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SERVICE DATE – NOVEMBER 7, 2013

DO

FR-4915-01-P

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Surface Transportation Board

[Docket No. AB 497 (Sub-No. 6X)]

Minnesota Northern Railroad, Inc.—Abandonment Exemption—in Polk County, Minn.

On October 18, 2013, Minnesota Northern Railroad, Inc. (MNN) filed with the Surface Transportation Board (Board) a petition under 49 U.S.C. § 10502 for exemption from the prior approval requirements of 49 U.S.C. § 10903 to abandon a 2.8-mile portion of its Ada Subdivision between milepost 66.8 north of Beltrami and milepost 64.0 at the end of the track at or near Beltrami, in Polk County, Minn. (the Line).¹ The Line traverses United States Postal Service Zip Code 56517.

MNN states that it appears that the Line contains federally granted right-of-way. Any documentation in MNN's possession will be made available promptly to those requesting it.

The interest of railroad employees will be protected by the conditions set forth in Oregon Short Line Railroad—Abandonment Portion Goshen Branch Between Firth & Ammon, In Bingham & Bonneville Counties, Idaho, 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 February 5, 2014.

¹ Upon abandonment, MNN intends to sell this portion of the Line at and near Beltrami to West Central Ag Services, the sole shipper on the Line, for use as private industry track.

Any offer of financial assistance (OFA) under 49 C.F.R. § 1152.27(b)(2) will be due no later than 10 days after service of a decision granting the petition for exemption. Each OFA must be accompanied by a \$1,600 filing fee. See 49 C.F.R. § 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 C.F.R. § 1152.28 or for trail use/rail banking under 49 C.F.R. § 1152.29 will be due no later than November 27, 2013. Each trail use request must be accompanied by a \$250 filing fee. See 49 C.F.R. § 1002.2(f)(27).

All filings in response to this notice must refer to Docket No. AB 497 (Sub-No. 6X) and must be sent to: (1) Surface Transportation Board, 395 E Street, S.W., Washington, DC 20423-0001; and (2) Thomas F. McFarland, Thomas F. McFarland, P.C., 208 South LaSalle Street, Suite 1890, Chicago, IL 60604 Replies to the petition are due on or before November 27, 2013.

Persons seeking further information concerning abandonment procedures may contact the Board's Office of Public Assistance, Governmental Affairs and Compliance at (202) 245-0238 or refer to the full abandonment or discontinuance regulations at 49 C.F.R. pt. 1152. Questions concerning environmental issues may be directed to the Board's Office of Environmental Analysis (OEA) at (202) 245-0305. [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 OEA 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 OEA 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 generally will be within 30 days of its service.

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

Decided: October 31, 2013.

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