

**JOINT STB/USDA GRAIN LOGISTICS TASK FORCE ISSUES THIRD REPORT ON GRAIN TRANSPORTATION  
PROSPECTS**

Surface Transportation Board (Board) Chairman Linda J. Morgan reported the issuance by the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) of the third in a series of Grain Transportation Prospects Reports prepared by a joint grain logistics task force composed of personnel from the Board and the USDA. The report projects 1998/1999 grain production and export demand to be up 4 percent over 1997/1998 levels, with domestic use at an all time high. Demand for rail transportation is expected to remain soft during the first months of 1999.

The inter-agency task force was initiated pursuant to a memorandum of understanding signed by Chairman Morgan and Agriculture Secretary Dan Glickman, and continues to produce informative and timely reports designed to address shipper and railroad needs related to recurring seasonal issues that affect the transportation of grain and grain products.

As with past reports, Chairman Morgan applauded the USDA staff for their considerable commitment to this effort, and pledged the Board's continued commitment as well. She noted that the task force effort is yet another example of a cooperative effort for the benefit of the public.

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