

Dated: June 2, 2021.

**Melanie J. Pantoja,**

*Program Analyst, Office of Federal Advisory Committee Policy.*

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## DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

### National Institutes of Health

#### Center for Scientific Review; Amended Notice of Meeting

Notice is hereby given of a change in the meeting of the Center for Scientific Review Special Emphasis Panel, June 22, 2021, 10:00 a.m. to June 22, 2021, 08:00 p.m., National Institutes of Health, Rockledge II, 6701 Rockledge Drive, Bethesda, MD 20892 which was published in the **Federal Register** on May 18, 2021, 86 FR 26931.

Lawrence Kagemann, Ph.D., *Larry.Kagemann@Nih.Gov*, (301) 480-6849, will be the new Contact person, replacing Inna Gorshkova as Scientific Review Officer. The meeting date and location remain the same. The meeting is closed to the public.

**David W. Freeman,**

*Program Analyst, Office of Federal Advisory Committee Policy.*

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## DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY

### Coast Guard

[Docket Number USCG-2019-0882]

#### BNSF Railway Bridge Across the Missouri River Between Bismarck and Mandan, North Dakota; Draft Environmental Impact Statement

**AGENCY:** Coast Guard, DHS.

**ACTION:** Notice of availability of draft Environmental Impact Statement, request for comments, and announcement of virtual public meeting.

**SUMMARY:** The United States Coast Guard, as the lead federal agency, announces the availability of a draft Environmental Impact Statement (EIS), in accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (NEPA), Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ) NEPA implementing regulations, and the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA), evaluating the potential environmental consequences of permitting the replacement of the

existing BNSF Railway Bridge across the Missouri River between the cities of Bismarck and Mandan, ND, or constructing a bridge adjacent to the existing bridge. The applicant proposes to remove the existing structure, which is eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places. The Coast Guard is analyzing proposed alternatives, through the NEPA and NHPA processes, to construct the new bridge while retaining the existing bridge. The Coast Guard is making the draft EIS available for public review and requests public comments. Additionally, the Coast Guard intends to host a virtual public meeting to provide additional information to the public and to solicit comments on potential issues and concerns.

**DATES:** Substantive and relevant comments must be submitted to the online docket via <https://www.regulations.gov/> on or before July 22, 2021.

**ADDRESSES:** You may submit substantive and relevant comments identified by docket number USCG-2019-0882 using the Federal eRulemaking Portal at <https://www.regulations.gov/>. See the "Public Participation and Request for Comments" portion of the **SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION** section for further instructions on submitting comments.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Rob McCaskey, Coast Guard District Eight Project Officer, 314-269-2381.

#### **SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:**

##### **I. Background and Purpose**

BNSF Railway Company owns and operates the existing bridge that crosses the Missouri River between the cities of Mandan, and Bismarck, North Dakota. With bridge components over 130 years old, the in-place structure is approaching the end of its useful service life. The structure has a history of exposure to ice jams and its substructure configuration renders it potentially susceptible to scour events which remove sediment from around the bridge abutments and piers. Although currently stable, the structure has experienced structural issues at both approaches in the past, resulting in unanticipated substructure movements. Since the bridge's original construction in 1882, the east hill slope has begun to move which resulted in the slope moving the pier west towards the river. Multiple remediation efforts to correct the pier damage and slope movement took place from the early 1900s to the mid-1950s. The purpose of the project is to construct a new, independent bridge across the Missouri River upstream of

the in-place structure. The new structure will provide a significant improvement in operational reliability and safety, and will provide enhanced structural redundancy thereby making it less susceptible to damage. As the current structure is over 130 years old, it requires substantial inspection and maintenance, which are disruptive to rail service. The new structure will be a single-track bridge but have the capability to carry a second track in the future when and if volumes necessitate that addition.

The BNSF Bismarck Bridge was constructed with similar methods in the same era as the Brooklyn Bridge. It is an iconic landmark that predates official North Dakota statehood by 6 years. The bridge is eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places for its association with broad patterns of railroad, commercial and military history of the United States. Because of these attributes, certain interest groups have expressed a desire to preserve the existing bridge.

The federal bridge statutes, including the General Bridge Act of 1946 (33 U.S.C. 525 *et seq.*), require that the location and plans of bridges in or over navigable waters of the United States be approved by the Secretary of Homeland Security, who has delegated that responsibility to the Coast Guard. The Missouri River is a navigable water of the United States as defined in 33 CFR 2.36(a). The Coast Guard's primary responsibility regarding BNSF's proposed railroad bridge is to ensure the structure does not unreasonably obstruct navigation. In exercising these bridge authorities, the Coast Guard considers navigational and environmental impacts, which include historic and tribal effects.

The Coast Guard is the lead federal agency for this project and, as such, is responsible for the review of its potential effects on the human environment, including historic properties and tribal impacts, pursuant to NEPA and NHPA. The Coast Guard is, therefore, required by law to ensure potential environmental effects are carefully evaluated in each bridge permitting decision.

The four alternatives considered for the proposed project include different span lengths and different distances from the current bridge. Specifically, the alternatives include:

- Building a new bridge with 200-foot spans and piers 92.5 feet upstream of the existing bridge (alternative considered keeping the existing bridge and removing the existing bridge).
- Building a new bridge with 400-foot spans and piers 92.5 feet upstream of