



SURFACE TRANSPORTATION BOARD
Washington, DC 20423

Office of Environmental Analysis

June 21, 2019

John M. Fowler, Executive Director
 Advisory Council on Historic Preservation
 Office of Planning and Review
 401 F Street NW, Suite 308
 Washington, DC 20001-2637

**RE: Docket No. AB 1243X—Patriot Woods Railroad, LLC—Abandonment
 Exemption—In Cowlitz County, Wash.; Notification of Adverse Effect and
 Invitation to Participate in Section 106 Consultation**

Dear Mr. Fowler:

On August 11, 2017, Patriot Woods Railroad (PW) filed a notice of exemption with the Surface Transportation Board (Board) seeking to abandon a line of railroad located in Cowlitz County, Washington. The rail line proposed for abandonment extends approximately 21.5 miles from milepost 8.5 at Ostrander Junction to milepost 30. If the Board grants abandonment authority, PW will be able to salvage track and related material from the rail corridor, dismantle any rail-related structures within the corridor, and dispose of the right-of-way. The Board's approval of this proposed abandonment is considered an undertaking under Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA) and is thus covered under its provisions.

The Board's Office of Environmental Analysis (OEA) is responsible for ensuring the agency's compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act and the NHPA. In consultation with the Washington State Department of Archaeology and Historic Preservation (the SHPO), OEA has determined that the rail line proposed for abandonment is a segment of the approximately 31.3-mile Weyerhaeuser Woods Railroad system, and is eligible for the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) as the Columbia & Cowlitz Railway (CLC)).¹ The CLC was determined to be significant under Criterion A of the National Register Criteria for Evaluation (36 CFR 60.4) due to its association with the broader rail system of the Weyerhaeuser timber company and that system's contributions to American railroading history and the development of the logging industry in Washington. The period of significance for this National Register-

¹ An adjacent abandonment was filed by the same applicants under Docket No. AB 1244X for the rail line segment to the southwest beyond milepost 8.5.

eligible property is 1928 to 2008, which represents the period during which rail transportation of timber actively occurred.

Pursuant to the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation's regulations for implementing the Section 106 process of the NHPA, we are notifying you that the proposed abandonment may adversely affect an historic property. We are also inviting you to participate in the Section 106 consultation, although it does not appear that the criteria set forth in Appendix A to 36 C.F.R. Part 800 are met here. OEA intends to continue to consult with the SHPO to identify other potential consulting parties and to develop a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) specifying appropriate mitigation measures to resolve the adverse effect of the proposed undertaking. Please indicate to us in writing within 30 days if you intend to participate in the Section 106 consultations regarding this proceeding.

Pursuant to 36 C.F.R § 800.11, the following documents are enclosed for your review: (1) the Environmental and Historic Report submitted to OEA by the railroad; (2) an Environmental Assessment prepared by OEA, which includes an historic review of the rail line proposed for abandonment; and (3) all correspondences to date between OEA, PW, the SHPO, and other concerned parties pertaining to the Section 106 process in this case.

If you have any questions, require additional information regarding this proceeding, or have any concerns, please do not hesitate to contact me or Alan Tabachnick of my staff by telephone at (202) 245-0367 or email at Alan.Tabachnick@stb.gov. Thank you for your assistance.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Victoria Rutson". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Victoria" written in a larger, more prominent script than the last name "Rutson".

Victoria Rutson, Director
Office of Environmental Analysis