

rural roadway on four-lane right-of-way. Highway 26 is scheduled to be expanded to four lanes between Interstate 90 and the Village of Milton in year 1999 and also through the Village of Johnson Creek area in year 2000.

Information describing the proposed action and soliciting comments will be sent to appropriate Federal, State and local agencies and to private organizations and citizens who have previously expressed, or are known to have interest in this proposal. A series of public meetings will be held in the project corridor throughout the date gathering and development of alternatives. In addition, a public hearing will be held. Public notice will be given of the time and place of the meetings and hearing. The Draft EIS will be available for public and agency review and comment prior to the hearing. As part of the scoping process, coordination activities have begun. Scoping meetings will continue to be held on an individual or group meeting basis. Agency coordination will be accomplished during these meetings.

To ensure that the full range of issues related to this proposed action are addressed and all significant issues are identified, comments and suggestions are invited from all interested parties. Comments or questions concerning this proposed action and the EIS should be directed to FHWA at the address provided above.

(Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance Program Number 20.205, Highway Planning and Construction. The regulations implementing Executive Order 112372 regarding intergovernmental consultation on Federal programs and activities apply to this program)

Issued February 23, 1999.

**Richard C. Madrzak,**

*Field Operations Engineer, Madison, Wisconsin.*

[FR Doc. 99-5352 Filed 3-3-99; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4910-22-M

## DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

### Surface Transportation Board

[STB Finance Docket No. 33719]

#### **Yakima Interurban Lines Association—Acquisition Exemption—BNSF Acquisition, Inc.**

Yakima Interurban Lines Association (Yakima), a noncarrier, has filed a verified notice of exemption under 49 CFR 1150.31 to acquire from BNSF Acquisition, Inc., successor in interest to Washington Central Railroad Company, approximately 11.29 miles of

rail line between milepost 2.97, at Fruitvale, WA, and milepost 14.26, at Naches, WA.<sup>1</sup>

The transaction is expected to be consummated on or after February 25, 1999.

If the verified notice contains false or misleading information, the exemption is void *ab initio*. Petitions to reopen the proceeding to revoke the exemption under 49 U.S.C. 10502(d) may be filed at any time. The filing of a petition to revoke will not automatically stay the transaction.

An original and 10 copies of all pleadings, referring to STB Finance Docket No. 33719, must be filed with the Surface Transportation Board, Office of the Secretary, Case Control Unit, 1925 K Street, NW, Washington, DC 20423-0001. In addition, a copy of each pleading must be served on Karl Morell, Esq., Ball Janik LLP, 1455 F Street, NW, Suite 225, Washington, DC 20005.

Board decisions and notices are available on our website at "WWW.STB.DOT.GOV."

Decided: February 24, 1999.

By the Board, David M. Konschnik, Director, Office of Proceedings.

**Vernon A. Williams,**

*Secretary.*

[FR Doc. 99-5248 Filed 3-3-99; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4915-00-P

## DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

### Surface Transportation Board

[STB Docket No. AB-391 (Sub-No. 6X)]

#### **Red River Valley & Western Railroad Company—Abandonment Exemption—in Cass County, ND**

Red River Valley & Western Railroad Company (RRVW) has filed a notice of exemption under 49 CFR 1152 Subpart F—*Exempt Abandonments* to abandon approximately 18.4 miles of rail line from milepost 18.7 near Alice to milepost 0.3 near Casselton, ND. The line traverses United States Postal Service Zip Codes 58003 and 58079.

RRVW has certified that: (1) No local traffic has moved over the line for at least 2 years; (2) there is no overhead traffic on 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 Surface Transportation Board (Board) or with any U.S. District Court or has been decided in favor of complainant within

<sup>1</sup> Yakima will be the exclusive operator of the rail line.

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 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 April 3, 1999, unless stayed pending reconsideration. Petitions to stay that do not involve environmental issues,<sup>1</sup> formal expressions of intent to file an OFA under 49 CFR 1152.27(c)(2),<sup>2</sup> and trail use/rail banking requests under 49 CFR 1152.29 must be filed by March 15, 1999. Petitions to reopen or requests for public use conditions under 49 CFR 1152.28 must be filed by March 24, 1999, with: Surface Transportation Board, Office of the Secretary, Case Control Unit, 1925 K Street, N.W., Washington, DC 20423.

A copy of any petition filed with the Board should be sent to applicant's representative: Rose-Michele Weinryb, Esq., Weiner, Brodsky, Sidman & Kider, P.C., 1350 New York Avenue, N.W., Suite 800, Washington, DC 20005-4797.

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

RRVW 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 March 9, 1999. Interested persons may obtain a copy of the EA by writing to SEA (Room 500, Surface Transportation Board, Washington, DC 20423) or by calling SEA, at (202) 565-1545. Comments on environmental and historic preservation

<sup>1</sup> 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.

<sup>2</sup> Each offer of financial assistance must be accompanied by the filing fee, which currently is set at \$1000. See 49 CFR 1002.2(f)(25).

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.

Pursuant to the provisions of 49 CFR 1152.29(e)(2), RRVW shall file a notice of consummation with the Board to signify that it has exercised the authority granted and fully abandoned the line. If consummation has not been effected by RRVW's filing of a notice of consummation by March 4, 2000, and there are no legal or regulatory barriers to consummation, the authority to abandon will automatically expire.

Board decisions and notices are available on our website at "WWW.STB.DOT.GOV."

Decided: February 26, 1999.

By the Board, David M. Konschnik, Director, Office of Proceedings.  
**Vernon A. Williams,**  
*Secretary.*  
 [FR Doc. 99-5306 Filed 3-3-99; 8:45 am]  
**BILLING CODE 4915-00-P**

**UNITED STATES INSTITUTE OF PEACE**

**Sunshine Act Meeting**

**AGENCY:** United States Institute of Peace.

**DATE/TIME:** Thursday, March 18, 1999; 9:00 a.m.-5:00 p.m.

**LOCATION:** 1200 17th Street, NW., 2nd Floor Conference Room, Washington, DC 20036.

**STATUS:** Open Session—Portions may be closed pursuant to Subsection (c) of Section 552(b) of Title 5, United States Code, as provided in subsection 1706(h)(3) of the United States Institute of Peace Act, Public Law 98-525.

**AGENDA:** March 1999 Board Meeting; Approval of Minutes of the Eighty-Eighth Meeting (January 21, 1999) of the

Board of Directors; Chairman's Report; President's Report; Committee Reports; Consideration of fellowship applications and individual Grants; Other General Issues.

**CONTACT:** Dr. Sheryl Brown, Director, Office of Communications, Telephone: (202) 457-1700.

Dated: March 2, 1999.

**Charles E. Nelson,**  
*Vice President for Management and Finance, United States Institute of Peace.*

[FR Doc. 99-5487 Filed 3-2-99; 2:33 pm]

**BILLING CODE 3155-01-M**

**DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS**

**Medical Research Service Merit Review Committee; Notice of Meetings**

The Department of Veterans Affairs gives notice under the Federal Advisory Committee Act, 5 U.S.C. App., of the following meetings to be held from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. as indicated below:

Subcommittee for	Date	Location
Immunology .....	March 15-16, 1999 .....	Holiday Inn Central.
Gastroenterology .....	March 18-19, 1999 .....	Holiday Inn Central.
Alcoholism & Drug Dependence .....	March 19, 1999 .....	Holiday Inn Central.
Oncology .....	March 22-23, 1999 .....	Holiday Inn Central.
Nephrology .....	March 24, 1999 .....	Holiday Inn Central.
Epidemiology .....	March 26, 1999 .....	Holiday Inn Central.
Aging & Clinical Geriatrics .....	March 29, 1999 .....	Holiday Inn Central.
Neurobiology-D .....	March 29-30, 1999 .....	Holiday Inn Central.
Cardiovascular Studies .....	April 5, 1999 .....	The River Inn.
Hematology .....	April 8, 1999 .....	Omni Shoreham.
Mental Hlth & Behavioral Sciences .....	April 8-9, 1999 .....	Omni Shoreham.
Infectious Diseases .....	April 8-9, 1999 .....	The River Inn.
Endocrinology .....	April 12-13, 1999 .....	The River Inn.
Neurobiology-C .....	April 16, 1999 .....	The River Inn.
Respiration .....	April 16, 1999 .....	The River Inn.
Surgery .....	April 17, 1999 .....	The River Inn.
General Medical Science .....	April 22-23, 1999 .....	The River Inn.
Medical Research Service Merit Review Committee .....	June 3, 1999 .....	Holiday Inn Central.

The addresses of the hotels are:

Holiday Inn Central, 1501 Rhode Island Avenue, NW., Washington, DC 20005

Omni Shoreham, 2500 Calvert Street, NW., Washington, DC 20008

The River Inn, 924-25th Street, NW., Washington, DC 20037

These subcommittee meetings will be for the purpose of evaluating the scientific merit of research conducted in each specialty by Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) investigators

working in VA Medical Centers and Clinics.

The subcommittee meetings will be open to the public for approximately one hour at the start of each meeting to discuss the general status of the program. The remaining portion of each subcommittee meeting will be closed to the public for the review, discussion, and evaluation of initial and renewal projects.

The closed portion of the meetings involves discussion, examination,

reference to, and oral review of site visits, staff and consultant critiques of research protocols and similar documents. During this portion of the subcommittee meetings, discussion and recommendations will deal with qualifications of personnel conducting the studies (the disclosure of which would constitute a clearly unwarranted invasion of personal privacy), as well as research information (the premature disclosure of which could significantly frustrate implementation of proposed