

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency also will serve as a cooperating agency. In addition, FHWA and CDOT will coordinate closely with the U.S. Forest Service, Federal Transit Administration, and other federal, state, and local agencies throughout the preparation of the programmatic EIS.

Recognizing the need to act on projected increases in congestion and other mobility problems that have been forecasted over a period of the next 20 years, CDOT commissioned the I-70 Mountain Corridor Major Investment Study (MIS), which was completed in late 1998. The recommended improvements resulting from the MIS address alternatives for increased safety and to accommodate existing and future traffic demand. Reference is made to such MIS, which is available for examination at the Colorado Department of Transportation, Region One, 18500 East Colfax Avenue, Aurora, Colorado 80011.

As the next step and to meet objectives in the MIS, CDOT planned to prepare a site-specific EIS to address a 16-mile-long corridor between U.S. 40 and Floyd Hill, Clear Creek County (**Federal Register** Vol. 64, No. 103, pages 29079-29080, May 28, 1999), an area in need of immediate improvements, in conjunction with a secondary and cumulative impact study of the entire I-70 Mountain Corridor. However, in response to public concern, CDOT will postpone the preparation of the site-specific EIS and begin preparation of the programmatic EIS.

The programmatic EIS will enable CDOT and FHWA to address the transportation problems of the I-70 Mountain Corridor comprehensively as part of the overall I-70 Mountain Corridor transportation system. The overall project termini will extend from C470 to Glenwood Springs in order to assess the transportation problems within the I-70 Mountain Corridor. While the project termini are proposed to match the problem area, some of the proposed solutions will extend into other major locales or corridors (*e.g.*, metropolitan Denver area). The transportation elements identified in the MIS include fixed guideway transit, improved rubber tire transit, highway improvements, aviation, and alternate routes. These and any other reasonable alternatives identified through public comment during scoping will be addressed. The programmatic EIS will develop a 20-year transportation plan and a 50-year vision for the I-70 Mountain Corridor with the intent to balance competing interests and uses of the corridor. The 20-year plan will be a cost-constrained plan that will prioritize

improvements and establish procedures for site-specific environmental studies. The programmatic EIS will identify the locations, modes of transportation, critical environmental resources, and general mitigation policy for the preferred alternative.

The approach to the assessment of environmental impacts will begin with agency and public scoping to identify the issues and concerns associated with the corridor. The results of scoping will help define the alternatives and the scope of the environmental studies to be conducted. Alternatives proposed in the MIS and identified through scoping will be evaluated and screened to narrow the range of alternatives considered for the I-70 Mountain Corridor programmatic EIS. Alternatives examined will be eliminated either through screening or advanced to environmental analysis for the programmatic EIS. The assessment will focus on cumulative environmental impacts. The studies and assessment will be documented in the draft programmatic EIS. After its publication, the draft programmatic EIS will be available for agency and public review and comment, and public hearings will be held. On the basis of the draft programmatic EIS and the comments received, a preferred alternative 20-year plan and 50-year vision will be selected and preparation of the final programmatic EIS and Record of Decision will proceed.

The Record of Decision for the programmatic EIS will not result in the environmental clearance of any I-70 transportation-related improvements. However, individual projects could proceed for I-70 improvements if they comply with 23 CFR 771.111(f) criteria: (1) Connect logical termini and be of sufficient length to address environmental issues on a broad scope, (2) have independent utility or independent significance, and (3) not restrict consideration of alternatives for other reasonably foreseeable transportation improvements. To date, projects that comply with 23 CFR 771.111(f) include the Eagle County Airport Interchange, Hogback Park-n-Ride, Georgetown Rockslide Mitigation Project, Colorado Intermountain Fixed Guideway Authority Demonstration and Testing Project, Intermountain Connection Project, and Eisenhower Tunnel Lighting Improvements. If any other projects emerge during the programmatic EIS that comply with 23 CFR 771.111(f), they will be noticed publicly in advance. At present, it is anticipated that the I-70 Mountain Corridor programmatic EIS process will be completed in late 2002.

Integral with the programmatic EIS process, CDOT and FHWA will conduct an extensive and broad public involvement program to keep federal, state, and local agencies, organizations, and interested individuals informed and to provide ample opportunities for such agencies, organizations, and the public to participate throughout the three-year process. To ensure that the full range of issues and alternatives related to this proposed action are identified and addressed, written comments, suggestions, or questions should be directed to the FHWA at the address provided above or directed to:

Ms. Cecelia Joy, Planning and Environmental Manager, Colorado Department of Transportation-Region 1, 18500 East Colfax Avenue, Aurora, Colorado 80011, Telephone: 303/757-9112.

Information describing the purpose of the project, proposed alternatives, area to be evaluated, public involvement program, and preliminary project schedule will be available upon request by contacting Cecelia Joy at the address and telephone number noted above. Scoping comments may be made verbally or in writing to Ms. Joy and at future public meetings, the locations, dates, and times of which will be announced through public notice (newspaper advertisements and other means), as contemplated by 40 CFR 1506.6 and the following CDOT public notice procedure for comparable actions.

(Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance Program Number 20.205, Highway Planning and Construction. The regulations implementing Executive Order 12372 regarding intergovernmental consultation on Federal programs and activities apply to this program)

Issued on: January 13, 2000.

Ronald A. Speral,
Program Team Leader, Colorado Division,
Federal Highway Administration, Lakewood,
Colorado.

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DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Federal Highway Administration

Environmental Impact Statement: Merced County, CA

AGENCY: Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), DOT.

ACTION: Notice of intent.

SUMMARY: The FHWA is issuing this notice to advise the public that an environmental impact statement will be prepared for a proposed expressway

project in Merced County, in Merced County, California.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Mr. Robert F. Tally, Team Leader, District Operations—North, California Division, 980 9th Street, Suite 400, Sacramento, CA 95814-2724, Telephone: (916) 498-5020.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The FHWA, in cooperation with the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) and the Merced County Department of Public Works, will prepare an environmental impact statement (EIS) on a proposal to construct a regional arterial, the Campus Parkway, in Merced County. The proposed project would involve the construction of an alignment, between the State Route 99/Mission Avenue Interchange to the southwest and the Bellevue Road to the northeast. The project would be approximately 10.5 kilometers (6.5 miles) in length.

Construction of this corridor is considered necessary to provide for the locally projected future traffic demand and conform with the regional transportation planning for the year 2020. The proposed project would provide access to the Merced's eastern industrial area, the northern area of the city of Merced, and the University Community Specific Use Development Plan area near Lake Yosemite, which encompasses the site for the campus of the University of California at Merced. Alternatives under consideration include: (1) Taking no action and (2) constructing a four-lane limited access highway on the ultimate six-lane Right-of-Way. Incorporated into and studied with the various build alternatives will be design variations of grade and alignment.

Letter describing the proposed action and soliciting comments will be sent to appropriate Federal, State, and Local agencies, and to private organizations and citizens who have previously expressed or are known to have interest in this proposal. Public information meetings will be held in Merced County between March and November 2000. In addition, a public hearing will be held. Public notice will be given of the time and place of the meetings and hearing. The draft EIS will be available for public and agency review and comment prior to the public hearing. No formal scoping meeting is planned at this time.

To ensure that the full range of issues relate to this proposed action are addressed and all significant issues are identified, comments and suggestions are invited from all interested parties. Comments or questions concerning this proposed action and the EIS should be

directed to the FHWA at the address provided above.

(Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance program Number 20.205, Highway research, Planning and Construction. The regulations implementing Executive Order 12372 regarding intergovernmental consultation on Federal programs and activities apply to this program)

Issued on: January 19, 2000.

Robert F. Tally,

Team Leader, District Operations—North California Division, Federal Highway Administration.

[FR Doc. 00-1712 Filed 1-24-00; 8:45 am]

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DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Surface Transportation Board

[STB Finance Docket No. 33844]

Kansas City Southern Industries, Inc., et al.—Corporate Family Transaction Exemption

Kansas City Southern Industries, Inc. (KCSI), Kansas City Southern Lines, Inc. (KCSL), The Kansas City Southern Railway Company (KCSR), KCS Transportation Company (KCST), Gateway Western Railway Company (GWWR), and Gateway Eastern Railway Company (GWER) (collectively, applicants),¹ have filed a verified notice of exemption. The exempt transaction involves KCSR's acquisition of KCST's rail subsidiaries, GWWR and GWER, through acquiring KCST's stock from KCSL.

The applicants reported that they intended to consummate the transaction immediately upon the effective date of the exemption. The earliest the transaction could be consummated was January 17, 2000, 7 days after the exemption was filed.²

The purpose of the transaction is to facilitate the planned spinoff of KCSI's financial subsidiaries into a corporation separate from KCSI, and to bring all of

¹ KCSI is a publicly traded, noncarrier holding company with both rail and nonrail assets. KCSL, a noncarrier holding company which owns direct and indirect interests in rail transportation companies, is a direct wholly owned subsidiary of KCSI. KCSR, a Class I rail carrier operating in the States of Nebraska, Iowa, Kansas, Missouri, Oklahoma, Arkansas, Texas, Louisiana, Mississippi, Tennessee, and Alabama, is a wholly owned subsidiary of KCSL and an indirect wholly owned subsidiary of KCSI. KCST, a noncarrier, is a wholly owned subsidiary of KCSL and an indirect wholly owned subsidiary of KCSI. KCST owns all of the stock of GWWR, a Class II rail carrier operating in the States of Kansas, Missouri and Illinois. GWWR owns all of the stock of GWER, a Class III rail carrier operating in the State of Illinois.

² Upon completion of the transaction, KCSR will indirectly control GWWR and GWER.

KCSI's commonly controlled railroads under the direct control of KCSR.

This is a transaction within a corporate family of the type specifically exempted from prior review and approval under 49 CFR 1180.2(d)(3). The applicants state that the transaction will not result in adverse changes in service levels, significant operational changes, or a change in the competitive balance with carriers outside the corporate family.

Under 49 U.S.C. 10502(g), the Board may not use its exemption authority to relieve a rail carrier of its statutory obligation to protect the interests of its employees. Although applicants do not expect any employees to be adversely affected by this control transaction, they have agreed to apply employee protective conditions pursuant to 49 U.S.C. 11326(a). Therefore, any employees adversely affected by the control transaction will be protected by the conditions set forth in *New York Dock Ry.—Control—Brooklyn Eastern Dist.*, 360 I.C.C. 60 (1979).

If the verified notice contains false or misleading information, the exemption is void *ab initio*. Petitions to reopen the proceeding to revoke the exemption under 49 U.S.C. 10502(d) may be filed at any time. The filing of a petition to reopen will not automatically stay the transaction.

An original and 10 copies of all pleadings, referring to STB Finance Docket No. 33844, must be filed with the Surface Transportation Board, Office of the Secretary, Case Control Unit, 1925 K Street, N.W., Washington, DC 20423-0001. In addition, a copy of each pleading must be served on William A. Mullins, Esq., Troutman Sanders, LLP, 1300 I Street, N.W., Suite 500 East, Washington, DC 20005-3314.

Board decisions and notices are available on our website at "WWW.STB.DOT.GOV."

Decided: January 18, 2000.

By the Board, David M. Konschnik, Director, Office of Proceedings.

Vernon A. Williams,
Secretary.

[FR Doc. 00-1648 Filed 1-24-00; 8:45 am]

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DEPARTMENT OF THE TREASURY

Customs Service

[T.D. 00-6]

Bonds; Approval To Use Authorized Facsimile Signatures and Seals

The use of facsimile signatures and seals on Customs bonds by the