

**STATE OF CONNECTICUT
DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION**

RECORD OF DECISION

Prepared in accordance with the Connecticut Environmental Policy Act

**NEW HAVEN-HARTFORD-SPRINGFIELD LINE
HIGH SPEED INTERCITY PASSENGER RAIL PROJECT**



State Project No. 170-2296

NOVEMBER 2012

Participating Agencies

State of Connecticut Department of Transportation
Federal Railroad Administration
Federal Transit Administration

Table of Contents

I.	Decision.....	1
II.	Statement of Environmental Impact.....	1
III.	Agency Coordination and Public Involvement.....	1

Attachment A: Environmental Assessment/Environmental Impact Evaluation,
Executive Summary (May 2012) and the Errata to the EA/EIE

Attachment B: Agency Coordination and Public Involvement

Attachment C: Scoping Notices and EA/EIE Notice of Availability
with Affidavits

Attachment D: Comments and Responses

Note: Because of its size, Attachment D is being provided to you on a CD. It also can be found at www.nhhsrail.com by clicking Environmental Assessment and then viewing Appendix A – Comments and Responses.

I. DECISION

The Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) and the Connecticut Department of Transportation (CTDOT) intend to continue with the implementation of the Proposed Action, which is the New Haven, Hartford, and Springfield (NHHS) High-Speed Intercity Passenger Rail Project. This decision is based upon the Environmental Assessment/Environmental Impact Evaluation (EA/EIE) (May 2012) that was prepared for the Proposed Action and the comments received during the public review period for the EA/EIE (May 8 – June 22, 2012). A copy of the Executive Summary that was included in the EA/EIE and the Errata to the EA/EIE is attached (see Attachment A).

II. STATEMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT

There will be no significant impacts to the environment as a result of the proposed Action. All practical means to avoid or minimize any associated environmental impacts have been adopted. The mitigation measures in the EA/EIE, and where applicable, the responses to comments have been adopted.

III. AGENCY COORINATION AND PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT

Agency coordination and public involvement for the NHHS High Speed Intercity Passenger Rail Project EA/EIE were conducted in accordance with NEPA and CEPA. These Acts and their implementing regulations require that the environmental review of any significant activity undertaken, respectively, by a federal entity or (in the case of CEPA) a state, and which has the potential to impact the environment, be prepared in consultation with appropriate agencies.

The public has been continuously engaged since 2002 in the development of improved passenger rail service in the NHHS rail corridor. This includes public participation in the NEPA/CEPA process associated with implementation of commuter rail along the NHHS rail corridor, as well as in the 2010 Environmental Review and the current 2011 EA/EIE. During the public involvement effort for this EA/EIE, CTDOT has revisited the elected officials and managers of all of the NHHS rail corridor's towns, and has engaged the public to discuss the proposed project and receive public input. Through that effort, the proposed project has been refined to incorporate needs articulated by the towns' representatives (see Attachment B).

The public scoping process for the Proposed Action began on September 20, 2011 with the publication of the scoping notice in the Environmental Monitor (Attachment C). The purpose of the notice was to inform and solicit comments from the public concerning the Proposed Action. The public comment period for scoping ended on October 20, 2011.

A Notice of Availability for the EA/EIE, which included the notice for the three Public Hearings that were held, was advertised in the Environmental Monitor on May 8, May 22, June 5, and June 19, 2012, as well as, in the Hartford Courant, the New Haven Register, the Springfield Republican on May 8, May 15, and May 20, 2012, La Voz (a Spanish newspaper) on May 10, May 17, and May 24, 2012, and the Meriden Record-Journal on May 15 and May 20 (see Attachment C).

The EA/EIE was available for review during the entire 45-day public comment period at www.nhhsrail.com, the Connecticut Department of Transportation, the City or Town Clerk's Office and the Public Libraries

Record of Decision
New Haven-Hartford-Springfield Line
High Speed Intercity Passenger Rail Project

in the affected municipalities along the rail corridor, the South Central Regional Council of Governments, the Central Connecticut Regional Planning Agency, the Capitol Region Council of Governments, and the Pioneer Valley Planning Commission.

Comments were submitted via the project website, in writing, by email, or as verbal testimony at the three public hearings. Responses to all comments received are included in Attachment D (see CD or visit www.nhhsrail.com and click on the Environmental Assessment tab and then Appendix A).

Record of Decision
New Haven-Hartford-Springfield Line
High Speed Intercity Passenger Rail Project

Attachment A
Environmental Assessment/Environmental Impact Evaluation
Executive Summary and the Errata
to the Environmental Assessment

Record of Decision
New Haven-Hartford-Springfield Line
High Speed Intercity Passenger Rail Project

Attachment B
Agency Coordination and Public Involvement

Record of Decision
New Haven-Hartford-Springfield Line
High Speed Intercity Passenger Rail Project

Attachment C
Scoping Notices and EA/EIE Notice of Availability
with Affidavits