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SERVICE DATE – DECEMBER 30, 2025

SURFACE TRANSPORTATION BOARD

DECISION

Docket No. FD 36891

NORTHERN LINES RAILWAY, LLC—AMENDED LEASE AND OPERATION
EXEMPTION CONTAINING INTERCHANGE COMMITMENT—
BNSF RAILWAY COMPANY

Decided: December 30, 2025

On December 1, 2025, Northern Lines Railway, LLC (NLR), a Class III railroad, filed a verified notice of exemption pursuant to 49 C.F.R. § 1150.41 to continue to lease from BNSF Railway Company and operate approximately 14.13 miles of rail line in Stearns, Sherburne, and Benton Counties, Minn. The lease contains an interchange commitment, however only the original 2004 lease was filed. NLR filed supplements on December 9 and 23, 2025 containing the complete lease agreement as amended.

Pursuant to 49 C.F.R. § 1150.42, exemptions become effective 30 days after notice of the exemption is filed. Although NLR made its first filing on December 1, 2025, a notice is not considered to be filed until the filing meets the Board’s regulatory requirements. See Buckeye Hammond R.R.—Acquisition & Operation Exemption—Buckeye Partners, L.P., FD 35697 (STB served Jan. 3, 2013). Because NLR’s verified notice was not complete until NLR filed its supplements containing the complete version of the lease, see 49 C.F.R. § 1150.43(h)(1)(ii) (requiring a verified notice for a lease containing an interchange commitment include “[a] confidential, *complete* version of the document(s) containing or addressing that provision or agreement” (emphasis added)), the Board will consider December 23, 2025, as the actual filing date of the verified notice. The effective date of the exemption will thus be calculated with December 23, 2025, as the filing date.

It is ordered:

1. The effective date of the exemption will be set by further order of the Board.
2. This decision is effective on its service date.

By the Board, Anika S. Cooper, Chief Counsel, Office of Chief Counsel.