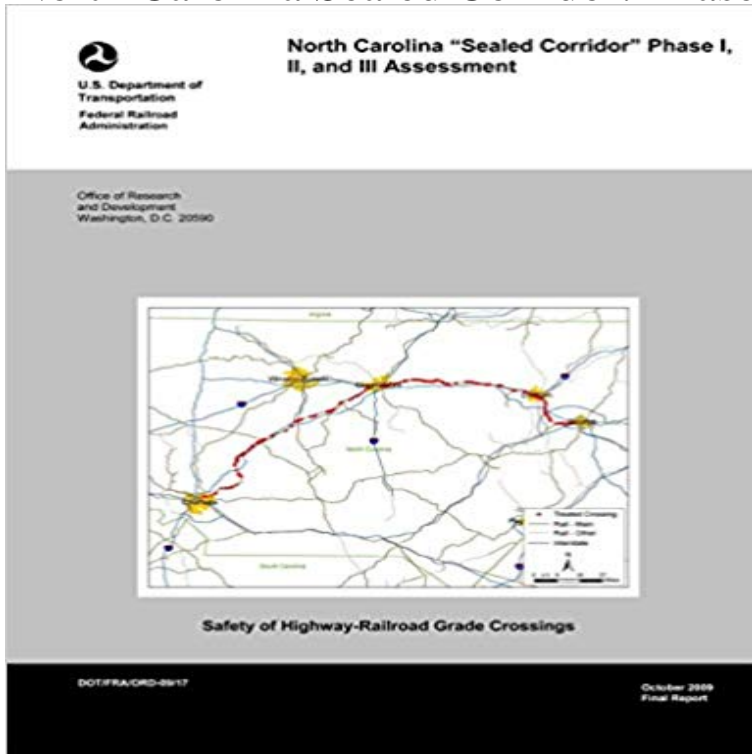


North Carolina Sealed Corridor: Phase I, II, and III Assessment



The Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) tasked the John A. Volpe National Transportation Systems Center to document the further success of the North Carolina DOT Sealed Corridor project through Phases I, II, and III. The Sealed Corridor is the section of the designated Southeast High Speed Rail (SEHSR) Corridor that runs through North Carolina. The Sealed Corridor program aims at improving or consolidating every highway-rail grade crossing, both public and private, along the Charlotte to Raleigh rail route in North Carolina. The research on the Sealed Corridor assessed the progress made at the 189 crossings that have been treated with improved warning devices or closed between Charlotte and Raleigh, from March 1995 through September 2004. Two approaches were used to describe benefits in terms of lives saved: a fatal crash analysis to derive lives saved, and prediction of lives saved based on the reduction of risk at the treated crossings. Both methods estimated that more than 19 lives have been saved as a result of the 189 improvements implemented through December 2004. Analysis also shows that the resulting reduction in accidents, due to the crossing improvements, is sustainable through 2010, when anticipated exposure and train speeds along the corridor will be increased.

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