

of the railroad's line is to be abandoned and it is not part of a system that will benefit from the abandonment. See *Yreka Western Railroad Company—Abandonment Exemption—In Siskiyou County, CA*, STB Docket No. AB-246 (Sub-No. 2X) (STB served May 4, 1999).

In an application by a third party for a determination that the public convenience and necessity permits service over a line to be discontinued and the line itself to be abandoned, the issue before the Board is whether the public interest requires that the line in question be retained as part of the national rail system. By granting a third party (or "adverse") application, the Board withdraws its primary jurisdiction over the line. Questions concerning the disposition of the line, including the adjudication of various claims of ownership or other rights and obligations, are then left to state or local authorities. See *Kansas City Pub. Ser. Frgt. Operations Exempt.—Aban.*, 7 I.C.C.2d 216, 224–26 (1990).

Because IDOT intends to convert the property underlying the subject rail line to highway purposes, conflicting public use requests are not appropriate, and offers of financial assistance to acquire or subsidize service on the line will not be entertained in this proceeding.

Any interested person may file with the Board its protest of, or written comments concerning, the proposed abandonment and discontinuance of service.² Written comments and protests must identify the proceeding, *i.e.*, STB Docket No. AB-No. 838, in the case of the abandonment of the ESLJ line, and STB Docket No. AB-33 (Sub-No. 199), in the case of the discontinuance of service by UP, and must be filed by no later than October 6, 2003.

Protests must contain that party's entire case in opposition (case in chief) including the following: (1) Protestant's name, address, and business; (2) a statement describing protestant's interest in the proceeding including: (i) A description of the protestant's use of the line; (ii) if protestant does not use the line, information concerning the group or public interest it represents; and (iii) if protestant's interest is limited to the retention of service over a portion of the line, a description of the portion of the line subject to protestant's interest (with milepost designations if

available); (3) specific reasons why protestant opposes the application including information regarding protestant's reliance on the involved service (this information must be supported by affidavits of persons with personal knowledge of the fact(s)); and (4) any rebuttal of material submitted by applicant.

In addition, a commenting party or protestant may provide a statement of position and evidence regarding: (i) Environmental impact; (ii) impact on rural and community development; or (iii) recommended provisions for protection of the interests of employees.

All filings in response to this notice must refer to STB Docket No. AB-838 and STB Docket No. AB-33 (Sub-No. 199), and should be sent to: (1) Surface Transportation Board, 1925 K Street, NW., Washington, DC 20423-0001, and (2) Fritz R. Kahn, Esq., 1920 N Street, NW., (8th floor), Washington, DC 20036-1601. The original and 10 copies of all comments or protests shall be filed with the Board, together with a certificate of service. Except as otherwise set forth in part 1152, every document filed with the Board must be served on all parties to the abandonment and discontinuance proceeding. 49 CFR 1104.12(a).

Persons seeking information concerning the filing of protests may contact the Board's Office of Public Services at (202) 565-1592 or refer to the full abandonment and discontinuance regulations at 49 CFR part 1152. Questions concerning environmental issues may be directed to the Board's Section of Environmental Analysis (SEA) at (202) 565-1539. [TDD for the hearing impaired is available at 1-800-877-8339.]

An environmental assessment (EA) (or environmental impact statement (EIS), if necessary) prepared by SEA will be served upon all parties of record and upon any agencies or other persons who commented during its preparation. Other interested persons may contact SEA to obtain a copy of the EA (or EIS). EAs in abandonment or discontinuance proceedings normally will be made available within 33 days of the filing of the application. The deadline for submission of comments on the EA will generally be within 30 days of its service. The comments received will be addressed in the Board's decision. A supplemental EA or EIS may be issued where appropriate.

Board decisions and notices are available on our Web site at <http://www.stb.dot.gov>.

Decided: September 2, 2003.

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

Vernon A. Williams,
Secretary.

[FR Doc. 03-22773 Filed 9-8-03; 8:45 am]

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DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Surface Transportation Board

[STB Docket No. AB-290 (Sub-No. 238X)]

Norfolk Southern Railway Company— Abandonment Exemption—in Buchanan County, VA

Norfolk Southern Railway Company (NSR) has filed a notice of exemption under 49 CFR 1152 Subpart F—*Exempt Abandonments* to abandon 4.0 miles of its line of railroad between milepost BH-0.0 at Bull Creek and milepost BH-4.0 at Harman, in Buchanan County, VA. The line traverses United States Postal Service Zip Code 24618.

NSR has certified that: (1) No local traffic has moved over the line for at least 2 years; (2) no overhead traffic has moved over the line for at least 2 years and overhead traffic, if there were any, could be rerouted over other lines; (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 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 October 9, 2003,¹ unless

¹ In its notice, NSR indicated a proposed consummation date of October 8, 2003. Under 49 CFR 1152.50(d)(2), however, the earliest the exemption could become effective is 50 days after the verified notice of exemption was filed. The notice was filed on August 20, 2003. Therefore, the

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² Persons opposing the proposed abandonment or discontinuance who wish to participate actively and fully in the process through the submission of their entire opposition case in the form of verified statements and arguments, should file a protest. Persons who may oppose the abandonment but who do not wish to participate fully in the process by submitting verified statements of witnesses containing detailed evidence should file comments.

stayed pending reconsideration. Petitions to stay that do not involve environmental issues,² formal expressions of intent to file an OFA under 49 CFR 1152.27(c)(2),³ and trail use/rail banking requests under 49 CFR 1152.29 must be filed by September 19, 2003. Petitions to reopen or requests for public use conditions under 49 CFR 1152.28 must be filed by September 29, 2003, with: Surface Transportation Board, 1925 K Street NW., Washington, DC 20423-0001.

A copy of any petition filed with the Board should be sent to NSR's representative: James R. Paschall, General Attorney, Norfolk Southern Corporation, Three Commercial Place, Norfolk, VA 23510.

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

NSR has filed an environmental report which addresses the abandonment's effects, if any, on the environment or historic resources. SEA will issue an environmental assessment (EA) by September 12, 2003. Interested persons may obtain a copy of the EA by writing to SEA (Room 500, Surface Transportation Board, Washington, DC 20423-0001) or by calling SEA, at (202) 565-1539. Assistance for the hearing impaired is available through the Federal Information Relay Service (FIRS) at 1-800-877-8339. 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.

Pursuant to the provisions of 49 CFR 1152.29(e)(2), NSR shall file a notice of consummation with the Board to signify

effective date of the exemption is October 9, 2003, and consummation may not take place prior to that date. NSR's representative has been notified and has confirmed that consummation will not take place before October 9, 2003.

² 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 (SEA) 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.

³ Each OFA must be accompanied by the filing fee, which currently is set at \$1,100. See 49 CFR 1002.2(f)(25).

that it has exercised the authority granted and fully abandoned the line. If consummation has not been effected by NSR's filing of a notice of consummation by September 9, 2004, 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 Web site at <http://www.stb.dot.gov>.

Decided: August 29, 2003.

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

Vernon A. Williams,

Secretary.

[FR Doc. 03-22772 Filed 9-8-03; 8:45 am]

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DEPARTMENT OF THE TREASURY

Office of the General Counsel

Appointment of Members of the Legal Division to the Performance Review Board, Internal Revenue Service

Under the authority granted to me as Chief Counsel of the Internal Revenue Service by the General Counsel of the Department of the Treasury by General Counsel Order No. 21 (Rev. 4), pursuant to the Civil Service Reform Act, I have appointed the following persons to the Legal Division Performance Review Board, Internal Revenue Service Panel:

1. Chairperson, William Fox, Acting Deputy General Counsel.
2. John M. Dalrymple, Deputy Commissioner (Operations Support).
3. Eric Solomon, Deputy Assistant Secretary (Regulatory Affairs).

This publication is required by 5 U.S.C. 4314(c)(4).

Dated: September 4, 2003.

Emily A. Parker,

Acting Chief Counsel, Internal Revenue Service.

[FR Doc. 03-22947 Filed 9-8-03; 8:45 am]

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DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS

Veterans' Advisory Committee on Environmental Hazards; Notice of Meeting

The Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) gives notice under Public Law 92-

463 (Federal Advisory Committee Act) that a meeting of the Veterans' Advisory Committee on Environmental Hazards will be held on Wednesday and Thursday, October 8-9, 2003, from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. each day. The meeting will be held at the Department of Veterans Affairs, 810 Vermont Avenue, NW., Room 430, Washington, DC 20420. The meeting is open to the public.

The purpose of the Committee is to provide advice to the Secretary of Veterans Affairs on adverse health effects that may be associated with exposure to ionizing radiation and to make recommendations on proposed standards and guidelines regarding VA benefit claims based upon exposure to ionizing radiation.

The major items on the agenda for both days will be discussions and analyses of medical and scientific papers concerning the health effects of exposure to ionizing radiation. On the basis of those analyses and discussions, the Committee may make recommendations to the Secretary concerning diseases that are the result of exposure to ionizing radiation. The agenda for the second day will include planning future Committee activities and assignment of tasks among the members.

Those who wish to attend should contact Ms. Ersie Farber-Collins, of the Department of Veterans Affairs, Compensation and Pension Service, 810 Vermont Avenue, NW., Washington, DC 20420, at (202) 273-7268, or by fax at (202) 275-1728, prior to October 7, 2003. Members of the public may submit written questions or prepared statements for review by the Committee in advance of the meeting. Statements must be received at least five (5) days prior to the meeting and should be sent to Ms. Farber-Collins' attention at the address given above. Those who submit material may be asked to clarify it prior to its consideration by the Committee.

Dated: September 3, 2003.

By Direction of the Secretary:

E. Phillip Riggan,

Committee Management Officer.

[FR Doc. 03-22953 Filed 9-8-03; 8:45 am]

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