

15/US System Interchange. The I-15 Corridor serves the Western United States by linking southern California and Salt Lake City, and points to the north. The I-15 Corridor also serves the Las Vegas Valley as a primary transportation link through central Las Vegas. Significant population growth in the Las Vegas Valley, projected to increase by approximately 60 percent from 2003 to 2030, will increase traffic volumes and local commuter traffic passing through this corridor. The projected population growth, associated development, and increasing tourism and gaming will place significant demand on the I-15 Corridor and connections to US 95. The purpose of this project is to meet the short- and long-term transportation needs of Las Vegas and motorists traveling through Las Vegas, specifically to provide improved transportation in response to regional growth, decrease congestion, enhance mobility, and provide access to the downtown area. Both existing congestion and projected increases in traffic necessitate consideration of the proposed improvements.

The envisioned project includes several major components, including: adding lanes and improving freeway and mass transit operations between Sahara Avenue and the I-15/US 95 Interchange; reconstructing the I-15/Charleston Boulevard Interchange; providing new I-15 freeway access to the City of Las Vegas's Downtown Redevelopment Area; extending Martin Luther King Boulevard over I-15 and Charleston Boulevard to connect with Industrial Road; and potential grade separation improvements to Oakey Boulevard east of the I-15 Corridor. The EIS will consider the effects of the proposed project, the No Action alternative, and other alternatives to the proposed project.

Letters 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 project. A project scoping meeting will be held in Las Vegas, Nevada on February 23, 2005 with the appropriate agencies and the general public. In addition, public information meetings will be held throughout the duration of the project and a public hearing will be held for the draft EIS. Public notices will be given announcing the time and place of the public meetings and the hearing. The draft EIS will be available for public and agency review and comment prior to the public hearing.

To ensure that the full range of issues related to this proposed action are addressed and all significant issues 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 regulation implementing Executive Order 12372 regarding intergovernmental consultation on Federal programs and activities apply to this program.)

Authority: 23 U.S.C. 315; 23 CFR 771.123

Issued on: February 4, 2005.

Greg Novak,

*Acting Assistant Division Administrator,
FHWA, Nevada Division.*

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DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Maritime Administration

[MARAD 2005 20317]

Application of Foreign Underwriters to Write Marine Hull Insurance

AGENCY: Maritime Administration, Department of Transportation.

ACTION: Request for comments.

SUMMARY: The Maritime Administration (MARAD) has received applications under 46 CFR part 249 from Axis Specialty Limited and Gard Marine and Energy Limited, both Bermuda based underwriters, to write marine hull insurance on Title XI program vessels.

In accordance with 46 CFR 249.7(b), interested persons are hereby afforded an opportunity to bring to MARAD's attention any discriminatory laws or practices relating to the placement of marine hull insurance which may exist in the applicant's country of domicile.

All comment submissions must include the docket number that appears at the top of this document. Written comments may be submitted to the Docket Clerk, U.S. DOT Dockets, Room PL-401, 400 Seventh Street, SW., Washington, DC 20590. Comments may also be submitted by electronic means via the Internet at <http://dmses.dot.gov/submit>. All comments received will be available for examination at the above address between 10 a.m. and 5p.m., Monday through Friday, except Federal holidays. An electronic version of this document is available on the World Wide Web at <http://dms.dot.gov>.

Privacy Act

Anyone is able to search the electronic form of all comments received into any of our dockets by the name of the individual submitting the comment (or signing the comment, if submitted on behalf of an association, business, labor union, etc.). You may review DOT's complete Privacy Act Statement in the **Federal Register** published on April 11, 2000 (volume 65, number 70; pages 19477-78) or you may visit <http://dms.dot.gov>.

Dated: February 3, 2005.

Joel C. Richard,

Secretary, Maritime Administration.

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DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Surface Transportation Board

[STB Finance Docket No. 34648]

Minnesota Commercial Railway Company—Trackage Rights Exemption—BNSF Railway Company¹

BNSF Railway Company (BNSF) has agreed to a modified trackage rights agreement governing Minnesota Commercial Railway Company's (MNNR) overhead trackage rights over a BNSF line of railroad between MNNR's connecting trackage at Union Yard, Minneapolis, MN, and trackage located east of 15th Avenue SE., in Minneapolis, MN, comprising the Southeast Minneapolis Switching District (SEMSD), a total of distance of approximately 777 feet. The modified agreement will change the maintenance obligations to promote operating and maintenance efficiencies and better align the parties' maintenance obligations relative to usage.²

The transaction was scheduled to be consummated on January 28, 2005.

As a condition to this exemption, any employees affected by the trackage rights will be protected by the conditions imposed in *Norfolk and Western Ry. Co.—Trackage Rights—BN*, 354 I.C.C. 605 (1978), as modified in *Mendocino Coast Ry., Inc.—Lease and Operate*, 360 I.C.C. 653 (1980).

¹ Effective January 20, 2005, The Burlington Northern and Santa Fe Railway Company changed its name to BNSF Railway Company.

² The trackage rights were originally granted as incidental trackage rights, as part of MNNR's acquisition of approximately 5 miles of rail line located in Minneapolis, MN, known as the SEMSD. See *Minnesota Commercial Railway Company—Acquisition and Operation Exemption—Certain Lines of The Burlington Northern and Santa Fe Railway Company*, STB Finance Docket No. 33606 (STB served June 19, 1998).