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OEA

SERVICE DATE – DECEMBER 9, 2022

SURFACE TRANSPORTATION BOARD
WASHINGTON, DC 20423

FINAL ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

Docket No. AB 531 (Sub-No. 3X)

**Pioneer Valley Railroad Company—
Abandonment Exemption—In Hampshire County, Mass.**

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

(X) NO NEW COMMENTS WERE RECEIVED

() NEW COMMENTS WERE RECEIVED

In this proceeding, Pioneer Valley Railroad Company (PVRR) filed a notice of exemption under 49 C.F.R. § 1152.50 with the Surface Transportation Board (Board) seeking exemption from the prior approval requirements of 49 U.S.C. § 10903 in connection with the abandonment of a line of railroad in the Town of Southamptton (Southampton), Hampshire County, Massachusetts known as the Florence Secondary Line. The rail line proposed for abandonment constitutes all of PVRR's right of way in Southamptton and runs approximately 4.25 miles from the northern terminus at Coleman Road to the southern terminus at Brickyard Road, near its intersection with Valley Road. The Office of Environmental Analysis (OEA) served a Draft EA for this proceeding on November 21, 2022, 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.

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:

Pioneer Valley Railroad Company (PVRR) shall retain its interest in and take no steps to alter the historic integrity of all historic properties including sites, buildings, structures, and objects within the project right-of-way (the Area of Potential Effects) that are potentially eligible for listing or listed in the National Register of Historic Places until the Section 106 process of the National Historic Preservation Act, 54 U.S.C. § 306108, has been completed. PVRR shall report back to the Office of Environmental Analysis regarding any consultations with the State Historic Preservation Officer, interested

federally recognized tribes, and any other Section 106 consulting parties that have been identified. PVRP may not file its consummation until the Section 106 process has been completed and the Board has removed this condition.

Conclusions

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, Director, Office of Environmental Analysis.