

SERVICE DATE – OCTOBER 22, 2026

SURFACE TRANSPORTATION BOARD

DECISION

Docket No. AB 290 (Sub-No. 425X)

NORFOLK SOUTHERN RAILWAY COMPANY—ABANDONMENT EXEMPTION—IN
ROCKINGHAM, SHENANDOAH, AND WARREN COUNTIES, VA.

Decided: October 22, 2026

On October 5, 2026, Norfolk Southern Railway Company (NSR) filed a verified notice of exemption under 49 C.F.R. part 1152 subpart F—Exempt Abandonments to abandon rail service over approximately 48.5 miles of connecting rail lines, extending from milepost B 51.0 +/- near Riverton Junction in Front Royal, to milepost B 99.5 +/- at Broadway, in Rockingham, Shenandoah, and Warren Counties, Va. (the Line).

On October 14, 2026, Shenandoah Valley Battlefields Foundation (SVBF), and its wholly-owned subsidiary, the Manassas Gap Railroad LLC (MGR), filed a notice of intent to file an offer of financial assistance (OFA) to purchase the Line.¹ SVBF/MGR filed, on the same date, a motion requesting that the Board hold the abandonment proceeding in abeyance, stating that SVBF/MGR filed a description of an anticipated responsive application seeking divestiture of the Line in Union Pacific Corp.—Control—Norfolk Southern Corp., Docket No. FD 36873. (SVBF Motion for Abeyance 1, Oct. 14, 2026); see also SVBF Description, Sept. 9, 2026, Union Pac. Corp.—Control—Norfolk S. Corp., FD 36873. SVBF/MGR argues that the anticipated responsive application should be considered first. (Id. at 3.)

NSR filed in opposition to SVBF/MGR's notice of intent to file an OFA and stated, among other things, that it would file a separate opposition to the motion to hold the proceeding in abeyance within the applicable period. (NSR Reply 1 & n.1, Oct. 21, 2026.) SVBF/MGR filed a reply to NSR's opposition on October 22, 2026.²

A housekeeping stay is appropriate to allow the Board to fully consider the issues raised in SVBF/MGR's motion to hold the proceeding in abeyance. Therefore, the effective date of NSR's exemption will be postponed, and all deadlines, including those related to environmental review and the OFA process, will be tolled until further order of the Board. NSR's response to the motion to hold the proceeding in abeyance will be due by November 3, 2026.

¹ SVBF/MGR also filed a motion for protective order on October 14, 2026.

² The merits of NSR's opposition and SVBF/MGR's reply will be addressed in a future Board decision, as necessary.

It is ordered:

1. The effective date of the exemption is postponed, and all deadlines, including those related to environmental review and the OFA process, are tolled until further order of the Board.
2. NSR's response to SVBF/MGR's motion to hold the proceeding in abeyance will be due by November 3, 2026.
3. This decision is effective on its service date.

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