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SERVICE DATE – DECEMBER 3, 2020

SURFACE TRANSPORTATION BOARD

DECISION

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

ILLINOIS CENTRAL RAILROAD COMPANY—ABANDONMENT EXEMPTION—IN
JEFFERSON COUNTY, ILL.

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

UNION PACIFIC RAILROAD COMPANY—ABANDONMENT EXEMPTION—IN
JEFFERSON COUNTY, ILL.

Decided: December 2, 2020

Illinois Central Railroad Company (IC) and Union Pacific Railroad Company (UP) (collectively, the Railroads) jointly filed a verified notice of exemption under 49 C.F.R. part 1152 subpart F—Exempt Abandonments to abandon approximately 100 feet of jointly owned railroad line extending from milepost 10.53 to milepost 10.55 at the railroad bridge overpass (the Bridge) of State Route 148 (County Road 600E), south of the Village of Waltonville in Jefferson County, Ill. (the Line). Notice of the exemptions was served and published in the Federal Register on November 4, 2020 (85 Fed. Reg. 70,221). The exemptions are scheduled to become effective on December 4, 2020.

The Board's Office of Environmental Analysis (OEA) served a Draft Environmental Assessment (Draft EA) on November 9, 2020, recommending that one condition be imposed on any decision granting environmental authority. OEA noted that, according to the Railroads, the purpose of the proposed abandonment is to allow the Bridge to be removed as part of an Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT) road improvement project. To ensure that abandonment-related salvage activities would not adversely affect vehicular traffic on State Route 148, OEA recommended a condition requiring the Railroads to coordinate with IDOT regarding the timing and nature of abandonment-related salvage activities and to 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.

OEA issued its Final Environmental Assessment (Final EA) on November 27, 2020, noting that one comment to the Draft EA was received. By letter dated November 17, 2020, the Illinois Department of Natural Resources' Historic Preservation Division (State Historic Preservation Office, or SHPO) stated that the proposed abandonment would have no effect on historic properties. OEA reviewed the available information and agreed with the SHPO's determination. OEA therefore determined that no mitigation related to historic properties is necessary.

In the Final EA, OEA continues to recommend the condition previously recommended in the Draft EA regarding coordination with IDOT. Accordingly, the condition recommended in the Final EA will be imposed.

This decision, and the proposed abandonment if implemented as conditioned, will not significantly affect either the quality of the human environment or the conservation of energy resources.

It is ordered:

1. This proceeding is reopened.
2. Upon reconsideration, the notice served and published in the Federal Register on November 4, 2020, exempting the abandonment of the Line described above, is subject to the condition that IC and UP shall coordinate with 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.
3. This decision is effective on its service date.

By the Board, Allison C. Davis, Director, Office of Proceedings.