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SERVICE DATE – LATE RELEASE FEBRUARY 18, 2011

SURFACE TRANSPORTATION BOARD

DECISION

Docket No. AB 290 (Sub-No. 291X)

NORFOLK SOUTHERN RAILWAY COMPANY—ABANDONMENT EXEMPTION—IN  
GRANT COUNTY, IND.

Decided: February 18, 2011

In this decision, an extension is granted for negotiating a trail use/rail banking agreement. By decision and notice of interim trail use or abandonment (NITU) served on January 28, 2008, a 180-day period was authorized for the City of Marion, Ind. (City), and Greenways Foundation, Inc., to negotiate an interim trail use/rail banking agreement with Norfolk Southern Railway Company (NSR) for 3.66 miles of rail line between mileposts TS 153.35 and TS 157.01 at Marion, in Grant County, Ind. The negotiating period under the NITU was extended several times with the latest extension expiring on February 11, 2011.

By letter dated February 4, 2011, and filed on February 11, 2011, the City has requested another 180-day extension of the NITU negotiating period. The City states that the parties remain engaged in discussions toward an agreement for the acquisition and interim trail use of the line. In a letter filed February 10, 2011, NSR states that it consents to the requested 180-day extension.

Where, as here, the carrier has not consummated the abandonment at the end of the previously imposed negotiating period and agrees to continue negotiations, the Board retains jurisdiction and the NITU negotiating period may be extended.<sup>1</sup> Under the circumstances, extension of the negotiating period is warranted. See Birt v. STB, 90 F.3d 580, 588-90 (D.C. Cir. 1996); Grantwood Vill. v. Mo. Pac. R.R., 95 F.3d 654, 659 (8th Cir. 1996). Accordingly, the NITU negotiating period will be extended for 180 days, to August 10, 2011.

This decision will not significantly affect either the quality of the human environment or the conservation of energy resources.

It is ordered:

1. The City's request to extend the NITU negotiating period for 180 days is granted.

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<sup>1</sup> See Rail Abans.—Use of Rights-of-Way as Trails—Supplemental Trails Act Procedures, 4 I.C.C.2d 152, 157-58 (1987).

2. The negotiating period under the NITU is extended to August 10, 2011.
3. This decision is effective on its service date.

By the Board, Rachel D. Campbell, Director, Office of Proceedings.