

SURFACE TRANSPORTATION BOARD
WASHINGTON, DC 20423

FINAL ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

Docket No. AB 1292X

Alabama and Tennessee River Valley Railway, LLC—Abandonment Exemption—
In Marshall County, Al.

ABANDONMENT TYPE

The time for comments on the Draft Environmental Assessment (EA) has expired in this:

(X) Notice of Exemption () Petition for Exemption () Regulated Abandonment

() **NO NEW COMMENTS WERE RECEIVED**

(X) **NEW COMMENTS WERE RECEIVED**

In this proceeding, Alabama & Tennessee River Railway, LLC (ATN) filed a notice with the Surface Transportation Board (Board) under 49 C.F.R. § 1152.50 seeking exemption from the requirements of 49 U.S.C. § 10903 in connection with the abandonment of a line of railroad in Marshall County, Alabama. The rail line proposed for abandonment (the Line) extends approximately 885 feet and is located approximately 3,670 feet north of Milepost 86 in the City of Guntersville, Alabama. The Board's Office of Environmental Analysis (OEA) served a Draft EA for this proceeding on December 2, 2019 for public review and comment. In the Draft EA, OEA recommended two environmental conditions and concluded that the proposed action would not significantly impact the quality of the human environment.

Comments on the Draft EA

Alabama Department of Transportation

On December 4, 2019, ATN provided OEA with a comment letter that ATN received from the Alabama Department of Transportation (ALDOT) in response to ATN's Environmental and Historic Report. In that letter, ALDOT states that ATN should coordinate with the local road authority regarding the removal and remediation of a public at-grade road crossing at Taylor Street and should notify the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) of the crossing removal so that FRA can update its crossing database.

By letter dated December 4, 2019, ATN informed ALDOT that the at-grade crossing at Taylor Street would not be removed as part of the proposed abandonment. The Line extends from just north of the crossing to a point near Scott Street. Following abandonment, ATN intends to continue using the crossing for railroad operations to ensure that there is enough head and tail room for trains serving a rail customer located near Taylor Street. Because the at-grade road crossing would not be removed as a result of the proposed abandonment, OEA is not recommending any mitigation in response to ALDOT's comments.

National Geodetic Survey

By email dated December 13, 2019, the National Geodetic Survey (NGS) informed ATN that the proposed abandonment would not affect any geodetic survey marks. Therefore, OEA has concluded that the condition, previously recommended in the Draft EA, requiring ATN to notify NGS at least 90 days prior to beginning salvage activities is not necessary. Accordingly, OEA is now recommending that the NGS condition not be imposed upon any Board decision granting abandonment authority in this proceeding.

Conclusions

The Draft EA comment period has ended. OEA recommends that the following condition, previously recommended in the Draft EA, be imposed upon any decision granting abandonment authority:

- 1. In the event that any artifacts or archaeological sites are discovered during abandonment-related salvage activities, Alabama & Tennessee River Railway, LLC (ATN) shall immediately cease all work and notify OEA and the Alabama Historical Commission (the State Historic Preservation Officer or SHPO), pursuant to 36 C.F.R. § 800.13(b). OEA shall then consult with the SHPO, ATN, and other consulting parties, if any, to determine whether appropriate mitigation measures are necessary.**

If the above condition is imposed, OEA believes that the proposed action will not significantly affect the quality of the human environment.

By the Board, Victoria Rutson, Director, Office of Environmental Analysis.