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OEA

SERVICE DATE – JANUARY 14, 2022

**SURFACE TRANSPORTATION BOARD
WASHINGTON, DC 20423**

FINAL ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

Docket No. AB 1319X

**City Utilities of Springfield, Missouri – Abandonment Exemption –
In Greene County, Mo.**

ABANDONMENT TYPE

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

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

() **NO NEW COMMENTS WERE RECEIVED**

(X) **NEW COMMENTS WERE RECEIVED**

In this proceeding, City Utilities of Springfield, Missouri (City Utilities) filed a petition under 49 U.S.C. § 10502 seeking exemption from the prior approval requirements of 49 U.S.C. § 10903 in connection with the abandonment of a line of railroad in Greene County, Missouri. The rail line proposed for abandonment extends approximately 1.24 miles from milepost 248.86 to milepost 250.1 (the Line). The Board's Office of Environmental Analysis (OEA) served a Draft EA for this proceeding on December 10, 2021 for public review and comment. In the Draft EA, OEA recommended no environmental conditions 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. The Cherokee Nation reviewed the proposed abandonment and does not foresee the proposed abandonment impacting Cherokee Nation cultural resources. However, the Cherokee Nation requests that the Surface Transportation Board halt project activities and contact the Cherokee Nation if items of cultural significance are discovered during the salvage activities. Accordingly, OEA is recommending that the Board impose a new unanticipated discoveries condition.

Conclusions

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

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

1. In the event that any unanticipated archaeological sites, human remains, funerary items or associated artifacts are discovered during the railroad's abandonment-related salvage activities, the railroad will immediately cease all work and notify the Office of Environmental Analysis (OEA), interested Federally recognized tribes, and the Missouri State Historic Preservation Office pursuant to 36 C.F.R. § 800.13(b). OEA will then consult with the SHPO (or THPO), the Cherokee Nation, other interested Federally recognized tribes, the railroad, 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, Danielle Gosselin, Acting Director, Office of Environmental Analysis.

respect to any portion of the Line covered by the interim trail use agreement for the duration of the agreement.