

Welcome to the Public Meeting for the International Falls, MN Land Port of Entry Modernization and Expansion Project Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement Public Meeting For the Draft SEIS

November 8, 2023

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Meeting ID: 84727622357; 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.

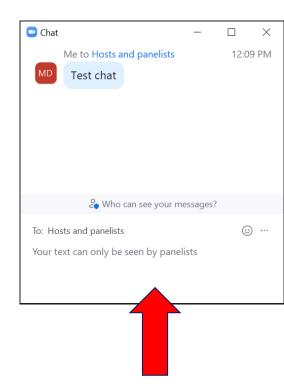
 $\underline{\textbf{TECHNICAL SUPPORT:}} \ \textbf{If you are experiencing technical issues, please use the chat box.}$



Meeting Format and Ground Rules

- Please enter any technical questions into the chat window, such as in the graphic to the right. Please <u>do not</u> 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.
- Closed captions will be activated during this presentation (click the "show captions" button on the bottom of your screen).
- ☐ GSA will not be responding to technical questions during today's meeting but will record and consider them in preparation of the Final 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),
 National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA)
- □ SEIS Timeline
- □ Project Background



International Falls Land Port of Entry (LPOE)

- □ Project Overview, Purpose and Need, Project Alternatives
- □ Resources Evaluated in the SEIS and Summary of Impacts
- □ Next Steps and Overall Project Schedule
- □ How to Comment
- □ Commenting Session

Project Team Overview

U.S. General Services Administration (GSA)

- Michael Gonczar, Region 5 NEPA Program Manager
- Seth Larocque, Region 5 Senior Project Manager
- Nicky Emery, Region 5 Preservation Architect
- Mike Finn, SITES GSA Fine Arts/Landscape Architecture/Urban Development Specialist
- Amber Levofsky, Senior Program Advisor,
 Center for Urban Development

Potomac-Hudson Engineering (PHE)

Paul DiPaolo, Contractor Project Manager

What is the Purpose of this Meeting?

- Describe the NEPA and NHPA processes
- Provide an overview of GSA's project
- □ Review findings of the Draft SEIS
- Provide an opportunity for public comments and feedback on the Draft SEIS



GSA is hosting this meeting to provide information about the project with the community. This meeting is part of the NEPA public involvement process intended to help inform the public of the findings of the SEIS. GSA welcomes public input on the SEIS or other issues that are important to the community

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 has prepared an SEIS per NEPA requirements to supplement a previous EIS that was conducted for this project. The SEIS documents 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.

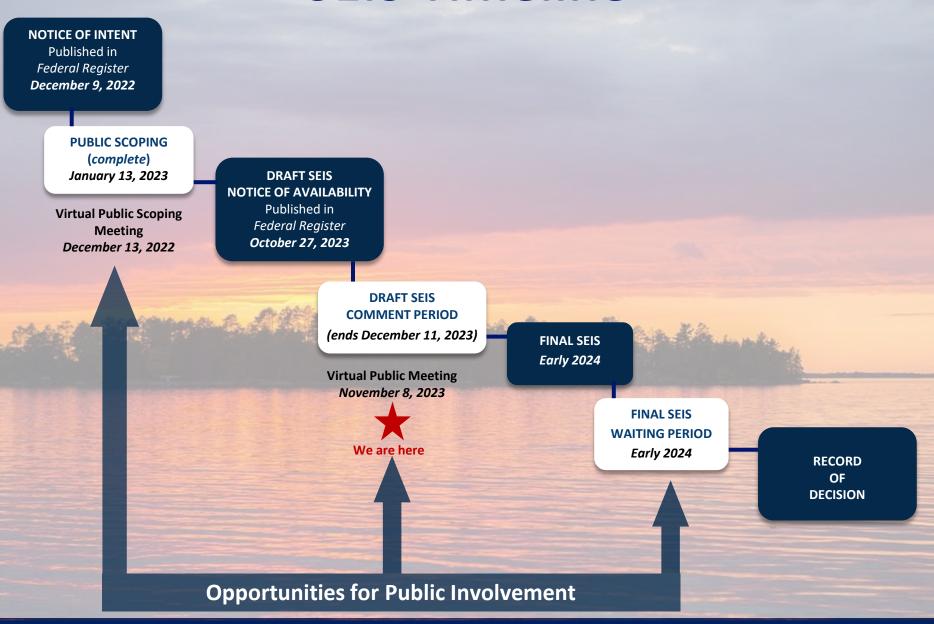


GSA will review all public comments and consider substantive comments in the preparation of the SEIS. All comments will be part of the administrative record and be included in the SEIS.

Background

- □ 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 analysis:
 - 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. Properties include historic districts, sites, buildings, structures, or objects including those of traditional religious or cultural importance to an Indian Tribe or Native Hawaiian Organization that meet the NRHP criteria.

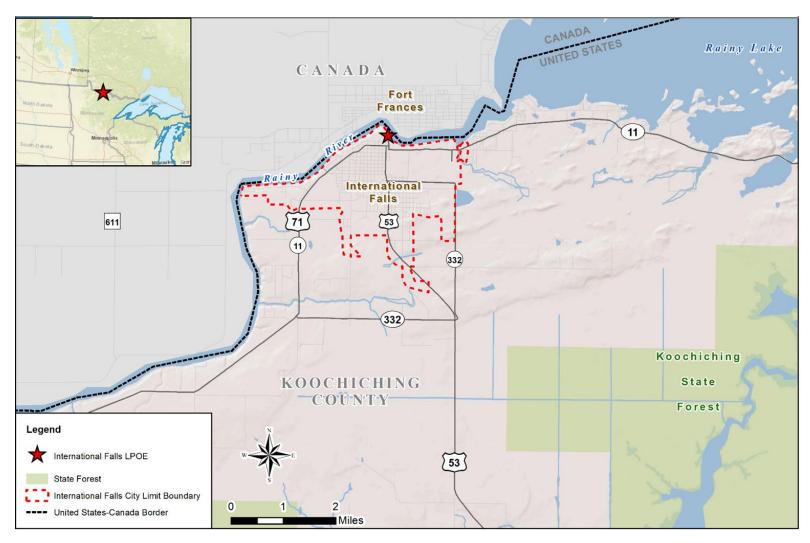


The Section 106 process has been initiated and is ongoing. GSA has completed a historic structures survey and an archaeological literature search; Findings are documented in the Draft SEIS. A terrestrial and maritime archaeological survey of the shoreline were recently completed and will be summarized in the Final SEIS.



GSA has been in close coordination with the State Historic Preservation Officer (SHPO) regarding its effect determinations. Consultation will be substantially completed prior the completion of the NEPA process (i.e., signature of a Record of Decision [ROD]).

Regional Location

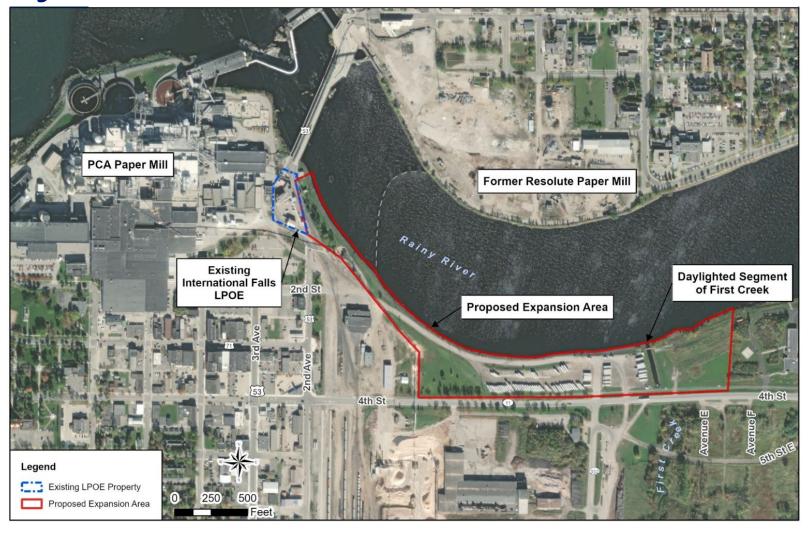


The International Falls LPOE was built in 1993 and is located at the foot of the International Bridge across the U.S.-Canada border from Fort Frances, Ontario. It is a 24/7, full-service facility operated by the U.S. Department of Homeland Security's Customs and Border Protection (CBP) and is the highest 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 – To replace the existing LPOE facility with a new facility; involves GSA acquiring approximately 20 acres of land for expansion, proposed Expansion Area (from PCA and Recreational Land Development, LLC).

Purpose of and Need for the Project



<u>Purpose</u>: 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.

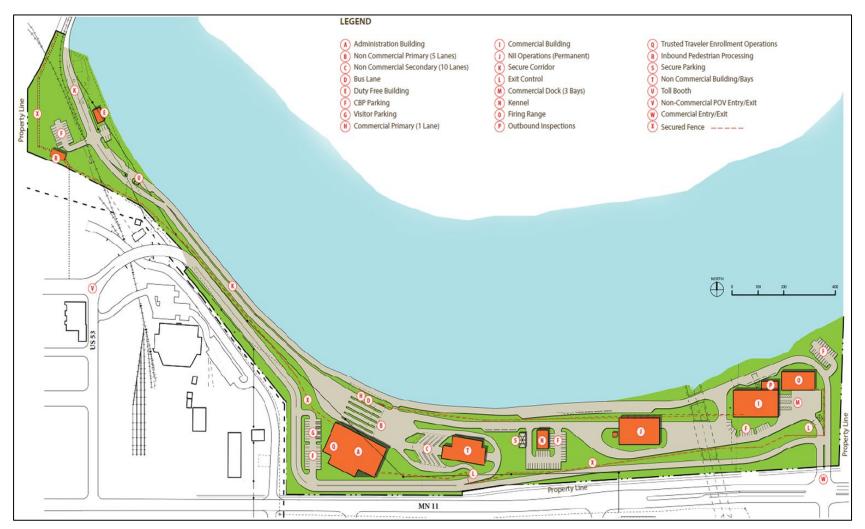


<u>Need</u>: Improve capacity and functionality of the International Falls LPOE to meet future demand, while maintaining the capability to meet border security initiatives; address spatial and layout constraints that lead to traffic congestion and safety issues; and provide adequate space and facilities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

□ Project 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) is planning to be part of the LPOE; U.S. Food and Drug Administration is no longer 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 Packaging Corporation of America (PCA) has acquired Boise, Inc.
 and has new requirements and operations, which requires changes to the original site plan as well as to offsite PCA facilities.
- Closure of Resolute paper mill Paper mill located in Fort Frances, Ontario closed and was demolished in 2022, which has decreased 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.
- Change in stormwater management Stormwater management would be redesigned along First
 Creek due to a new culvert or two new areas of pavement that may cross the creek.
- New renewable energy technologies Solar and geothermal technologies are being considered for implementation.

- □ Majority of improvements and operations would be moved to a 20acre site and includes construction of the following:
 - Main Administration Building Two-story building, which may include Trusted Traveler operations
 - Non-Commercial Inspection Facilities (Primary and Secondary) Includes 5
 primary and 10 secondary passenger canopied lanes and parking spaces, and one
 passenger vehicle bay
 - Commercial Inspection Facilities Includes one canopied lane and booth, one bus lane, Non-Intrusive Inspection Building, Commercial Building, Commercial Dock, Secure Parking Enclosure, Commercial Impound Lot, Truck Inspection Staging, and two commercial bays
 - Indoor Firing Range
 - Kennel
 - Outbound Inspection Facilities Includes a canopied non-commercial booth and Outbound Inspection Building
 - Pedestrian Inspection Satellite Building
 - Toll Booth



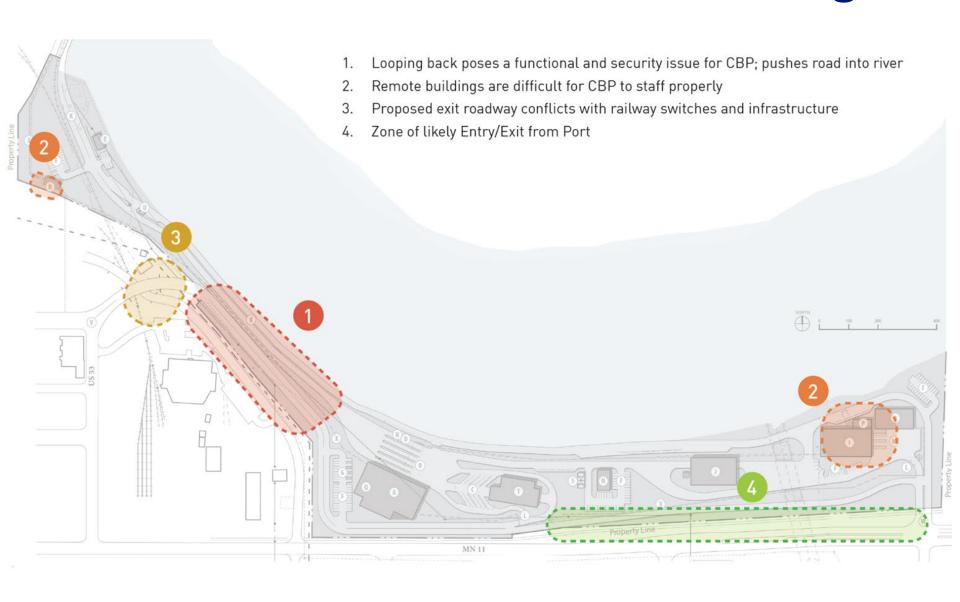
2011 EIS Preferred Alternative with Project Updates

Note: Figure does not reflect daylighted culvert or stormwater redesign.

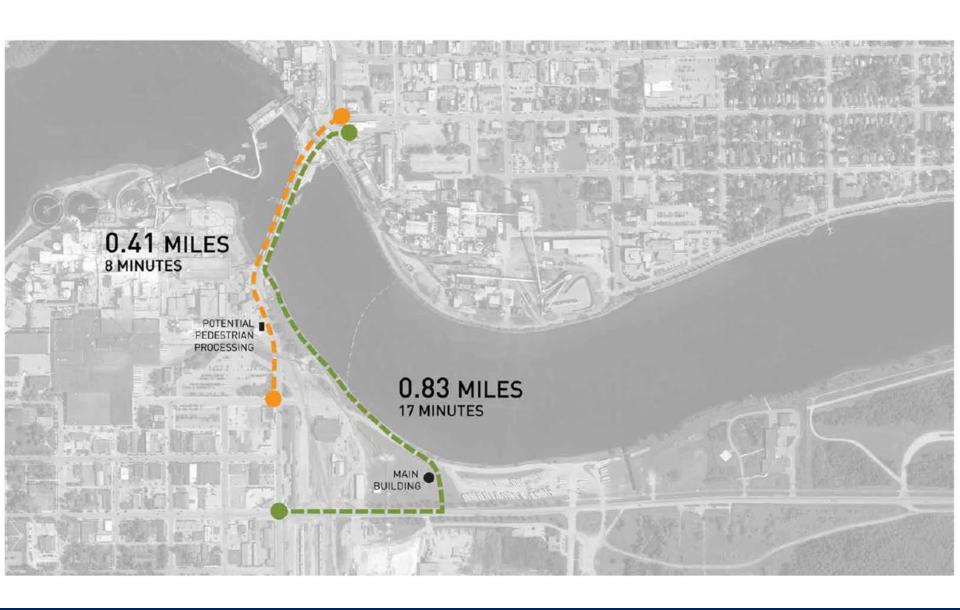
Pedestrian & POV Access Point Change

- Draft SEIS currently considers POV access point at 2nd Avenue and 2nd Street, near existing access point.
- Following finalization of the Draft SEIS, it was identified there may be design constraints with this configuration due to
 - Limitations with the narrowness of the site.
 - CBP Security Concerns
 - Concerns of MD&W with impacts on rail switches
- Internal planning is still ongoing but potential change may include shifting POV access point to southern boundary of expansion area on SR-11, west of commercial vehicle access point.
- In effort for transparency, disclosing this potential change to solicit public feedback on this potential change.
- Any changes, including public concerns, would be addressed in the Final SEIS.

Pedestrian & POV Access Point Change



Pedestrian Access Point Change Overview



Project Alternatives

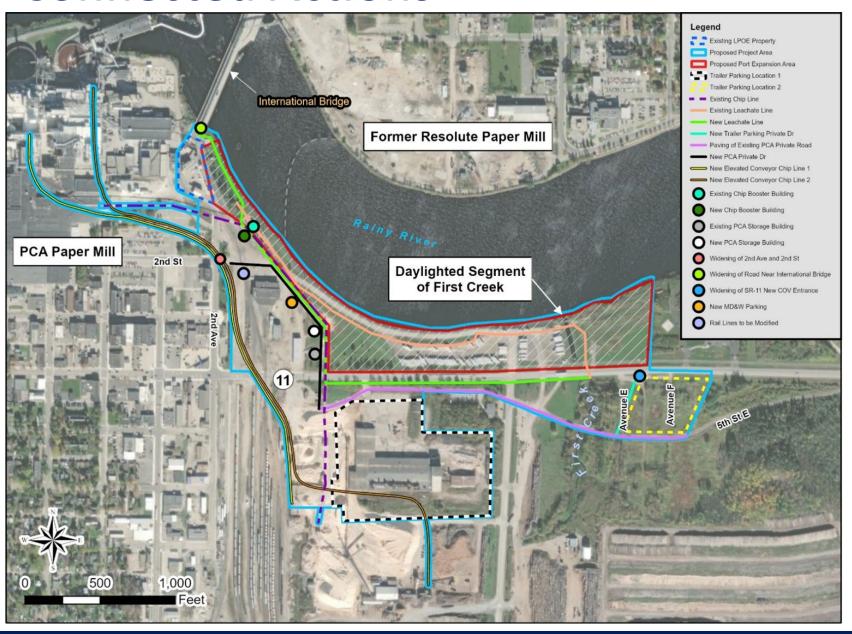
GSA has identified one "action" alternative and the "no action" alternative analyzed in the SEIS.

- ➤ 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.
 - Renewable energy technologies may be incorporated into the final facility design, including solar, geothermal, or river water cooling, which would require placement of heat exchangers within the Rainy River and other structures near the shoreline.
- ➤ 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.

Connected Actions

- Site preparation for proposed GSA development would trigger relocation of some existing utilities and PCA buildings and infrastructure, either within the LPOE via easements or moved off site to the west and south on PCA-owned land.
 - PCA chip line booster building, storage building relocated
 - Existing Leachate Line removed and re-routed
 - MD&W Railway Lines and Parking Areas relocated
 - Roadway modifications adjacent to expansion area and near bridge
 - Relocated Trailer Parking
 - Utilities Relocation (CentraGas, Minnesota Power)
 - Demolition of existing forced-air chip line and construction of two new chip lines (conveyor belt)

Connected Actions



Summary of Environmental Impacts (Table 1 of 5)

RESOURCE	ALTERNATIVE 1 (FULL BUILD) IMPACTS	NO ACTION ALTERNATIVE	
Geology, Topography, and Soils	<u>Construction</u> : Long-term, minor adverse impacts during demolition, clearing, and excavation. Total maximum disturbance of 20.5 acres of expansion area and approximately 60 acres for connected action footprints. Long-term, negligible adverse impacts on topography. <u>Operation</u> : No adverse impacts to geology or topography. Long-term, minor adverse impacts to soils. Maximum increase in impervious surface area of 13.3 acres in the proposed expansion area and 3.5 acres in the connected action footprints.	No impacts on existing geology, topography, and soils.	
Water Resources	Construction: Overall, short-term and long-term, minor to moderate adverse impacts on water resources from land disturbance activities involving 20.5 acres of expansion area and approximately 60 acres for connected actions. Short-term, negligible adverse impacts to regional water supply. Short-term, minor adverse impacts to groundwater. Operation: Long-term, negligible to minor adverse impacts by an increase in surface runoff from an additional 13.3 of 16.8 acres of impervious surface in the proposed expansion area and up to 3.5 acres in the connected action footprints. Long-term, minor adverse impacts to floodplains due to construction within a 1-percent annual-chance and 0.2-percent-annual-chance floodplain. Long-term beneficial impact from relocation of a leachate pipeline. Long-term, negligible adverse impact on groundwater if geothermal wells are drilled.	Limited adverse impacts on existing water resources due to maintenance activities at the LPOE. Existing leachate line would not be relocated and would continue to pose a contamination risk to First Creek, Rainy River, and other downstream waters. Flooding risks would remain along SR-11 as the First Creek daylighted segment would not be improved.	
Biological Resources	<u>Construction</u> : Short- and long-term, minor adverse impacts by removal of vegetation. Short-term, minor adverse impacts on local wildlife in the areas cleared. No adverse impacts on special status species. <u>Operation</u> : No adverse impacts to vegetation or terrestrial wildlife. Long-term, minor adverse impacts to aquatic habitat from de-icing salt usage and a potential geothermal river water cooling system.	No impacts on existing biological resources.	

Summary of Environmental Impacts (Table 2 of 5)

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RESOURCE	ALTERNATIVE 1 (FULL BUILD) IMPACTS	NO ACTION ALTERNATIVE
Air Quality	<u>Construction</u> : Short-term, minor adverse impacts to local air quality from	No changes to air quality and GHG
and Climate	construction emissions and activities. Negligible, incremental contribution to	emissions.
Change	greenhouse gas emissions and global climate change.	
	<u>Operation</u> : Beneficial long-term impact on air quality from increased energy efficiency features. Anticipated long-term, beneficial impacts on air quality from a reduction in the wait time for personally owned vehicles to be processed by a CBP officer. Negligible, incremental contribution to greenhouse gas emissions and global climate change.	
Noise	<u>Construction</u> : Short-term, minor adverse impacts from construction activity on the closest sensitive noise receptors. Short-term, minor adverse impacts on sensitive noise receptors along major roadway corridors.	No new increases in noise levels or impacts to the noise environment.
	<u>Operation</u> : Long-term, negligible to minor adverse impact from expanded operations and traffic. Long-term, minor beneficial impact within city's central business district from reduced congestion and relocation of truck entry point. Long-term, minor beneficial impacts on LPOE inspection employees and patrons from relocation away from PCA facilities.	
Traffic and Transportation	Construction: Short-term, minor adverse impacts to roadway traffic from construction-related traffic. Short-term, minor adverse impacts on pedestrian facilities and the Rainy Lake Bike Trail. Operation: Long-term, negligible adverse impacts on traffic from workers at the expanded LPOE. Long-term, minor adverse impacts to traffic flows on SR-11 and users on the Rainy Lake Bike Trail from truck traffic. Long-term, beneficial impact to portions of the city's downtown by relocating the truck access point. Long-term, negligible to minor, beneficial impacts by increasing queuing space and removing vehicles from city streets.	Long-term, minor, adverse impacts on traffic would remain, as congestion and queueing issues would continue and result in traffic safety issues, with the continued railway conflicts exacerbating such issues.

Summary of Environmental Impacts (Table 3 of 5)

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RESOURCE	ALTERNATIVE 1 (FULL BUILD) IMPACTS	NO ACTION ALTERNATIVE
Land Use and	<u>Construction</u> : Short-term, minor impacts on PCA operations, adjacent land	No changes in land use would
Visual	uses, and recreational uses. GSA would acquire approximately 20.5 acres of	occur.
Resources	land from PCA and RLD and proposed development would not conflict with local land use planning or zoning. Because the project area and surrounding areas are mainly industrial in nature, construction activities would result in short-term, negligible adverse impact on the surrounding viewshed. Operation: Project would not conflict with its current zoning designation of M-2A (Manufacturing). Long-term, minor adverse impacts to users of the Bike Trail and SR-11 at new truck access point. Long-term, negligible adverse and long-term, minor, beneficial impact to the overall visual quality. Long-term, negligible to minor, beneficial impacts to regional haze conditions are expected as the new LPOE facility would operate more efficiently and reduce idling times.	Long-term minor adverse impacts to visual resources as existing structures would continue to deteriorate and degrade the aesthetic quality of the LPOE. Long-term increases in idling time could contribute to regional haze.
Infrastructure and Utilities	 Construction: Short-term, minor to moderate adverse impacts on facilities and utilities due to relocation and reconnection. Short-term, minor adverse impacts on public utility providers from increasing demands on service to support construction activities. Operation: Long-term, major, beneficial impact on facilities and infrastructure for CBP. Long-term, negligible to minor adverse impacts to utilities from increased demand. Long-term, minor adverse impacts to stormwater management systems. Increased demand on most utility services would be offset by a more efficient, sustainable facility design. 	LPOE would not benefit from updated facilities and infrastructure with LEED certification, designed to accommodate renewable energy sources and achieve sustainable standards.

Summary of Environmental Impacts (Table 4 of 5)

RESOURCE	ALTERNATIVE 1 (FULL BUILD) IMPACTS	NO ACTION ALTERNATIVE	
Socioeconomics	<u>Construction</u> : Short-term, negligible to minor adverse impact on local and regional population and housing. Short-term, minor, beneficial impact on unemployment and income locally. Short-term, moderate, beneficial impacts from construction spending and job creation. Short-term, minor adverse impacts associated with decreased quality of life for the closest residents. <u>Operation</u> : Long-term, negligible to minor, adverse impact on population and housing locally from slight increase in workers. Long-term, negligible to minor, beneficial impact on labor and earnings locally. Minor to moderate, beneficial effects on personal travel expenditures by redirection of COV traffic. Long-term, minor to moderate, beneficial impacts on unemployment. Long-term, minor to moderate, beneficial impacts to quality of life from reduced traffic congestion and road improvements.	No change to number of personnel. No impacts on existing population and housing, labor and income, the local economy, and public services in International Falls.	
Cultural Resources	<u>Construction</u> : Adverse effects under NHPA and major impacts could occur under NEPA if archaeological resources are encountered during ground-disturbing activities. No adverse effects to aboveground historic-age resources are expected from the Proposed Action. GSA is continuing consultation under Section 106; results of the consultation process, as well as any applicable impact reduction measures, will be included in the Final SEIS. <u>Operation</u> : No adverse effects under NHPA and less-than-significant impacts under NEPA to archaeological resources would be anticipated. No additional effects under NHPA or impacts under NEPA would occur to aboveground historic-age resources beyond those described under <i>Construction</i> .	No adverse effects under NHPA and no adverse impacts under NEPA to cultural resources would be expected.	

Summary of Environmental Impacts (Table 5 of 5)

RESOURCE	ALTERNATIVE 1 (FULL BUILD) IMPACTS	NO ACTION ALTERNATIVE
Human Health and Safety	<u>Construction</u> : Short-term, negligible to minor adverse impacts on human health and safety locally. Short-term, negligible to minor adverse impacts locally and regionally from hazardous materials use and waste handling. <u>Operation</u> : Long-term, negligible to minor, adverse effects on human health and safety locally during operations. Long-term, minor to moderate beneficial impacts on public safety locally by improving traffic patterns and minimizing risks of vehicular and pedestrian accidents near the LPOE. Long-term, negligible to minor adverse impacts related to hazardous materials and waste handling.	Negligible impacts would occur as there would be no change in risks to human safety, hazardous materials usage, or waste generation.
Environmental Justice and Protection of Children's Health and Safety	 Construction: No disproportionately high and adverse impact on environmental justice during construction. Beneficial impacts may have a disproportionately favorable effect for minority and low-income populations locally. Minor to moderate adverse impacts to children's health and safety during construction. Operation: No disproportionately high and adverse impact on environmental justice during operations as operations of new LPOE would generally remain comparable to current operations. 	No creation of direct or indirect jobs would occur; therefore, no potential beneficial impacts for existing environmental justice populations.

Next Steps



A Notice of Availability for the Draft SEIS was published in the *Federal Register* on October 27, 2023 to start the public comment period.





The public comment period ends December 11, 2023.





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





A waiting period will begin with the publication of the Notice of Availability in the *Federal Register* for the Final SEIS.





Issuance of Record of Decision (ROD).

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

Anticipated Overall Project Schedule

- Project Planning and Development (we are here)
 - December 2022 March 2024
- Design
 - Summer 2023 Fall 2025
- Construction
 - Spring 2025 Winter 2028
- Substantial Completion: Spring 2029

Port of Entry to remain operational 24/7, 365 days a year during construction

Design Team Introduction



HGA







Architectural Design and overall project management

Mechanical, Electrical, Civil, and Structural Engineering, and cost Estimating

Landscape Architecture

Transportation Engineering

Security Integration

Sustainability

Detailed Design Activities

- Summer 2023 Fall 2023
 - » Feasibility Study Review against site survey and current operational requirements
- Spring 2024 Summer 2024
 - » Concept Design: Develop 3 design options for site layout, massing, and materials for buildings and site
- Fall 2024 Spring 2025
 - » Develop preferred concept with support systems and preliminary detail

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 (December 11, 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 December 11, 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.



Commenting Session

Request to Speak

In person:

- Sign up at sign-in table.
- 2. Wait to be called up by the Moderator.
- State your <u>name</u> and any applicable <u>affiliation</u> 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.
- State your <u>name</u> and any applicable <u>affiliation</u> 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.
- Click 'Send.'

