

Surface Transportation Board Finds No Need for Formal Environmental Review of Proposed "Canadian National-Wisconsin Central" Railroad Merger

Surface Transportation Board (Board) Chairman Linda Morgan announced today that the Board has issued a decision finding that, because there would be only minimal changes in railroad operations as a result of the proposed "Canadian National-Wisconsin Central" railroad merger, the transaction does not require the Board's formal environmental review under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA).

The merger "applicants" asserted in their April 9, 2001 application that the proposed transaction would have insignificant environmental effects and would cause only modest changes in railroad operations, none of which would exceed the thresholds triggering the Board's environmental review as established in the agency's environmental rules. The applicants also stated that the proposal is exempt from historic review under the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA).

To determine the necessity of a formal environmental review, the Board directed the applicants to issue, by May 14, 2001, an Environmental Appendix providing additional details and explanation for public review and comment. Based on its review of that Environmental Appendix and all comments received, the Board concludes that neither an Environmental Assessment (EA) nor an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) is warranted because the proposed merger would cause no more than minor increases in traffic on any rail line segment, and because "there is nothing in the environmental information that is currently available to indicate that the proposed transaction has any potential for significant environmental impacts." The Board also determined that the proposal is exempt from historic review under the NHPA, according to the Board's environmental rules. Because no formal environmental review is required in this case, it is unnecessary for the Board to adjust its procedural schedule to allow preparation of an EA or an EIS.

The Board issued its decision today in the case entitled *Canadian National Railway Company, Grand Trunk Corporation, and WC Merger Sub, Inc.--Control--Wisconsin Central Transportation Corporation, Wisconsin Central Ltd., Fox Valley & Western Ltd., Sault Ste. Marie Bridge Company, and Wisconsin Chicago Link Ltd.*, STB Finance Docket No. 34000, Decision No. 9. A printed copy of the decision is available for a fee by contacting **Da 2 Da Legal, Room 405, 1925 K Street, NW, Washington, DC 20006, telephone (202) 293-7776**, or via [http://Da_To_Da@Hotmail.com](mailto:Da_To_Da@Hotmail.com). The decision also is available for viewing and downloading via the Board's website at <http://www.stb.dot.gov>.

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