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SERVICE DATE - SEPTEMBER 25, 1997

DO

FR-4915-00-P

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Surface Transportation Board

[STB Finance Docket No. 33459]

Rio Valley Railroad, Inc. and Rio Valley Switching Company--Lease and Operation

Exemption--Southern Pacific Transportation Company

Rio Valley Railroad, Inc. (RVRI) and Rio Valley Switching Company (RVSC), Class III rail carriers, have filed a joint verified notice of exemption under 49 CFR 1150.41 for RVRI to lease a total of 12.79 miles of rail lines owned by Southern Pacific Transportation Company, and for RVSC to operate these lines pursuant to an operating agreement with RVRI. The transaction was expected to be consummated on or shortly after September 11, 1997, the effective date of the exemption.

The lines involved in the lease and operation are described as follows: (1) a portion of the Brownsville branch at or near Edinburg, TX, between milepost 142.65 at the west leg of the wye track and milepost 145.0, a short distance east of the plant of Inland Paperbox Packaging, a distance of 2.35 miles; and, (2) a portion of the McAllen branch between milepost 141.52 at the end of the Edinburg line at or near Edinburg, TX,

and milepost 151.96 at the point of connection of that line with the line of Union Pacific Railroad Company at or near McAllen, TX, a distance of 10.44 miles.<sup>1</sup>

If the notice contains false or misleading information, the exemption is void ab initio. Petitions to revoke the exemption under 49 U.S.C. 10502(d) may be filed at any time. The filing of a petition to revoke will not automatically stay the transaction.

An original and 10 copies of all pleadings, referring to STB Finance Docket No. 33459, must be filed with the Surface Transportation Board, Office of the Secretary, Case Control Unit, 1925 K Street, N.W., Washington, DC 20423-0001 and served on: Thomas F. McFarland, Jr., McFarland & Herman, 20 North Wacker Drive, Suite 1330, Chicago, IL 60606-2902.

Decided: September 17, 1997.

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

Vernon A. Williams

Secretary

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<sup>1</sup> In a letter received on September 9, 1997, the applicants' representative amended the notice of exemption filed on September 4, 1997, to change the milepost numbers for the McAllen branch.