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OEA

SERVICE DATE - JUNE 25, 2026

SURFACE TRANSPORTATION BOARD
WASHINGTON, DC 20423

SUPPLEMENTAL FINAL ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

Docket No. AB 290 (Sub-No. 420X)

**Norfolk Southern Railway Company – Abandonment Exemption –
in the City of Baltimore, Md.**

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

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In this proceeding, Norfolk Southern Railway Company (NSR) filed a notice of exemption with the Surface Transportation Board (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 freight rail easement in the City of Baltimore, Maryland. The freight rail easement proposed for abandonment extends approximately 1.0 mile from milepost UU 0.00 +/- southeast of North Howard Street to milepost UU 1.00 +/- north of Wyman Park Drive, on a rail line known as the Cockeysville Industrial Tract (CIT) which runs between Baltimore and Cockeysville, Md. (the Line).

The Board's Office of Environmental Analysis (OEA) issued an Environmental Assessment (EA) on December 29, 2025 for public review and comment. On January 16, 2026, OEA issued a Final EA, recommended no conditions and concluded that the proposed action would not significantly affect the quality of the human environment.

Comments

On January 2, 2026, James Riffin filed a notice of intent to participate in the proceeding with a comment attached that was not considered in the Final EA. In his comment, Mr. Riffin raised a number of issues related to NSR's Environmental and Historic Report (E&H Report) and the historic review process.

First, Mr. Riffin stated that NSR failed to provide a sufficiently detailed map in its E&H Report. As an appendix to its E&H Report, NSR provided a large-scale satellite imagery map containing enough detail to show the location of the proposed abandonment, including buildings and other structures in the vicinity. In addition, NSR stated in its revised June 27, 2025 E&H

Report that it had provided U.S.G.S. topographic maps depicting the location of the Line in its submission to the SHPO. Therefore, OEA determined that the map NSR appended to its E&H Report met the requirements of 49 C.F.R. § 1105.8(d)(1) and adequately depicted the location of the Line and adjacent structures.

Second, Mr. Riffin stated that NSR failed to provide a written description of the right-of-way. The regulation at 49 C.F.R. § 1105.8(d)(2) requires that applicants include the right-of-way width to the extent known in its E&H report. NSR stated that it does not own the Line and that it has no knowledge regarding changes made to the right-of-way by the owners. Thus, OEA concluded that NSR had complied with the regulations and that it had adequate information to proceed with the historic review of the proposed abandonment.

Third, Mr. Riffin stated that NSR failed to provide good quality photographs of railroad structures 50 years old or older and the immediately surrounding area and the dates of construction of the structures and the dates and extent of any major alteration as required under 49 C.F.R. § 1105.8(d)(3)-(4). NSR stated in its E&H Report that it does not own the Line and that there are no NSR owned or maintained structures (bridges or tunnels) on the Line. OEA reviewed aerial photography of the Line (Google Earth Imagery dated March 16, 2025) and confirmed that there are no buildings or structures (retaining walls, culverts) within the right-of-way or Area of Potential Effects (APE). The culverts and stone retaining walls referenced in Mr. Riffin's comment are not owned by NSR, and NSR is not proposing any changes to them. As discussed below, OEA's independent research revealed that the SHPO has documentation including photographs of the culverts and stone retaining walls. Therefore, OEA concluded that NSR had complied with the regulations because NSR does not own the Line, the culvert and stone retaining wall near the Line have already been photographically documented, and the documentation is on file at the SHPO.

Finally, Mr. Riffin stated that NSR did not include documentation of the Jones Falls culverts and stone retaining wall, both over 50 years of age, and that due to insufficient information included in the E&H Report, the SHPO may not be aware of the structures. OEA consulted the SHPO's online Cultural Resource Information System (MEDUSA) (<https://apps.mht.maryland.gov/medusa/>) to view what information the SHPO had access to when making its determination regarding the proposed abandonment. The SHPO's MEDUSA system revealed that the Jones Falls culverts and stone retaining wall referenced by Mr. Riffin were previously documented in 1999 (Jones Falls Retaining Walls, B-1313). The survey documentation materials include detailed U.S.G.S. mapping of the walls and culvert, photographs, and a full history and evaluation of significance. The Jones Falls Retaining Walls (Walls) were identified as a "late nineteenth-century public works project intended to prevent erosion and to control the Jones Falls through Baltimore." Nothing in the survey documentation associates the resource with any railroad, and the Walls were previously determined not eligible for the National Register of Historic Places (National Register) by the SHPO in 2000. The SHPO had this documentation when it evaluated the proposed abandonment and made the no effect determination.

After considering Mr. Riffin's comment, OEA's previous determination that the proposed abandonment would not affect historic properties listed in or eligible for inclusion in the National Register remains unchanged. The documentation for this finding, as specified at 36 C.F.R. §

800.11(d), consists of NSR's historic report, all relevant correspondence (including the SHPO's 2024 determination of no effect), and the Draft EA, Final EA, and this Supplemental Final EA.

Conclusion

Accordingly, no changes to the EA (Draft and Final) are warranted as a result of this comment.

By the Board, Danielle Gosselin, Director, Office of Environmental Analysis.