53295 SERVICE DATE – NOVEMBER 23, 2026
OEA

SURFACE TRANSPORTATION BOARD
WASHINGTON, DC 20423

FINAL ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

Docket No. AB 290 (Sub-No. 426X)

Norfolk Southern Railway Company – Abandonment Exemption – in Madison County, Ohio

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 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 in Madison County, Ohio. The rail line proposed for abandonment extends approximately 0.96 miles from milepost XD 24.73 +/- between Maple and South Walnut Steet to milepost XD 25.69 +/- on the eastern edge of Midway Street in the City of London (the Line). The Office of Environmental Analysis (OEA) served a Draft EA for this proceeding on November 6, 2026 for public review and comment. In the Draft EA, OEA recommended two environmental conditions and concluded that the proposed action would not significantly impact the quality of the human environment.

Comments on the Draft EA

OEA received one comment after issuance of the Draft EA. By electronic submission dated November 9, 2026, Michael Hopkins commented that the Line would fill a gap in the Ohio to Erie Trail (Trail) network in the City of London. According to Hopkins, the gap in the Trail in London causes trail users to use the city streets in downtown London creating a safety issue. Hopkins adds that the gap in the Trail could be filled by the abandonment of the Line. To improve safety and complete another section of the Trail, Hopkins stated that he supports NSR's proposed abandonment of the Line. No changes to the Draft EA are warranted in response to this comment.

Conclusions

The Draft EA comment period has ended. Accordingly, OEA recommends that the following conditions previously recommended in the Draft EA should be imposed upon any

decision granting abandonment authority.[1]

1. Prior to and during any abandonment-related salvage activities, Norfolk Southern Railway Company shall conduct the following conservation measures to protect the Indiana bat: 1) Tree clearing activities for trees ≥ 5 inches diameter breast height (dbh) shall occur only between October 1 and March 31. Trees < 5 inches dbh may be cleared at any time of year; 2) tree cutting/trimming shall not fragment a connective corridor between 2 or more forest patches of at least 5 acres; and 3) tree cutting/trimming shall not exceed 5 acres of forest.

2. To comply with the Migratory Bird Treaty Act, Norfolk Southern Railway Company (NSR) shall clear vegetation in preparation for abandonment-related salvage activities before or after the breeding bird nesting season to avoid inadvertent removal of active nests (i.e., nesting adults, young, or eggs), or, if clearing is required during the nesting season, consult with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service on appropriate nest survey methods for that area prior to any clearing activities.

If the above conditions are imposed, OEA believes that the proposed action will not significantly affect the quality of the human environment.

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

[1] If an interim trail use agreement under 16 U.S.C. § 1247(d) and 49 C.F.R. § 1152.29 is reached for the Line (or a portion thereof), compliance with these conditions is not required with respect to any portion of the Line covered by the interim trail use agreement for the duration of the agreement.