

Welcome to the Public Meeting for the

International Falls, MN Land Port of Entry Modernization and Expansion Project Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement Public Scoping Meeting

December 13, 2022

TO CONNECT YOUR AUDIO:

Click 'Join with Computer Audio' or 'Join Audio by Computer' on the screen that pops up when you enter the meeting. Or, click the 'Join Audio' button on the bottom left hand corner of the Zoom window and follow the prompts to join with Computer Audio.

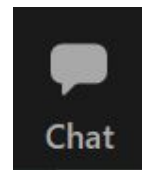
If you do not hear anyone speaking after 2 minutes, click 'Test Speaker and Microphone' under 'Join Audio' and follow the prompts to determine if your computer is compatible with the 'Computer Audio' feature.

If your computer is not compatible for audio, you can connect with your phone by dialing the following number: 646-931-3860, and entering the following information, making sure to press the pound or # key after each step:

Meeting ID: 817 8441 8631; Attendee ID: *not required (just press # to continue)*; Password: *not required*.

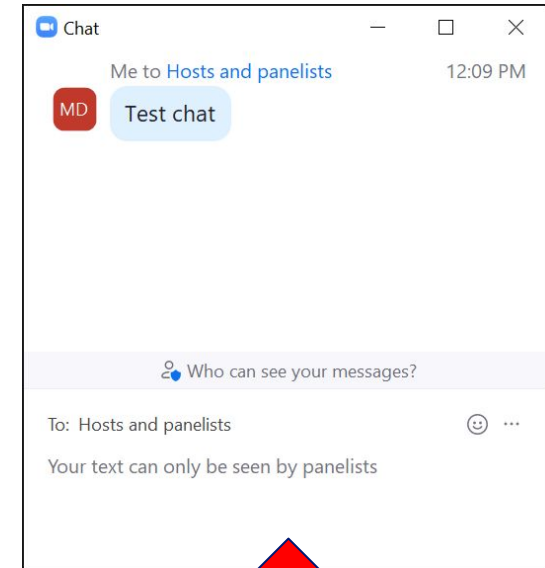
Note: Use of vulgar or crass language at any point during the meeting will result in removal.

TECHNICAL SUPPORT: If you are experiencing technical issues, please use the chat box.



Meeting Format and Ground Rules

- ❑ Please enter any technical questions into the chat window, such as in the graphic to the right. Please **do not** submit public comments through the chat.
- ❑ All participants will remain muted during the presentation and question and answer session.
- ❑ At the end of the presentation, there will be an opportunity for comments and questions.
 - ❑ For those attending in-person, there is a sign-up sheet to speak at the sign-in table. Those attending virtually will be able to sign-up at the end of this presentation.
- ❑ GSA will not be responding to technical questions during today's meeting but will consider them in preparation of the Draft SEIS. GSA will clarify anything presented in this presentation relating to the project, the NEPA process, or opportunities for public participation.
- ❑ A copy of this presentation will be made available at:
<https://www.gsa.gov/real-estate/gsa-properties/land-ports-of-entry-and-the-bil/bipartisan-infrastructure-law-construction-project/minnesota#international-falls>



Note: The meeting is being recorded and will be included in the project's Administrative Record.

Meeting Agenda

- ❑ Welcome and Introductions
- ❑ Purpose of Meeting
- ❑ National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA)
- ❑ Past NEPA Activities and Need for the Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement (SEIS)
- ❑ Project Overview, including Purpose and Need for the Project
- ❑ Description of the Alternatives
- ❑ Next Steps
- ❑ How to Comment
- ❑ Public Comment Session



International Falls Land Port of Entry (LPOE), Minnesota

Project Team Overview

- ❑ U.S. General Services Administration (GSA)
 - ❑ Seth Larocque, LPOE Project Manager
 - ❑ Michael Gonczar, Region 5 NEPA Program Manager
 - ❑ Nicky Emery, Preservation Architect
- ❑ Potomac-Hudson Engineering (PHE)
 - ❑ Paul DiPaolo, Contractor Project Manager

What is the Purpose of this Meeting?

- ❑ Describe the NEPA process and past NEPA activities
- ❑ Describe the NHPA process
- ❑ Provide an overview of GSA's project
- ❑ Provide the public an opportunity to comment on the project
- ❑ Inform the public of next steps in the planning process



GSA is hosting this meeting to provide information about the project with the community. Scoping is an early, open public involvement process intended to help determine which issues the SEIS will address. GSA welcomes public input on what resources and issues are important to you.

What is the National Environmental Policy Act?



NEPA requires federal agencies to consider the potential impacts to the natural and human environment from their proposed actions and disclose the potential impacts in a document that is circulated for public review.



GSA will prepare an SEIS per NEPA requirements to supplement a previous EIS that was conducted for this project. The SEIS will document potential impacts from implementation of the Proposed Action.



NEPA provides the public an opportunity at various stages throughout the process to submit comments on the project, including during the scoping process, and public reviews of the draft and final SEIS.



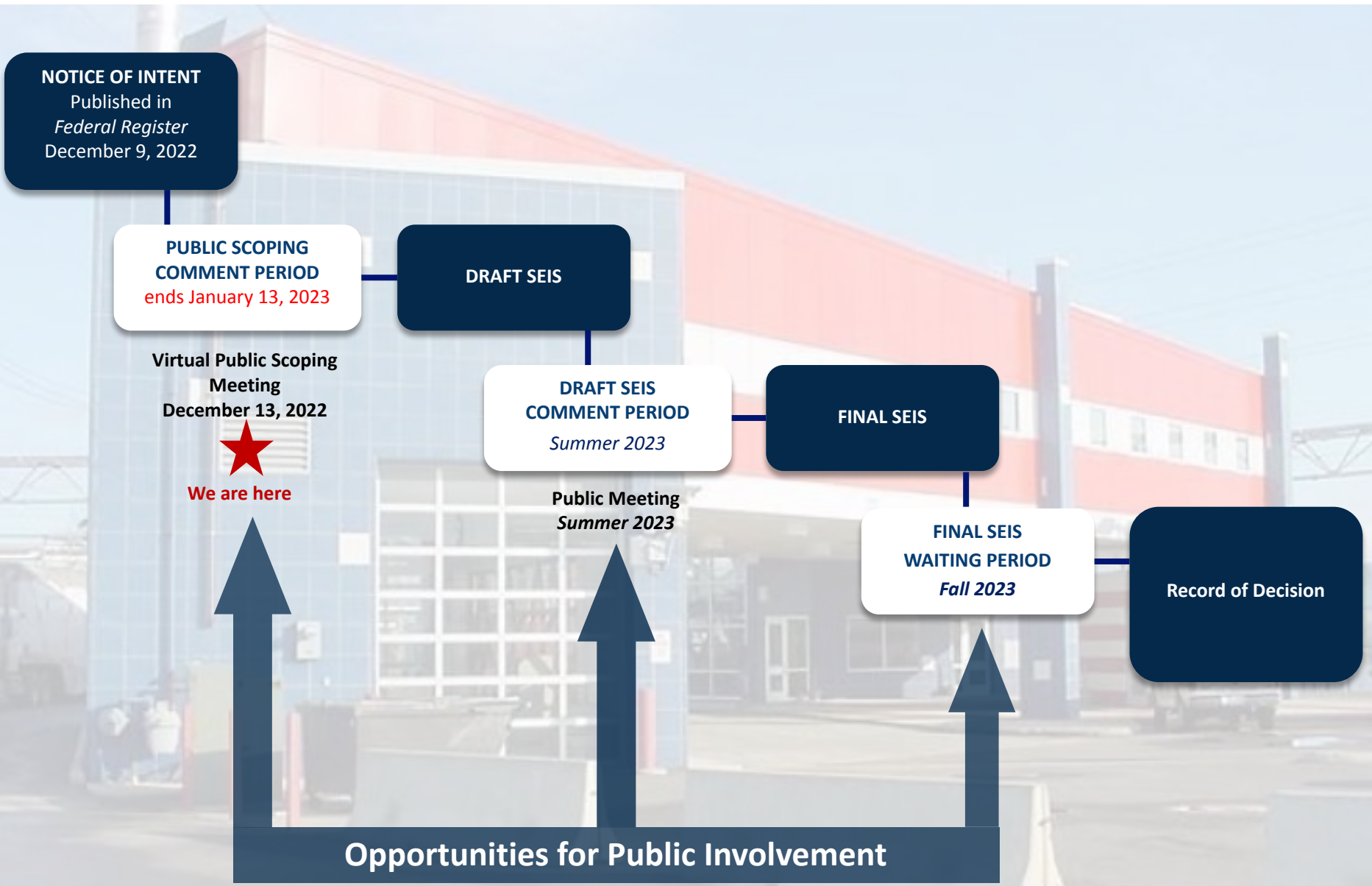
GSA will review all public comments and consider substantive comments in the preparation of the SEIS. All comments will be part of the administrative record and be included in the SEIS.

Past NEPA Activities and Need for the SEIS

- Past NEPA activities for the International Falls LPOE:
 - **Draft EIS was published in 2010** – Draft EIS analyzed five action alternatives. A public hearing for the Draft EIS was held on January 27, 2010.
 - **Final EIS was published in 2011** – GSA identified a preferred alternative in the Final EIS. The preferred alternative would fully satisfy the project’s purpose and needs and was determined to be the environmentally preferable alternative. A 30-day wait period for the Final EIS began in October 2011.
 - **Record of Decision (ROD) issued in 2012** – GSA issued the ROD in January 2012. The ROD stated that the preferred alternative would have less-than-significant impacts on the natural and social environment of the study area and International Falls, including minor changes or impacts in surface water, surface water runoff, traffic, increased lighting, and hazardous substances.

- Need for this SEIS:
 - **Project updates since the 2011 EIS** – 10+ years have passed and existing conditions and program requirements have changed.
 - **Scope of the SEIS** – The SEIS supplements the 2011 EIS to consider recent changes to the project site and tenant program requirements.
 - **SEIS follows same NEPA procedures as a regular EIS.**

SEIS Timeline



What is the National Historic Preservation Act?



The National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA) is the most comprehensive federal law pertaining to the protection of cultural resources and establishes a program for the preservation of historic properties (i.e., districts, sites, buildings, structures, and objects) throughout the nation.



Section 106 of the NHPA requires GSA to evaluate potential effects on properties listed or eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) prior to an undertaking.

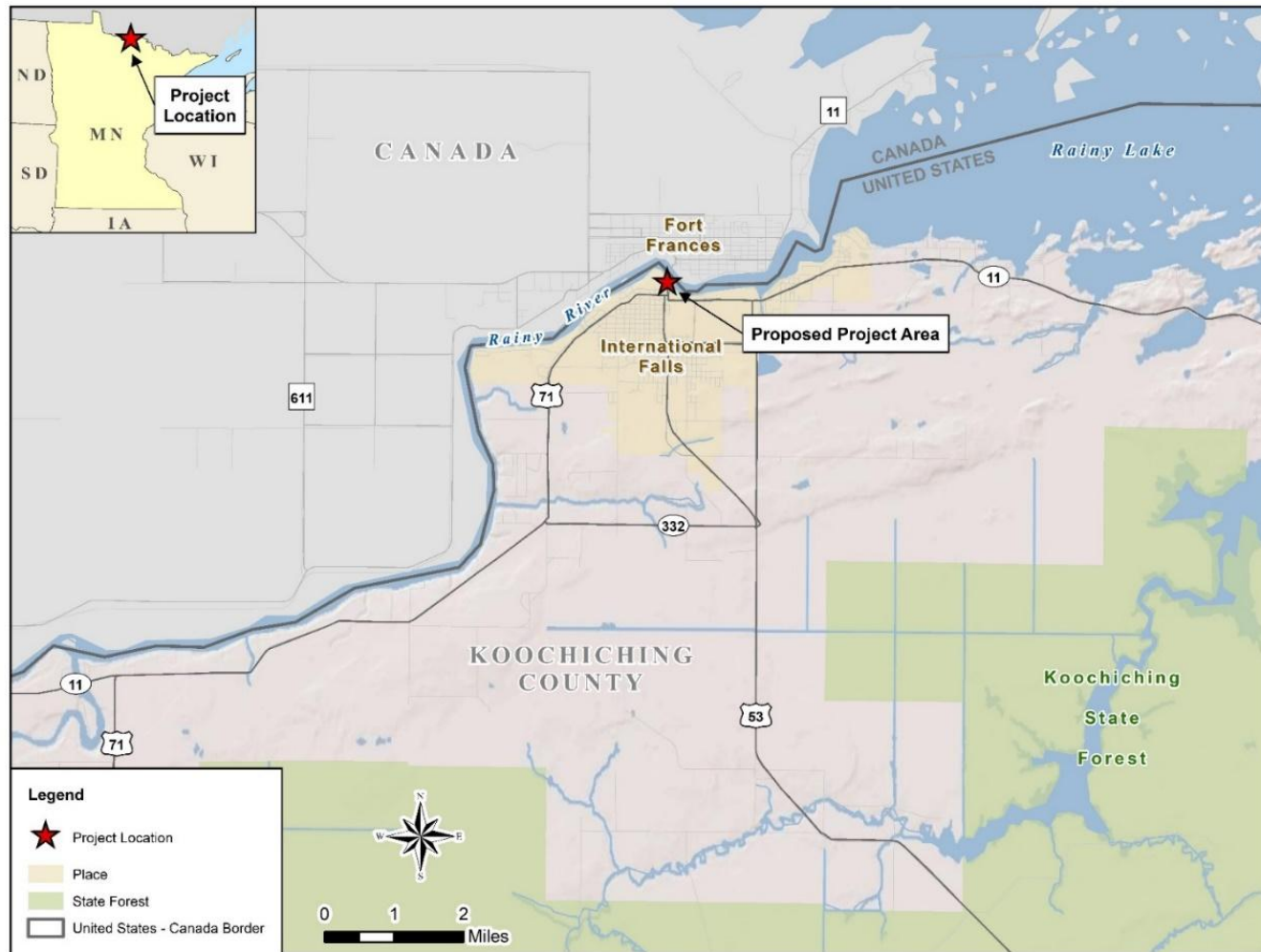


The Section 106 process is being initiated in conjunction with the NEPA scoping period. Potential consulting parties interested in participating in the consultation process are invited to express their interest during this period. Consulting parties are those that have consultative roles in the Section 106 process.



GSA will undergo Section 106 consultation with the State Historic Preservation Officer (SHPO). Consultation will be completed prior the completion of the NEPA process (i.e., signature of a Record of Decision [ROD]).

Regional Location



The International Falls LPOE was built in 1993 and is located at the foot of the International Bridge across the U.S.-Canada border from Fort Frances, Ontario. It is a 24/7, full-service facility operated by the U.S. Department of Homeland Security's Customs and Border Protection (CBP) and is the highest traffic volume port in Minnesota.

Existing Facilities

- A. Main Building
- B. Non-Commercial Primary Inspection
- C. Toll Booth
- D. Non-Commercial Secondary Inspection
- E. Hard Non-Commercial Secondary Inspection
- F. Duty Free
- G. Visitor Parking
- H. Government Visitor Parking
- I. Commercial Primary Inspection
- J. Mobile Gamma Ray Inspection Technology Building
- K. Mobile Gamma Ray Inspection Truck
- L. Outbound Inspection
- M. Storage Building



Proposed Action



Proposed Action – To replace the existing LPOE facility with a new facility; involves GSA acquiring approximately 20 acres of land for expansion (from Paper Corporation of America [PCA] and Recreational Land Development, LLC).

Purpose and Need for Project



Purpose: To support CBP's mission by bringing the International Falls LPOE operations in line with current land port design standards and operational requirements of CBP while addressing existing deficiencies identified with the ongoing port operations.



Need: Improve capacity and functionality of the International Falls LPOE to meet future demand, while maintaining the capability to meet border security initiatives; address spatial and layout constraints that lead to traffic congestion and safety issues; and provide adequate space and facilities for federal agencies to accomplish their missions.

Project Overview

- Project updates since 2011:
 - **Change in tenants and use of space** – U.S. Department of Agriculture/Animal Plant Health Inspection Services-Plant Protection and Quarantine (USDA/APHIS-PPQ) and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) are planning to be part of the LPOE; FDA would no longer be planning to be part of the LPOE.
 - **Change in space requirements** – Increase in overall building space needed based on updated program requirements and addition of maintenance building. Additional parking is also required.
 - **Paper mill change in ownership** – PCA has acquired Boise, Inc. and has new requirements and operations, which requires changes to original site plan.
 - **Closure of Resolute paper mill** – Paper mill located in Fort Frances, Ontario closed in 2017, which would decrease rail traffic.
 - **Change in First Creek culvert** - A section of First Creek between SR-11 and the Rainy River that was previously contained in a culvert was discovered to be removed and is now daylighted, which requires an impacts analysis.
 - **Change in stormwater management** - Stormwater management would be redesigned in the 300-foot section of First Creek due to two new areas of pavement crossing First Creek.
- SEIS will update analysis provided in 2011 EIS based on these changes, including conducting investigations and consultation for the Section 106 NHPA process.

Project Overview

- Proposed Improvements – Majority of improvements and operations would be moved to a 20-acre site and includes construction of the following:
 - Main building
 - Five primary passenger vehicle lanes
 - Ten secondary passenger vehicle lanes
 - One bus lane
 - One primary commercial vehicle lane
 - Commercial Building
 - One passenger vehicle bay
 - Two commercial bays
 - Kennel
 - Storage Building
 - Parking facilities
 - Indoor Firing Range

Project Overview



2011 EIS Preferred Alternative with Project Updates

Project Alternatives

GSA has preliminarily identified one “**action**” alternative and the “**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. This alternative is similar to the 2011 EIS Preferred Alternative:
 - Demolition of existing facilities.
 - Expansion of facility, which would require execution of property rights agreements with PCA on 16.4 acres of land and from Recreational Land Development on 4.1 acres of land.
 - Construction of new facilities.

- **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.

Preliminary Resources to be Evaluated in the SEIS

- Geology and Soils
- Water Resources
- Biological Resources
- Air Quality and Climate Change
- Noise
- Traffic and Transportation
- Land Use and Visual Resources
- Cultural Resources
- Utilities
- Human Health and Safety
- Socioeconomics
- Environmental Justice

Next Steps



A Notice of Intent was published in the *Federal Register* on December 9, 2022 to start the public scoping period.



The public scoping period ends January 13, 2023.



Public scoping comments will be reviewed and considered during the development of the Draft SEIS.



A public comment period will begin with the publication of the Notice of Availability in the *Federal Register* for the Draft SEIS.



An additional public meeting will be held during the comment period for the Draft SEIS.

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>

Public Comments

Written and verbal comments may be provided tonight.

- All written and verbal comments will be considered equally and will be part of the administrative record.

Written comments also can be submitted by either of the two methods below prior to the end of the public comment period (January 13, 2023):

- By email to: michael.gonczar@gsa.gov (Please include *'International Falls LPOE SEIS Scoping Comment'* in the subject line of the message.)
- By mail to (must be postmarked by January 13, 2023):

ATTN: Michael Gonczar, International Falls LPOE SEIS
U.S. General Services Administration, Region 5
230 S. Dearborn Street, Suite 3600
Chicago, IL 60604

Commenting Etiquette

- ❑ Commenters: Say and spell your first and last name at the start of your comment.
- ❑ Be respectful of participants and presenters.
- ❑ Remain quiet while others are speaking.
- ❑ Verbal comments will be held to a 3-minute time limit.
- ❑ If time allows, participants may be permitted to speak again after all commenters have had the opportunity to speak. Additional comments can also be submitted in writing.
- ❑ A recording of the meeting will be made available, and your comments will be included in the administrative record.



Thank you!

Commenting Session

Request to Speak

In person:

1. Sign up at sign-in table.
2. Wait to be called up by the Moderator.
3. State your **name** and any applicable **affiliation** for the record.

Virtually:

1. Click 'Raise Hand' icon on the bottom of screen. For those accessing audio by phone, dial *9.
2. Wait to be unmuted by the Moderator.
3. State your **name** and any applicable **affiliation** for the record.

Submit a Written Comment or Question

Virtually:

1. Click 'Q&A' icon on the bottom of screen.
2. Type your Comment or Question.
3. Click 'Send.'

Queue to Speak

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

