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SERVICE DATE - MAY 1, 1998

SURFACE TRANSPORTATION BOARD
WASHINGTON, DC 20423

ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

STB Docket NO. AB-55(SUB-NO. 559X)

CSX Transportation, Inc.--Abandonment Exemption--in
Atlanta, Fulton County, GA

BACKGROUND

In this proceeding, CSX Transportation, Inc. (CSXT) 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 of a portion of its Atlanta Terminal Subdivision, Atlanta Service Lane, extending between milepost 4.87 at Memorial Drive to milepost 5.22 at Wylie Street, a distance of 0.35 miles in Atlanta, Fulton County, GA. 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, CSXT states that the only shipper on the line, Weyerhaeuser Corporation, shipped 37 carloads of scrap paper via rail from its Memorial Drive facility in 1996 and shipped 19 carloads via rail in 1997. Weyerhaeuser vacated this facility in May 1997 and there have been no shipments on this line since then. CSXT also states that Stein Steel is a rail patron on the line but will not be affected by this abandonment because that industry is served by another rail line. There are no other potential rail patrons on this line between Memorial Drive and Wylie Street.

ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW

The railroad has 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)]. We 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 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

Following abandonment and salvage of the rail line, 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. Nevertheless, 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.

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, Room 2215, Washington, DC 20423, to the attention of Ann Newman, who prepared this environmental assessment. **Please refer to Docket No. AB-55 (Sub-No. 559X) 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: May 1, 1998.

Comment due date: May 31, 1998. (30 Days)

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

Vernon A. Williams
Secretary

Attachment

MAP HAS TO BE SCANNED
