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SERVICE DATE – JUNE 24, 2005

DO

FR-4915-01-P

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Surface Transportation Board

[STB Docket No. AB-441 (Sub-No. 4X)]

San Pedro Railroad Operating Company, LLC—Abandonment Exemption—in Cochise County, AZ

On June 6, 2005, San Pedro Railroad Operating Company, LLC (SPROC)¹ filed with the Surface Transportation Board a petition under 49 U.S.C. 10502 for exemption from the provisions of 49 U.S.C. 10903 to abandon approximately 76.2 miles of railroad in Cochise County, AZ, as follows: (1) the Bisbee Branch, between milepost 1085.0 at Bisbee Junction and milepost 1090.6 at Bisbee, a distance of 5.6 miles; and (2) the Douglas Branch (a) between milepost 1097.3 near Paul Spur and milepost 1106.5 near Douglas, a distance of 9.2 miles, (b) between milepost 1055.8 near Charleston and milepost 1097.3 near Paul Spur, a distance of 41.5 miles, and (c) between milepost 1040.15 near Curtiss and milepost 1055.8 near Charleston, a distance of 19.9 miles. The lines traverse U.S. Postal Service Zip Codes 85602, 85603, 85607, and 85615 and include no stations.

The lines do not contain federally granted rights-of-way. Any documentation in SPROC's possession will be made available promptly to those requesting it.

¹ SPROC is a wholly owned subsidiary of Arizona Rail Group.

The interest of railroad employees will be protected by the conditions set forth in Oregon Short Line R. Co.—Abandonment—Goshen, 360 I.C.C. 91 (1979).

By issuance of this notice, the Board is instituting an exemption proceeding pursuant to 49 U.S.C. 10502(b). A final decision will be issued by September 23, 2005.

Any offer of financial assistance (OFA) under 49 CFR 1152.27(b)(2) will be due no later than 10 days after service of a decision granting the petition for exemption. Each offer must be accompanied by a \$1,200 filing fee. See 49 CFR 1002.2(f)(25).

All interested persons should be aware that, following abandonment of rail service and salvage of the line, the line may be suitable for other public use, including interim trail use. Any request for a public use condition under 49 CFR 1152.28 or for trail use/rail banking under 49 CFR 1152.29 will be due no later than July 14, 2005. Each trail use request must be accompanied by a \$200 filing fee. See 49 CFR 1002.2(f)(27).

All filings in response to this notice must refer to STB Docket No. AB-441 (Sub-No. 4X), and must be sent to: (1) Surface Transportation Board, 1925 K Street, N.W., Washington, DC 20423-0001, and (2) John D. Heffner, 1920 N Street, N.W., Suite 800, Washington, DC 20036. Replies to SPROC's petition are due on or before July 14, 2005.

Persons seeking further information concerning abandonment procedures may contact the Board's Office of Public Services at (202) 565-1592 or refer to the full abandonment or discontinuance regulations at 49 CFR part 1152. Questions concerning environmental issues may be directed to the Board's Section of Environmental Analysis (SEA) at (202) 565-1539. [Assistance for the hearing impaired is available through the Federal Information Relay Service (FIRS) at 1-800-877-8339.]

An environmental assessment (EA) (or environmental impact statement (EIS), if necessary) prepared by SEA will be served upon all parties of record and upon any agencies or other persons who commented during its preparation. Other interested persons may contact SEA to obtain a copy of the EA (or EIS). EAs in these abandonment proceedings normally will be made available within 60 days of the filing of the petition. The deadline for submission of comments on the EA will generally be within 30 days of its service.

Board decisions and notices are available on our website at
“WWW.STB.DOT.GOV.”

Decided: June 16, 2005.

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

Vernon A. Williams
Secretary