

ADDENDUM TO DETERMINATION OF NONSIGNIFICANCE

Originally Issued on March 13, 2013 (Addendum Dated November 26, 2014)

Point Defiance Bypass Project

Environmental document added to by this addendum: Determination of Nonsignificance (March 13, 2013) for the Point Defiance Bypass Project. The DNS was declared Final on March 26, 2013. The DNS issued for the project is added to by the authority provided in WAC 197-11-600(4)(c) and conforms to the procedures for preparing an addendum in WAC 197-11-625. The addendum provides information regarding minor design modifications proposed as part of the project that does not substantially change the analysis of impacts in the existing environmental documents for this project (WAC 197-11-706).

Project description: The project consists of railroad track and support facility improvements to facilitate rerouting Amtrak's intercity passenger rail to the Point Defiance Bypass route and relocating the existing Tacoma Amtrak Station.

Location:

The project is located in Pierce County along an existing approximately 20-mile rail corridor between Tacoma and Nisqually that generally parallels and is west of Interstate 5 transportation corridor.

Addendum: This addendum details the changes to the project's design since it was initially evaluated, and summarizes new information available about the project's likely environmental impacts. This addendum provides additional information on the following design modifications for the project:

1. Platform modifications at Freighthouse Square to reduce conflicts at station including: Extending onto new trestle (rather than across C & D streets) and adding a second platform
2. Extension of the siding at DuPont
3. Replacement of the rail bridge over Clover Creek and rehabilitation of 3 bridges
4. Installation of required safety technology, Positive Train Control Antenna Poles

There is no requirement to circulate an addendum; therefore, no comment period is required for, or provided with, this addendum (WAC 197-11-625). The addendum will be placed in the project record.

Responsible Official: Megan White, Director Environmental Services

Phone: (360) 705-7482

Washington State Department of Transportation

P.O. Box 47331

Olympia, WA 98504-7331

Signature: _____

Megan White

Date: _____

11/26/2014

WAC 197-11-960

ADDENDUM

A. BACKGROUND

- 1. Name of proposed project: **Point Defiance Bypass Project**
- 2. Name of applicant: **Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT)**
- 3. Address and phone number of applicant and contact person:

Carol Lee Roalkvam
 310 Maple Park Avenue SE
 Olympia, WA 98504-7331
 360-705-7126

- 4. Date checklist prepared:

Addendum 11/25/2014 Original Checklist prepared March 11, 2013

- 5. Agency requesting checklist: **Washington State Department of Transportation**

- 6. Proposed timing or schedule (including phasing, if applicable):

Construction of the project would begin in 2015 and would be finished in 2017

- 7. Do you have any plans for future additions, expansion, or further activity related to or connected with this proposal? If yes, explain.

WSDOT is implementing a program of infrastructure improvement projects along the Pacific Northwest Rail Corridor (PNWRC). To fund these projects, WSDOT applied for and was selected for grant funding through the Federal Railroad Administration's High Speed Intercity Passenger Rail Program. The PNWRC Improvement Program would improve the reliability of service and allow for two additional Amtrak Cascades service round trips between Seattle, Washington, and Portland, Oregon. PNWRC improvements would also support Amtrak's longer-distance Pacific Northwest passenger rail service, the Coast Starlight. The PNWRC Improvement Program is made up of approximately 17 component projects. The Federal Railroad Administration issued a Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) in November 2010 on the PNWRC Improvements based on a programmatic environmental assessment (completed in September 2009). In advancing the corridor improvements, WSDOT and FRA collaborated on developing project-level environmental documents to assess the potential impacts of the component projects along the corridor. One of the component projects is the Point Defiance Bypass Project, which would address deficiencies in the existing passenger rail operations around Point Defiance between Tacoma and Nisqually in Washington State.

- 8. List any environmental information you know about that has been prepared, or will be prepared, directly related to this proposal.

Point Defiance Bypass Project Environmental Assessment prepared pursuant to the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) for U. S. Department of Transportation Federal Railroad Administration (issued for public review October 1, 2013, revised February 22, 2013 and issued with federal decision – FONSI - March 1, 2013). NEPA Re-examination documents by Federal Railroad Administration approved August 2014 and November 2014. Permit applications.

- 9. Do you know whether applications are pending for governmental approvals of other proposals directly affecting the property covered by your proposal? If yes, explain.

At the time this checklist was prepared, no permits were pending for other proposals directly affecting the property covered by this project.

- 10. List any government approvals or permits that will be needed for your proposal, if known.

Clean Water Act Section 404, US Army Corps of Engineers;
 Clean Water Act Section 401, Ecology;
 Critical Areas Exemption, City of Lakewood;
 Endangered Species Act Section 7 Consultation, National Marine Fisheries Service and the US Fish and Wildlife Service;
 Floodplain Approval, City of Lakewood;
 Hydraulic Project Approval from the Washington State Department of Fish and Wildlife;

National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES), Ecology;
Shoreline Exemption, City of Lakewood

11. Give brief, complete description of your proposal, including the proposed uses and the size of the project and site.

See EA for full project description. This addendum addresses design refinements at the Amtrak Station at Freighthouse Square, modifications at DuPont siding, replacement of the rail bridge over Clover Creek and rehabilitation of 3 bridges, and installation of required safety technology, Positive Train Control Antenna Poles.

Freighthouse Square Vicinity

Amtrak Station at FHS Design Refinements

Negotiations with Amtrak and community input have resulted in refinements to the Amtrak Station at FHS. The design refinements involving the Amtrak Station at FHS include: 1) an increase in the size of the station to meet Amtrak's needs and to allow a corridor that connects pedestrians to other parts of Freighthouse Square; and 2) the expansion of the existing Sound Transit kiss-n-ride drop off area at East 25th Street to accommodate an increase in use from Amtrak riders. The expanded kiss-and-ride will provide additional space close to the Amtrak station entrance for passenger drop off, including easy access for elderly and disabled passengers to be dropped off in front of the station. The modifications to the kiss-n-ride will occur within the City of Tacoma ROW. Minimal ground disturbing activities would be associated with the kiss-n-ride expansion.

Coast Starlight Platform on the Sound Transit Tacoma Trestle

The modified Coast Starlight platform location shifts the platform to the east onto a newly reconstructed Tacoma Trestle, still adjacent to FHS. The platform relocation onto the trestle will result in avoidance of C and D streets blockage when the Coast Starlight dwells at the FHS station. The new platform-on-trestle requires minor ground disturbance for reconstruction of a retaining wall at the east end of FHS and for installation of footing associated with turnaround and emergency stairs at the far east end of the platform. Platform construction increases project, non-pollution generating, impervious surface totals. The platform location on the trestle eliminates the need for a traffic diversion plan or dynamic message signs that were in the initial PDB project. Eliminating the twice daily blocking of C and D streets by relocating the platform is strongly supported by the City of Tacoma and the businesses in the Dome District.

Second Platform at Freighthouse Square

The proposed second Platform at FHS would be positioned south of, and directly across from, the existing FHS platform. Passengers coming from the FHS station would access the second platform via an existing at-grade crossing at D Street. Construction of a second platform would increase the project's impervious surface totals and would require ground disturbance and vegetation removal for retaining wall construction. The second platform construction would also require the installation of a rail crossover between East C and D Streets and associated roadway refinements at the D Street crossing. An existing electrical bungalow located on the east side of D Street would likely be relocated next to another existing electrical bungalow located on the west side of D Street. Relocating this bungalow will require an easement from Tacoma Rail. The proposed second platform will be located entirely within existing ST right-of-way; ST is acquiring the Tacoma Rail right-of-way from TR Junction to East D Street.

Bridges

Clover Creek Bridge

Replacement of the Clover Creek Bridge would require in-water work for pile removal and therefore requires additional regulatory approvals (see environmental documentation section below for complete description). The bridge replacement would include the removal of 15 creosote timber piles from within the creek channel which may result in a temporary increase in turbidity. Excavation, required for bridge footings, would be conducted outside of the ordinary high water line and within the existing rail prism. The replacement bridge would clear span the creek and would not require additional in-water work.

Pendleton Avenue Bridge

Rehabilitation of the Pendleton Avenue Bridge includes reapplication of waterproofing on the bridge deck; repair of damages caused by over height vehicles, such as replacement of torn/perforated bottom cover plates and heat straightening of beams; addition of concrete riser blocks at the abutments and wingwalls to increase vertical clearance; and installation of warning signs on and adjacent to the Pendleton Avenue Bridge. Rehabilitation would also include rail and ballast improvements.

Bridge over Southbound I-5 at Nisqually

Rehabilitation of the Bridge over Southbound I-5 at Nisqually would include rail and ballast improvements, removal and replacement of walkway, retrofit of existing welded connections, replacement of broken drain pipe, removal of debris buildup on bottom flanges, replacement of the handrail post, and installation of inner guardrail over the bridge to provide derailment protection.

Bridge over Northbound I-5 at Nisqually

Rehabilitation of the Bridge over Northbound I-5 at Nisqually would include ballast and rail improvements, curb extensions, raising the walkway surface, and installation of inner guardrail over the bridge to provide derailment protection.

DuPont Siding

DuPont Siding Extension at the Tacoma Rail Yard

The DuPont Siding extension would extend the existing siding by approximately 1,000 ft. The siding extension will eliminate potential conflict with Tacoma Rail operations, improved traffic flow at the Barksdale at-grade crossing, and decrease wayside horn blasts (noise) at the Barksdale at-grade crossing. Siding construction would include the removal and replacement of turnouts, crash wall construction around bridge piers, shifting of mainline north 15 ft at the siding extension location and the removal of approximately two acres of railroad maintained vegetation. All work would be conducted within the existing, maintained right-of-way.

Positive Train Control

The installation of up to 12 antennae poles adjacent to existing signal bungalow locations from Bridgeport Way SW to the southern end of the project area represents new information since the EA was issued. This train safety technology is consistent with the proposed signal improvements and technology upgrades along the entire route. Federal Communications Commission (FCC) is requiring the installation of these self-supporting monopoles. Each pole will be 60 feet high and will not contain guy wires or lighting.

12. Location of the proposal.

The project is located in Pierce County along an existing approximately 20-mile rail corridor between Tacoma and Nisqually that generally parallels and is west of Interstate 5 transportation corridor.

B. ENVIRONMENTAL ELEMENTS (ONLY WHERE UPDATED)**1. Earth****g. About what percent of the site will be covered with impervious surfaces after project construction (for example, asphalt or buildings)?**

See EA. The area of new non-pollution generating impervious surface from Platform on Trestle and 2nd Platform is approximately 25,500 square feet.

3. Water**a. Surface:****2) Will the project require any work over, in, or adjacent to (within 200 feet) the described waters? If yes, please describe and attach available plans.**

During design, WSDOT assessed the condition of the existing Clover Creek bridge. The initial project did not anticipate any in-water work. The project proposes to remove the existing bridge, including creosote pile removal from within Clover Creek and replace it with a new structure that clear spans Clover Creek. The removal of the Clover Creek Bridge requires in-water work to remove 15 creosote wood pilings. The piles will either be pulled in their entirety or cut below the mudline. To minimize temporary increases in turbidity, piles will be isolated from Clover Creek prior to removal, likely using sandbags. The full span design of the new Clover Creek Bridge does not require in-water work. Minimization measures and best management practices will be implemented per the endangered species act consultation, as well as through clean water act and local permit conditions.

3) Estimate the amount of fill and dredge material that would be placed in or removed from surface water or wetlands and indicate the area of the site that would be affected. Indicate the source of fill material.

The project proposes to remove the existing bridge, including creosote pile removal from within Clover Creek and replace it with a new structure that clear spans Clover Creek. Less than two cubic yards of clean gravel or other approved material will be used to fill the holes created from the creosote pile removal from Clover Creek.

c. Water runoff (including stormwater):**1) Describe the source of runoff (including storm water) and method of collection and disposal, if any (include quantities, if known). Where will this water flow? Will this water flow into other waters? If so, describe.**

The modified platform location (on trestle) and the second platform will add approximately 25,500 square feet of non-pollution generating impervious surface. The amount of new impervious surface from the platforms at Freighthouse Square may be above the flow control and treatment exemption threshold. The project will ensure that stormwater meets state and local compliance standards prior to discharge into the City of Tacoma stormdrain system. Stormwater will be addressed in the final design.

4. Plants**b. What kind and amount of vegetation will be removed or altered?**

See EA for vegetation types. Construction of the Second Platform and the DuPont siding results in a minor amount of additional vegetation removal (approximately 2.4 acres). Total vegetation removal for the PDB project is approximately 26.4 acres and occurs within the railroad maintained right-of-way.

5. Animals**b. List any threatened or endangered species known to be on or near the site.**

Regarding the proposed bridge replacement, WSDOT and FRA consulted with the federal and state resource agencies. There is proposed Puget Sound distinct population segment (DPS) steelhead and its critical habitat at Clover Creek.

d. Proposed measures to preserve or enhance wildlife, if any:

October 2014 the lead agencies obtained a letter of concurrence from the National Marine Fisheries Service. The proposed project is not likely to adversely affect Puget Sound DPS steelhead and will not destroy or adversely modify proposed Puget Sound DPS steelhead critical habitat. Best management practices will be employed to minimize impacts to listed species including isolating the work area from Clover Creek for pile removal.

8. Land and shoreline use**d. Will any structures be demolished? If so, what?**

The existing Clover Creek Bridge is a treated timber structure nearing the end of its design life. The project proposes to remove the existing bridge, including creosote pile removal from within Clover Creek and replace it with a new structure that clear spans Clover Creek.

10. Aesthetics**a. What is the tallest height of any proposed structure(s), not including antennas; what is the principal exterior building material(s) proposed?**

The self-supporting monopoles will be 60 feet high. For the Amtrak Station within the FHS the proposed building materials are wood and glass. The Clover Creek Bridge replacement and bridge rehabilitations will be similar in appearance to the existing structure and is compatible with the character of the surrounding area.

b. What views in the immediate vicinity would be altered or obstructed?

The installation of PTC antenna poles will occur adjacent to new signal boxes within the area where new track is being laid from Lakewood south. The poles will have similar visual effects as described in the EA and supporting visual report.

c. Proposed measures to reduce or control aesthetic impacts, if any:

During the design stage for Amtrak station at FHS, WSDOT coordinated with city of Tacoma and its citizen's advisory committee, the Tacoma Dome District, city council, businesses, residents and rail passengers. WSDOT shared the preferred design concept for Tacoma's new passenger rail station at the Oct. 30 public meeting. No new measures are proposed.

13. Historic and cultural preservation

- a. Are there any places or objects listed on, or proposed for, national, state, or local preservation registers known to be on or next to the site? If so, generally describe.**

See EA, and Appendix A of the FONSI. FRA and WSDOT have continued coordination with the tribes and SHPO.

The Clover Creek Railroad Bridge, Pendleton Avenue Railroad Bridge, and two rail bridges over I-5 are located along the mainline track between Tacoma and Nisqually (see Bridge Location Map). The four bridges were identified, documented and evaluated for listing on the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) in 2008 as part of the Point Defiance Bypass Project cultural resources survey. Structural features of the Clover Creek Bridge, Pendleton Avenue Bridge and the northbound and southbound I-5 crossings have been updated over time and improved for safety. FRA determined that none of the bridges were eligible for listing on the NRHP and SHPO concurred with this.

The Freighthouse Square (Milwaukee Road Freighthouse) is located at 2501 E. D Street in Tacoma, WA (see vicinity map). Freighthouse Square was inventoried and evaluated for listing on the National Register of Historic Places as part of the Pacific Northwest Rail Corridor Project in 2003. FRA determined the FHS was not eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places and SHPO concurred in 2003 (Historic Property Inventory forms are on file). The FHS was reevaluated by FRA in 2012 for the Point Defiance Bypass Rail Project and determined the structure did not meet eligibility criteria for listing in the NRHP. SHPO concurred with this determination in September 2012. Notification letters describing project changes were sent to interested parties in Fall 2014.

Related to the installation of antenna poles, the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) will follow their compliance process for Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act.

- b. Generally describe any landmarks or evidence of historic, archaeological, scientific, or cultural importance known to be on or next to the site.**

See EA, and Appendix A of the FONSI.

The Clover Creek Railroad Bridge was identified, documented and evaluated for listing on the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) in 2008 as part of the Point Defiance Bypass Project cultural resources survey. FRA determined the Clover Creek Railroad Bridge was not eligible for listing on the NRHP and SHPO concurred with this determination in December 2010.

FRA and WSDOT are continuing their coordination with the tribes and SHPO on all the project modifications.

14. Transportation

- g. Proposed measures to reduce or control transportation impacts, if any:**

The initial Coast Starlight platform location at the Freighthouse Square Station would block East C and D streets when Coast Starlight trains were dwelling at the station. The modified platform location shifts the Coast Starlight platform east, onto a newly reconstructed Sound Transit Tacoma Trestle. The modified platform location results in fewer traffic effects, as East C and D Streets will no longer be blocked by Coast Starlight trains dwelling at the Freighthouse Square Station.

Construction of the DuPont extension will reduce transportation impacts in the City of DuPont by allowing freight operations to occur off the main track and not block the

Barksdale crossing while assembling trains. A siding at DuPont will increase on-time reliability of the Amtrak trains and reduce traffic delays at the Barksdale at-grade crossing.

15. Public services

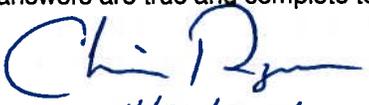
b. Proposed measures to reduce or control direct impacts on public services, if any.

The initial proposal called for the construction of a platform across East C and D streets to accommodate the longer Coast Starlight trains. The lead agencies disclosed that the platform location at the Freighthouse Square Station would block East C and D streets when Coast Starlight trains were dwelling at the station. The traffic impacts from this blockage was a major concern for the City of Tacoma and Tacoma business district. To address these concerns the project team advanced platform design and coordinated with Sound Transit's trestle replacement project team to modify and shift the Coast Starlight platform east, onto a newly reconstructed Sound Transit Tacoma Trestle.

The modified platform location results in impacts to fewer public services effects than what was originally disclosed; as East C and D Streets will no longer be blocked by Coast Starlight trains dwelling at the Freighthouse Square Station.

C. Signature

The above answers are true and complete to the best of my knowledge.

Signature: 

Date Submitted: 11/26/2014