

**DESERTXPRESS HIGH-SPEED PASSENGER TRAIN
DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT
AND 4(F) EVALUATION**

Prepared by
USDOT Federal Railroad Administration

With Cooperating Agencies
**Bureau of Land Management
Surface Transportation Board
Federal Highway Administration
National Park Service**

Pursuant to:

National Environmental Policy Act (42 U.S.C. § 4332 et seq), and implementing regulations (40 C.F.R. Parts 1500-1508), 64 FR § 28545, 23 CFR §771, 65 FR § 33960, 49 C.F.R. § 1105; 49 U.S.C. § 303 (formerly Department of Transportation Act of 1966, Section 4(f)); National Historic Preservation Act (16 U.S.C. § 470); Clean Air Act as amended (42 USC §§ 7401 et seq. and 40 CFR Parts 51 and 93); the Endangered Species Act of 1973 (16 USC § 1531-1544); the Clean Water Act (33 USC § 1251-1387); and the Uniform Relocation Assistance and Real Property Acquisition Policies Act of 1970, as amended (42 USC § 4601)



**Jo Strang
Acting Deputy Administrator
Federal Railroad Administration
U.S. Department of Transportation**

Date March 18, 2009

Contact the following individual for additional information concerning this document:

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Abstract: DesertXpress Enterprises Inc. proposes the construction and operation of privately financed, fully grade-separated, dedicated double track passenger-only railroad along an approximately 200-mile corridor, from Victorville, California to Las Vegas, Nevada. Alternatives evaluated in this Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) include the Proposed Action and alternatives for construction of a privately financed steel-on-wheel rail high-speed train, and a No Action alternative (No-Project or No-Build). Two train technologies are being considered: diesel/electric multiple unit (DEMU) or electric multiple unit (EMU) train sets. The DEMU train set would be able to reach a maximum speed of 125 miles per hour (mph); the EMU would be able to reach a maximum speed of 150 mph.

The need for a high-speed rail service system stems from several factors, including high and increasing travel demand with limited increases in capacity on Interstate-15 (I-15), constraints to the expansion of air travel, and frequent automobile accidents on the I-15 corridor. The DesertXpress high-speed passenger train would provide reliable and safe passenger rail transportation using proven high-speed rail technology that would be a convenient alternative to automobile travel on I-15 or air travel to and from Las Vegas, and that would add transportation capacity in the I-15 corridor. Potential environmental impacts of the alternatives include land use and community effects, conversion of agricultural land, impacts on sensitive biological resources and wetlands, visual impacts in scenic areas of the Mojave Desert, impacts on historic properties and archaeological sites, impacts on parks and recreation resources, impacts to hydrological resources, air quality effects, noise level impacts, energy effects, traffic impacts on I-15 and near station locations, effects on utility and public service providers, impacts to geology and soils, and impacts on hazardous material sites. Mitigation measures and strategies are described to avoid or minimize potential impacts.

The Draft DesertXpress High-Speed Passenger Train Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) is being made available to the public in accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act for a public review and comment period, ending Friday, May 22, 2009. Public hearings will be held as shown below.

<u>Las Vegas Area</u> April 28, 2009 5:30 p.m.-8:00 p.m. Hampton Inn Tropicana 4975 Dean Martin Drive Las Vegas, NV 89118	<u>Barstow Area</u> April 29, 2009 5:30 p.m.-8:00 p.m. Ramada Inn 1511 East Main St Barstow, CA 92311	<u>Victorville Area</u> April 30, 2009 5:30 p.m.-8:00 p.m. Green Tree Golf Course Club House 14144 Green Tree Boulevard Victorville, CA 92395
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Locations, dates, and times of hearings will also be posted on the Federal Railroad Administration Web Site (www.fra.dot.gov), and notice will be mailed to interested parties and published in newspapers of general circulation.

Comments on this EIS are due by Friday, May 22, 2009, and should be sent to the Federal Railroad Administration by mail addressed to the:

Federal Railroad Administration
1200 New Jersey Avenue S.E. MS-20
Washington, DC 20590
Attn: DesertXpress EIS

Comment on the Draft DesertXpress High-Speed Train EIS must be received by Friday, May 22, 2009.

Visit the Federal Railroad Administration Web Site [www.fra.dot.gov], where you may:

- View and download the Draft EIS
- Request a CD-ROM of the Draft EIS
- Find a location near you to review a copy of the Draft EIS
- Find the dates and information on planned hearings and meetings

Printed copies of the Draft EIS have been placed in the following locations:

Victorville City Library
15011 Circle Drive
Victorville, CA 92395

Barstow Library
304 East Buena Vista
Barstow, CA 92311

Las Vegas Library
833 Las Vegas Blvd. North
Las Vegas, NV 89101

