U.S. Department of Transportation
Federal Highway Administration

Nevada Division

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March 12, 2012

In Reply Refer To:
HFO

Ms. Susan Martinovich, P.E.
Director, Nevada Department of Transportation
1263 South Stewart Street
Carson City, Nevada 89712

Subject: Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) for the V & T Railway Reconstruction

Dear Ms. Martinovich:

The Nevada Department of Transportation's (NDOT) January 4, 2012 letter requested a Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) for the V & T Railway Reconstruction Project: Preferred Drako Way Terminal, 9,000 Foot Line Change, Interim Eastgate Station and Baloon Track, Carson City, Nevada. FHWA has determined that the project will have no significant environmental impacts.

The Environmental assessment (EA) was approved for circulation on September 27, 2011. Based on public and agencies input, a public hearing was not held at that time. However, a Location/Design hearing was held on June 12, 2010 at the Carson City Community Center, and public information meetings were held on January 24, 2006, at the Carson City Community Center and on January 25, 2006, at the Dayton Library.

The FHWA determination was based on the information included in the January 4th transmittal, the supplemental environmental assessment, public hearing transcripts, and the design recommendation report The Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) is enclosed.

Sincerely yours,

Andrew H. Soderborg
Field Operations Team Leader

Enclosure
ec: Steve Cooke, NDOT
Bill Hoffman, NDOT
Abdelmoez Abdalla, FHWA

FEDERAL HIGHWAY ADMINISTRATION
FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT (FONSI)
Supplemental Environmental Assessment
V & T Historic Railway Reconstruction Project
Carson City, Nevada

The Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) has determined that the selected alternative will have no significant impact on the human environment. As described in Section 1.4.3 of the supplemental environmental assessment, the Drako Way Terminal is now the selected terminal site for the V&T Historic Railway reconstruction project.

The Supplemental Environmental assessment (EA) was approved for circulation on September 27, 2011 and Public Design Hearing (Public Hearings) was conducted on June 2, 2010 in Carson City, Nevada.

This FONSI is based on the EA, supplied materials, and the Nevada Department of Transportation's (NDOT's) Design Recommendation and Hearing Certification which have been independently evaluated by the FHWA and determined to adequately and accurately discuss the need, environmental issues, and impacts of the proposed project. In addition to mitigation commitments described in the EA, a list of mitigation measures is attached and it shall be part of this FONSI. These documents provide sufficient evidence and analysis for determining that an Environmental Impact Statement is not required. The FHWA takes full responsibility for the accuracy, scope, and content of the EA and its attachments.

3/13/12
Date

For FHWA

3/13/2012
Date

For FHWA

STATE OF NEVADA
DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
1263 S. Stewart Street
Carson City, Nevada 89712

BRIAN SANDOVAL
Governor

SUSAN MARTINOVICH, P.E., *Director*

RECEIVED 1/4/12

December 22, 2011

In Reply Refer to:

ANDREW SODERBORG
FIELD OPERATIONS TEAM LEADER
FEDERAL HIGHWAY ADMINISTRATION
705 NORTH PLAZA STREET, SUITE 220
CARSON CITY, NEVADA 89701

Hearing Certification and
Request for FONSI
Project No. 73619/DE-0025(018)
V&T Railway Reconstruction
Preferred Drako Way Terminal,
9,000 Foot Line Change, Interim
Eastgate Station and Balloon Track

Dear Mr. Soderborg:

This letter serves to certify that the Nevada Department of Transportation, pursuant to Section 128, Title 23 USC, had a public hearing and has considered the economic and social effects of the project at such a location, its impact on the environment, and its consistency with the goals and objectives as promulgated by the community.

A Location/Design hearing was held On June 2, 2010 at the Carson City Community Center in Carson City, Nevada and public information meetings were held on January 24, 2006 at the Carson City Community Center and January 25, 2006 at the Dayton Library.

At this time, the Department also requests the FHWA issue and approve a Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) for the V&T Railway Reconstruction Preferred Drako Way Terminal, 9,000 Foot Line Change, Interim Eastgate Station and Balloon Track. Enclosed in electronic format is the following supporting documentation:

- Environmental Assessment
- Design Recommendation report (includes responses to comments)
- Copy of the Hearing transcript
- Draft FONSI Determination

Upon receiving approval of the FONSI, the Department will provide Notice of Availability of the FONSI.

Sincerely,

Steve M. Cooke, P.E., Chief
Environmental Services

SMC/CEY/tkb

Enclosure

Cc: Abdelmoez Abdalla, FHWA

List of Mitigation Measures

The following list describes measures that would be implemented as part of the project to avoid, reduce, or otherwise mitigate environmental impacts associated with this project. The mitigation measures presented here are intended for the portion of the project considered herein and to supplement those contained in the April 2003 Environmental Assessment *V&T Historic Railroad Reconstruction, Carson City, Lyon County, and Gold Hill, Nevada*, FHWA-NV-EA 03.03, STP-0029(004).

Mitigation measures and actions to comply with federal, state, and local laws/regulations in the areas of noise, air quality, water quality, and hazardous materials as well as those listed below will be specified in the contract documents.

The following mitigation measures and commitments are not subject to change or modification without prior written approval from the Federal Highway Administration.

Nevada Commission for the Reconstruction of the V&T Railway and/or Project Contractor is responsible for implementing the following Mitigation Measures:

EA Page No. Reference	Mitigation Category	Description
10	Social/Business (Section 2.1.3)	All relocations will be conducted in accordance with the Relocation Assistance and Real Property Acquisition Policy Act of 1970 (Uniform Act). Blasting required for the construction of the 9,000 foot alignment will be coordinated with nearby businesses in order not to impact any motion sensitive production periods. Surrounding business and/or residences that may be impacted by the blasting will receive adequate notification in advance of the blasting specifying days and times of proposed blasting. The blasting schedule will be determined in cooperation with those businesses engaged in high precision manufacturing to reduce any impact to production. All blasting will be conducted in compliance with state and local laws and be monitored. Maximum velocities for shock waves will be specified in the contract documents to minimize vibration impacts to structures or manufacturing processes. Should the Parker-Carson STOLPORT be listed as a public use airport on current aviation charts at the time of final design and construction then interim Eastgate Station improvements will be in conformance with FAA guidelines.
10	Recreation (Section 2.1.3)	A single railway crossing will be constructed just west of the proposed balloon track location that will maintain recreation access to this portion of the river and surrounding area. This crossing will be constructed regardless of the ultimate terminal location or balloon track construction. A second crossing on the 9,000 foot line change to provide 10access to the Carson City water tank above the intersection of Deer Run Road and Carson River Road will avoid any impact to recreational use of this area.

EA Page No. Reference	Mitigation Category	Description
10	Utilities (Section 2.1.3)	Mitigation of existing utilities will consist primarily of raising power lines along the 9,000 foot line change and at the Drako Way Terminal site. Relocation of the water line to the Carson City water tank above Deer Run Road or relocation of a few power poles will be coordinated with the city and the utility company. Temporary utilities installed for the interim Eastgate Station, if constructed, will eventually be removed or abandoned in place as required by NDEP permits and in accordance with BLM right-of-way grant requirements. It is anticipated that all relocations will be within acquired or BLM granted right-of-way.
11	Traffic (Section 2.1.3)	Traffic studies would be conducted and traffic signage or signal systems will be upgraded or installed where Carson City or NDOT deem necessary. In addition, all railroad crossings will be designed and constructed to avoid automobile and pedestrian conflicts with train traffic.
12	Noise (Section 2.3.4)	Construction noise would be temporary and limited to daytime operations in accordance with standard grading and other permits. Noise during construction of the 9,000 foot alignment and terminal site will temporarily increase to levels above the ambient levels. Blasting will be scheduled for daylight hours and vibration limited by project specifications which will also limit related noise levels. Stationary equipment will be placed as far away as practical from sensitive receptors. Proper maintenance of rail equipment and limited hours of operation would be used to maintain consistent noise levels during operation. As the project proceeds through the later design stages, if a vibration assessment is warranted and if it is determined that vibration levels would be excessive, then mitigation measures to reduce the levels of ground-borne vibration would be included into the final design. Such measures may include but are not limited to floating slabs, resiliently supported ties, high-resilience fasteners, and vibration reducing ballast mats. To be effective, any approved measure must be optimized for the frequency spectrum of the vibration in question.
13	Air Quality (Section 2.4.4)	Contract documents will specify that the contractor must implement a dust control plan to address impacts. In addition, the contractor must comply with all federal, state, and local laws and regulations.
15	Surface Water (Section 2.5.3)	Energy dissipaters and interceptor ditches will be constructed at the drainage structure outfalls to prevent down gradient scouring. Interceptor ditches will be constructed on the upstream side of the roadbed to carry storm runoff through the cut sections. They will discharge to natural channels on the upstream side in fill areas, or to small pipes crossing under the track bed. Embankment fill in the area of the low point of the project east of the Bertagnolli gravel pit will raise the track structure relative to the flood elevation. BMPs will be utilized to limit and control the potential for water quality impacts due to erosion of sediment from wind and water related forces as well as containing construction materials onsite during the construction and operation of the proposed project.

EA Page No. Reference	Mitigation Category	Description
15	Surface Water (Section 2.5.3) continued	The contractor will be required to file a Notice of Intent (NOI) with the Nevada Division of Environmental Protection's Bureau of Water Pollution Control. This provides coverage under the General Permit for Storm Water Discharges Associated with Construction Activity (NVR100000) required by the National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) program pursuant to the Clean Water Act. A Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP) must be developed prior to the NOI submittal. The SWPPP outlines temporary erosion and sediment controls incorporating BMPs, therefore reducing non-point source pollution that may be generated relative to the construction project.
15-16	Surface Water (Section 2.5.3) continued	The following mitigation measures will be required at the Drako Way Terminal site and the interim Eastgate Station if constructed: Drains will be constructed inside the vehicle maintenance area. Flow from the drains will be treated prior to discharge into the local sanitary sewer system or offsite disposal in the event that the interim station is not served by sewer. A maintenance plan will be developed for the oil/water separator. Vehicles, equipment, and train rolling stock will be washed on a special wash pad at the Drako Way Terminal location. Flow from the wash pad will be treated prior to discharge into the local sanitary sewer system. Vehicles, equipment and train rolling stock will be washed on a special wash pad at the Interim Eastgate Station and the wash water disposed of by collection and offsite disposal or treated and discharged to the local sanitary sewer system when extended to the site. Wastewater from buildings or restrooms at the Drako Way Terminal will be connected to local sewer and water utilities. Train wastes will be stored on the train and properly disposed of at the depot or at the Eastgate Station. The interim Eastgate Station will be served by a holding tank, septic system or by a holding tank(s). Train wastes will be disposed of either on site to a holding tank, septic system or sewer as appropriate to the ultimate development of the site. Stormwater runoff from parking lots, rooftops, and maintenance areas will be treated to meet water quality standards prior to flowing into the local storm drain or drainage conveyance.
17	Floodplain and Hydrologic Assessment (Section 2.6.3)	Existing flow patterns and capacities for drainage features will be perpetuated in the railroad corridor. Minor drainages will be perpetuated and discharged into their historic drainage paths with minimal disturbance. The railroad grade will be raised a foot or more by design along the Bertagnolli gravel pit area. Impacts to upstream, downstream and adjacent properties and to the Carson River will be minimized by limiting encroachment into FEMA designated floodplain (100 and 500 year flood zones) and avoiding any construction within the ordinary high water mark of the Carson River.

EA Page No. Reference	Mitigation Category	Description
19	Hazardous Materials Track Right-of-Way (Section 2.7.3)	Mitigation for potentially mercury contaminated soils will consist of placing fill over the native soils. Embankment fills will be placed for a short distance near the Bertagnolli gravel pit and in the area of the balloon track which combined with dust control will help mitigate exposure to workers. Standards for safe handling of native soils with possible mercury contamination will be incorporated into the special provisions of the project contract. Close coordination with NDEP will be required of the design team including plan reviews. Soils excavated in the area of the Bertagnolli aggregate pit will be screened for hydrocarbon contamination (TPH). If contaminated soils are encountered during construction they will be disposed of in accordance with appropriate regulations. Current preliminary plans call for raising the grade in this area and little excavation is planned. No other constituents were discovered by NDOT which exceeded state action levels. However, if additional contamination is discovered during construction it will be reported to NDEP so necessary steps can be taken. The balloon track area will for the most part involve the placement of fill averaging three or more feet thick. The placement of a minimum of two feet of clean fill over hazardous metal contamination is a standard practice in the area recognized by NDEP for isolating heavy metals such as mercury and lead from public exposure. Proper handling and disposal methods as approved by NDEP will need to be specified in the Special Provisions for the project. It will be necessary to ensure that no excavated material is moved from this area without testing to determine the extent of any contamination.
19	Hazardous Materials Depot and Interim Station Operations (Section 2.7.3)	The impacts caused by hazardous waste generation and fuel storage at the depot or interim station sites will be mitigated by proper handling and spill prevention techniques. This will include following applicable Federal, State and local regulations. Federal RCRA regulations cover the storage and handling of hazardous waste. Carson City Fire Department regulations pertain to aboveground fuel storage tanks and Carson City Utility Department regulations cover the storage of hazardous material and waste. Special attention will be given to secondary containment for hazardous waste and fuel storage. A Spill Prevention Control and Countermeasure Plan (SPCC) will be developed for the terminal and interim station.

EA Page No. Reference	Mitigation Category	Description
19	Hazardous Materials Depot and Interim Station Operations (Section 2.7.3) continued	Wash water, generated by steam cleaning and washing of trains and maintenance vehicles, will be managed as wastewater and disposed of in the sanitary sewer or at an approved offsite disposal facility in the case of the interim station. The Carson City Utility Department regulates these discharges and requires some form of pretreatment prior to discharge to the sewer or at an approve disposal site. This and/or other regulations will be adhered to in the handling of wastewater. Over excavation and removal of the construction debris materials observed on the proposed Drako Way Terminal site will be necessary due to the need for track structures to pass over the area. Monitoring of the removal will be necessary to ensure no hazardous materials are present. If hazardous materials are encountered they will be properly handled and disposed of in accordance with state and local standards. Clean structural fill will need to be placed once the offensive materials have been completely removed.
27-28	Biological Resources Vegetation (Section 2.8.3)	A preconstruction survey of the project area will be necessary. Construction and associated activities will occur strictly within the limits of the Drako Way Terminal site, the Interim Eastgate Station site, the utility easement between Morgan Mill Road and Flint Drive and on the 9,000 foot alignment change with the exception of areas designated for avoidance. Avoidance areas shown on plans will include where necessary potential jurisdictional waters, cultural areas and if present sensitive vegetation areas. Clearing of vegetation will be limited to areas necessary for construction, future maintenance and where safety concerns exist. Topsoil will be stockpiled when appropriate and reused during reclamation. Vegetated areas disturbed outside of required maintenance zones will be graded, covered with reclaimed topsoil, and revegetated with native, certified weed-free seed mixes. The train operator and/or the Commission will remove debris from areas within the right-of-way. This will help restore habitat and make the ride more visually pleasing. An inadvertent discovery plan for sensitive species will be included in project documents to protect sensitive species should they be found. Permits if required will be obtained if plants need to be removed.