

SUPPORTING JUSTIFICATION
Notice of Funding Availability and Solicitation of Applications for Grants
under the Railroad Rehabilitation and Repair Grant Program

OMB Control Number 2130-0580

Summary:

- This submission is a request for a revision of the previous emergency clearance request granted by OMB on 11/05/2013.
- The total number of burden hours requested for this submission is 504 hours.
- The total number of burden hours previously approved was 4,454.
- The change in burden is decreased by 3,950 hours. This collection no longer includes any burden hours associated with accepting new grants, as no additional funding is available after December 9, 2013.

- 1. EXPLAIN THE CIRCUMSTANCES THAT MAKE THE COLLECTION OF INFORMATION NECESSARY. IDENTIFY ANY LEGAL OR ADMINISTRATIVE REQUIREMENTS THAT NECESSITATE THE COLLECTION. ATTACH A COPY OF THE APPROPRIATE SECTION OF EACH STATUTE AND REGULATION MANDATING OR AUTHORIZING THE COLLECTION OF INFORMATION.**

Background

The Consolidated Security, Disaster Assistance, and Continuing Appropriations Act, 2009 (Pub. L. 110-329; September 30, 2008), established the Railroad Rehabilitation and Repair Program, making Federal funds available directly to States. This Program allowed grants to fund up to 80 percent of the cost of rehabilitation and repairs to Class II and Class III railroad infrastructure damaged by hurricanes, floods, and other natural disasters in areas that are located in counties that have been identified in a Disaster Declaration for Public Assistance by the President under title IV of the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act of 1974. Funding was made available on a reimbursement basis for costs incurred after a major disaster declaration that was made between January 1, 2008 and the date of the publication of the notice of funding availability in the counties covered by such a declaration. Rehabilitation and repairs include rights-of-way, bridges, signals, and other infrastructure which is part of the general railroad system of transportation and primarily used by railroads to move freight traffic.

FRA recently revised this ICR to allow for the submission of additional grants under this

program based on the Notice of Funding Availability published by FRA on 10/13/2013 and the emergency clearance request approved by OMB on 11/05/2013. Any grants submitted as part of this previous information collection request were due by December 9, 2013. Therefore, this revision no longer includes any burden hours for the application process, as no new applications are being accepted at this time.

Due to the nature of these disaster assistance funds, current economic conditions, and the various States need for immediate assistance to vital freight transportation pathways and the important role these sectors of transportation play in the overall national economy, FRA is requesting OMB to extend this Information Collection Request (ICR) in order to manage the current grants obligated under this program until the remaining grants have properly closed-out and are completed.

2. INDICATE HOW, BY WHOM, AND FOR WHAT PURPOSE THE INFORMATION IS TO BE USED. EXCEPT FOR A NEW COLLECTION, INDICATE THE ACTUAL USE THE AGENCY HAS MADE OF THE INFORMATION RECEIVED FROM THE CURRENT COLLECTION.

The proposed collection of information will be used solely by FRA staff (and potentially contractors) to review grant applications, when applicable and funding is available, to determine whether they fulfill the requirements and criteria established by statute and agency guidelines. The collection of information – applications and other necessary documentation – will be used by FRA to ensure that grants are awarded to those applicants whose proposed project(s) are most consistent with the eligibility requirements, selection criteria, and goals and purposes established in the appropriating statute. Thus, the collection of information will provide the means for the agency to make the most well informed decisions regarding the awarding of the prescribed statutory grant money, and will facilitate prompt aid to eligible States and communities affected by recent natural disasters for needed railroad rehabilitation and repair projects.

FRA will use the information collected to ensure that all applicable Federal statutes, such as the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), the National Historic Preservation Act, and the Endangered Species Act are complied with by eligible States seeking Railroad Rehabilitation and Repair funds. Additionally, FRA will use the information collected to monitor various aspects of agency approved Railroad Rehabilitation and Repair projects, including: the progress, completion, and performance of individual projects; the financial status of projects that detail outlays and requests for reimbursement for physical construction; final requests for payment; patent disclosure (if applicable); and condition of Federally-owned property (if applicable) that are included in required close-out reports by State governments. This monitoring and follow-up information is essential if FRA is to carry-out the Congressional mandate and ensure that Federal grant money is used appropriately and effectively.

3. DESCRIBE WHETHER, BY WHOM, AND TO WHAT EXTENT, THE COLLECTION OF INFORMATION INVOLVES THE USE OF AUTOMATED,

ELECTRONIC, MECHANICAL, OR OTHER TECHNOLOGICAL COLLECTION TECHNIQUES OR OTHER FORMS OF INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY, E.G. PERMITTING ELECTRONIC SUBMISSION OF RESPONSES, AND THE BASIS FOR THE DECISION FOR ADOPTING THIS MEANS OF COLLECTION. ALSO DESCRIBE ANY CONSIDERATION OF USING INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY TO REDUCE BURDEN.

FRA strongly supports and encourages the use of advanced information technology, wherever possible, to reduce burden on respondents. FRA has championed the use of advanced information technology, particularly electronic recordkeeping, for many years now. In compliance with both the requirements of the Paperwork Reduction Act (PRA) and Government Paperwork Elimination Act (GPEA), FRA provides for electronic submission of application information under this Railroad Rehabilitation and Repair Grant Program. In fact, all grant applications submitted under this program by State departments of transportation must be submitted to FRA through the Internet at <http://www.grants.gov>. Only documents which are impractical to submit electronically, such as oversized engineering drawings, will be permitted to be transmitted to FRA in paper format.

It should be noted that the total burden for the proposed collection of information is fairly minimal.

4. DESCRIBE EFFORTS TO IDENTIFY DUPLICATION. SHOW SPECIFICALLY WHY ANY SIMILAR INFORMATION ALREADY AVAILABLE CANNOT BE USED OR MODIFIED FOR USE FOR THE PURPOSES DESCRIBED IN ITEM 2 ABOVE.

The applications are generally project specific and resulting from a recent disaster that damaged the railroad infrastructure. The information provided in an application package is unique and not available elsewhere.

When appropriate, to reduce duplication, relevant materials previously provided to FRA may be referenced and described as unchanged. To the extent referenced, this information need not be resubmitted for a grant application.

5. IF THE COLLECTION OF INFORMATION IMPACTS SMALL BUSINESSES OR OTHER SMALL ENTITIES (ITEM 5 OF OMB FORM 83-I), DESCRIBE ANY METHODS USED TO MINIMIZE BURDEN.

Participation in the Railroad Rehabilitation and Repair Grant Program is completely voluntary. Application eligibility is limited, by statute, to States with counties that the President declared a major disaster after January 1, 2008, under Title IV of the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act of 1974. As such, no small businesses or other small entities are anticipated to be impacted by this collection of information.

Again, it should be noted that the total burden for this proposed collection of information is fairly minimal.

6. DESCRIBE THE CONSEQUENCE TO FEDERAL PROGRAM OR POLICY ACTIVITIES IF THE COLLECTION IS NOT CONDUCTED OR IS CONDUCTED LESS FREQUENTLY, AS WELL AS ANY TECHNICAL OR LEGAL OBSTACLES TO REDUCING BURDEN.

If this information were not select project and collected, FRA would be unable to fulfill its Congressional mandate to competitively award funding under the Railroad Rehabilitation and Repair Grant Program. Specifically, the applications and supporting materials are necessary for FRA to determine project eligibility, to evaluate project merits, and to competitively award funds and close-out the grants awarded under this program

If this information were not collected, FRA would have no way to ensure that all applicable Federal statutes, such as the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), the National Historic Preservation Act, and the Endangered Species Act are complied with to enable FRA to provide Railroad Rehabilitation and Repair grant funds. Without this collection of information, FRA would be unable to fulfill its obligations under NEPA. Project construction cannot begin until all appropriate environmental and historic documentation has been completed, and FRA has satisfied all applicable environmental responsibilities.

Without this collection of information, FRA would have no way to monitor various aspects of agency approved Railroad Rehabilitation and Repair projects, including: the progress, completion, and performance of individual projects; the financial status of the project that details outlays and requests for reimbursement for physical construction; final requests for payment; patent disclosure (if applicable); and condition of Federally-owned property (if applicable) that are included in required close-out reports by State governments. This monitoring and follow-up information is essential if FRA is to carry-out the Congressional mandate and ensure that Federal grant money is used appropriately and effectively.

In sum, the collection of information enables FRA to fulfill a Congressional mandate, contribute to eligible economic development of various States and communities affected by hurricanes, floods and natural disasters, and facilitate the rehabilitation and repair of eligible structures/projects so as to ensure safe rail transportation.

7. EXPLAIN ANY SPECIAL CIRCUMSTANCES THAT WOULD CAUSE AN INFORMATION COLLECTION TO BE CONDUCTED IN A MANNER:

- **REQUIRING RESPONDENTS TO REPORT INFORMATION TO THE**

AGENCY MORE OFTEN THAN QUARTERLY;

- **REQUIRING RESPONDENTS TO PREPARE A WRITTEN RESPONSE TO A COLLECTION OF INFORMATION IN FEWER THAN 30 DAYS AFTER RECEIPT OF IT;**
- **REQUIRING RESPONDENTS TO SUBMIT MORE THAN AN ORIGINAL AND TWO COPIES OF ANY DOCUMENT;**
- **REQUIRING RESPONDENTS TO RETAIN RECORDS, OTHER THAN HEALTH, MEDICAL, GOVERNMENT CONTRACT, GRANT-IN-AID, OR TAX RECORDS FOR MORE THAN THREE YEARS;**
- **IN CONNECTION WITH A STATISTICAL SURVEY, THAT IS NOT DESIGNED TO PRODUCE VALID AND RELIABLE RESULTS THAT CAN BE GENERALIZED TO THE UNIVERSE OF STUDY;**
- **REQUIRING THE USE OF A STATISTICAL DATA CLASSIFICATION THAT HAS NOT BEEN REVIEWED AND APPROVED BY OMB;**
- **THAT INCLUDES A PLEDGE OF CONFIDENTIALITY THAT IS NOT SUPPORTED BY AUTHORITY ESTABLISHED IN STATUTE OR REGULATION, THAT IS NOT SUPPORTED BY DISCLOSURE AND DATA SECURITY POLICIES THAT ARE CONSISTENT WITH THE PLEDGE, OR WHICH UNNECESSARILY IMPEDES SHARING OF DATA WITH OTHER AGENCIES FOR COMPATIBLE CONFIDENTIAL USE; OR**
- **REQUIRING RESPONDENTS TO SUBMIT PROPRIETARY TRADE SECRET, OR OTHER CONFIDENTIAL INFORMATION UNLESS THE AGENCY CAN DEMONSTRATE THAT IT HAS INSTITUTED PROCEDURES TO PROTECT THE INFORMATION'S CONFIDENTIALITY TO THE EXTENT PERMITTED BY LAW.**

All the information collection requirements associated with this submission are in compliance with this section.

- 8. IF APPLICABLE, PROVIDE A COPY AND IDENTIFY THE DATE AND PAGE NUMBER OF PUBLICATION IN THE FEDERAL REGISTER OF THE AGENCY'S NOTICE, REQUIRED BY 5 CFR 1320.8(d), SOLICITING COMMENTS ON THE INFORMATION COLLECTION PRIOR TO SUBMISSION TO OMB. SUMMARIZE PUBLIC COMMENTS RECEIVED IN RESPONSE TO THAT NOTICE AND DESCRIBE ACTIONS TAKEN BY THE AGENCY IN RESPONSE TO THOSE COMMENTS. SPECIFICALLY ADDRESS COMMENTS RECEIVED ON COST AND HOUR BURDEN.**

DESCRIBE EFFORTS TO CONSULT WITH PERSONS OUTSIDE THE AGENCY TO OBTAIN THEIR VIEWS ON THE AVAILABILITY OF DATA, FREQUENCY OF COLLECTION, THE CLARITY OF INSTRUCTIONS AND RECORDKEEPING, DISCLOSURE, OR REPORTING FORMAT (IF ANY), AND ON THE DATA ELEMENTS TO BE RECORDED, DISCLOSED, OR REPORTED.

CONSULTATION WITH REPRESENTATIVES OF THOSE FROM WHOM INFORMATION IS TO BE OBTAINED OR THOSE WHO MUST COMPILE RECORDS SHOULD OCCUR AT LEAST ONCE EVERY 3 YEARS--EVEN IF THE COLLECTION OF INFORMATION ACTIVITY IS THE SAME AS IN PRIOR PERIODS. THERE MAY BE CIRCUMSTANCES THAT MAY PRECLUDE CONSULTATION IN A SPECIFIC SITUATION. THESE CIRCUMSTANCES SHOULD BE EXPLAINED.

As required by the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, FRA published a Notice in the **Federal Register** on Monday, December 23, 2013, 60-day FRN, and Monday, February 24, 2014, 30-day FRN, soliciting comment on this particular collection of information (Vol. 78, Number 246 and Vol. 79, Number 36, respectively). FRA received no comments in response to this notice.

- 9. EXPLAIN ANY DECISION TO PROVIDE ANY PAYMENT OR GIFT TO RESPONDENTS, OTHER THAN REMUNERATION OF CONTRACTORS OR GRANTEES.**

There are no monetary payments provided or gifts made to respondents in connection with this information collection.

- 10. DESCRIBE ANY ASSURANCE OF CONFIDENTIALITY PROVIDED TO RESPONDENTS AND THE BASIS FOR THE ASSURANCE IN STATUTE, REGULATION, OR AGENCY POLICY.**

Information collected is not of a confidential nature, and FRA pledges no confidentiality.

- 11. PROVIDE ADDITIONAL JUSTIFICATION FOR ANY QUESTIONS OF A SENSITIVE NATURE, SUCH AS SEXUAL BEHAVIOR AND ATTITUDES, RELIGIOUS BELIEFS, AND OTHER MATTERS THAT ARE COMMONLY CONSIDERED PRIVATE. THIS JUSTIFICATION SHOULD INCLUDE THE REASONS WHY THE AGENCY CONSIDERS THE QUESTIONS NECESSARY, THE SPECIFIC USES TO BE MADE OF THE INFORMATION, THE EXPLANATION TO BE GIVEN TO PERSONS FROM WHOM THE INFORMATION IS REQUESTED, AND ANY STEPS TO BE TAKEN TO OBTAIN THEIR CONSENT.**

There are no questions or information of a sensitive nature or data that would normally be considered private contained in this information collection.

12. PROVIDE ESTIMATES OF THE HOUR BURDEN OF THE COLLECTION OF INFORMATION. THE STATEMENT SHOULD:

- **INDICATE THE NUMBER OF RESPONDENTS, FREQUENCY OF RESPONSE, ANNUAL HOUR BURDEN, AND AN EXPLANATION OF HOW THE BURDEN WAS ESTIMATED. UNLESS DIRECTED TO DO SO, AGENCIES SHOULD NOT CONDUCT SPECIAL SURVEYS TO OBTAIN INFORMATION ON WHICH TO BASE HOUR BURDEN ESTIMATES. CONSULTATION WITH A SAMPLE (FEWER THAN 10) OF POTENTIAL RESPONDENTS IS DESIRABLE. IF THE HOUR BURDEN ON RESPONDENTS IS EXPECTED TO VARY WIDELY BECAUSE OF DIFFERENCES IN ACTIVITY, SIZE, OR COMPLEXITY, SHOW THE RANGE OF ESTIMATED HOUR BURDEN, AND EXPLAIN THE REASONS FOR THE VARIANCE. GENERALLY, ESTIMATES SHOULD NOT INCLUDE BURDENS HOUR FOR CUSTOMARY AND USUAL BUSINESS PRACTICES**

- **IF THIS REQUEST FOR APPROVAL COVERS MORE THAN ONE FORM, PROVIDE SEPARATE HOUR BURDEN ESTIMATES FOR EACH FORM AND AGGREGATE THE HOUR BURDENS IN ITEMS 13 OF OMB FORM 83-I.**

- **PROVIDE ESTIMATES OF ANNUALIZED COST TO RESPONDENTS FOR THE HOUR BURDENS FOR COLLECTIONS OF INFORMATION, IDENTIFYING AND USING APPROPRIATE WAGE RATE CATEGORIES. THE COST OF CONTRACTING OUT OR PAYING OUTSIDE PARTIES FOR INFORMATION COLLECTION ACTIVITIES SHOULD NOT BE INCLUDED HERE. INSTEAD, THIS COST SHOULD BE INCLUDED IN ITEM 14.**

Note: Based on the language in Public Law 110-329, which stipulates that 80 percent of the cost of rehabilitation and repairs to Class II and Class III railroad infrastructure damaged by hurricanes, floods, and natural disaster that are located in counties identified in a Disaster Declaration for Public Assistance by the President under Title IV of the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Act of 1974 are eligible for the Congressionally mandated grant program, respondent universe is estimated at 49 States.

Application Process

All grant applications for opportunities funded under this section are submitted to FRA through www.grants.gov. The electronic posting contains all of the information needed to apply for a grant, including required supporting documentation.

FRA estimates that zero (0) applications will be submitted at this time (Application for Federal Assistance SF-424), as no additional funding under this program is currently available. Therefore, the total annual burden for this requirement is currently 0 hours .

Respondent Universe:

49
States

Burden time per response:

315
hours

Frequency of Response:

On occasion

Annual number of Responses: 0 grant applications

Annual Burden: 0

Calculation: 0 grant applications x 315 hrs. = 0 hours

Environmental Assessment

The provision of grant funds by FRA under this program is subject to a variety of environmental and historic preservation statutes and implementing regulations. We anticipate, that when any grants are submitted under this ICR, that all applicants will submit FRA's categorical Exclusion Worksheet (<http://www.fra.dot.gov/us/content/1606>). The Categorical Exclusion must be completed and approved by the authorized FRA employee prior to a decision by FRA to approve a project for construction.

FRA will receive no additional applications after December 9, 2013; therefore, no environmental and historic documents will need to be submitted to the agency under the above requirement. The total annual burden for this requirement is 0 hours.

Respondent Universe: 49 States

Burden time per response:

80
hours

Frequency of Response:

On occasion

Annual number of Responses: 0 environmental documents

Annual Burden: 0 hours

Calculation: 0 environmental documents x 80 hrs. = 0 hours

Close-Out Procedures

- A. Within 90 days after the period performance end date of the grant or termination by FRA, the grantee must submit to FRA any or all of the following information, depending on the terms of the grant: (1) Final performance or progress report; (2) Financial Status Report (SF 425) or Outlay Report and Request for Reimbursement for Construction Programs (SF-271); (3) Request for Payment (SF-270); (4) Patent disclosure (if applicable); and (5) Federally-owned Property Report (if applicable).

FRA estimates that six (6) grantees will complete the necessary close-out documents stipulated under the above requirement. It is estimated that it will take approximately four (4) hours to complete all (each set) of the prescribed forms/reports. Total annual burden for this requirement is 24 hours.

Respondent Universe:

49
States/
Local
govern
ments

Burden time per response:

4 hours

Frequency of Response: On occasion
Annual number of Responses: 6 sets of close-out documents
Annual Burden: 24 hours

Calculation: 6 sets of close-out documents x 4 hrs. = 24 hours

- B. If the project is completed, within 90 days after the period performance end date of the grant or termination by FRA, the grantee must complete a full inspection of all construction work completed under the grant and submit a report to FRA. If the project is not completed, the State must submit a report detailing why the project was not completed.

FRA estimates that six (6) States will complete the reports prescribed under the above requirement. It is estimated that it will take approximately 80 hours to complete the necessary construction and inspection report. Total annual burden for this requirement is 480 hours.

Respondent Universe:

		49 States/ Local govern- ments
Burden time per response:		
		80 hours
Frequency of Response:		On occasion
Annual number of Responses:	6 reports	
Annual Burden:		480 hours

Calculation: 6 reports x 80 hrs. = 480 hours

Total burden for Close-Out Procedures portion of information collection requirement is 504 hours (24 + 480).

The total burden for this entire information collection is 504 hours (Application process 0 hours + Environment assessment 0 hours + Close-out Procedures 504 hours).

13. PROVIDE AN ESTIMATE OF THE TOTAL ANNUAL COST BURDEN TO RESPONDENTS OR RECORDKEEPERS RESULTING FROM THE COLLECTION OF INFORMATION. (DO NOT INCLUDE THE COSTS OF ANY HOUR BURDEN SHOWN IN ITEMS 12 AND 14).

- **THE COST ESTIMATES SHOULD BE SPLIT INTO TWO COMPONENTS: (A) A TOTAL CAPITAL AND START-UP COST COMPONENT (ANNUALIZED OVER ITS EXPECTED USEFUL LIFE); AND (B) A TOTAL OPERATION AND MAINTENANCE AND PURCHASE OF SERVICES COMPONENT. THE ESTIMATES SHOULD TAKE INTO ACCOUNT COSTS ASSOCIATED WITH GENERATING, MAINTAINING, AND DISCLOSING OR PROVIDING THE INFORMATION. INCLUDE DESCRIPTIONS OF METHODS USED TO ESTIMATE MAJOR COSTS FACTORS INCLUDING SYSTEM AND TECHNOLOGY ACQUISITION, EXPECTED USEFUL LIFE OF CAPITAL EQUIPMENT, THE DISCOUNT RATE(S), AND THE TIME PERIOD OVER WHICH COSTS WILL BE INCURRED. CAPITAL AND START-UP COSTS INCLUDE, AMONG OTHER ITEMS, PREPARATIONS FOR COLLECTING INFORMATION SUCH AS PURCHASING COMPUTERS AND SOFTWARE; MONITORING, SAMPLING, DRILLING AND TESTING EQUIPMENT; AND RECORD STORAGE FACILITIES.**

- **IF COST ESTIMATES ARE EXPECTED TO VARY WIDELY, AGENCIES SHOULD PRESENT RANGES OF COST BURDENS AND EXPLAIN THE REASONS FOR THE VARIANCE. THE COST OF PURCHASING OR CONTRACTING OUT INFORMATION COLLECTION SERVICES SHOULD BE A PART OF THIS COST BURDEN ESTIMATE. IN DEVELOPING COST BURDEN ESTIMATES, AGENCIES MAY CONSULT WITH A SAMPLE OF RESPONDENTS (FEWER THAN 10), UTILIZE THE 60-DAY PRE-OMB SUBMISSION PUBLIC COMMENT PROCESS AND USE EXISTING ECONOMIC OR REGULATORY IMPACT ANALYSIS ASSOCIATED WITH THE RULEMAKING CONTAINING THE INFORMATION COLLECTION, AS APPROPRIATE.**

- **GENERALLY, ESTIMATES SHOULD NOT INCLUDE PURCHASES OF EQUIPMENT OR SERVICES, OR PORTIONS THEREOF, MADE (1) PRIOR TO OCTOBER 1, 1995, (2) TO ACHIEVE REGULATORY COMPLIANCE WITH REQUIREMENTS NOT ASSOCIATED WITH THE INFORMATION COLLECTION, (3) FOR REASONS OTHER THAN TO PROVIDE INFORMATION OR KEEP RECORDS FOR THE GOVERNMENT, OR (4) AS PART OF CUSTOMARY AND USUAL BUSINESS OR PRIVATE PRACTICES.**

There are no additional costs to respondents resulting from the proposed collection of information.

14. **PROVIDE ESTIMATES OF ANNUALIZED COST TO THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT. ALSO, PROVIDE A DESCRIPTION OF THE METHOD USED TO ESTIMATE COSTS, WHICH SHOULD INCLUDE QUANTIFICATION OF HOURS, OPERATIONAL EXPENSES SUCH AS EQUIPMENT, OVERHEAD, PRINTING, AND SUPPORT STAFF, AND ANY OTHER EXPENSE THAT WOULD NOT HAVE BEEN INCURRED WITHOUT THIS COLLECTION OF INFORMATION. AGENCIES ALSO MAY AGGREGATE COST ESTIMATES FROM ITEMS 12, 13, AND 14 IN A SINGLE TABLE.**

FRA estimates there will be no cost to the Federal government, as no new applications will be reviewed as part of this ICR.

15. **EXPLAIN THE REASONS FOR ANY PROGRAM CHANGES OR ADJUSTMENTS REPORTED IN ITEMS 13 OR 14 OF THE OMB FORM 83-I.**

Changes were made to this collection based on the non-availability of funds under this program.

16. **FOR COLLECTIONS OF INFORMATION WHOSE RESULTS WILL BE**

PUBLISHED, OUTLINE PLANS FOR TABULATION, AND PUBLICATION. ADDRESS ANY COMPLEX ANALYTICAL TECHNIQUES THAT WILL BE USED. PROVIDE THE TIME SCHEDULE FOR THE ENTIRE PROJECT, INCLUDING BEGINNING AND ENDING DATES OF THE COLLECTION OF INFORMATION, COMPLETION OF REPORT, PUBLICATION DATES, AND OTHER ACTIONS.

There are no plans for publication of this submission. The information will be used exclusively for purposes of administering the Railroad Rehabilitation and Repair Grant Program.

17. IF SEEKING APPROVAL TO NOT DISPLAY THE EXPIRATION DATE FOR OMB APPROVAL OF THE INFORMATION COLLECTION, EXPLAIN THE REASONS THAT DISPLAY WOULD BE INAPPROPRIATE.

Once OMB approval is received, FRA will publish the approval number for these information collection requirements in the Federal Register.

18. EXPLAIN EACH EXCEPTION TO THE CERTIFICATION STATEMENT IDENTIFIED IN ITEM 19, "CERTIFICATION FOR PAPERWORK REDUCTION ACT SUBMISSIONS," OF OMB FORM 83-I.

No exceptions are taken at this time.

Meeting Department of Transportation (DOT) Strategic Goals

This information collection supports DOT's strategic goals of Safety, State of Good Repair, Economic Competitiveness, and Environmental Sustainability. The proposed collection of information will enable FRA to determine eligibility and evaluate proposals for Railroad Rehabilitation and Repair Grant funds. These funds will provide assistance to States, communities, and railroads affected by natural disasters to rehabilitate and repair vital infrastructure so that freight traffic can be moved safely and efficiently along important rail corridors. Track, signals, and other infrastructure that is damaged or not properly maintained in a state of good repair can lead to accidents/incidents causing injuries, fatalities, and extensive property damage. The Railroad Rehabilitation and Repair Grant Program is designed to reduce the risk of rail traffic being moved along Class II and Class III railroad infrastructure that is not up to Federal safety standards by providing critical funding for much needed rehabilitation and repair for eligible areas.

The proposed collection of information also supports the DOT strategic goal of economic competitiveness. In particular, the proposed collection of information will allow FRA to direct grant money to repair critical railroad infrastructure that communities and businesses rely upon to ship and receive goods. The funding may also create short-term jobs for individuals repairing and rebuilding affected infrastructure.

Finally, the proposed collection of information supports the DOT strategic goal of environmental sustainability. The collection of information provides FRA with the means to ensure that all applicable Federal statutes, such as the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), the National Historic Preservation Act, and the Endangered Species Act are complied with by eligible States seeking Railroad Rehabilitation and Repair funds. Without this collection of information, FRA would be unable to fulfill its obligations under NEPA. The use of Federal funds in a project triggers the NEPA process. A grantee may have its own personnel conduct the required environmental assessment or may contract with private parties to perform the NEPA review, but FRA must issue the final review document. Project construction can not begin until all appropriate environmental and historic documentation has been completed, and can not begin until the FRA Associate Administrator has completed his/her review of this documentation and given his/her approval.