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OEA

SERVICE DATE – SEPTEMBER 18, 2026

**SURFACE TRANSPORTATION BOARD
WASHINGTON, DC 20423**

DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

Docket No. AB 55 (Sub-No. 827X)

**CSX Transportation, Inc. – Abandonment Exemption –
In Anne Arundel County, Md.**

BACKGROUND

In this proceeding, CSX Transportation, Inc. (CSXT) 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 line of railroad in Anne Arundel County, Maryland. The rail line proposed for abandonment extends approximately 0.72 miles from milepost BBR 6.89 south of Kembo Street to milepost BBR 7.61, on CSXT's Northeast Region, Baltimore Terminal Subdivision (the Line). A map depicting the Line in relationship to the area served is appended to this Draft Environmental Assessment (Draft EA). If the notice becomes effective, the railroad will be able to salvage track, ties, and other appurtenances and to dispose of the right-of-way.

DESCRIPTION OF THE LINE

According to CSXT, the Line was part of the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad (B&O) network which extended from Curtis Bay Yard, crossed Curtis Creek, and served industrial facilities located on the Marley Neck Peninsula. CSXT states it continues to operate portions of the former B&O network north of the Line and to provide rail service to several customers in the area. According to CSXT, the Line is adjacent to a former landfill that is currently designated as an active remediation site under the Maryland Department of Environment (MDE).¹

ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW

CSXT submitted a combined environmental and historic report (E&H Report) that concludes the quality of the human environment would not be affected significantly as a result of the proposed abandonment of the Line, including salvage. CSXT served the E&H Report on a number of appropriate federal, state, and local agencies as required by the Board's environmental

¹ Brownfields Master Inventory Number MD0362.

rules [49 C.F.R. § 1105.7(b)]² implementing the National Environmental Policy Act. The Board's Office of Environmental Analysis (OEA) has reviewed and investigated the record in this proceeding.

Diversion of Traffic

According to CSXT, no local traffic has moved over the Line over the last ten years, and overhead traffic on the Line has been rerouted. Therefore, the proposed abandonment would not result in the diversion of rail traffic to truck traffic that could result in significant impacts to air quality or the local transportation network. Nor would the proposed abandonment adversely impact the development, use and transportation of energy resources or recyclable commodities or the transportation of ozone-depleting materials.

Salvage Activities

Impacts from salvage and disposal of a rail line typically include removal of tracks and ties, removal of ballast, dismantling of any bridges or other structures that may be present on the rail right-of-way, and regrading of the right-of-way. Salvage may be performed within the right-of-way, or, if necessary, via the construction of new access points to the right-of-way. According to CSXT, it does intend to disturb any subgrade or subgrade structures or remove any rail, trail, or material from the Line. If abandonment authority is granted, CSXT states that it intends to sell the Line "as is" along with the surrounding property to Elm Street Properties.

Land Use

CSXT considers the proposed abandonment to be consistent with existing land use plans. CSXT requested comments on the proposed abandonment from Anne Arundel County (County). By letter dated August 25, 2026, the County stated that the proposed abandonment is consistent with the County's General Development Plan (Plan2024), its Region 1 Plan, and the mixed-use development zoning and planned land use for the area.

CSXT notified the United States Department of Agriculture's Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) of the proposed abandonment by letter dated August 6, 2026. To date, OEA has not received a response. However, because no salvage activities are proposed, OEA concludes that the proposed abandonment is unlikely to have an adverse effect on prime agricultural land.

Hazardous Materials/Spills and Safety

CSXT states that the proposed abandonment would have no detrimental effects on public health and safety. According to CSXT, the Line is adjacent to a former B&O Railroad landfill,

² The E&H Report is available for viewing on the Board's website at www.stb.gov by clicking "Search STB Records;" selecting "Filings" in the "Search for" dropdown menu; entering "AB" "290" "827" "X" sequentially in the four boxes for "Docket Number," then selecting "Search." The E&H Report was filed on August 26, 2026.

which is currently designated as an active remediation site under the MDE.³ The landfill was located just east of the intersection of Fort Smallwood Road and Kembo Road and was used by B&O from the early 1950s until its closure in 1973 per CSXT.

MDE provided comments stating that any solid waste including construction, demolition and land clearing debris, generated from the proposed abandonment must be properly disposed of at a permitted solid waste acceptable facility, or recycled if possible; the Solid Waste Program should be contacted prior to any construction activities to ensure that the treatment, storage or disposal of hazardous wastes and low-level radioactive wastes to the facility should be conducted in compliance with applicable State and federal laws and regulations. Because no land disturbance or instream work is contemplated; no bridge, viaduct, embankment, or tree removal is contemplated; and no salvage activities are proposed, OEA concludes that the proposed abandonment is unlikely to impact hazardous materials. OEA is providing a copy of this Draft EA to MDE for its review.

Biological Resources

CSXT requested comments from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) regarding the potential impact of the proposed abandonment to protected wildlife, including federally listed threatened and endangered species. In its request for comments, CSXT concluded that the proposed abandonment is not likely to adversely affect the eastern black rail and would have no effect on the tricolored bat in the project area. In a response letter dated August 25, 2026, USFWS concurred with CSXT's conclusions.

To identify protected species in the project area and to meet the Board's requirements under section 7(c) of the Endangered Species Act, OEA conducted its own search of the USFWS Information for Planning and Consultation (IPaC) system.⁴ The following three species may be present in the project area: eastern black rail (*Laterallus jamaicensis jamaicensis*), a threatened bird; tricolored bat (*Perimyotis sublavus*), a proposed endangered mammal; and monarch butterfly (*Danaus plexippus*) a proposed threatened insect. According to the IPaC report, there is no designated critical habitat for these species in the project area.

Because no land disturbance or instream work is contemplated; no bridge, viaduct, embankment, or tree removal is contemplated; no salvage activities are proposed; and no critical habitat is present, OEA determined that the proposed abandonment would have "no effect" on these species.⁵ OEA is providing a copy of this Draft EA to the USFWS, Chesapeake Bay Field Office for its review.

³ Brownfields Master Inventory Number MD0362.

⁴ U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Information for Planning and Consultation Tool (IPaC), <https://ipac.ecosphere.fws.gov> (OEA accessed on September 14, 2026, Project Code: 2026-0145838).

⁵ Although, USFWS concurred with CSXT's not likely to adversely affect conclusion for eastern black rail, the Board as the Federal action agency, has made a "no effect" determination for eastern black rail for the reasons stated above.

CSXT notified the Maryland State Clearinghouse (MSC) of the proposed abandonment by letter dated August 6, 2026. Maryland Department of Natural Resources (MDNR) provided a response through MSC stating that the project area occurs within a Special Species Project Review Area, indicating the presence of state-listed rare, threatened, and endangered species. MDNR stated that any future activities that could impact these species would require coordination with DNR Wildlife and Heritage Service (WHS) to ensure that impacts to state-listed rare, threatened, and endangered species are avoided and minimized to the greatest extent possible. Because no land disturbance or instream work is contemplated; no bridge, viaduct, embankment, or tree removal is contemplated; and no salvage activities are proposed, OEA believes that the proposed abandonment would have no effect on state-listed rare, threatened, and endangered species. OEA is providing a copy of this Draft EA to MDNR for its review.

CSXT notified the National Park Service (NPS) of the proposed abandonment requesting assistance in identifying any potential effects on wildlife sanctuaries or refugees, National or State parks or forests. To date, NPS has not provided comments. Because no salvage is contemplated and the Line does not cross any wildlife sanctuaries or refuges, National or State parks or forests, OEA believes that no such area would be affected by the proposed abandonment.

Water Resources

The Line is located within a Coastal Zone. CSXT notified MDE's, Maryland Coastal Zone Management Program (MCZMP) and the MSC of the proposed abandonment by letter dated August 6, 2026. To date, OEA has not received a response from MCZMP. However, MDE provided a response through MSC stating that the proposed abandonment is generally consistent with its plans, programs, and objectives.⁶ Therefore, no further consultation is necessary. OEA is providing a copy of this Draft EA to MCMZP and MDE for their review.

CSXT requested assistance from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Region 3 (USEPA); and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Baltimore District (USACE) in identifying whether permits under Sections 402 and 404 of the Clean Water Act (CWA) (33 U.S.C. §§ 1342 and 1344) are required for the proposed abandonment, respectively. To date USEPA and USACE have not provided comments. Because CSXT does not intend to conduct any salvage operations, disturb any roadbed underlying the Line, or do any work in Waters of the United States (WOTUS), there would be no discharge of dredged or fill materials into WOTUS or jurisdictional wetlands. Therefore, OEA does not anticipate the need for permits under Section 402 and 404 of the CWA. OEA is providing USEPA and USACE a copy of this Draft EA for their review.

By letter dated August 6, 2026, CSXT requested assistance from MDE in identifying any potential effects on water quality standards. MDE commented that it found the proposed abandonment to be generally consistent with its plans, programs, and objectives. MDE further advised that the project area is in close proximity to Flood Zone AE (100-year Floodplain) and X (500-year Floodplain) and local floodplain ordinances and Federal Emergency Management Agency's guidelines and standards should be followed. MDE also advised that consideration

⁶ MCMZP is a program within MDE.

should be given to climate resiliency. Because no land disturbance or instream work is contemplated, no salvage activities are proposed, and no freight rail traffic would be diverted to truck traffic, OEA believes that the proposed abandonment would not likely affect water resources or floodplains. OEA is providing a copy of this Draft EA to MDE for its review.

Summary

Based on all information available to date, OEA does not believe that the proposed abandonment would cause significant environmental impacts. In addition to the parties on the Board's service list for this proceeding, OEA is providing a copy of this Draft EA to the following agencies for review and comment: USFWS, Chesapeake Bay Ecological Services Field Office; MCZMP; USEPA, Region 3; USACE, Baltimore District; MDE; and MDNR.

HISTORIC REVIEW

CSXT served the E&H Report on the Maryland Historical Trust (State Historic Preservation Office or SHPO), pursuant to 49 C.F.R. § 1105.8(c).⁷ Based on available information, the SHPO submitted comments stating that no historic properties listed in or eligible for inclusion in the National Register of Historic Places (National Register) would be affected within the right-of-way (the Area of Potential Effect, or APE) of the proposed abandonment.⁸

Therefore, 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 the 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 CSXT's historic report, all relevant correspondence, and this Draft EA, which have been provided to the SHPO and made available to the public through posting on the Board's website www.stb.gov.

Pursuant to 36 C.F.R. § 800.2, OEA conducted a search of the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development's Tribal Directory Assessment Tool (TDAT) to identify federally recognized Tribes that may have ancestral connections to the project area.⁹ The database indicated that the following federally-recognized tribes may have knowledge regarding properties of traditional religious and cultural significance within the right-of-way (the APE) of

⁷ Applicants seeking authority from the Board to abandon railroad lines may act on behalf of the Board when complying with the Section 106 regulations of the National Historic Preservation Act. Applicants are authorized to initiate the Section 106 review process and carry out some of its steps but the Board retains overall responsibility for the Section 106 review. See 36 C.F.R. § 800.2(c)(4); 49 C.F.R. Part 1105; Delegation Letter (Dec. 9, 2009). The Delegation Letter can be found at a link on the bottom of the Board's website overlooking historic preservation at <https://www.stb.gov/resources/environmental/historic-preservation-overview>.

⁸ Maryland Historic Trust Log #: 202603678; Project #: AB-55 (Sub-No. 827X).

⁹ U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, Tribal Directory Assessment Tool, <https://egis.hud.gov/tdat> (last accessed September 15, 2026).

the proposed abandonment: Delaware Nation, Oklahoma and Delaware Tribe of Indians. Accordingly, OEA is sending a copy of this Draft EA to these Tribes for their review and comment.

CONDITIONS

OEA recommends no conditions be imposed on any decision granting abandonment authority.

CONCLUSIONS

Based on the information provided from all sources to date, OEA concludes that, as currently proposed, abandonment of the Line will not significantly affect the quality of the human environment. Therefore, the environmental impact statement process is unnecessary.

Alternatives to the proposed abandonment would include denial (and therefore no change in operations), discontinuance of service without abandonment, and continued operation by another operator. In any of these cases, the existing quality of the human environment and energy consumption should not be affected.

PUBLIC USE

Following abandonment and salvage of the rail line, the right-of-way may be suitable for other public use. A request containing the requisite four-part showing for imposition of a public use condition (49 C.F.R. § 1152.28) must be filed with the Board and served on the railroad within the time specified in the Board's Federal Register notice of the proposed abandonment. The Federal Register notice is also issued as a Board decision and is available on the Board's website.¹⁰

TRAIL USE

A request for a notice of interim trail use (NITU) is due to the Board, with a copy to the railroad, within 10 days of publication of the notice of exemption in the Federal Register. Nevertheless, the Board will accept late-filed requests as long as it retains jurisdiction to do so in a particular case. This request must comply with the Board's rules for

¹⁰ Board decisions are available for viewing on the Board's website at www.stb.gov by clicking "Search STB Records;" selecting "Decisions" in the "Search for" dropdown menu; entering "AB" "290" "827" "X" sequentially in the four boxes for "Docket Number," then selecting "Search."

use of rights-of-way as trails (49 C.F.R. § 1152.29). The Federal Register notice is also issued as a Board decision and is available on the Board's website.¹¹

PUBLIC ASSISTANCE

The Board's Office of Public Assistance, Governmental Affairs, and Compliance responds to questions regarding interim trail use, public use, and other reuse alternatives. You may contact this office directly at (202) 245-0238, or mail inquiries to Surface Transportation Board, Office of Public Assistance, Governmental Affairs, and Compliance, Washington, DC 20423.

COMMENTS

OEA encourages interested parties to submit their comments on the Draft EA electronically through the Board's website at <https://www.stb.gov/>. From the Board's home page, scroll down to the blue "How to File" box. Select the "E-Filing (recommended)" button. From the E-Filing page, select "Environmental Comments" under "Select your E-Filing Type." Log-in accounts are not needed to file environmental comments electronically, and brief comments can be typed in the comment field, and lengthier comments can be attached as Word, Adobe Acrobat, or other file formats.

Alternatively, comments submitted by mail should be addressed to: Karen Stevens, Surface Transportation Board, 395 E Street SW, Washington, DC 20423-0001, Attention: Environment Filing, Docket No. AB-55 (Sub-No. 827X). If you have any questions, please contact Karen Stevens by email at Karen.Stevens@stb.gov or by phone at 202-245-0304.

Date made available to the public: September 18, 2026.

Comment due date: October 2, 2026.

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

Attachment

¹¹ Id.



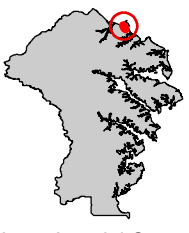


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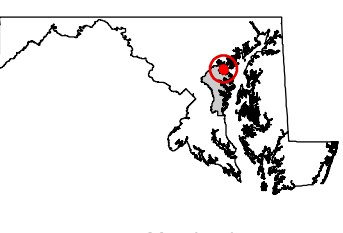
Legend

 The Line

Note: Maps produced by the STB's Office of Environmental Analysis are based on information provided by the applicant and are for reference purposes only.



Anne Arundel County



Maryland