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ENTERED
Office of Chief Counsel
September 4, 2026
Part of
Public Record

VIA E-FILING

Chief of Case Administration
Office of Chief Counsel
Surface Transportation Board
395 E Street, S.W.
Washington, DC 20423-0001

September 4, 2026

Re: The Great Walton Railroad Company, Inc. – Control Exemption – The Athens Line, LLC, FD 36950

Dear Chief of Case Administration:

Pursuant to 49 C.F.R. 1180.2(d)(2), The Great Walton Railroad Company, Inc. files this verified notice of exemption seeking authority to control The Athens Line, LLC. A \$ 2,300 filing fee has been paid via Pay.gov. If there are any questions about this matter, please contact me directly, either by telephone at (202) 210-4761 or by email at rhstreeter@gmail.com.

Respectfully submitted

/s/ Richard H. Streeter

Richard H. Streeter
Attorney for:
The Great Walton Railroad Company, Inc.

Enclosures

FEE RECEIVED
September 4, 2026
SURFACE
TRANSPORTATION BOARD

FILED
September 4, 2026
SURFACE
TRANSPORTATION BOARD

**BEFORE THE
SURFACE TRANSPORTATION BOARD**

FD 36950

**THE GREAT WALTON RAILROAD COMPANY, INC.
-CONTROL EXEMPTION –
THE ATHENS LINE, LLC**

**NOTICE OF EXEMPTION
PURSUANT TO 49 C.F.R. § 1180.2(d)(2)**

**Richard H. Streeter
Law Office of Richard H. Streeter
5255 Partridge Lane, N.W.
Washington, DC 20016
Tel: (202) 210-4761
rhstreeter@gmail.com**

**Attorney for Great Walton Railroad
Company, Inc.**

Dated: September 4, 2026

**BEFORE THE
SURFACE TRANSPORTATION BOARD**

FD 36950

**THE GREAT WALTON RAILROAD COMPANY, INC.
-CONTROL EXEMPTION –
THE ATHENS LINE, LLC**

NOTICE OF EXEMPTION

Pursuant to the class exemption at 49 C.F.R. § 1180.2(d)(2), The Great Walton Railroad Company, Inc., a Class III railroad (“GWRC”),¹ hereby provides this verified notice of exemption (“Notice”). GWRC controls The Athens Line, LLC (“the Athens Line”) and the Hartwell Railroad Company (“Hartwell”). GWRC obtained authority to control Hartwell;² however, GWRC mistakenly did not obtain authority to control Athens Line.

This notice seeks to obtain after-the-fact authority from the Surface Transportation Board (“STB” or “Board”) for control by GWRC of the Athens Line.³ In accordance with the requirements of 49 C.F.R. § 1180.4(g), GWRC submits the following information.

¹ Bennie Ray Anderson, Sr., who is now deceased, controlled GWRC; GWRC is currently part of his estate, which is in probate. GWRC became a carrier in 1987 through the acquisition of a line of railroad owned by Georgia Eastern Railroad Co. The Great Walton Rail Co. – Acquisition And Operation Exemption; Georgia Eastern Railroad Co., FD 310211 (ICC served March 28, 1987).

² See Great Walton Railroad Company d/b/a Hartwell Railroad Company – Acquisition Exemption – Hartwell Railroad Company, Docket No. FD 36599 (STB served May 23, 2022). GWRC’s control of Hartwell was obtained pursuant to a petition for exemption (rather than a notice for exemption) because GWRC and Hartwell connected at Bowersville, GA. Hartwell is a wholly-owned subsidiary of GWRC.

³ The Athens Line is a wholly-owned subsidiary of GWRC. The Athens Line became a carrier when it originally leased, and eventually acquired, a line of railroad from Central of Georgia Railroad Company. See The Athens Line, LLC – Lease and Operation Exemption – Norfolk Southern Railway Company and Central of Georgia Railroad Company, STB Finance Docket No. 34118 (STB served December 27, 2001); The Athens Line, LLC – Acquisition and Operation Exemption – Rail Line of Norfolk Southern Railway Company and Central of Georgia Railroad Company, Docket No. FD 36122 (STB served June 16, 2017).

INFORMATION REQUIRED BY 49 C.F.R. § 1180.6

Description of Proposed Transaction and Parties Thereto: 49 C.F.R. § 1180.6(a)(1)(i)

GWRC, a Class III carrier, controls two other Class III rail carriers: the Athens Line and Hartwell. In 2001, the Athens Line obtained STB authority to lease and operate certain rail lines, and the Athens Line subsequently obtained STB authority to acquire and operate those lines. However, when the Athens Line became a Class III carrier in 2001, GWRC mistakenly did not file to continue to control the Athens Line upon it becoming a carrier. Accordingly, GWRC seeks an after-the-fact exemption to address this prior omission.

The full name and address of the Applicant is as follows:

The Great Walton Railroad Company, Inc.
1096 North Cherokee Road
Social Circle, Georgia 30025
Telephone: (770) 464-0761

The Athens Line does not connect with either GWRC or Hartwell. As such, control by GWRC over the Athens Line will not result in the railroads connecting with each other or any railroads in their corporate family and is not part of a series of anticipated transactions that would result in any such connection. In addition, the control by GWRC over the Athens Line does not involve a class I carrier. Accordingly, the proposed control satisfies the class exemption criteria at 49 C.F.R. § 1180.2(d)(2).

Any questions concerning this Notice should be sent to GWRC's representative at the following address:

Richard H. Streeter
Law Office of Richard H. Streeter
5255 Partridge Lane, N.W.
Washington, DC 20016
Tel: (202) 210-4761
rhstreeter@gmail.com

Proposed Schedule for Consummation: 49 C.F.R. § 1180.6(a)(1)(ii)

As discussed above, GWRC is seeking after-the-fact authority for its continued control of the Athens Line. Because the Athens Line is already a railroad, there is no proposed consummation date for it to become a new carrier. GWRC anticipates that the after-the-fact control authority it seeks pursuant to this Notice will become effective thirty (30) days after the Notice is filed with the STB.

Purpose Sought to Be Accomplished: 49 C.F.R. § 1180.6(a)(1)(iii)

The control by GWRC of the Athens Line generally improves the overall efficiency of rail service provided by the railroads in the corporate family. In addition, the acquisition of the after-the-fact control authority sought in this Notice will enable GWRC to be in compliance with the Board's control regulations as of the effective date of this Notice.

States in Which Property of Applicants is Located: 49 C.F.R. § 1180.6(a)(5)

GWRC, the Athens Line, and Hartwell are located solely in the State of Georgia.

Maps - Exhibit A: 49 C.F.R. § 1180.6(a)(6)

Maps showing the general location of GWRC, the Athens Line, and Hartwell are attached hereto as Exhibit A.

Agreement: 49 C.F.R. § 1180.6(a)(7)(ii)

No agreement is contemplated or necessary GWRC to continue in control of the Athens Line.

Labor Protection Conditions: 49 C.F.R. § 1180.4(g)(1)(i)

GWRC, the Athens Line, and Hartwell are all Class III carriers. Accordingly, GWRC's continued control of the Athens Line is not subject to the imposition of labor protection conditions. *See* 49 U.S.C. § 11326(c).

Environmental and Historic Preservation Matters: 49 C.F.R. § 1180.4(g)(2)

Under 49 C.F.R. § 1105.6(c)(1)(i), the proposed control transaction is exempt from environmental reporting requirements. GWRC's control of the Athens Line will not result in significant changes in carrier operations, *i.e.*, changes that exceed the thresholds established in 49 C.F.R. § 1105.7(e)(4) or (5).

In addition, this proceeding is exempt from historic review under 49 C.F.R. § 1105.8(b)(3) because the transaction will not result in significant changes in the level of maintenance of any of the railroad properties.

Interchange Commitments: 49 C.F.R. § 1180.4(g)(3)

The proposed control transaction does not involve the acquisition or operation of a rail line, and, thus, the provisions of 49 C.F.R. § 1180.4(g)(3) are inapplicable.

Respectfully submitted,

/s/ Richard H. Streeter

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*Attorney for The Great Walton
Railroad Company*

September 4, 2026

**BEFORE THE
SURFACE TRANSPORTATION BOARD**

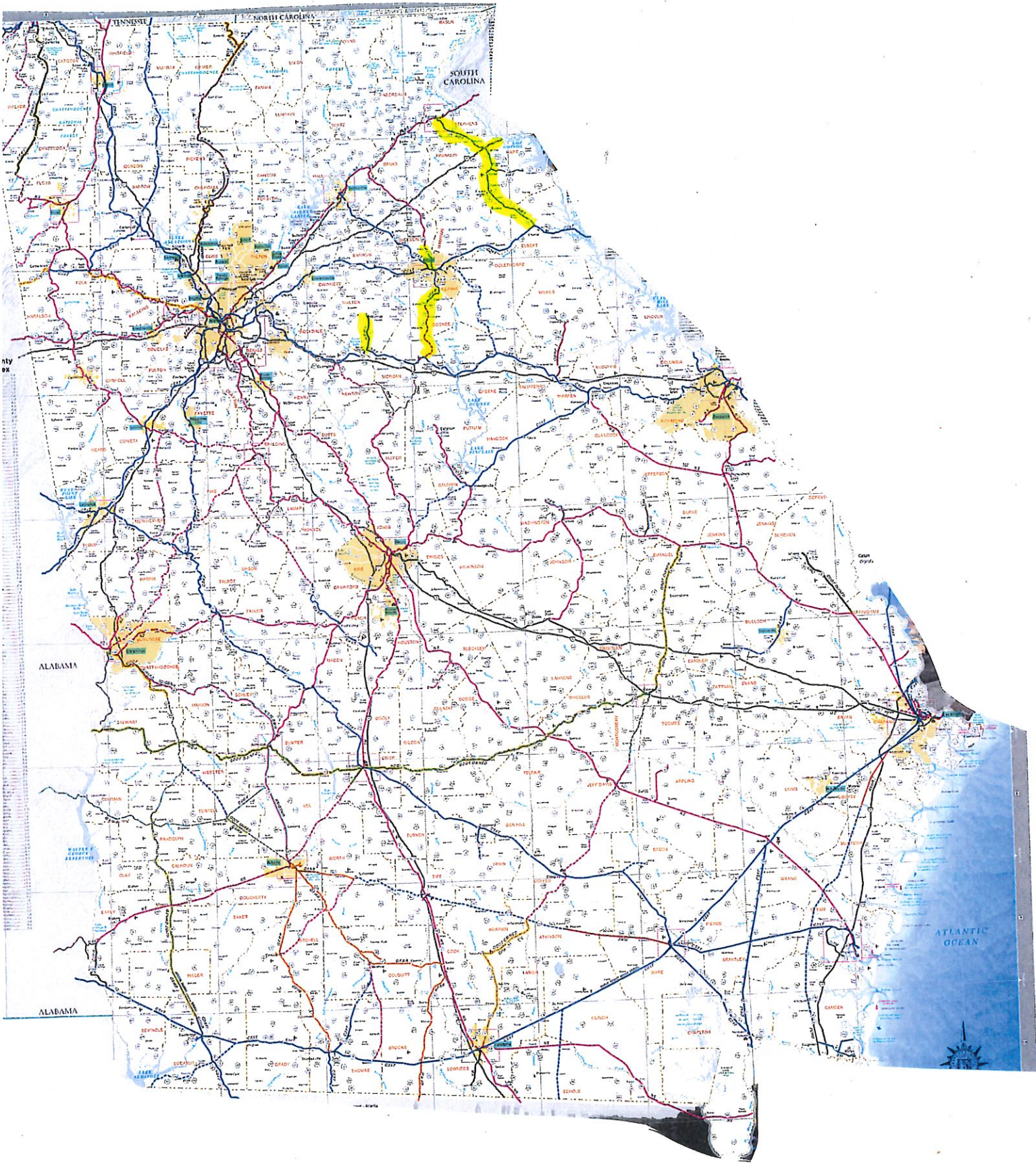
FD 36950

**THE GREAT WALTON RAILROAD COMPANY, INC.
-CONTROL EXEMPTION-
THE ATHENS LINE, LLC**

NOTICE OF EXEMPTION

EXHIBIT A

**MAPS OF THE GWRC, ATHENS
LINE, AND HARTWELL**



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**BEFORE THE
SURFACE TRANSPORTATION BOARD**

FD 36950

**THE GREAT WALTON RAILROAD COMPANY, INC.
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THE ATHENS LINE, LLC**

NOTICE OF EXEMPTION

VERIFICATION

VERIFICATION

I, CHARLES DAVID BISHOP hereby verify under penalty of perjury under the laws of the United States that the statements made in the foregoing notice of exemption are true and correct to the best of my knowledge, information, and belief. Further, I certify that I, as PRESIDENT of The Great Walton Railroad Company, am qualified and authorized to cause the foregoing notice of exemption to be filed.

Signature: Charles David Bishop
Name: CHARLES DAVID BISHOP
Title: PRESIDENT

Dated: September 4, 2026