

International Falls Land Port of Entry Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement

Scoping Meeting Handout

Dec. 13, 2022, 6-8 p.m. CT



Introduction

The U.S. General Services Administration intends to prepare a Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement and conduct consultation under Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act to analyze the potential impacts resulting from the expansion and modernization of the International Falls Land Port of Entry, located at the foot of the International Bridge in International Falls, Minnesota. The LPOE is owned and managed by GSA and operated by the U.S. Department of Homeland Security’s Customs and Border Protection. The SEIS supplements the 2011 Final Environmental Impact Statement for the International Falls LPOE Improvements Study and will analyze the impacts on human, cultural, and natural resources based on recent project updates.

Project Background

The existing 1.6-acre LPOE is located in International Falls, Koochiching County, Minnesota, on the south bank of the Rainy River and serves people and vehicles crossing the bridge that connects International Falls to the town of Fort Frances, Ontario, Canada. This LPOE is the busiest port of entry in Minnesota and currently processes more traffic than it was originally designed to accommodate. The existing facilities are undersized and no longer meet the mission requirements of Customs and Border Protection. The project is intended to address security and safety concerns, provide state of the art technologies, and allow federal tenant agencies to carry out their missions. GSA has determined that an SEIS is required since 10+ years have passed and existing conditions and program requirements have changed. The 2011 EIS analyzed five build alternatives. In 2012, GSA issued the Record of Decision and identified its Preferred Alternative. This SEIS supplements the 2011 EIS to consider recent changes to the project site and tenant requirements.

Proposed Alternatives

GSA proposes to expand and modernize the International Falls LPOE by demolishing current facilities, constructing new facilities, and expanding the LPOE within land acquired (up to 20.5 acres) from the Packing Corporation of America and recreational land development. GSA has preliminarily identified one “action” alternative and a “no action” alternative to analyze in the SEIS:

- **Alternative 1: Full Build** – Construct the facilities as described in the Preferred Alternative assessed in the 2011 EIS and modified by project updates. Alternative 1 would incorporate sustainable, climate-resilient, cyber-secure, and operationally-efficient design. GSA would seek to meet or exceed energy and sustainability goals established by federal guidelines and policies, along with industry-standard building codes and best practices.
- **No Action Alternative** – Analysis of this alternative will satisfy federal requirements for analyzing “no action” under NEPA and provide a baseline for comparison with impacts from Alternative 1.

National Environmental Policy Act Process

The SEIS follows the same NEPA procedures as a regular EIS. We are currently in the public scoping period of the NEPA process.



The views and comments of the public are necessary to help determine the scope and content of the environmental analysis. An important objective of scoping is to identify specific elements of the environment that might be affected with implementation of the proposed action. Potentially adverse impacts raised during scoping will be considered during development of the SEIS. The NEPA process and consultation under Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act will run concurrently.

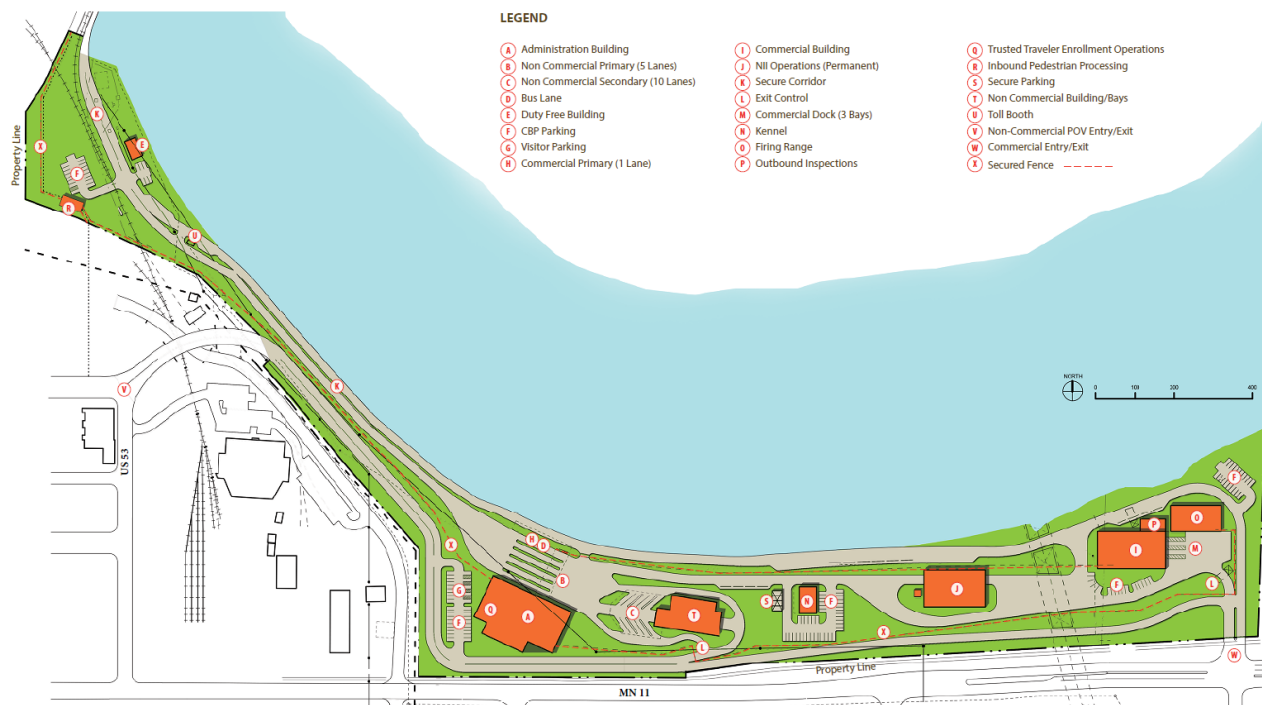


Figure 1. Alternative 1 – 2011 EIS Preferred Action Alternative with Project Updates

For project updates, visit:

<https://www.gsa.gov/real-estate/gsa-properties/land-ports-of-entry-and-the-bil/bipartisan-infrastructure-law-construction-project/minnesota#international-falls>

Scoping Comments

Scoping comments must be received by January 13, 2023, in order to be considered during development of the Draft SEIS. All comments will be considered equally and will be part of the public record. Comments may be submitted by one of the following methods:

- Verbally – Submit verbal comments at the virtual or in-person portion of the scoping meeting.
- On comment form – Submit written comments on forms provided at the in-person portion of the scoping meeting.
- By email – Send to michael.gonczar@gsa.gov. Please reference “International Falls LPOE SEIS” in the subject line.
- By U.S. mail to:

ATTN: Michael Gonczar, International Falls LPOE SEIS
 U.S. General Services Administration, Region 5
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For further information, contact Michael Gonczar, NEPA Program Manager, GSA Region 5, at 312-810-2326 or michael.gonczar@gsa.gov.