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BEFORE THE SURFACE TRANSPORTATION BOARD

ENTERED
Office of Chief Counsel
April 17, 2026
Part of
Public Record

STB Docket No. FD 36920

Mesabi Railroad LLC—Operation Exemption—Itasca County Regional Railroad
Authority

Verified Notice of Exemption
of Mesabi Railroad LLC
Under 49 C.F.R. § 1150.31

Jason D. Tutrone
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Counsel for Mesabi Railroad LLC

Dated: April 17, 2026

Filing contains color

FILED
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SURFACE TRANSPORTATION BOARD

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SURFACE TRANSPORTATION BOARD

Mesabi Railroad LLC (“Mesabi Railroad”), a noncarrier, submits this notice of exemption under 49 C.F.R. § 1150.31 to exempt from 49 U.S.C. § 10901 its planned common carrier operation of an existing rail line in Itasca County, MN (the “Rail Line”) and associated sidetracks.

The Rail Line is owned by the Itasca County Regional Railroad Authority (“ICRRA”), which constructed it under an exemption from 49 U.S.C. § 10901.¹ It runs approximately 6 miles from a connection with an existing rail line at Taconite, Minnesota. The existing line is co-owned by BNSF Railway Company (“BNSF”) and Canadian National Railway Company (“CN”), and both carriers operate over the line. The Rail Line also has sidetracks at its northern and southern ends. No rail customers currently exist on the Rail Line, but the Rail Line will serve a new taconite mine and pelletization plant of Mesabi Railroad’s affiliate, Mesabi Metalics Company LLC, in Nashwauk, Minnesota, which is under construction and set to begin commercial operations later this year.

ICRRA and Mesabi Railroad plan to enter a rail use and operations agreement (the “Agreement”) requiring Mesabi Railroad to provide common carrier rail service over the Rail Line. The Agreement will also allow Mesabi Railroad to use the associated sidetracks.

¹ See *Itasca County Regional Rail Auth.—Pet. for Exemption—Construction of a line of railroad in Itasca County, MN*, FD 34992 (STB served Sept. 5, 2008) (granting an exemption for construction)

Notice Content under 49 C.F.R. § 1150.33

Applicant's Name and Address (§ 1150.33(a))

Mesabi Railroad LLC
108 W 13th St Ste 100
Wilmington, DE 19801

Applicant's Representative (§ 1150.33(b))

Jason Tutrone
Thompson Hine LLP
1919 M St NW Ste 700
Washington, DC 20036
202-263-4143
Jason.Tutrone@ThompsonHine.com

Statement about Agreement (§ 1150.33(c))

Mesabi Railroad and ICRRA anticipate finalizing the agreement under which Mesabi Railroad will provide common carrier service over the Rail Line in May 2026.

Operator of the Property (§ 1150.33(d))

Mesabi Railroad will operate the Rail Line and provide rail common carrier service to customers on the Rail Line upon consummation of the transaction. In addition, Mesabi Railroad may engage or permit a third party to provide some or all common carrier operations on the Rail Line, subject to any necessary authority under 49 U.S.C. or an exemption from that authority.

Summary of the Proposed Transaction (§ 1150.33(e))

Mesabi Railroad, a noncarrier, plans to enter a rail use and operating agreement with ICRRA under which Mesabi Railroad will provide common carrier rail service over ICRRA's approximately 6-mile rail line in Itasca County,

Minnesota, and may use associated sidetracks. Mesabi Railroad will operate the mainline track depicted on the map attached as Exhibit A as a common carrier and may use the ICRRA sidetracks depicted on the map in connection with the common carrier service. Mesabi Railroad may also engage in additional transactions, subject to obtaining necessary Board authority or exemptions, to allow a third party to operate the tracks as a common carrier.

a. Name and address of the entity granting use of the Rail Line

Itasca County Regional Railroad Authority
123 NE 4th St
Grand Rapids, MN 55744

b. Proposed time schedule for consummation of the transaction

Mesabi Railroad anticipates consummation of the transaction on or after May 17, 2026.

c. Mile posts

The Rail Line does not have mileposts. However, it connects to a BNSF and CN co-owned line at mileposts 18.84 and 19.79 of that line. Additionally, the Rail Line's distance station information is on the Rail Line map in Exhibit A. The Rail Line begins at station 0+00 and ends at station 417+30.

d. Total route miles involved

The Rail Line is approximately 6 miles.

Map (§ 1150.33(f))

A map showing the Rail Line and a map showing the location of the Rail Line with reference to the surrounding area (see ICRRA Railroad at the northeast corner of the map) are attached as Exhibit A.

Certificate of Revenues (§ 1150.33(g))

Mesabi Railroad certifies that its projected revenues will not exceed \$5 million and those that would qualify it as a Class III carrier.

Interchange Commitments (§ 1150.33(h))

Mesabi Railroad certifies that the proposed operation and Agreement do not involve an interchange commitment.

Caption Summary under 49 C.F.R. § 1150.34

A caption summary is attached as Exhibit B.

Environmental and Historic Reports

Under 49 C.F.R. § 1105.6(c)(1), Mesabi Railroad's proposed transaction is exempt from the Board's environmental reporting requirements. The proposed transaction will not involve operational changes exceeding the thresholds established in 49 C.F.R. § 1105.7(e)(4) or (5). Specifically, it will not involve an increase in rail traffic above these thresholds based on the anticipated traffic levels in the Environmental Assessment that the Board adopted when authorizing construction of the Rail Line.²

Under 49 C.F.R. § 1105.8(b), Mesabi Railroad's proposed transaction does not require a historic report. The transaction involves only acquisition of operating authority, is for rail operations, involves operations for which further STB approval

² See *Itasca County Regional Rail Auth.—Pet. for Exemption—Construction of a line of railroad in Itasca County, MN*, FD 34992, slip op. at 4-5 (STB served Sept. 5, 2008); Environmental Assessment 2-6, *Itasca County Regional Rail Auth.—Pet. for Exemption—Construction of a line of railroad in Itasca County, MN*, FD 34992 (served March 28, 2008).

will be necessary to abandon service. Additionally, there are no plans to dispose of or alter properties subject to STB jurisdiction that are at least 50 years old.

Respectfully submitted,

/s/ Jason D. Tutrone

Jason D. Tutrone

Amaiya Johnson

Thompson Hine LLP

1919 M Street, NW Suite 700

Washington, DC 20036

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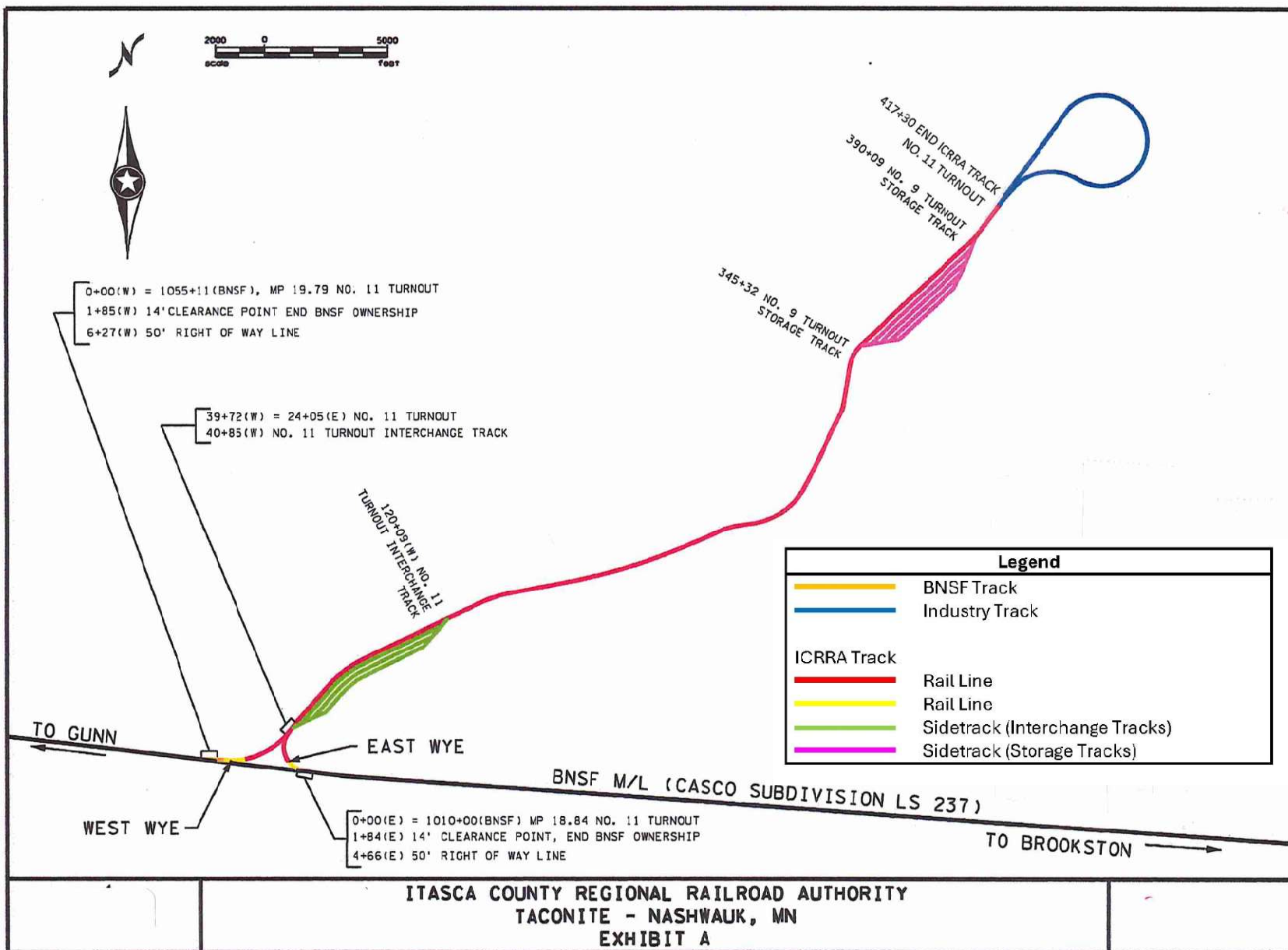
Jason.Tutrone@ThompsonHine.com

Counsel for Mesabi Railroad LLC

Dated: April 17, 2026

Exhibit A

Maps



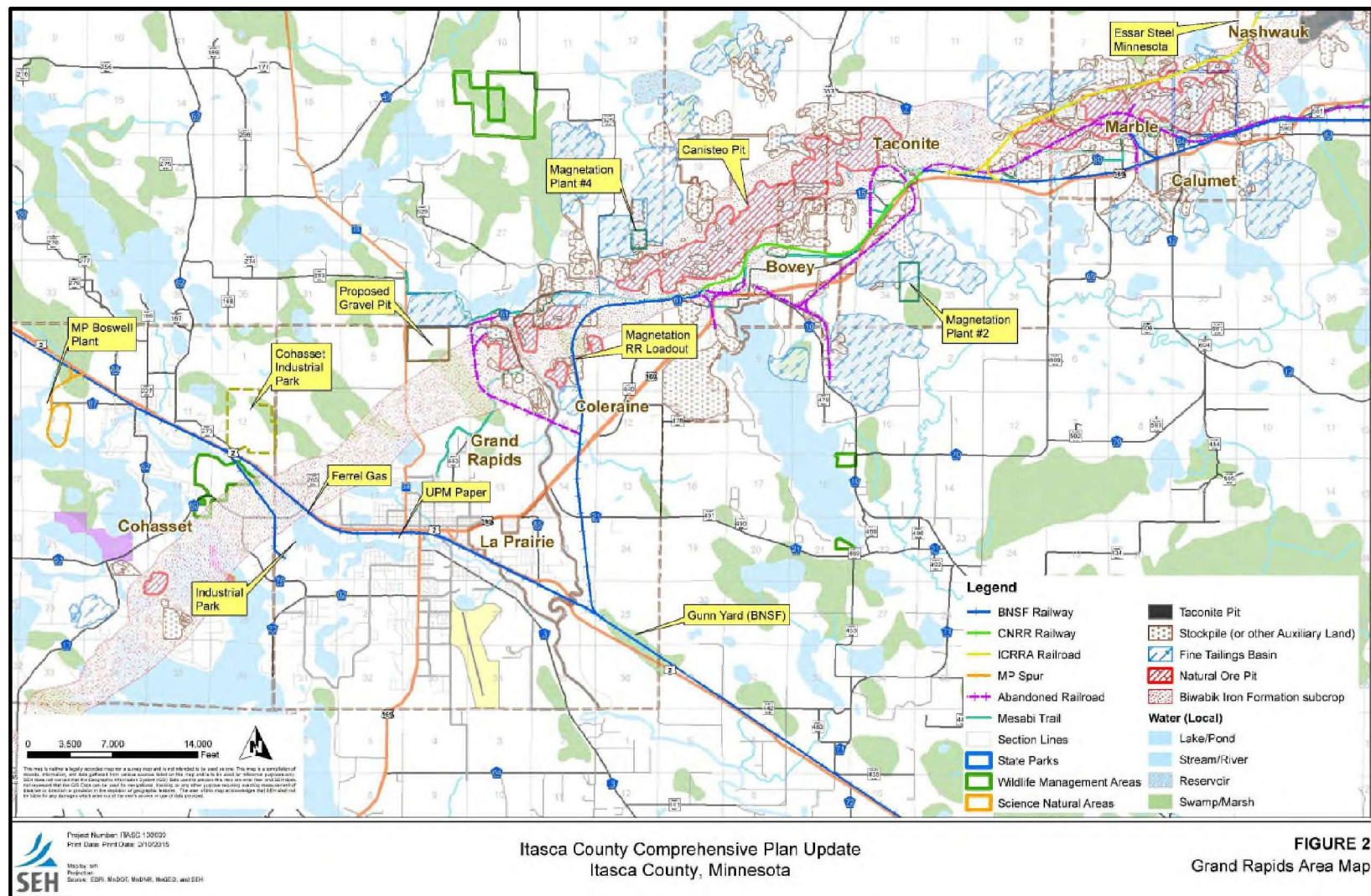


Exhibit B

Caption Summary

Surface Transportation Board

Notice of Exemption

STB Finance Docket No. FD 36920

Mesabi Railroad LLC—Operation Exemption—Itasca County Regional Railroad Authority

Mesabi Railroad LLC (“Mesabi Railroad”), a noncarrier, has filed a verified notice of exemption under 49 C.F.R. § 1150.31 to operate the Itasca County Regional Railroad Authority’s (“ICRRA”) line in Itasca County, Minnesota (the “Rail Line”). The Rail Line extends approximately 6 miles from a connection with an existing line co-owned by BNSF Railway Company (“BNSF”) and Canadian National Railway Company (“CN”), in Taconite, Minnesota, at BNSF/CN mileposts 18.84 and 19.79, to a taconite mine and pelletization plant under construction in Nashwauk, Minnesota. Mesabi Railroad and ICRRA plan to enter a use and operations agreement governing the operation and permitting Mesabi Railroad to use and operate the Rail Line and ICRRA’s adjacent sidetracks. Mesabi Railroad anticipates commencing common carrier operations over the Rail Line on or after May 17, 2026.

All pleadings, referring to Docket No. FD 36920, must be filed with the Surface Transportation Board either via e-filing on the Board's website or in writing addressed to 395 E Street SW, Washington, DC 20423-0001. In addition, a copy of each pleading must be served on Mesabi Railroad’s representative: Jason Tutrone,

Thompson Hine LLP, 1919 M St. NW, Ste 700, Washington, DC 20036; 202-263-4143; Jason.Tutrone@thompsonhine.com.

This action is categorically excluded from environmental review under 49 CFR 1105.6(c) and from historic preservation reporting requirements under 49 CFR 1105.8(b).

The notice is filed under 49 C.F.R. § 1150.31. If the notice contains false or misleading information, the exemption is void ab initio. Petitions to revoke the exemption under 49 U.S.C. § 10502(d) may be filed at any time. The filing of a petition to revoke will not automatically stay the transaction.

Board decisions and notices are available at www.stb.gov.

Exhibit C

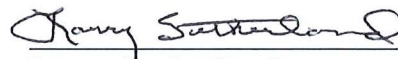
Certification and Verification

Certification and Verification

I, Larry Sutherland, authorized representative of Mesabi Railroad LLC, verify under penalty of perjury that the foregoing is true and correct. Further, I certify under penalty of perjury that:

1. Mesabi Railroad LLC's projected annual revenues due to this transaction will not result in the creation of a Class II or Class I rail carrier and will not exceed \$5 million.
2. This transaction will not involve an interchange commitment.
3. I am qualified and authorized to file this document.

Executed on: April 17, 2026


Larry Sutherland