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SERVICE DATE - MAY 18, 2000

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FR-4915-00-P

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Surface Transportation Board

[STB Docket No. AB-32 (Sub-No. 89)]

Boston and Maine Corporation--Abandonment--In Middlesex County, MA

On April 28, 2000, the Boston and Maine Corporation (B&M) filed with the Surface Transportation Board (Board), Washington, DC 20423, an application for permission to abandon and discontinue service on a line of railroad known as the Bemis Branch in Waltham and Watertown, MA, extending from milepost 8.83 to milepost 10.94, a distance of 2.11 miles, in Middlesex County, MA. The line traverses U.S. Postal Service Zip Codes 02451 and 02472. Applicant indicated that there are no agency stations located on the line.

The line does not contain federally granted rights-of-way. Any documentation in B&M's possession will be made available promptly to those requesting it. The applicants' entire case for abandonment and discontinuance was filed with the application.

The line of railroad has appeared on B&M's system diagram map or has been included in its narrative in category 1 since January 26, 1999.

The interest of railroad employees will be protected by Oregon Short Line Railroad Co.--Abandonment--Goshen, 360 I.C.C. 91 (1979).

Any interested person may file with the Board written comments concerning the proposed abandonment and discontinuance or protests (including the protestant's entire opposition case), by June 12, 2000. All interested persons should be aware that following any 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 U.S.C. 10905 (49 CFR 1152.28 of the Board's rules) and any request for a trail use condition under 16 U.S.C. 1247(d) (49 CFR 1152.29 of the Board's rules) must be filed by June 12, 2000. Persons who may oppose the abandonment or discontinuance but who do not wish to participate fully in the process by appearing at any oral hearings or by submitting verified statements of witnesses containing detailed evidence should file comments. Persons interested only in seeking public use or trail use conditions should also file comments. Persons opposing the proposed abandonment or discontinuance that do wish to participate actively and fully in the process should file a protest.

In addition, a commenting party or protestant may provide:

- (i) An offer of financial assistance, pursuant to 49 U.S.C. 10904 (due 120 days after the application is filed or 10 days after the application is granted by the Board, whichever occurs sooner);
- (ii) Recommended provisions for protection of the interests of employees;
- (iii) A request for a public use condition under 49 U.S.C. 10905; and
- (iv) A statement pertaining to prospective use of the right-of-way for interim trail use and rail banking under 16 U.S.C. 1247(d) and 49 CFR 1152.29.

Parties seeking information concerning the filing of protests should refer to 49 CFR 1152.25.

Written comments and protests, including all requests for public use and trail use conditions, must indicate the proceeding designation STB No. AB-32 (Sub-No. 89) and should be filed with the Secretary, Surface Transportation Board, Washington, DC 20423,

no later than June 12, 2000. Interested persons may file a written comment or protest with the Board to become a party to this proceeding. A copy of each written comment or protest shall be served upon the applicant's representative, Robert B. Culliford, Boston and Maine Corporation, Iron Horse Park, North Billerica, MA 10862. The original and 10 copies of all comments or protests shall be filed with the Board with a certificate of service. Except as otherwise set forth in part 1152, every document filed with the Board must be served on all parties to the abandonment proceeding. 49 CFR 1104.12(a).

The line sought to be abandoned and discontinued will be available for subsidy or sale for continued rail use, if the Board decides to permit the abandonment and discontinuance, in accordance with applicable laws and regulations (49 U.S.C. 10904 and 49 CFR 1152.27). No subsidy arrangement approved under 49 U.S.C. 10904 shall remain in effect for more than 1 year unless otherwise mutually agreed by the parties (49 U.S.C. 10904(f)(4)(B)). Applicant will promptly provide upon request to each interested party an estimate of the subsidy and minimum purchase price required to keep the line in operation. The carrier's representative to whom inquiries may be made concerning sale or subsidy terms is set forth above.

Persons seeking further information concerning abandonment procedures may contact the Board 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).

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

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or other persons who commented during its preparation. Any other persons who would like to obtain a copy of the EA (or EIS) may contact SEA. EAs in abandonment proceedings normally will be made available within 33 days of the filing of the application. The deadline for submission of comments on the EA will generally be within 30 days of its service. The comments received will be addressed in the Board's decision. A supplemental EA or EIS may be issued where appropriate.

Decided: May 15, 2000.

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

Vernon A. Williams

Secretary