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SERVICE DATE - NOVEMBER 6, 1998

DO

FR-4915-00-P

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Surface Transportation Board

[STB Docket No. AB-290 (Sub-No. 203X)]<sup>1</sup>

Norfolk Southern Railway Company--Abandonment Exemption--in Madison and Bond Counties, IL

On October 16, 1998, Norfolk Southern Railway Company (NSR) filed with the Surface Transportation Board (Board) a petition under 49 U.S.C. 10502 for exemption from the provisions of 49 U.S.C. 10903 to abandon a 39.1-mile branch line of railroad known as the Madison-Sorento Line or the Madison Branch, extending between milepost TS-406.6 at Sorento, IL, and milepost TS-445.7 at Madison, IL, in Madison and Bond Counties, IL.<sup>2</sup> The line traverses U.S. Postal Service Zip Codes 62001, 62025, 62060,

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<sup>1</sup> NSR has filed with the Board two related petitions for exemption. In Norfolk Southern Railway Company--Purchase Exemption--Union Pacific Railroad Company, STB Finance Docket No. 33609 (STB served Oct. 29, 1998), NSR is proposing to purchase from UP, and to operate approximately 15.3 miles of rail line between Monterey Junction, IL (including the southwest leg of the wye track at Monterey Junction), and DeCamp, IL, plus certain yard tracks at Madison, IL. In Norfolk Southern Railway Company--Lease and Operation Exemption--Union Pacific Railroad Company, STB Finance Docket No. 33610 (pending), NSR is proposing to lease from UP, and to operate, approximately 4.7 miles of rail line between Monterey Mine No. 1 near Carlinville, IL, and Monterey Junction, IL, and a leg of the wye track and related trackage at Monterey Junction.

<sup>2</sup> NSR indicates that the end point of the branch line at Sorento has been shown on its system diagram map as milepost TS-444.2 rather than TS-445.7. NSR requests an exemption or waiver from the requirement that it list the 1.5 miles of the line between those mileposts on its system diagram map. Because NSR has provided no reasons for the Board

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62074, and 62086, and includes the stations of Madison, Stallings, Glen Carbon, Leclaire, Edwardsville, White (Town of Alhambra), New Douglas, and Sorento.

The line does not contain federally granted rights-of-way. Any documentation in the railroad'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 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 February 3, 1999.

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 OFA must be accompanied by a \$1,000 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

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<sup>2</sup>(...continued)

to grant either exemption or waiver here, the request will not be granted. It should be noted, however, that failure to comply with 49 U.S.C. 10903(c)(2) is not grounds for denial of this abandonment petition.

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use/rail banking under 49 CFR 1152.29 will be due no later than November 27, 1998.

Each trail use request must be accompanied by a \$150 filing fee. See 49 CFR 1002.2(f)(27).

All filings in response to this notice must refer to STB Docket No. AB-290 (Sub-No. 203X) and must be sent to: (1) Surface Transportation Board, Office of the Secretary, Case Control Unit, 1925 K Street, N.W., Washington, DC 20423-0001, and (2) James R. Paschall, Three Commercial Place, Norfolk, VA 23510-2191. Replies to the NSR petition are due on or before November 27, 1998.

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) 565-1545. [TDD for the hearing impaired is available at (202) 565-1695.]

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.

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Decided: November 2, 1998.

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

Vernon A. Williams

Secretary