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SERVICE DATE - JUNE 29, 1999  
SURFACE TRANSPORTATION BOARD  
WASHINGTON, DC 20423

## ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

STB Docket NO. AB-33 (SUB-NO. 135X)

Union Pacific Railroad Company--Abandonment  
Exemption--in St. Louis County, MO

### BACKGROUND

In this proceeding, Union Pacific Railroad Company (UP) 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 and discontinuance of service over a 2.18-mile line of railroad known as the Kirkwood Industrial Lead extending from milepost 13.62 near Kirt Jct. to the end of the line at milepost 15.8 near Billman Spur, in St. Louis County, MO. 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

In its petition, UP states that there is one shipper on the line, Von Hoffman Press (VHP), located at milepost 14.20. UP delivers printing paper to VHP primarily in a switch move in the interchange of rail cars received from other railroads in St. Louis, MO. Traffic consisted of four carloads in 1996, eight carloads in 1997 (seven carloads in switching service and one carload of linehaul traffic) and 14 carloads in 1998 (13 switch cars and one linehaul car). UP asserts that the traffic increased in 1998 due to a short burst of transloading activity that is not expected to be repeated. The line consists of 90-pound rail and track materials. There are seven major road crossings with flashing light signals. The right-of-way is 100 feet wide and travels southeasterly direction. The topography is level. Tentatively, it has been determined the land area consists of approximately 26.2710 acres, of which 21.7505 acres are reversionary and 4.5205 acres are non-reversionary.

### ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW

UP 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. UP 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 at 49 CFR 1105.7(b). Also, we have consulted with appropriate agencies and individuals to verify the railroad's report and to obtain additional

information and comments regarding the potential environmental effects of the proposed abandonment. Contacts have included the U.S. Fish and Wildlife, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Natural Resources Conservation Service, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency-Region 7, National Park Service, Missouri Water Pollution control, Kirkwood City Hall, St. Louis County Community Development and Los Pohl, Fed. Assistance Clearinghouse.

### **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 discontinuance would include denial (and, therefore no change in operations), discontinuance of service without abandonment, and continued operation by another operator. In this case, 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 not 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 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. However, 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.

## **ENVIRONMENTAL COMMENTS**

If you wish to file comments regarding this environmental assessment, send an **original and two copies** to Vernon A. Williams, Office of the Secretary, Suite 700, Washington, DC 20423, to the attention of Ann Newman, who prepared this environmental assessment. **Please refer to Docket No. AB-33 (Sub-No. 135X)** in all correspondence addressed to the Board. If you have questions regarding this environmental assessment, you should contact Ann Newman at (202) 565-1629.

Date made available to the public: June 29, 1999.

**Comment due date: July 29, 1999.**

By the Surface Transportation Board, Elaine K. Kaiser, Chief, Section of Environmental Analysis.

Vernon A. Williams  
Secretary

Attachment

PLEASE SCAN MAP