

SURFACE TRANSPORTATION BOARD**[Docket No. FD 36771]****Merrimack & Grafton Railroad Corporation—Change in Operator Exemption—in Grafton and Coos Counties, N.H., and Essex County, Vt.**

Merrimack & Grafton Railroad Corporation (MGRC), a Class III rail carrier, has filed a verified notice of exemption pursuant to 49 CFR 1150.41 to assume operations over the following railroad lines (the Lines), totaling approximately 52 route miles, owned by the State of New Hampshire through the New Hampshire Department of Transportation (NHDOT): (1) from milepost P 131.93 at North Stratford, N.H., to milepost P 145.21 at Colebrook, N.H.; (2) from milepost C 119.86 east of Wing Road in Bethlehem, N.H., to milepost C 130.7/P 101.9 at Hazen Road in Whitefield, N.H.; (3) from milepost C 130.7/P 101.9 at Hazen Road in Whitefield to milepost P 112.46/C 137.42 at Lancaster, N.H.; (4) from milepost P 112.46/C 137.42 at Lancaster to milepost C 145.76 (proximate to the Whistle Post located south of the West Street crossing at the connection with the St. Lawrence & Atlantic Railroad Company) at Groveton, N.H.; and (5) from milepost P 100.91 at Whitefield to milepost P 111.57 at Lunenburg, Vt. The verified notice states that the Lines are currently operated by New Hampshire Central Railroad, Inc. (NHCR).

According to the verified notice, MGRC, a subsidiary of Trans Rail Holding Company, has entered into an operating agreement with NHDOT to assume common carrier operations over the Lines. Upon consummation of the proposed transaction, MGRC will replace NHCR as the exclusive common carrier operator over the Lines.

MGRC certifies that the documents governing the proposed transaction do not include terms that would limit future interchange with a third-party connecting carrier. MGRC also certifies that its projected annual revenues resulting from the transaction will not result in the creation of a Class I or II rail carrier and are not expected to exceed \$5 million.

Under 49 CFR 1150.42(b), a change in operator requires that notice be given to shippers. MGRC certifies that it has provided a copy of its verified notice to all customers on the Lines.

The transaction may be consummated on or after May 26, 2024, the effective date of the exemption (30 days after the verified notice was filed). If the verified notice contains false or misleading information, the exemption is void ab initio. Petitions to revoke the exemption

under 49 U.S.C. 10502(d) may be filed at any time. The filing of a petition to revoke will not automatically stay the effectiveness of the exemption. Petitions for stay must be filed no later than May 17, 2024 (at least seven days before the exemption becomes effective).

All pleadings, referring to Docket No. FD 36771, must be filed with the Surface Transportation Board via e-filing on the Board's website or in writing addressed to 395 E Street SW, Washington, DC 20423-0001. In addition, a copy of each pleading must be served on MGRC's representative, Robert A. Wimbish, Fletcher & Sippel LLC, 29 North Wacker Drive, Suite 800, Chicago, IL 60606-3208.

According to MGRC, this action is categorically excluded from environmental review under 49 CFR 1105.6(c) and from historic preservation reporting requirements under 49 CFR 1105.8(b).

Board decisions and notices are available at www.stb.gov.

Decided: May 7, 2024.

By the Board, Mai T. Dinh, Director, Office of Proceedings.

Jeffrey Herzig,
Clearance Clerk.

[FR Doc. 2024-10285 Filed 5-9-24; 8:45 am]

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DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION**Federal Aviation Administration****Notice of Availability, Notice of Public Comment Period, Notice of Public Meeting, and Request for Comment on the Draft Programmatic Environmental Assessment for Drone Package Delivery in North Carolina**

AGENCY: Federal Aviation Administration, DOT.

ACTION: Notice of availability; notice of public meeting; request for comments.

SUMMARY: The Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) announces the availability of the Draft Programmatic Environmental Assessment (PEA) for Drone Package Delivery in North Carolina for public review and comment.

DATES: Send comments on or before May 30, 2024. The FAA will hold a virtual public meeting on Tuesday, May 21, 2024, from 6:00–8:00 p.m. Eastern Time.

ADDRESSES: Email comments to 9-FAA-Drone-Environmental@faa.gov or by mail to Federal Aviation Administration, Suite 802W, C/O AVS Environmental, 800 Independence Ave.

SW, Washington, DC 20591. Members of the public may view the virtual meeting via Zoom at <https://us06web.zoom.us/j/84319168260>.

Before including your address, phone number, email address, or other personal identifying information in your comment, be advised that your entire comment—including your personal identifying information—may be made publicly available at any time. While you can ask us in your comment to withhold from public review your personal identifying information, we cannot guarantee that we will be able to do so.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: For questions concerning this action, contact Nicholas Baker, Environmental Protection Specialist, Unmanned Aircraft Systems Integration Office, Safety & Integration Division, Strategic Programs Branch, AUS-430; telephone 1-202-267-4714; email 9-FAA-Drone-Environmental@faa.gov.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The Draft PEA evaluates the potential environmental impacts of Unmanned Aircraft Systems (UAS) package delivery operations in the state of North Carolina. The proposed action analyzed in the PEA is UAS operators conducting commercial drone package deliveries under 14 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) part 135 in North Carolina. The North Carolina Department of Transportation is the project proponent.

The Draft PEA is submitted for review pursuant to the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) (42 United States Code [U.S.C.] 4321 *et seq.*), the Council on Environmental Quality NEPA Implementing Regulations (40 CFR parts 1500–1508), FAA Order 1050.1F, *Environmental Impacts: Policies and Procedures*, section 4(f) of the Department of Transportation Act (49 U.S.C. 303), and section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act (16 U.S.C. 470). The draft PEA is available to view and download electronically at https://www.faa.gov/uas/advanced_operations/nepa_and_drones/. The Draft PEA is available from any internet access, including from computers freely available at public libraries.

Based on the analysis in the Draft PEA, including any mitigation measures that may be used to prevent significant noise impacts, the FAA has preliminarily determined there will not be significant impacts to the human environment. As a result, an Environmental Impact Statement has not been initiated. The FAA intends for this PEA to create efficiencies by establishing a framework that can be used for “tiering,” when appropriate, to