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GIS PLANNER

Date: September 10, 2026

To: Elizabeth Webster
Surface Transportation Board (Docket No. FD 36873)
395 E Street SW
Washington, D.C. 20423

From: Lawrence County (Pennsylvania) Department of Planning and Community Development

Re: Union Pacific Acquisition of Norfolk Southern – Docket No. FD 36873 – Environmental Impact

Description:

As understood by the Lawrence County (Pennsylvania) Department of Planning and Community Development, Union Pacific has filed an application with the Surface Transportation Board (Board) to acquire Norfolk Southern. The Board, as part of the approval process, must evaluate potential environmental impacts.

An interactive map provided by the Board has identified a segment of Norfolk Southern rail line in Lawrence County that "would experience operational changes (an increase in average trains per day) that would exceed the Board's environmental analysis thresholds." In addition, the interactive map identifies the rail line segment in Lawrence County as one that would "exceed the Board's thresholds for air quality and noise analysis."

This four-mile segment of Norfolk Southern rail line is in the southwestern corner of Lawrence County in Enon Valley and New Beaver Boroughs and Little Beaver Township. The site of the East Palestine, Ohio train derailment that occurred in February of 2023 is three and a half miles west of this segment where the Environmental Protection Agency monitors ground, surface and drinking water as part of a long-term process.

Comments:

The following are adjacent or in proximity to the rail line segment under consideration:

1. Freshwater Emergent, Forested/Shrub and Riverine Wetlands as well as Freshwater Ponds as identified by the United States Fish and Wildlife Service's National Wetland Inventory.
2. Flood Zone A as identified by the Federal Emergency Management Agency.
3. Abandoned Mine Land as identified by the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection.
4. The Little Beaver Creek at New Galilee Natural Heritage Area (a site of state significance) by the Lawrence County Natural Heritage Inventory of 2021.
5. Medium and Low-Priority Conservation Greenway Areas identified by the Experience Lawrence County Greenways Plan Update of 2017.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Chris Conti".

Chris Conti
GIS Planner

Mission Statement: The Lawrence County Planning Commission members and staff are committed to systematically organize, lead, direct, educate, and administer planning as required by the Pennsylvania Municipalities Planning Code, so as to maximize the economic, environmental, and social development of Lawrence County and the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania.

