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SERVICE DATE - JANUARY 18, 2002

**SURFACE TRANSPORTATION BOARD  
WASHINGTON, DC 20423**

**ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT**

**STB Docket No. AB-55 (Sub-No. 601X)**

**CSX Transportation, Inc. - Abandonment Exemption -  
In Lenoir County, North Carolina**

**BACKGROUND**

In this proceeding, CSX Transportation, Inc. (CSXT) has filed a petition under 49 U.S.C. 10502 seeking exemption from the requirements of 49 U.S.C. 10903 in connection with the abandonment of a portion of its Parmele Subdivision, from Milepost AA-173.09 to Milepost AA-173.70, a distance of 0.61 miles in Elmer, Lenoir County, North Carolina. 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**

CSXT states in its application that there is one rail shipper, PCS Phosphate Co., located on the line. According to CSXT, PCS wishes to purchase the rail line after abandonment and expand its facilities. CSXT states that the expanded PCS facilities will continue to be located at the end of the Parmele Subdivision and that CSXT will continue to provide service to PCS.

**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 and reviewed the record in this proceeding.

**CONDITIONS**

We recommend that no conditions be placed on this abandonment proceeding.

**CONCLUSIONS**

Based on the information provided from all sources to date, we conclude that, as currently proposed, and subject to the recommended mitigation measures, 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 responds to questions regarding interim trail use, public use, and other reuse alternatives. You may contact the Office of Public Services directly at (202) 565-1592, or mail inquiries to Surface Transportation Board, Office of Public Services, 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, Washington, DC 20423, to the attention of Dana White, who prepared this environmental assessment. **Please refer to Docket No. AB-55 (Sub-No. 601X) in all correspondence addressed to the Board.** If you have questions regarding this environmental assessment, you should contact Dana White, the environmental contact for this case by phone at (202) 565-1552, fax at (202) 565-9000, or e-mail at whited@stb.dot.gov.

Recent events involving a principal postal facility within Washington, D.C., may affect for a period of time the receipt of materials mailed to the Board, as well as customer receipt of reply mail sent from the Board. Until the timely delivery of mail has been reestablished, the Section of Environmental Analysis (SEA) requests that individuals filing comments regarding this or other environmental assessments take the following additional steps to ensure receipt of their correspondence during the comment period:

1. Telephone or e-mail the environmental contact indicated above prior to the close of the comment period and inform them that you have mailed a comment.

2. If the comment has not been received, the environmental contact will discuss alternative modes of delivery.
3. Retain a copy of your comment for your records should alternative modes of delivery need be necessary.

SEA is committed to carrying out its duties to the public and regrets any inconvenience these new procedures may cause.

Date made available to the public: **January 18, 2002.**

**Comment due date: February 15, 2002 (30 Days).**

By the Board, Victoria Rutson, Chief, Section of Environmental Analysis.

Vernon A. Williams  
Secretary

Attachment

MAP NEEDS TO BE SCANNED.