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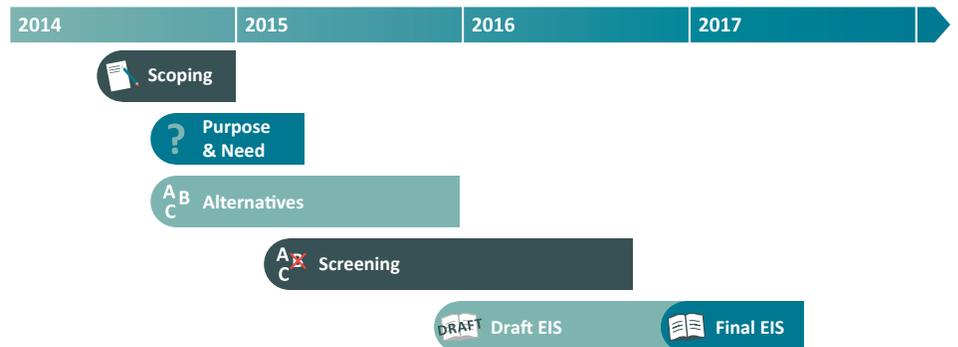


The Virginia Department of Rail and Public Transportation (DRPT) and the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) are working to improve passenger rail service between Washington, D.C. and Richmond, Va. We are in the process of evaluating potential environmental impacts and benefits that may occur if changes are made to CSX's R, F & P rail line, which runs generally parallel to I-95.

## The Project and Your Property

Because of your property's proximity to the project corridor, it may be necessary for DRPT and/or its consultants to enter your property to conduct environmental studies. Please note that conducting environmental studies does not mean that improvement projects will occur on your property or that a decision on the improvements has been made. The studies are only for the purpose of gathering data. DRPT and/or its consultants may conduct testing related to archaeological and other cultural resources, wildlife habitat assessment, identification of wetlands, study of streams, soil sampling, surveying, and noise monitoring.

## Key Project Milestones



- **Scoping** (2014): Solicit public input on the issues and address concerns
- **Purpose & Need** (2014-2015): Establish why the project is needed
- **Alternatives** (2014-2015): Identify and consider alternatives that address the project's Purpose and Need
- **Screening** (2015-2016): Review alternatives that consider socio-economics, engineering, the environment, and cost
- **Draft EIS** (2016): The Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) describes the affected environment, alternatives, and impact analysis
- **Final EIS** (2017): Announce Proposed Action based on the Draft EIS

## Field Work Description

To effectively conduct the environmental studies, state employees, consultants, and/or regulatory agency representatives may need to enter private property to locate and observe physical features, take photographs, record coordinates for later mapping, and conduct testing, including, but not limited to the activities described below. The studies will take place outside of any dwelling, building or other structure on private property. Our crews will access property as possible along existing roads, drives, and trails, and will make every reasonable effort not to adversely impact property in any way. The crews will carry photo identification and copies of the letters sent to the landowners in the area in which they are working.

### Architectural History Survey

During architectural history surveys, staff may visit the property to observe the exteriors of the buildings, including homes, barns, garages, sheds, and other structures. The purpose of the review is to help determine whether a structure qualifies as an historic resource. The review will include photographs to document the building conditions. All work will be done in accordance with Department of Historic Resource standards.

### Archaeological Surveys

During archaeological resource surveys, staff may visit the property to assess the potential for archaeological or cultural resources. This assessment will include shovel tests in some areas – during the shovel test, a small hole is dug and the dirt is sifted for artifacts. Potential artifacts are transported to a lab for identification and processing. The hole is filled prior to leaving the site. All work will be done in accordance with Department of Historic Resource standards.

### Wildlife Habitat Assessment

Staff will visually observe the vegetation, topography, and other habitat features of an area to evaluate its likely use by various wildlife species. Species type, size, and density data may be collected within sample plots. No vegetation will be cleared, dug up, or otherwise removed, although leaf or twig samples may be taken from some plants for identification purposes.

### Identification of Wetlands and other Regulated Waters

Many wetlands and waterways are protected by federal, state, and local regulations. Staff will delineate the boundaries of these protected resources through evaluation of vegetation type, visual evidence of surface hydrology, and soil indicators of periodic flooded conditions. Soil samples will be tested with an auger, leaving a small hole approximately 1.0 inch in diameter at each sampling location. Plastic flagging may be hung in adjacent tree branches to mark the boundary of the wetland.

### Topographic and/or Aerial Surveys

Surveyors may enter the property to place fabric markers on the ground to assist with aerial surveys of the rail corridor. Markers will be removed after completion of the aerial survey. Surveyors may also need to conduct conventional topographic surveys of some features along the corridor.

### Noise/Vibration Monitoring

Staff may enter the property to place sound or vibration monitoring equipment. The equipment would be left in place for a period of days to record noise and vibration caused by passing trains. At the end of the sampling period, the equipment will be removed.

### Other Site Surveys

Staff may enter the property to observe site conditions, land use, and other features, evaluate potential impacts of various alternatives, or to access other property.