

32804

SERVICE DATE - LATE RELEASE JUNE 17, 2002

**SURFACE TRANSPORTATION BOARD**

WASHINGTON, DC 20423

**ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT**

**STB Docket No. AB-55 (Sub No. 614X)**

**CSX Transportation, Inc. - Abandonment Exemption -  
In Richmond County, Georgia**

**BACKGROUND**

In the above entitled proceeding, CSX Transportation, Inc. (CSXT) has filed a notice of exemption under 49 CFR 1152.50 seeking exemption from the requirements of 49 U.S.C. 10903 in connection with the abandonment of its line of railroad valuation station 0+00 at Milepost ANS 0.2 to Valuation Station 84+44, a distance of approximately 1.60 miles, in Augusta, Richmond County, Georgia. A map depicting the rail line in relationship to the area served is appended to the report. If the notice 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**

According to CSXT, there has been no local traffic on the line for two years and CSXT states that it is unlikely that there will be any prospect for increased traffic.

**ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW**

CSXT 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. CSXT served the environmental and historical reports on a number of appropriate Federal, state, and local agencies as required by the Surface Transportation Board's environmental rules [49 CFR 1105.7(b)]. In its environmental report, CSXT states that it plans to remove all of the rail, crossties, and possibly the upper layer of ballast. We have reviewed and investigated the record in this proceeding.

**CONDITIONS**

We recommend that no environmental conditions be placed on any decision granting

abandonment authority.

## **CONCLUSIONS**

Based on the information provided from all sources to date, we conclude that, as currently proposed, 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**

If abandonment and salvage of the rail line does take place, 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 Surface Transportation 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 Surface Transportation Board, with a copy to the railroad, within 10 days of publication of the notice of exemption in the Federal Register. However, the Board will accept late-filed requests as long as it retains jurisdiction to do so. 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 (OPS) responds to questions regarding interim trail use, public use, and other reuse alternatives. You may contact OPS directly at (202) 565-1592 or mail inquiries to the 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 Surface Transportation Board, Case Control Unit, Washington, DC 20423, to the attention of Dana White, who prepared this environmental assessment. **Please refer to Docket No. AB-55 (Sub-No. 614X) 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.

Date made available to the public: June 11, 2002.

Comment due date: **June 25, 2002 (15 days)**.

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

Vernon A. Williams  
Secretary

Attachment

EXHIBIT A

NORTH AUGUSTA  
SOUTH CAROLINA

BEGIN ABANDONMENT  
ANS 0.2 + V.S. 0-00

END ABANDONMENT  
V.S. 84-44

AUGUSTA  
GEORGIA

EAST  
BOUNDARY  
GEORGIA

**AB 55 (614X)**

**CSX TRANSPORTATION**

Proposed Abandonment of 1.6  
Miles Savannah River Terminal

City: Augusta  
County: Richmond  
State: Georgia  
Fips: 13245  
Pin: 13245-0058 - 0070

VAL: V1/1  
GIS: 21826  
Scale: 1" = 2255'  
Date: 3/12/02  
Drawn By: LF

**LEGEND**

PROPOSED ABANDONMENT  
XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX

Total Distance - 1.60 Miles \*\*

SOUTHERN REGION  
FLORENCE DIVISION  
AUGUSTA SUBDIVISION