

SERVICE DATE – NOVEMBER 27, 2020

**SURFACE TRANSPORTATION BOARD
WASHINGTON, DC 20423**

FINAL ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

Docket No. AB 43 (Sub-No. 191X)

Illinois Central Railroad Company – Abandonment Exemption – in Jefferson County, Ill.

and

Docket No. AB 33 (Sub-No. 337X)

Union Pacific Railroad Company – Abandonment Exemption – in Jefferson County, Ill.

ABANDONMENT TYPE

The time for comments on the Draft Environmental Assessment (Draft 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, Illinois Central Railroad Company (IC) and Union Pacific Railroad Company (UP) filed a notice of exemption under 49 C.F.R. § 1152.50 seeking exemption from the prior approval requirements of 49 U.S.C. § 10903 in connection with the abandonment of a line of railroad in Jefferson County, Illinois. The rail line proposed for abandonment is an approximately 100-foot railroad bridge extending from Milepost 10.53 to Milepost 10.55 south of the Village of Waltonville (the Line). OEA served a Draft EA for this proceeding on November 9, 2020 for public review and comment. In the Draft EA, OEA recommended one environmental condition and concluded that the proposed action would not significantly impact the quality of the human environment.

Comments on the Draft EA

OEA received one comment after issuance of the Draft EA. On November 18, 2020, IC and UP forwarded a comment letter dated November 17, 2020 from the Illinois Department of Natural Resources' Historic Preservation Division (State Historic Preservation Officer or SHPO). As discussed in the Draft EA, the SHPO had previously commented in a letter dated March 1, 2018 that the proposed abandonment would have no effect on historic properties. The SHPO's March 1, 2018 letter stated that the SHPO's clearance would remain in effect for two years. Because that two-year period has ended, IC and UP requested that the SHPO reissue its clearance. In its November 17, 2020 letter, the SHPO again stated that the proposed abandonment would have no effect on historic properties listed in the National Register of Historic Places (National Register) and that the clearance would remain in effect for two more years.

OEA has reviewed the available information and agrees with the SHPO's determination that the proposed abandonment would have no effect on any historic properties listed in or

eligible for listing in the National Register. Therefore, no mitigation related to historic properties is necessary in this proceeding, and no changes to the Draft EA are recommended.

Conclusions

The Draft EA comment period has ended. Accordingly, OEA recommends that the following condition previously recommended in the Draft EA should be imposed upon any decision granting abandonment authority:¹

Illinois Central Railroad Company and Union Pacific Railroad Company shall coordinate with the Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT) regarding the timing and nature of abandonment-related salvage activities and shall abide by the reasonable requirements of IDOT for any abandonment-related salvage activities that would take place within the right-of-way of State Route 148.

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.

¹ If an interim trail use agreement under 16 U.S.C. § 1247(d) and 49 C.F.R. § 1152.29 is reached for the Line (or a portion thereof), compliance with this condition is not required with respect to any portion of the Line covered by the interim trail use agreement for the duration of the agreement.