



International Falls Land Port of Entry Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement

Public Meeting Handout
November 8, 2023, 6 p.m. - 8 p.m., CST



Introduction

The U.S. General Services Administration (GSA) has prepared a Draft Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement (SEIS) and Floodplain Assessment and Statement of Findings and is undergoing consultation under Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act. The Draft SEIS analyzes the potential impacts resulting from the expansion and modernization of the International Falls Land Port of Entry (LPOE), 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 (CBP). The SEIS supplements the 2011 Final Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for the International Falls LPOE Improvements Study and analyzes 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 CBP. 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 since the 2011 Final EIS was completed. The 2011 EIS analyzed five build alternatives and in 2012, GSA issued the Record of Decision which identified its Preferred Alternative. The 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 (approximately 20 acres) from the Packing Corporation of America (PCA) and Recreational Land Development. GSA analyzed one “action” alternative and a “no action” alternative in the SEIS:

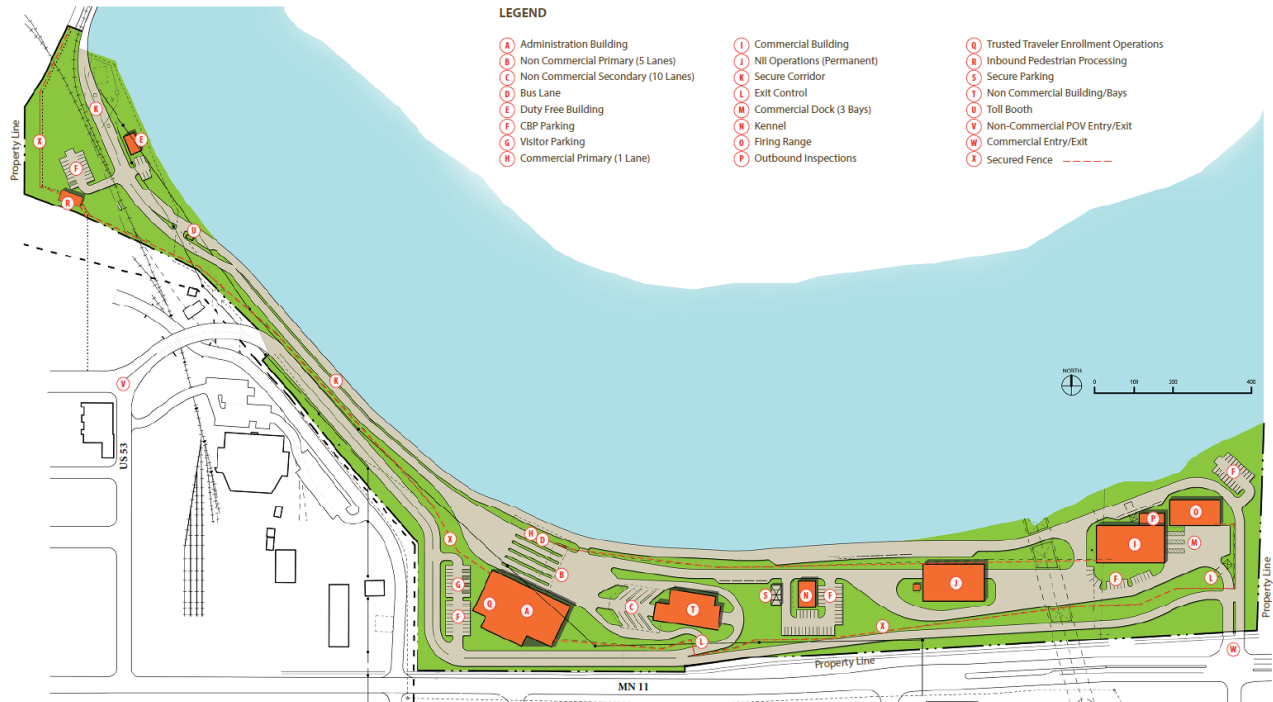
- **Alternative 1: Full Build** – Construct the facilities as described in the Preferred Alternative assessed in the 2011 EIS and modified by project updates. Alternative 1 would incorporate sustainable, climate-resilient, cyber-secure, and operationally-efficient design. GSA would seek to meet or exceed energy and sustainability goals established by federal guidelines and policies, along with industry-standard building codes and best practices. See Figure 1 for a conceptual layout of Alternative 1.
- **No Action Alternative** – Analysis of this alternative will satisfy federal requirements for analyzing “no action” under the National Environmental Policy Act (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 Draft EIS public comment period of the NEPA process.



NEPA directs federal agencies to conduct environmental reviews to consider the potential impacts on the environment by their proposed actions and also requires that agencies take into account public concerns in reaching a decision that is in the best overall public interest. The public comment period provides an opportunity for citizens to review the Draft SEIS and provide comments on the environmental analysis. Upon closing of the public comment period, GSA will consider all comments and, if necessary, conduct further analyses. The Final SEIS will provide responses to substantive comments. The NEPA process and consultation under Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act are running concurrently.



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

Figure 1. Alternative 1 – 2011 EIS Preferred Action Alternative with Project Updates (Conceptual Layout)

For project updates, visit:

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

Public Comments

Public comments must be postmarked or received by December 11, 2023, in order to be considered during development of the Final 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 public meeting.
- On comment form – For those attending the meeting in-person, you may submit written comments on forms provided at the public 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
 230 S. Dearborn Street, Suite 3600
 Chicago, IL 60604

For further information, or if assistance is needed in attending the public meeting, contact Michael Gonczar, NEPA Program Manager, GSA Region 5, at 312-810-2326 or michael.gonczar@gsa.gov.