

30869 SERVICE DATE - LATE RELEASE MARCH 24, 2000

**SURFACE TRANSPORTATION BOARD**  
WASHINGTON, DC 20423

**ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT**

AB-33 (SUB-NO.147X)

The Union Pacific Railroad Company - ABANDONMENT EXEMPTION -- In  
Mc Pherson and Saline Counties, KS.

**BACKGROUND**

In this proceeding, the Union Pacific Railroad Company (UP) and Central Kansas Railway Limited Liability Company (CKR) jointly filed a notice of exemption under 49 C.F.R. 1152.50 seeking exemption from the requirements of 49 U.S.C. 10903 for UP to abandon and CKR to discontinue service over the Hoisington Subdivision extending from milepost 491.20 near Bridgeport to milepost 492.80 near Lindsborg, a distance of 4.6 miles in Mc Pherson and Saline Counties, Kansas ("Hoisington Line"); and over the Mc Pherson Subdivision extending from milepost 534.75 near Bridgeport to milepost 545.00 near Sid, a distance of 10.25 miles in Saline County, Kansas ("Mc Pherson Line"), collectively referred to as ("the Lines"). In addition, CKR seeks to discontinue its overhead trackage rights over the UP rail line located between Milepost 545.00, near Sid, and Milepost 551.30, at Saline County, Kansas. The Lines transverse through United States Postal Zip Codes 67401, 67416 and 67456. A map depicting the rail line in relationship to the area served is appended to the report. If the exemption becomes effective, the railroad will be able to salvage track, ties and other railroad appurtenances, and to dispose of the right-of-way.

**DESCRIPTION OF THE LINE**

Both Lines are adjacent to fair to good agriculture land. The topography is flat and level and runs parallel to the Smokey Hill River. Both CKR and UP indicated there has been no rail operations over the Lines for at least two years.

### **ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW**

The railroad has submitted an environmental report that concludes the quality of the human environment will not be affected significantly as a result of the abandonment or any post-abandonment activities, including salvage and disposition of the right-of-way. The railroad has served the environmental report on a number of appropriate Federal, state, and local agencies as required by the Board's environmental rules at 49 CFR 1105.7(b). We have investigated the record in this proceeding. Also, we have consulted with appropriate agencies and individuals to verify the railroad's report and to obtain additional information and comments regarding the potential environmental effects of the proposed abandonment. Contacts have included Kansas State Corporation Commission, Department of Transportation, Kansas Department of Health and the Environment, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service-Region 6, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, National Park Service, Natural Resources Conservation Service, National Geodetic Survey, Kansas State Historical Society, State of Kansas Wildlife & Parks Department.

### **CONDITIONS**

No Conditions.

### **CONCLUSIONS**

Based on the information provided from all sources to date, and subject to the recommended condition(s), we conclude that, as currently proposed, abandonment of the line will not significantly affect the quality of the human environment. Therefore, the environmental impact statement process is unnecessary.

Alternatives to the proposed abandonment would include denial (and therefore no change in operations), discontinuance of service without abandonment, and continued operation by another operator. In any of these cases, the existing quality of the human environment and energy consumption should not be affected.

### **PUBLIC USE**

Following abandonment and salvage of the rail line, the right-of-way may be suitable for other public use. A request containing the requisite four-part showing for imposition of a public use condition (49 CFR 1152.28) must be filed with the Board and served on the railroad within the time specified in the Federal Register notice.

### TRAILS USE

A request for a notice of interim trail use (NITU) is due to the Board, with a copy to the railroad, within 10 days of publication of the notice of the petition for exemption in the Federal Register. Nevertheless, the Board will accept late-filed requests as long as it retains jurisdiction to do so in a particular case. This request must comply with the Board's rules for use of rights-of-way as trails (49 CFR 1152.29).

### PUBLIC ASSISTANCE

The Board's Office of Public Services (OPS) responds to questions regarding interim trail use, public use, and other reuse alternatives. You may contact OPS directly at (202) 565-1592, or mail inquiries to Surface Transportation Board, Office of Public Services, Room 848, Washington, DC 20423.

### COMMENTS

If you wish to file comments regarding this environmental assessment, you should send an **original and two copies** to Vernon A. Williams, Office of the Secretary, Room 711, Washington, DC 20423, to the attention of Bernard L. Brown, who prepared this environmental assessment. **Please refer to Docket No. AB-33 (Sub No. 147X) in all correspondence addressed to the Board.** If you have questions regarding this environmental assessment, you should contact Bernard L. Brown at (202) 565-1554.

Date made available to the public: March 24, 2000  
**Comment due date: April 10, 2000.**

By the Board, Elaine K. Kaiser, Chief, Section of Environmental Analysis.

Vernon A. Williams  
Secretary

Attachment

PLEASE SCAN THE MAP