



SURFACE TRANSPORTATION BOARD
Washington, DC 20423

Office of Environmental Analysis

November 16, 2021

Amanda E. Ciampolillo
Acting Supervisory Environmental Protection Specialist
Federal Railroad Administration
1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE
Washington, DC 20590

RE: Docket No. FD 36488, DesertXpress Enterprises, LLC—Construction and Operation exemption—Passenger Rail Line Between Victor Valley and Rancho Cucamonga, Cal.; Acceptance of invitation to become a Cooperating Agency for Environmental Review (EO-3581)

Dear Ms. Ciampolillo,

Thank you for your October 22, 2021 and November 10, 2021 letters inviting the Surface Transportation Board (Board) to participate as a cooperating agency in the environmental review under the National Environmental Policy Act and as a “Consulting Party” in the Section 106 process under the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA) for the proposed Brightline West Cajon Pass High-Speed Rail Project in San Bernardino County, California (the Project). DesertXpress Enterprises, LLC (d/b/a “Brightline West”) proposes to construct and operate a 49-mile high-speed train system between Victor Valley, California, and Rancho Cucamonga, California. The primary purpose of the Project is to provide new high-speed passenger rail service between three stations in: Victor Valley; Hesperia; and Rancho Cucamonga, California. The Federal Railroad Administration (FRA), as the lead federal agency, is initiating the preparation of an Environmental Assessment (EA) and Section 106 consultation pursuant to 36 C.F.R. § 800.2 for the Project.

Because the Board has a licensing role in this Project, the Board, through its Office of Environmental Analysis (OEA), is pleased to accept your invitation to cooperate with FRA in the preparation of the EA and to be a “Consulting Party” in the Section 106 process. The Board further designates FRA as the lead federal agency to act on the Board’s behalf to fulfill our collective responsibilities under Section 106 of the NHPA.

Andrea Poole of my staff is the environmental protection specialist assigned to this case. If you have any questions or would like to discuss this matter further, please feel free to contact her at (202) 245-0305 or email at andrea.poole@stb.gov. For questions on cultural

resources or the Section 106 process, please contact Alan Tabachnick, our Historic Preservation Specialist, at (202) 245-0367 or via email at alan.tabachnick@stb.gov. We look forward to working with you and your team to provide timely review and comment on the environmental review for this project.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Danielle Gosselin". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Danielle" written in a larger, more prominent script than the last name "Gosselin".

Danielle Gosselin
Acting Director
Office of Environmental Analysis