zoll
Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer

MKZ:WTT:JLC:jlc

emc: Mark Assam, Federal Transit Administration, Region V
Reginald Arkell, Federal Transit Administration, Region V

PROJECT CONSULTATION OPTIONS

Peoria Tribe of Indians of Oklahoma

Project Name: West Lake Corridor Project, Lake County, Indiana and Cook County, Illinois

Please check the appropriate response. Use the back of this form or additional sheets if you wish to make comments:

Project	There are no known places of traditional religious or cultural importance present or within the vicinity of the proposed project and further consultation is not requested.	There are <u>or may be</u> places of traditional religious or cultural importance present or within the vicinity of the proposed project and further consultation is requested.	Our organization has no interest associated with this proposed project and further consultation is not required.
West Lake Corridor Project, Lake County, Indiana and Illinois	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

If you have chosen to continue consultation, please indicate the manner in which you wish to do so:

Mail (address): PO Box 1527
Miami, Ok 74355-1527

Email: cstacy@peoriatribe.com

Phone: 918-540-2535

Other (please describe) _____

(NAME OF TRIBE) designated contact for this proposed Project:

Cynthia Stacy, Special Projects 918-540-2535 x31
 NAME, TITLE (please print) Manager/ NAGPRA Phone

Cynthia Stacy 10/15/14
 SIGNED Date

Please return to: Mark Assam
 Environmental Protection Specialist
 Federal Transit Administration, Region 5
 200 W. Adams Street, Suite 320
 Chicago, IL 60606

Or e-mail: mark.assam@dot.gov

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**SECTION 106
Consulting Parties Acceptance Form
West Lake Corridor Project
Lake County, Indiana and Cook County, Illinois**

Yes, I Richard M. Lytle, wish to be a consulting party under Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act for the West Lake Corridor Project. My demonstrated interest in historic properties as associated with this Project is described as follows:

I AM The Local History Librarian at The Hammond Public Library as well as The President of The Hammond Historical Society

Or;

No, I _____, do not wish to be a consulting party under Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act for the West Lake Corridor Project.

Date: 10 October 2014

Name of Organization: Hammond Historical Society
 Address: 564 State St, Hammond, IN 46320
 Email Address: lytle@hammond-lib.in.us
 Phone Number: 319-931-5100

Please return to:
 John Parsons
 Director of Marketing and Planning
 Northern Indiana Commuter Transportation District
 33 East U.S. Highway 12
 Chesterton, IN 46304
john.parsons@nictd.com



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**SECTION 106
Consulting Parties Acceptance Form
West Lake Corridor Project
Lake County, Indiana and Cook County, Illinois**



Yes, I Bruce Woods, wish to be a consulting party under Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act for the West Lake Corridor Project. My demonstrated interest in historic properties as associated with this Project is described as follows:

Lake County Historian

Or;

No, I _____, do not wish to be a consulting party under Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act for the West Lake Corridor Project.

Date: 10/11/14

Name of Organization: Lake Co. Hist. Soc.

Address: Courthouse Sq., Suite 205, Crown Point, IN 46307

Email Address: brucewoods_mhs@yahoo.com

Phone Number: 219.662.3975

Please return to:
John Parsons
Director of Marketing and Planning
Northern Indiana Commuter Transportation District
33 East U.S. Highway 12
Chesterton, IN 46304
john.parsons@nictd.com

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**SECTION 106
Consulting Parties Acceptance Form
West Lake Corridor Project
Lake County, Indiana and Cook County, Illinois**

Yes, I TIFFANY TOLBERT, wish to be a consulting party under Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act for the West Lake Corridor Project. My demonstrated interest in historic properties as associated with this Project is described as follows:

INDIANA LANDMARKS NORTHWEST FIELD OFFICE COVERS LAKE, PORTER, JASPER AND NEWTON COUNTIES. Indiana Landmarks is a STATEWIDE NOT-FOR-PROFIT ORGANIZATION. Our mission is to REVITALIZE COMMUNITIES, RECONNECT US TO OUR HERITAGE and SAVE MEANINGFUL PLACES.

No, I _____, do not wish to be a consulting party under Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act for the West Lake Corridor Project.

Date: 10/28/14

Name of Organization: INDIANA LANDMARKS - NORTHWEST FIELD OFFICE
Address: 541 S. LAKE STREET CARY, IN 46403
Email Address: T.TOLBERT@indianalandmarks.org
Phone Number: 219/947-2657

Please return to:
John Parsons
Director of Marketing and Planning
Northern Indiana Commuter Transportation District
33 East U.S. Highway 12
Chesterton, IN 46304
john.parsons@nictd.com