

ATLANTIC NORTHEAST *RAILS & PORTS*

Helping to move rail and port traffic through New York, New England, the Maritimes, & eastern Québec. A weekly trade newsletter.

operating railroads + ports, intermodal facilities, and government environment

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15. March 2017

Cynthia T. Brown
Chief, Section of Administration
Office of Proceedings
Surface Transportation Board
395 E Street, SW Washington, DC 20024
electronic filing

ENTERED
Office of Proceedings
March 17, 2017
Part of
Public Record

Re: *Request for Oral Argument* **STB Docket No. FD 35842**
New England Central Railroad, Inc. - Trackage Rights Order - Pan Am Southern LLC

Dear Ms. Brown:

I am writing this letter in support of the request for oral argument filed by NECR on 14 March.

Given the murkiness of the proceedings to date, my newsletter *Atlantic Northeast Rails & Ports* supports neither railroad in its position, but would like oral argument.

That very murkiness leads me to endorse oral argument as a means to clarify the outstanding issues and positions in this important case.

I am acutely aware that the Board rarely schedules oral argument. However, this matter is extremely important to the New England railroading community, including the shippers and receivers, as well as the states which benefit from rail shipping. That community benefits from the competition which NECR and Pan Am pose to each other on the ConnRiver line between White River Junction, Vermont, and East Northfield, Massachusetts.

Even railroads as far north as the Central Maine & Quebec benefit, because it can have an interchange with Pan Am in White River Junction, coming down from the north along the ConnRiver line. And railroads in New England as far south as Providence & Worcester can benefit, as it interchanges with both Pan Am and NECR.

My newsletter has covered New England railroads for 23 years. I know that this is not only a dispute about dollars of interest to the two railroads, but also a case involving one of only three gateways New England has available to cross the Hudson-Champlain-St. Lawrence River water barrier, and the outcome will affect nearly every railroad in New England.

Please schedule oral argument, to permit you to make the most astute decision possible.

Yours,
Chop Hardenbergh, editor *Atlantic Northeast Rails & Ports*

CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE

I certify that I have this day served copies of document upon all parties of record in this proceeding, by ~~US Mail~~ or E-mail].

Signature _____

Date 17 MAR CH 2017

cc to the following parties by e-mail:

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