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SERVICE DATE – MARCH 19, 2009

SURFACE TRANSPORTATION BOARD

DECISION

STB Docket No. AB-43 (Sub-No. 182X)

ILLINOIS CENTRAL RAILROAD COMPANY—ABANDONMENT EXEMPTION—IN  
GRENADA COUNTY, MS

Decided: March 19, 2009

Illinois Central Railroad Company (IC)<sup>1</sup> filed a notice of exemption under 49 CFR 1152 Subpart F—Exempt Abandonments to abandon a 1.20-mile line of railroad between milepost 311.90 and milepost 313.10, in Grenada, Grenada County, MS. Notice of the exemption was served and published in the Federal Register on February 18, 2009 (74 FR 7637-38). The exemption is scheduled to become effective on March 20, 2009.

The Board's Section of Environmental Analysis (SEA) served an environmental assessment (EA) in this proceeding on February 23, 2009. In the EA, SEA recommends two conditions. First, SEA indicates that the Mississippi Department of Wildlife, Fisheries, and Parks (MDWFP) has reviewed the proposed project and has expressed concerns regarding impacts to water quality and the Chestnut Lamprey (Ichthyomyzon castaneus), a species of special concern. However, MDWFP determined that, if best management practices are implemented to protect water quality, the proposed abandonment likely would not pose a threat to listed species or their habitats. Therefore, SEA recommends that IC follow best management practices during salvage activities to minimize impacts to water quality and wildlife habitat.

Second, SEA indicates that the Grenada County Board of Supervisors (Board of Supervisors) submitted comments stating that it objects to the proposed abandonment because “the location of the railroad tracks on the south side of the Yalobusha River constitute[s] protection from flooding at high water levels and abandonment would endanger their integrity for the residents inside the levee created by the railroad.” Accordingly, SEA recommends that, prior to commencement of salvage activities, IC consult with the Board of Supervisors and report the results of these consultations to SEA.

Comments to the EA were due by March 10, 2009. No comments to the EA were received by the due date. Accordingly, the environmental conditions recommended by SEA in the EA will be imposed.

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<sup>1</sup> IC is a wholly owned subsidiary of Canadian National Railway Company.

Based on SEA's recommendations, the proposed abandonment, if implemented as conditioned, will not significantly affect either the quality of the human environment or the conservation of energy resources.

It is ordered:

1. This proceeding is reopened.
2. Upon reconsideration, the exemption of the abandonment of the line described above is subject to the conditions that IC shall: (1) follow best management practices during salvage activities to minimize impacts to water quality and wildlife habitat; and (2) prior to commencement of salvage activities, consult with the Board of Supervisors and report the results of these consultations to SEA.
3. This decision is effective on its service date.

By the Board, Joseph H. Dettmar, Acting Director, Office of Proceedings.

Anne K. Quinlan  
Acting Secretary