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OEA

SERVICE DATE – FEBRUARY 27, 2025

SURFACE TRANSPORTATION BOARD
WASHINGTON, DC 20423

FINAL ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

Docket No. AB 1343X

**Saratoga Railroad, LLC – Abandonment Exemption
In Carbon County, Wyo.**

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, Saratoga Railroad, LLC (Saratoga) filed a notice of exemption with the Surface Transportation Board 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 Carbon County, Wyoming. The rail line proposed for abandonment extends approximately 23.71 miles from milepost 0.57 in Walcott, Wyoming, to milepost 24.28 in Saratoga, Wyoming (the Line). The Office of Environmental Analysis (OEA) served a Draft EA for this proceeding on February 7, 2025 for public review and comment. In the Draft EA, OEA recommended one 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 February 24, 2025, the Wyoming State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) commented that the proposed undertaking is in an area previously surveyed and that the Line was determined to be ineligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places. SHPO also noted that prehistoric or historic material may be discovered during the undertaking. Accordingly, OEA no longer recommends imposing the Section 106 condition previously recommended in the Draft EA and instead recommends that the Board impose an unanticipated discovery condition on any decision granting abandonment authority.

Pursuant to the Section 106 regulations of the National Historic Preservation Act at 36 C.F.R. § 800.4(d)(1), and following consultation with Wyoming SHPO and the public, OEA has determined that the proposed abandonment would not affect historic properties listed in or eligible for inclusion in the National Register. The documentation for this finding, as specified

at 36 C.F.R. § 800.11(d), consists of Saratoga's historic report, all relevant correspondence, and this EA, which have been provided to the SHPO and made available to the public through posting on the Board's website at www.stb.gov.

Conclusions

The Draft EA comment period has ended. Accordingly, OEA recommends that the conditions recommended in the Draft EA, as modified by the recommendations in this document, should be imposed upon any decision granting abandonment authority: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, Saratoga Railroad, LLC (Saratoga) will immediately cease all work and notify the Office of Environmental Analysis (OEA), interested federally recognized tribes, and the Wyoming State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) pursuant to 36 C.F.R. § 800.13(b). OEA will then consult with the SHPO, interested federally recognized tribes, Saratoga, 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, 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.