

Surface Transportation Board

[Finance Docket No. 30186 (Sub No. 2)]

Tongue River Railroad Company—Construction and Operation of an Additional Rail Line From Ashland to Decker, in Rosebud and Big Horn Counties, Montana

The Tongue River Railroad Company (TRRC) applied to the Interstate Commerce Commission (ICC), now the Surface Transportation Board (Board),¹ for authority to construct and operate a 41-mile rail line from a point south of Ashland, MT to a point near Decker, MT. The ICC's Section of Environmental Analysis (SEA) began the environmental analysis of this proposal, considering the potential environmental impacts associated with TRRC's preferred route, the Four Mile Creek Alternative, and a "no build" alternative. SEA completed a Draft Environmental Impact Statement (served July 17, 1992) and a Supplemental Draft Environmental Impact Statement (served March 17, 1994).

The Board's SEA has now completed the environmental review process, and its conclusions are discussed in the Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS). SEA concludes that the Four Mile Creek Alternative would be environmentally preferable to the TRRC preferred route if the Board grants TRRC's proposal, because it would avoid the environmentally sensitive Tongue River Canyon. With the recommended mitigation, construction and operation of that route should meet applicant's project goals of providing more efficient service to coal shippers in this area, without having an unduly severe impact on the environment. The "no build" alternative, while environmentally benign, would not meet those objectives.

Copies of the FEIS have been served on representative individuals and agencies. Also, two copies are available for review at the Rosebud County Library, Forsyth, MT. For additional information about the FEIS, please contact: Elaine K. Kaiser, Chief, Section of Environmental Analysis, or Dana White at (202) 927-6213.

Copies of the FEIS are available to all persons for a fee through DC News and

Data Inc. at (202) 289-4357, (assistance for the hearing impaired is available through TDD services (202) 927-5721) or by pickup from Room 2229, 1201 Constitution Avenue, NW, Washington, DC 20423. Because of limited resources, we are no longer able to make additional copies available at no cost.

Date made available to the public: April 11, 1996.

By the Surface Transportation Board, Elaine K. Kaiser, Chief, Section of Environmental Analysis, Office of Economic and Environmental Analysis.

Vernon A. Williams,

Secretary.

[FR Doc. 96-9227 Filed 4-18-96; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4915-00-U

Surface Transportation Board¹

[STB Docket No. AB-6 (Sub-No. 376X)]

Burlington Northern Railroad Company—Abandonment Exemption—in Saline County, NE

Burlington Northern Railroad Company (BN) filed a notice of exemption under 49 CFR 1152 Subpart F—*Exempt Abandonments* to abandon 22.91 miles of its line of railroad between milepost 0.33 near DeWitt and milepost 23.26 near Tobias, including the stations of Swanton at milepost 8.3, and Western at milepost 15.6 in Saline County, NE.²

¹ The ICC Termination Act of 1995, Pub. L. No. 104-88, 109 Stat. 803, which was enacted on December 29, 1995, and took effect on January 1, 1996, abolished the Interstate Commerce Commission and transferred certain functions to the Surface Transportation Board (Board). This notice relates to functions that are subject to the Board's jurisdiction pursuant to 49 U.S.C. 10903.

² BN has proposed a consummation date for the abandonment that is four months from the date of filing of its verified notice. This proposed consummation date is based on BN's reading of 49 U.S.C. 10904. The first sentence of 10904(c) provides, "Within 4 months after an application is filed under section 10903, any person may offer to subsidize or purchase the railroad line that is the subject of such application."

The Board recently addressed this provision in proposing revised abandonment regulations to implement 49 U.S.C. 10903-04, as established by the ICC Termination Act. In *Abandonment and Discontinuance of Rail Lines and Rail Transportation Under 49 U.S.C. 10903*, STB Ex Parte No. 537 (STB served Mar. 15, 1996) slip op. at 10 [61 FR 11174, 11176 (Mar. 19, 1996)], the Board said, "We see the 4-month statutory deadline as an outer limit, which does not require us to delay resolution of proceedings where the entire time is not needed."

Based on the Board's statement, the exemption in this proceeding will be scheduled to become effective on May 21, 1996, or 50 days after BN's filing of its verified notice of exemption. This is consistent with the existing rules at 49 CFR 1152.50. Offers of financial assistance will be due according to deadlines established in this notice. Potential offerors will *not* have until 4 months after

BN has certified that: (1) no local traffic has moved over the line for at least 2 years; (2) there is no overhead traffic to be rerouted from the line; (3) no formal complaint filed by a user of rail service on the line (or by a state or local government entity acting on behalf of such user) regarding cessation of service over the line either is pending with the Board or with any U.S. District Court or has been decided in favor of complainant within the 2-year period; and (4) the requirements at 49 CFR 1105.7 (environmental reports), 49 CFR 1105.8 (historic reports), 49 CFR 1105.11 (transmittal letter), 49 CFR 1105.12 (newspaper publication), and 49 CFR 1152.50(d)(1) (notice to governmental agencies) have been met.

As a condition to use of this exemption, any employee adversely affected by the abandonment shall be protected under *Oregon Short Line R. Co.—Abandonment—Goshen*, 360 I.C.C. 91 (1979). To address whether this condition adequately protects affected employees, a petition for partial revocation under 49 U.S.C. 10502(d) must be filed.

Provided no formal expression of intent to file an offer of financial assistance (OFA) has been received, this exemption will be effective on May 21, 1996, unless stayed pending reconsideration. Petitions to stay that do not involve environmental issues,³ formal expressions of intent to file an OFA under 49 CFR 1152.27(c)(2),⁴ and trail use/rail banking requests under 49 CFR 1152.29⁵ must be filed by April 29, 1996. Petitions to reopen or requests for public use conditions under 49 CFR 1152.28 must be filed by May 9, 1996, with: Office of the Secretary, Case Control Branch, Surface Transportation Board, 1201 Constitution Avenue, N.W., Washington, DC 20423.

A copy of any petition filed with the Board should be sent to applicant's representative: Sarah J. Whitley, General

the notice was filed by BN with the Board to make an offer of financial assistance.

While the exemption is scheduled to take effect on May 21, 1996, BN may of course delay consummation until a later date.

³ The Board will grant a stay if an informed decision on environmental issues (whether raised by a party or by the Board's Section of Environmental Analysis in its independent investigation) cannot be made before the exemption's effective date. See *Exemption of Out-of-Service Rail Lines*, 5 I.C.C.2d 377 (1989). Any request for a stay should be filed as soon as possible so that the Board may take appropriate action before the exemption's effective date.

⁴ See *Exempt. of Rail Abandonment—Offers of Finan. Assist.*, 4 I.C.C.2d 164 (1987).

⁵ The Board will accept late-filed trail use requests so long as the abandonment has not been consummated and the abandoning railroad is willing to negotiate an agreement.

¹ The ICC Termination Act of 1995, Pub. L. No. 104-88, 109 Stat. 803 (the Act), enacted December 29, 1995, and effective January 1, 1996 abolished the Interstate Commerce Commission and transferred certain rail proceedings to the Surface Transportation Board (Board) if they involve functions retained by the Act. This proceeding concerns a function, authorization of rail construction under 49 U.S.C. 10901, that has been transferred to the Board.

Attorney, Burlington Northern Railroad Company, 3800 Continental Plaza, 777 Main Street, Fort Worth, TX 76102-5384.

If the verified notice contains false or misleading information, the exemption is void *ab initio*.

BN has filed an environmental report which addresses the abandonment's effects, if any, on the environment and historic resources. The Section of Environmental Analysis (SEA) will issue an environmental assessment (EA) by April 24, 1996. Interested persons may obtain a copy of the EA by writing to SEA (Room 3219, Surface Transportation Board, Washington, DC 20423) or by calling Elaine Kaiser, Chief of SEA, at (202) 927-6248. Comments on environmental and historic preservation matters must be filed within 15 days after the EA becomes available to the public.

Environmental, historic preservation, public use, or trail use/rail banking conditions will be imposed, where appropriate, in a subsequent decision.

Decided: April 12, 1996.

By the Board, David M. Konschnik,
Director, Office of Proceedings.
Vernon A. Williams,
Secretary.

[FR Doc. 96-9679 Filed 4-18-96; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4915-00-P

DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS

Agency Information Collection Activities: Proposed Collection; Comment Request: Request for Determination of Reasonable Value (Used Manufactured Home), VA Form 26-8728

AGENCY: Veterans Benefits Administration, Department of Veterans Affairs.

ACTION: Notice.

SUMMARY: As part of its continuing effort to reduce paperwork and respondent burden, the Veterans Benefits Administration (VBA) invites the general public and other Federal agencies to comment on this information collection. This request for comment is being made pursuant to the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995 (Public Law 104-13; 44 U.S.C. 3506(c)(2)(A)). Comments should address the accuracy of the burden estimates and ways to minimize the burden including the use of automated collection techniques or the use of other forms of information technology, as well as other relevant aspects of the information collection.

DATES: Written comments and recommendations on the proposal for the collection of information should be received by no later than June 18, 1996.

ADDRESSES: Direct all written comments to Nancy J. Kessinger, Veterans Benefits Administration (20M30), Department of Veterans Affairs, 810 Vermont Avenue, NW, Washington, DC 20420. All comments will become a matter of public record and will be summarized in the VBA request for Office of Management and Budget (OMB) approval. In this document VBA is soliciting comments concerning the following information collection:

OMB Control Number: 2900-0241.

Title and Form Number: Request for Determination of Reasonable Value (Manufactured Home), VA Form 26-8728.

Type of Review: Extension of a currently approved collection.

Need and Uses: The form is used to obtain appraisal of used manufactured home units proposed for VA guaranteed financing to establish the reasonable value of such units and also serves as owner's/seller's request for liquidation of such units. Without the form, VA would have to require that requesters furnish this information by letter.

Current Actions: Section 3712 of Title 38 U.S.C., prohibits the guaranty of any loan for the purchase of a used manufactured home unless the loan amount is "not in excess of the amount determined to be reasonable" with respect to the value of the property, as determined by the Secretary. The form is submitted to VA by buyers, owners/sellers, and manufactured home dealers to obtain appraisals of used manufactured home units proposed for guaranteed financing. VA personnel extract data needed for the making of appraisals assignments to fee appraisers. The form is also used to request liquidation appraisals, and lenders terminating guaranteed loans on manufactured home units may forward the form to the fee appraiser designated by VA with a copy to the VA regional office of jurisdiction.

Affected Public: Individuals or households—Business or other for-profit.

Estimated Annual Burden: 117 hours.

Estimated Average Burden Per

Respondent: 10 minutes.

Frequency of Response: On occasion.

Estimated Number of Respondents: 700.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:

Requests for additional information or copies of the form should be directed to Department of Veterans Affairs, Attn: Jacquie McCray, Information

Management Service (045A4), Department of Veterans Affairs, 810 Vermont Avenue, NW, Washington, DC 20420, Telephone (202) 565-8266 or FAX (202) 565-8267.

Dated: April 9, 1996.

By direction of the Secretary.

Donald L. Neilson,

Director, Information Management Service.

[FR Doc. 96-9648 Filed 4-18-96; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 8320-01-P

Agency Information Collection Activities: Proposed Collection; Comment Request

AGENCY: Veterans Benefits Administration, Department of Veterans Affairs.

ACTION: Notice.

SUMMARY: As part of its continuing effort to reduce paperwork and respondent burden, the Veterans Benefits Administration (VBA) invites the general public and other Federal agencies to comment on this information collection. This request for comment is being made pursuant to the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995 (Public Law 104-13; 44 U.S.C. 3506(c)(2)(A)). Comments should address the accuracy of the burden estimates and ways to minimize the burden including the use of automated collection techniques or the use of other forms of information technology, as well as other relevant aspects of the information collection.

DATES: Written comments and recommendations on the proposal for the collection of information should be received by no later than June 18, 1996.

ADDRESSES: Direct all written comments to Nancy J. Kessinger, Veterans Benefits Administration (20M30), Department of Veterans Affairs, 810 Vermont Avenue, NW, Washington, DC 20420. All comments will become a matter of public record and will be summarized in the VBA request for Office of Management and Budget (OMB) approval. In this document VBA is soliciting comments concerning the following information collection:

OMB Control Number: 2900-0089.

Title and Form Number: Statement of Dependency of Parents, VA Form 21-509.

Type of Review: Reinstatement, without change, for a previously approved collection for which approval has expired.

Need and Uses: The form is needed to gather income and dependency information from applicants who are seeking payment of benefits as or for a