

30270

SERVICE DATE - JUNE 9, 1999

DO

FR-4915-00-P

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Surface Transportation Board

[STB Docket No. AB-425 (Sub-No. 1X)]

Lone Star Railroad, Inc.--Abandonment Exemption--in Taylor and Jones Counties, TX

[STB Docket No. AB-426 (Sub-No. 1X)]

Southern Switching Company--Discontinuance of Service Exemption--in Taylor and Jones Counties, TX

On May 20, 1999, Lone Star Railroad, Inc. (LSRI), and Southern Switching Company (SSC) jointly filed with the Surface Transportation Board (Board) a petition under 49 U.S.C. 10502 for exemptions from the provisions of 49 U.S.C. 10903 for LSRI to abandon, and SSC to discontinue service over, a 4.5-mile line of railroad, known as the North Abilene Line, extending from milepost 147.3 at or near Abilene to milepost 142.8 at or near North Abilene, in Taylor and Jones Counties, TX.¹ The line traverses U.S. Postal Service Zip Code 79601 and includes the station of North Abilene.

The line does not contain federally granted rights-of-way. Any documentation in LSRI's and SSC'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).

¹ LSRI owns the line and SSC operates it pursuant to a contract with LSRI.

By issuance of this notice, the Board is instituting exemption proceedings pursuant to 49 U.S.C. 10502(b). A final decision will be issued by September 7, 1999.

Any offer of financial assistance under 49 CFR 1152.27(b)(2) will be due no later than 10 days after service of a decision granting the exemptions. Each offer 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 use/rail banking under 49 CFR 1152.29 will be due no later than June 29, 1999. 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 Nos. AB-425 (Sub-No. 1X) and AB-426 (Sub-No. 1X) 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) Thomas F. McFarland, Jr., McFarland & Herman, 20 North Wacker Drive, Suite 1330, Chicago, IL 60606-2902. Replies are due June 29, 1999.

Persons seeking further information concerning abandonment and discontinuance procedures may contact the Board's Office of Public Services at (202) 565-1592 or refer to the full abandonment and 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.

Board decisions and notices are available on our website at
“WWW.STB.DOT.GOV.”

Decided: May 26, 1999.

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

Vernon A. Williams

Secretary