

The FHWA did not revise the proposed structure for stakeholder/public involvement within the STEP. Because of the numerous and diverse STEP stakeholders, the FHWA believes that it is important that the limited STEP resources focus on priority environment and planning surface transportation research needs. Also, we expect to continue efforts to coordinate STEP implementation with other cooperative research resources like State Planning Research (SPR), the Future Strategic Highway Research Program (SHRPII), National Cooperative Highway Research Program (NCHRP) and others to further leverage STEP funding. The final implementation strategy is available on the STEP Web site at: <http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/hep/step/index.htm>.

Suggestions for Research Activities

At this time, the FHWA is requesting suggestions for the lines of research that should be pursued within each emphasis area. For example, stakeholders who have an interest in the "Tools to Support Environment and Planning" emphasis area might suggest that it is important to research ways to identify business models to enhance transportation decision-making using geospatial data. Specific research work statements for this suggestion, if pursued under the STEP, would be crafted by FHWA, after careful consideration of stakeholder views.

Thus, the FHWA does not seek specific, detailed research proposals and discourages researchers from submitting proposals of that nature. Rather, the FHWA staff who will serve as contacts for each Emphasis Area will work with stakeholders in the 17 research emphasis areas to identify and prioritize lines of research within each area and to subsequently develop specific work activities.

The FHWA is issuing this notice to: (1) Announce the posting of the final STEP Implementation strategy on the STEP Web site; and (2) to solicit comments on proposed research activities to be undertaken in the STEP via the STEP Web site. The URL for the STEP is <http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/hep/step/index.htm>. The FHWA will use this Web site as a major mechanism for informing the public regarding the status of the STEP.

We invite the public to visit this Web site to obtain additional information on the STEP, as well as information on the process for forwarding comments to the FHWA regarding the STEP implementation plan.

Authority: Section 5207 of Public Law 109–59.

Issued on: July 28, 2006.

J. Richard Capka,

Federal Highway Administrator.

[FR Doc. E6–12664 Filed 8–3–06; 8:45 am]

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DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

National Highway Traffic Safety Administration

Announcing the Fifteenth Public Meeting of the Crash Injury Research and Engineering Network (CIREN)

AGENCY: National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA), DOT.

ACTION: Meeting announcement.

SUMMARY: This notice announces the Fifteenth Public Meeting of members of the Crash Injury Research and Engineering Network. CIREN is a collaborative effort to conduct research on crashes and injuries at eight Level 1 Trauma Centers linked by a computer network. Researchers can review data and share expertise, which could lead to a better understanding of crash injury mechanisms and the design of safer vehicles. Seven presentations on current research based on CIREN cases will be presented. The agenda will be posted to the CIREN Web site <http://www-nrd.nhtsa.dot.gov/departments/nrd-50/ciren/CIREN.html> three weeks prior to the meeting.

Date and Time: The meeting is scheduled from 8:30 a.m. to 2 p.m. on Wednesday, September 20th, 2006. This meeting will be hosted by the Froedtert Hospital and the Medical College of Wisconsin (MCW) CIREN Center.

ADDRESSES: The meeting will be held at: Radisson Hotel, 2300 N. Mayfair Road, Milwaukee, WI 53226, (414) 257–3400.

Special Demonstration: Following the CIREN research presentations, a tour of the MCW's car crash facility will be given along with a demonstration of an oblique pole impact test and an overview of current Federal Motor Vehicle Safety Standards including FMVSS No. 208 and FMVSS No. 214.

To Register for This Event: Contact Judy Citta at (414) 266–6435 or e-mail _WICIREN@MCW.edu (Under score precedes WICIREN). Please provide name, affiliation, phone number and e-mail address. Registration is strongly recommended and required for parties wishing to participate in the special demonstration. You must register by September 5, 2006. Late registrations or those not registered are still welcome to attend the public meeting but you may not be able to attend the special demonstrations.

For General Information: Dale Halloway, (414) 805–5439.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The CIREN System has been established, and crash cases have been entered into the database by each Center. CIREN cases may be viewed from the NHTSA/CIREN Web site at: <http://www-nrd.nhtsa.dot.gov/departments/nrd-50/ciren/CIREN.html>. NHTSA has held three Annual Conferences where CIREN research results were presented. Further information about the three previous CIREN conferences is also available through the NHTSA Web site. NHTSA held the first public meeting on May 5, 2000, with a topic of lower extremity injuries in motor vehicle crashes; the second public meeting on July 21, 2000, with a topic of side impact crashes; the third public meeting on November 30, 2000, with a topic of thoracic injuries in crashes; the fourth public meeting on March 16, 2001, with a topic of offset frontal collisions; the fifth public meeting on June 21, 2001, on CIREN outreach efforts; the sixth public meeting (held in Ann Arbor, Michigan), with a topic of injuries involving sport utility vehicles; the seventh public meeting on December 6, 2001, with a topic of age related injuries (elderly and children); the eighth public meeting on April 25, 2002, with a topic of head and traumatic brain injuries; the ninth public meeting on August 22, 2002 (held at Harborview Injury Prevention and Research Center in Seattle, Washington), with presentations highlighting the various research specialties of the Centers; the tenth public meeting on December 5, 2002, with a topic of occult injuries; the eleventh public meeting on April 3, 2003, with papers on the injuries sustained in crashes where vehicles are mismatched in terms of size or weight; the twelfth public meeting on December 5, 2003 (held at the University of Alabama at Birmingham), with presentations on various research specialties of the Centers; the thirteenth public meeting on November 4, 2004 (held at the University of Maryland/National Study Center), with presentations on various research specialties and the fourteenth public meeting on March 28, 2006, in Washington, DC with presentations on various research specialties. Presentations from these meetings are available through the NHTSA Web site.

NHTSA plans to continue holding CIREN meetings on a regular basis to disseminate CIREN information to interested parties. This is the fifteenth such meeting. The CIREN Centers will

be presenting papers on a variety of research topics.

Should it be necessary to cancel the meeting due to inclement weather or to any other emergencies, a decision to cancel will be made as soon as possible and posted immediately on CIREN's Web site <http://www-nrd.nhtsa.dot.gov/departments/nrd-50/ciren/CIREN.html>. If you do not have access to the Web site, you may call or e-mail the contacts listed in this announcement and leave your telephone number or e-mail address. You will be contacted only if the meeting is postponed or canceled.

Issued on: August 1, 2006.

Joseph N. Kanianthra,

Associate Administrator for Vehicle Safety Research.

[FR Doc. E6-12662 Filed 8-3-06; 8:45 am]

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DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Surface Transportation Board

[STB Finance Docket No. 34879]

Wallowa Union Railroad Authority— Acquisition and Operation Exemption—Union Pacific Railroad Company

Wallowa Union Railroad Authority (WURA), a Class III rail carrier, has filed a verified notice of exemption under 49 CFR 1150.41 to acquire from the Union Pacific Railroad Company (UP) approximately one half-mile of rail line between milepost 21.0 at Elgin, OR, and milepost 20.50 at the North line of Baltimore Street in Elgin, OR.¹

WURA certifies that its projected annual revenues as a result of the transaction will not result in WURA becoming a Class II or Class I rail carrier and will not exceed \$5 million.

The transaction was expected to be consummated shortly after July 20, 2006, the effective date of this exemption (7 days after the exemption was filed).

If the verified notice contains false or misleading information, the exemption is void *ab initio*. Petitions 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. 34879, must be filed with

the Surface Transportation Board, 1925 K Street, NW., Washington, DC 20423-0001. In addition, a copy of each pleading must be served on Karl Morell, Of Counsel, Ball Janik LLP, Suite 225, 1455 F Street, NW., Washington, DC 20005.

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

Decided: July 28, 2006.

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

Vernon A. Williams,
Secretary.

[FR Doc. E6-12643 Filed 8-3-06; 8:45 am]

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DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Surface Transportation Board

[STB Docket No. AB-6 (Sub-No. 431X)]

BNSF Railway Company— Abandonment and Discontinuance Exemption—in Knox and Fulton Counties, IL

BNSF Railway Company (BNSF) has filed a notice of exemption under 49 CFR 1152 Subpart F—*Exempt Abandonments and Discontinuances of Services* to: (1) Abandon a 1-mile line of railroad between milepost 51.58 and milepost 52.58 near Farmington, in Fulton County, IL; and (2) discontinue service over a 4.69-mile line of railroad between milepost 46.89 near Yates City, and milepost 51.58 near Farmington, in Knox County, IL, a total distance of 5.69 miles. The line traverses United States Postal Service Zip Codes 61531 and 61572.

BNSF has certified that: (1) No traffic has moved over the line for at least 2 years; (2) there is no overhead traffic on the line to be rerouted; (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 of 49 CFR 1105.7 (environmental report), 49 CFR 1105.8 (historic report), 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 September 5, 2006, unless stayed pending reconsideration. Petitions to stay that do not involve environmental issues,¹ formal expressions of intent to file an OFA under 49 CFR 1152.27(c)(2),² and trail use/rail banking requests under 49 CFR 1152.29 must be filed by August 14, 2006. Petitions to reopen or requests for public use conditions under 49 CFR 1152.28 must be filed by August 24, 2006, with the Surface Transportation Board, 1925 K Street, NW., Washington, DC 20423-0001.

A copy of any petition filed with the Board should be sent to BNSF's representative: Sidney L. Strickland, Jr., Sidney Strickland and Associates, PLLC, 3050 K Street, NW., Suite 101, Washington, DC 20007.

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

BNSF has filed environmental and historic reports which address the effects, if any, of the abandonment on the environment and historic resources. SEA will issue an environmental assessment (EA) by August 11, 2006. 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.

¹ 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.

² Each OFA must be accompanied by the filing fee, which was increased to \$1,300 effective on April 19, 2006. See *Regulations Governing Fees for Services Performed in Connection with Licensing and Related Services—2006 Update*, STB Ex Parte No. 542 (Sub-No. 13) (STB served Mar. 20, 2006).

¹ WURA owns and operates the adjacent rail line between milepost 21.0 at Elgin and milepost 83.58 at Joseph, OR. See *Wallowa Union Railroad Authority—Acquisition and Operation Exemption—Wallowa County, OR, and Idaho Northern & Pacific Railroad Company*, STB Finance Docket No. 34349 (STB served Nov. 26, 2003).