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SERVICE DATE – JANUARY 6, 2012

DO

FR-4915-01-P

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Surface Transportation Board

[Docket No. AB 290 (Sub-No. 331X)]

Norfolk Southern Railway Company—Abandonment Exemption—in Henry and Spalding Counties, Ga.

Norfolk Southern Railway Company (NSR) filed a verified notice of exemption under 49 C.F.R. pt. 1152 subpart F—Exempt Abandonments to abandon approximately 4.92 miles of rail line between milepost 4.80 M (south of Meredith Park Drive near the line's crossing of Indian Creek in McDonough) and milepost 9.72 M (east of Trestle Road in Locust Grove), in Henry and Spalding Counties, Ga. The line traverses United States Postal Service Zip Codes 30223, 30228, 30248, and 30253.

NSR has certified that: (1) no local traffic has moved over the line for at least 2 years; (2) any overhead traffic can 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 C.F.R. § 1105.7(c) (environmental report), 49 C.F.R. § 1105.11 (transmittal letter), 49 C.F.R. § 1105.12 (newspaper publication), and 49 C.F.R. § 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 Railroad—Abandonment Portion Goshen Branch Between Firth & Ammon, in Bingham & Bonneville Counties, Idaho, 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 February 7, 2012, unless stayed pending reconsideration. Petitions to stay that do not involve environmental issues,¹ formal expressions of intent to file an OFA under 49 C.F.R. § 1152.27(c)(2),² and trail use/rail banking requests under 49 C.F.R. § 1152.29 must be filed by January 17, 2012. Petitions to reopen or requests for public use conditions under 49 C.F.R. § 1152.28 must be filed by January 26, 2012, with the Surface Transportation Board, 395 E Street, S.W., Washington, DC 20423-0001.

¹ The Board will grant a stay if an informed decision on environmental issues (whether raised by a party or by the Board's Office of Environmental Analysis (OEA) in its independent investigation) cannot be made before the exemption's effective date. See Exemption of Out-of-Serv. 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 is currently set at \$1,500. See 49 C.F.R. § 1002.2(f)(25).

A copy of any petition filed with the Board should be sent to NSR's representative: Robert A. Wimbish, 2401 Pennsylvania Ave., N.W., Suite 300, Washington, DC 20037.

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

NSR has filed a combined environmental and historic report which addresses the effects, if any, of the abandonment on the environment and historic resources. OEA will issue an environmental assessment (EA) by January 13, 2012. Interested persons may obtain a copy of the EA by writing to OEA (Room 1100, Surface Transportation Board, Washington, DC 20423-0001) or by calling OEA at (202) 245-0305. Assistance for the hearing impaired is available through the Federal Information Relay Service 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 C.F.R. § 1152.29(e)(2), NSR shall file a notice of consummation with the Board to signify 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 January 6, 2013, and there are no legal or regulatory barriers to consummation, the authority to abandon will automatically expire.

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“WWW.STB.DOT.GOV.”

Decided: December 27, 2011.

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