

SURFACE TRANSPORTATION BOARD**SECTION OF ENVIRONMENTAL ANALYSIS****POST ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT**

ENVIRONMENTAL RECOMMENDATIONS IN STB DOCKET NO. AB-515 (Sub-No. 2)

September 25, 2008

ABANDONMENT TYPE

The time for comments on the Environmental Assessment (EA) has expired in this:

- ☐ Notice of Exemption ☐ Petition for Exemption ☒ Regulated Abandonment
- ☐ NO NEW COMMENTS WERE RECEIVED
- ☒ NEW COMMENTS WERE RECEIVED

SEA served an Environmental Assessment (EA) for this proceeding on August 15, 2008, for public review and comment. In the EA, SEA recommended nine environmental conditions and concluded that the proposed project, in particular the diversion of rail traffic to truck traffic, would result in some adverse impacts on air quality. Accordingly, SEA determined that the proposed abandonment and discontinuance of service over the line could adversely affect the quality of the human environment. Because the Central Oregon & Pacific Railroad, Inc. (CORP) states that it does not plan to remove any bridges as part of the proposed project, SEA does not believe that salvage activities would cause significant environmental impacts.

ENVIRONMENTAL COMMENTS

On August 21, 2008, the Surface Transportation Board (Board) held a public hearing in Eugene, Oregon, to hear public testimony related to this proceeding. In addition to oral comments received at the public hearing, SEA also received a number of written comments on the EA. Written comments were submitted by elected officials, organizations, agencies, companies, community groups, and private citizens expressing concerns about the proposed project and potential environmental impacts. All environmental comments are summarized and addressed below. Comments that addressed similar or identical topics are grouped together. Where appropriate, SEA clarifies or corrects information that was in the EA, explains and communicates government policy or regulations, and directs commenters to appropriate governmental authorities and resources.

Removal of Bridges, Culverts, and Tunnels

Many commenters expressed concerns about the bridges, culverts, and tunnels¹ on the line, particularly the bridges that cross navigable waters, and requested that CORP be required to remove these structures if the abandonment is approved and consummated.

As stated in the EA, it is well settled that in conducting environmental review of abandonment cases, the Board's role is limited to the anticipated impacts of the abandonment proposal before the agency, e.g., the likely diversion of traffic to other lines or transportation modes and the likely disruptive consequences of removing the track and related structures. Iowa Southern R. Co.-Exemption-Abandonment, 5 I.C.C.2d 496, 501 (1989), aff'd, Goos v. ICC, 911 F.2d 1283 (8th Cir. 1990). CORP does not plan to remove the bridges on the line as part of the proposed abandonment, and the Board does not typically require the removal of railroad bridges and other structures when a line is approved for abandonment. Accordingly, it would not be appropriate or consistent with Board precedent for SEA to recommend a condition requiring bridge or structure removal.

Moreover, bridges would be required for continued rail service if the Oregon International Port of Coos Bay's pending feeder line application to purchase the Coos Bay Subdivision under 49 U.S.C. 10907 is authorized and consummated, or if an Offer of Financial Assistance (OFA) is filed under 49 U.S.C. 10904. Bridges can also be important to permit continued use of the right-of-way as a trail under the rail banking and interim trail use provisions of the Trails Act, 16 U.S.C. 1247(d). In the event that the line is sold under the feeder line or OFA provisions, the new owner would be responsible for maintaining the line and the structures on it. The trail sponsor also would be responsible for maintenance if there is interim trail use under the Trails Act.

SEA also received a letter that sets out the U.S. Coast Guard's policy regarding bridges over navigable waters that are no longer used for transportation. Accordingly, in response to comments regarding the bridges that cross navigable waters, we recommend that, prior to commencement of any salvage activities, CORP be required to consult with both the U.S. Coast Guard and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers regarding their requirements. Accordingly, the previously recommended condition (Condition Number 3) has been modified to reflect that change.

¹ Based on information received from CORP, the EA stated that there are eight tunnels on the line; however, the Oregon Department of Transportation's Rail Office believes there are actually nine.

Maintenance of Bridges, Culverts, and Tunnels

A number of commenters stated that CORP has neglected maintenance of the rail line for years and expressed concern regarding the line's current state of disrepair and associated safety issues. One commenter stated that there are trees down and lying across the line from last year's storms and that invasive species have spread along the right-of-way. A number of commenters expressed concern that the rail line is currently blocking fish passages or migrations, (including the migrations of Federally-listed fish species) on a number of historic salmon-bearing streams. The National Marine Fisheries Service commented that bridges constructed with creosote treated lumber are located in designated critical habitat and could leach contaminants for decades following installation, which may affect listed species. Commenters requested that CORP be required to: replant native vegetation (or post a bond for this work); restore links to upstream salmon spawning areas; and use alternative treatment practices (as opposed to the use of herbicides and pesticides) where the line passes fish-bearing watersheds and coastal lakes.

SEA notes that the EA included conditions that would require CORP to revegetate disturbed areas with native species; consult with the Oregon Department of State Lands' (DSL) Wetlands and Waterways Conservation Division prior to commencement of any salvage activities, in order to discuss concerns regarding the abandonment (erosion and sedimentation control plan, bridge and culvert maintenance, and the safety and condition of land and structures on any state-owned land); and consult with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service regarding potential impacts from salvaging activities to Federally-listed threatened and endangered species that may occur in the vicinity of the line. However, in response to the comments, SEA has added a condition (Condition Number 10) to recommend that, during any salvage activities, CORP utilize alternatives to herbicides and pesticides or consult with the Oregon Department of Agriculture's Pesticide Division at (503) 986-4635 prior to using herbicides and pesticides. In addition, in response to concerns regarding Federally-listed fish species, we recommend that, prior to commencement of salvage activities, CORP be required to consult with both the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and the National Marine Fisheries Service regarding their requirements. Accordingly, the previously recommended condition (Condition Number 7) has been modified to reflect that change.

There are also concerns that, if CORP is granted abandonment authority, structures, particularly culverts and bridges at water crossings, would not be regularly and properly maintained in the future. More specifically, there were concerns that unmaintained culverts and bridges would eventually fill with debris or collapse, which could block fish migrations, and that the state or counties would incur liability in such a situation.² As noted above, in conducting an environmental review of a proposed abandonment, the Board's role is limited to the anticipated

² DSL also suggested that the abandonment might be considered a "trespass" pursuant to Oregon Revised Statute 273.185 and 274.992.

impacts of the abandonment proposal before the agency. While the Board can impose reasonable conditions on the grant of abandonment authority to address concerns that have been raised regarding the restoration of railroad property for non-rail use, the Board will generally not require mitigation for existing conditions or railroad operations. See San Jacinto Rail Limited Construction Exemption – Build-Out to the Bayport Loop Near Houston, Harris County, TX, STB Finance Docket No. 34079 (STB served May 9, 2003). Accordingly, deterioration of bridges or other structures on the line is a pre-existing condition, and existing risks associated with the rail property, such as impacts to fish migrations, are already occurring and would not be a direct result of the abandonment proposal before the Board. In addition, the Board lacks jurisdiction over right-of-way maintenance following consummation of an abandonment. Accordingly, it would not be appropriate or consistent with Board precedent for SEA to recommend a condition requiring responsibility for post-abandonment maintenance.

SEA notes that the previously recommended condition (Condition Number 9) has been modified to recommend that CORP also consult with the Lane County Board of Commissioners.

Increase in Truck Traffic and Impacts to Air Quality

Commenters indicate that concerns remain regarding the increase in truck traffic that would result from the proposed abandonment, and there have been requests for SEA to impose measures to mitigate impacts to traffic, safety, noise, and air pollution. As stated in the EA, the proposed abandonment would likely result in an increase of approximately 159 new trucks per day on area roads, including U.S. Highway 101 and/or Oregon Route 126, an increase that has occurred since the embargo.³ Commenters also expressed specific concerns regarding the diversion of rail traffic to truck traffic and the capacity of the two-lane coastal roads in the area, which are prone to slides, flooding, and road closures. For instance, the Oregon Department of Transportation (Oregon DOT) stated that oversize loads may not fit under highway bridges on the routes between Interstate 5 and the coast.

Oregon DOT also submitted comments stating that the average daily traffic on U.S. Highway 101 at the Lane-Douglas County line, which is 4,000 vehicles, could increase at least 25 percent during the summer peak travel and possibly as high as 37 percent. In addition, Oregon DOT stated that impacts would also be expected on other area roads, such as Oregon

³ In the EA, SEA calculated that an additional 527,868 gallons of diesel fuel would be consumed in the event that authority to abandon the line is granted and all rail traffic is diverted to truck traffic. The last sentence of the first paragraph on page 4 of the EA inadvertently stated that: "This amount is approximately 9.7 percent of the total 547 million gallons of diesel fuel consumed annually by motor carriers in the State of Oregon." That sentence should instead read: "This amount is approximately .097 percent of the total 547 million gallons of diesel fuel consumed annually by motor carriers in the State of Oregon."

Route 42. According to Oregon DOT, Oregon Route 42 has few passing lanes and increases in truck traffic could be expected to affect the speed of cars and traffic congestion.⁴

If the abandonment is authorized, greater demands would be placed on the existing roadways and transportation system, and the additional truck traffic could result in some adverse impacts to local roads, highway infrastructure, and road safety. SEA notes that there has been no traffic on the line since the embargo in September 2007, and the increased truck traffic has been moving over local roads since that time. While this does not minimize the impact, it does provide an indication of potential effects. SEA received comments indicating that some local roadways are in degraded condition, and Oregon DOT has stated that the sudden addition of trucks has further degraded traffic operations on U.S. Highway 101 in downtown Coos Bay and North Bend. However, we have not received any information that would indicate that local roads are no longer safe as a result of the increased truck traffic on area roads resulting since the embargo. Therefore, SEA concludes that the increased truck traffic would adversely but not significantly affect local roadways.

In the EA, it was also noted that the City of Oakridge, which was designated a PM₁₀ non-attainment area in 1994, currently met the standard and was in the process of formally regaining attainment status for PM₁₀. This continues to be the case. However, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA) revised and tightened the air quality standards for particle pollution in 2006, and the City of Oakridge is one of the areas that the USEPA is considering designating as "nonattainment" for the 24-hour fine particle standards,⁵ specifically PM_{2.5} (fine particles that are unhealthy to breathe and that are 2.5 micrometers or smaller in diameter).⁶ The USEPA plans to make final designation and boundary determinations for the 2006 24-hour fine particles (PM_{2.5}) National Ambient Air Quality Standards by December 18, 2008.⁷ If the City of Oakridge is formally designated as "nonattainment" for PM_{2.5}, then the area will be required to take action to improve its air quality. The Clean Air Act requires state and local governments to take steps to control particle pollution in nonattainment areas; those steps may include stricter

⁴ Oregon DOT also stated that following slower trucks can lead to "underestimating risk taking values and underestimating distances in passing situations."

⁵ See August 20, 2008 article titled, "Two Oregon towns may see new wood stove restrictions" by the Associated Press at www.statesmanjournal.com/apps/pbcs.dll/article?AID=/20080820/UPDATE/80820038.

⁶ Sources of fine particles include all types of combustion activities (motor vehicles, power plants, wood burning) and certain industrial processes.

⁷ See EPA Responses to State and Tribal 2006 24-Hour PM_{2.5} Designation Recommendations: Notice of Availability and Public Comment, 73 Fed. Reg. 51,259-51,260 (September 2, 2008). See also the USEPA's website at <http://www.epa.gov/pmdesignations/2006standards/regs.htm#2>.

controls on industrial facilities and additional planning requirements for transportation-related sources.

Most likely, the City of Oakridge will be formally designated as nonattainment for PM_{2.5} in December. The increase in the number of trucks as a result of the proposed abandonment, as well as the fuel that would be consumed by those trucks (an additional 527,868 gallons of diesel fuel per year) would have some effect on the area's ability to attain compliance with the new standards for air quality. However, as previously noted, if the designation discussed above is made, the state and local governments will have to take appropriate steps to control particle pollution pursuant to the Clean Air Act.

The Proposed Jordan Cove Energy Project

Several commenters including the Sierra Club, have noted that the Jordan Cove Energy Project, a proposal for a liquefied natural gas import terminal, would be located in the International Port of Coos Bay. However, under the Natural Gas Act, the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) has authority to approve or deny applications related to LNG terminal facilities on land or in State waters. Accordingly, the Jordan Cove Energy Project falls under the jurisdiction of FERC, which recently issued a Draft Environmental Impact Statement under the National Environmental Policy Act on the project. FERC's environmental analysis would appropriately consider environmental issues related to this facility.

Economic Concerns

A number of commenters oppose CORP's application to abandon the rail line and express support for the Port of Coos Bay's pending feeder line application. For example, Oregon State Senator Jeff Kruse, who represents Oregon Senate District One, stated that there is no other rail link in the region and argued that operation of the line is critical to the economic, social, and environmental future of the region. Other commenters echoed that concern and stated that the proposed abandonment would have a negative impact on the quality of life of local communities, the region's economy, and tourism. One commenter argued that rail is an energy efficient mode of transportation and suggested that complete removal of the rail line may not be the best choice from an environmental point of view.

Environmental Review Process

The National Environmental Policy Act of 1969, 42 U.S.C. 4321-4343 (NEPA), requires the Board to consider the environmental consequences of actions such as its authorization of the abandonment of railroad lines. The Sierra Club requested that SEA "conduct a full review of the environmental and safety hazards of the proposed abandonment, and a similar NEPA review to assess future uses of the rail line and to assure all repair issues are addressed before the line is sold to a new entity. Full public participation should be part of the Board's review process." In response, SEA believes that it has ensured the Board's NEPA compliance in this proceeding by

issuing an EA addressing the potential environmental impacts of the proposed abandonment for public review and comment and considering those comments in this Post-EA.

HISTORIC PRESERVATION

In the EA, SEA recommended that CORP retain its interest in the portion of the line between milepost 669.0 and milepost 763.13 and take no steps to alter the historic integrity of all historic properties including sites, buildings, structures, and objects within the project right-of-way (the Area of Potential Effect) that are eligible for listing or listed in the National Register of Historic Places (National Register) until completion of the Section 106 process of the National Historic Preservation Act, 16 U.S.C. 470f (NHPA).

In a letter dated August 15, 2008, the Oregon Parks and Recreation Department's State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) submitted comments stating that the rail line is eligible for the National Register, but the proposed abandonment would not adversely affect historic properties if CORP does not plan to remove any features of the rail line.

Accordingly, pursuant to the Section 106 regulations of the National Historic Preservation Act at 36 CFR 800.5(b), and following consultation with the SHPO, we have determined that the proposed abandonment would not affect historic properties listed in or eligible for inclusion in the National Register. In the event that any structure removal is planned during the salvage activities, then additional documentation and coordination with the SHPO would be required. Accordingly, the previously recommended condition on historic preservation (Condition Number 8) has been modified to reflect that change.

CONCLUSIONS

The EA comment period has ended. Accordingly, SEA recommends that the new condition recommended in this document and the conditions recommended in the EA, as modified by the recommendations in this document, should be imposed upon any decision granting abandonment authority. SEA's final recommended conditions are:

1. Central Oregon & Pacific Railroad, Inc. shall notify the National Geodetic Survey (NGS) at least 90 days prior to beginning any salvage activities that will disturb or destroy any geodetic station marker in order to plan for the possible relocation of the marker by NGS.
2. Prior to beginning any salvage activities, Central Oregon & Pacific Railroad, Inc. (CORP) shall consult with Oregon's Coastal Management Program staff members Dave Perry at (541) 270-3279 and John Ritz at (541) 601-9659 to determine whether state coastal management consistency certification is required. If consistency certification is required, CORP shall be prohibited from performing any salvage activities until it obtains consistency certification and shall then notify the Board's Section of Environmental

Analysis in writing, pursuant to the Coastal Zone Management Act, 16 U.S.C. 1451 et seq., and the Board's environmental regulations at 49 CFR 1105.9.

3. Prior to commencement of any salvage activities, Central Oregon & Pacific Railroad, Inc. shall consult with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers' Portland District (Corps) and the U.S. Coast Guard regarding their requirements and, if applicable, shall comply with the reasonable requirements of the Corps and the U.S. Coast Guard. The railroad shall report the results of these consultations in writing to the Board's Section of Environmental Analysis prior to the onset of salvage operations.
4. To ensure appropriate consideration of the National Pollution Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) and Clean Water Act (CWA) requirements, Central Oregon & Pacific Railroad, Inc. (CORP) shall consult with the Oregon Department of Environmental Quality prior to commencement of any salvage activities and shall comply with the reasonable NPDES requirements. CORP shall report the results of these consultations in writing to the Board's Section of Environmental Analysis prior to the onset of salvage operations.
5. Central Oregon & Pacific Railroad, Inc. (CORP) shall consult with Oregon Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) prior to commencement of any salvage activities, in order to discuss DEQ's concerns regarding proper disposal of waste and demolition material. CORP shall report the results of these consultations in writing to the Board's Section of Environmental Analysis prior to the onset of salvage operations.
6. Based on the comments and concerns of the Oregon Department of State Lands (DSL), Central Oregon & Pacific Railroad, Inc. (CORP) shall: 1) revegetate disturbed areas with native species and 2) consult with DSL's Wetlands and Waterways Conservation Division prior to commencement of any salvage activities, in order to discuss DSL's concerns regarding the abandonment (erosion and sedimentation control plan; bridge and culvert maintenance; and the safety and condition of land and structures on any state-owned land). CORP shall report the results of these consultations in writing to the Board's Section of Environmental Analysis prior to the onset of salvage operations.
7. Prior to commencement of any salvage activities, Central Oregon & Pacific Railroad, Inc. (CORP) shall consult with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and Director Kim Kratz at the National Marine Fisheries Service regarding potential impacts from salvaging activities to Federally-listed threatened and endangered species that may occur in the vicinity of the line. CORP shall report the results of these consultations in writing to the Board's Section of Environmental Analysis prior to the commencement of salvage operations.
8. In the event that any structure removal is planned during the salvage activities, Central Oregon & Pacific Railroad, Inc. will immediately cease all work and notify the Board's

Section of Environmental Analysis (SEA) and the Oregon Parks and Recreation Department's State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO). SEA would then consult with the SHPO, the railroad, and any other consulting parties, if any, to determine what documentation is necessary.

9. Prior to commencement of salvage activities, Central Oregon & Pacific Railroad, Inc. (CORP) shall contact the Oregon Department of State Lands, the Port of Siuslaw, the City of North Bend, the City of Coos Bay, the Lane County Board of Commissioners, and the Oregon Department of Environmental Quality in order to discuss their concerns regarding the bridges and culverts on the line, as well as their concerns regarding salvage activities (erosion control plan; plan for waste and demolition material disposal, specifically the removal of tracks in the vicinity of water crossings; and habitat and estuary protection). The railroad shall report the results of these consultations in writing to the Board's Section of Environmental Analysis prior to the commencement of salvage operations.
10. During any salvage activities, Central Oregon & Pacific Railroad, Inc. shall utilize alternatives to herbicides and pesticides or shall consult with the Oregon Department of Agriculture's Pesticide Division at (503) 986-4635 prior to using herbicides and pesticides.

Based on its independent analysis of all the information available at this time, SEA has determined that the proposed abandonment and discontinuance of service over this rail line could result in adverse impacts to the environment. However, if the recommended conditions are imposed, some impacts could be avoided or minimized such that abandonment and discontinuance of service over the line would not significantly affect the quality of the human environment. Accordingly, SEA recommends that the Surface Transportation Board impose the above mitigation measures as conditions in any final decision approving the proposed abandonment and discontinuance. In addition, SEA has concluded that the Environmental Impact Statement process is unnecessary.

SEA CONTACT: Christa Dean 245-0299



Oregon

Theodore R. Kulongoski, Governor

Department of Transportation

Region 3

3500 NW Stewart Parkway

Roseburg, OR 97470

(541) 957-3500

FAX (541) 957-3547

September 15, 2008

FILE CODE:

SURFACE TRANSPORTATION BOARD
WASHINGTON, DC 20423

Re: STB DOCKET NO. AB-515 (Sub-No. 2) Central Oregon & Pacific Railroad, Inc. –
Abandonment and Discontinuance of Service - In Coos, Douglas, and Lane Counties, OR.

Dear Board Members,

Please accept these comments on behalf of the Oregon Department of Transportation in reference to the proposed abandonment and discontinuance of rail service in Coos, Douglas, and Lane counties.

We are concerned for the traffic impacts resulting from increased truck traffic in downtown Coos Bay and North Bend. US 101 through these downtowns is already congested and experiences unstable traffic flows at peak times. The sudden addition of trucks has further degraded traffic operations within these communities and should be analyzed further.

The EA identifies Average Daily Traffic (ADT) at the Lane/Douglas County line as 4000. We note that this number could increase at least 25% during the summer peak travel and possibly as high as 37%. These numbers are based on Automatic Traffic Recorders (ATRs) along US 101. Truck volumes prior to rail service discontinuation were estimated to be 8.5% of the total volume. An extra 159 trucks would raise that to between 12 and 13%.

The study's "area highways" in the EA were limited to US 101 and OR 126. This works if one assumes the average beginning point for each loaded truck trip is Coos Bay. Since 95% of the trips haul forest products, and some of the mills are as far away as Coquille, other highways are impacted in addition to US 101 and OR 126. One such highway is OR 42. The impacts on OR 42 should be addressed in the EA.

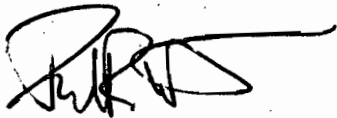
For example, we assume Roseburg Forest Products (the largest rail customer on the Coos Bay Line) sends forest products to their Roseburg rail head which is in the 65-70 mile range via OR 42 as opposed to 135 mile range if the trip begins in the Coquille area. A significant increase in trucks on OR 42 will likely have an effect on key intersections in the Winston area and on motorists traveling to and from the coast. OR 42 has very few passing lanes and increases in truck traffic can be expected to impede more of the higher speed cars and cause queuing. Following slower trucks sometimes leads to underestimating risk taking values and underestimating distances in passing situations.

SURFACE TRANSPORTATION BOARD
STB DOCKET NO. AB-515 (Sub-No. 2)
Page Two

Another item not adequately addressed are the shipments to and from American Bridge in Gardiner. That company periodically ships bridge girders that cannot fit under highway bridges on any of the routes between I-5 and the coast. Oversize loads are important to address when assessing the impacts from discontinuing rail service.

A lack of rail service will continue to have a dramatic effect on transportation to and from our southern coast. If you have any questions, please contact me at 541-957-3658.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Paul Mather', with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Paul Mather, P.E.
ODOT Region 3 Manager

Cc: Doug Tindall
Chris Warner
Kelly Taylor



Lane County Board of Commissioners

Bill Dwyer
Bill Fleenor
Bobby Green, Sr.
Peter Sorenson
Faye Hills Stewart

lee
E1-11832
CD

August 21, 2008

Testimony submitted to the Surface Transportation Board during its Eugene Hearing in the matter of Finance Docket No. 35160 and Docket No AB-515 (Sub-No. 2)

To Whom It May Concern:

Thank you for the opportunity to comment today on this important issue. As Chair of the Lane County Board of Commissioners, I am submitting to the Surface Transportation Board a Resolution adopted on Wednesday, August 20, at our regular meeting. It outlines Lane County's position with regard to the items before you today.

In short, we oppose the request for Abandonment of the Coos Bay rail line made by the Central Oregon and Pacific Railroad, but support of the Feeder Line Application Made by the International Port of Coos Bay.

In coming to these positions, we have been influenced by a number of pertinent issues that we hope the Board will also consider in reaching its decision in these matters.

- The majority of the subject property in this case lies within Lane County (1183 of 1853 acres, or 64%). The line passes through several incorporated cities within Lane County, and abuts one Lane County Park as well as several properties otherwise owned by Lane County. Our interest in this matter is clear.
- The abrupt cessation of service by the Central Oregon and Pacific Railroad in September, 2007 forced shippers along the line to switch to utilizing trucks to move freight. This resulted in an addition of 1,100 truck trips monthly and an annual increase of ten percent in the consumption of diesel fuel statewide. The environmental and safety implications for Lane County residents are obvious.
- This is the only rail transportation link between the Southern Willamette Valley and Oregon's second busiest seaport. Preserving the right of way and reopening the line for rail transportation have obvious economic impacts for all of the communities in the region now and importantly, into the future.
- The subject line includes a large number of water crossings which for the most part would be left in place if abandonment is granted. Given the environmental and attractive nuisance implications that these structures pose when not regularly and properly maintained, we are concerned that these costs have not adequately been considered within the realm of these applications, specifically the environmental assessment performed by the Section of Environmental Analysis. In particular, one of our parks, the Ada County Park is adjacent to several large trestles that cross portions of Siltcoos Lake. We would expect assurance that these structures will not be forced into our ownership unless we are fully prepared to take ownership.

Respectfully submitted,

Faye Stewart
Faye Stewart, Chair
Lane County Board of Commissioners

BEFORE THE BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS OF LANE COUNTY, OREGON

RESOLUTION NO.

08-8-19-11

IN THE MATTER OF ADVISING THE SURFACE
TRANSPORTATION BOARD OF LANE
COUNTY'S OPPOSITION TO ABANDONMENT
OF THE COOS BAY LINE, SUPPORT OF
FEEDER LINE APPLICATION OF THE
INTERNATIONAL PORT OF COOS BAY AND
DEVELOPMENT OF RAILROAD
INFRASTRUCTURE TO SOUTHWEST
OREGON COMMUNITIES

WHEREAS; economic development, energy and climate considerations are paramount in decisions related to transportation in Oregon; and

WHEREAS; the preservation of existing transportation infrastructure provides for a diversity of modal opportunities for the residents and businesses of Lane County and Oregon; and

WHEREAS; Lane County maintains a working relationship with its partner counties across Oregon; and

WHEREAS; Lane County received a briefing from the International Port of Coos Bay (the "Port") on its long term plans in August 1, 2007, and pledged to continue open communications and opportunities for mutual gain; and

WHEREAS; Lane County is home to approximately 50 miles of track currently named the Coos Bay Line of the Central Oregon and Pacific Railroad; and

WHEREAS; the Central Oregon and Pacific Railroad suddenly and without notice ceased operations on the Coos Bay Line in September, 2007, and is now petitioning the United States Surface Transportation Board to abandon the line; and

WHEREAS; the Port has filed a feeder line application with the United States Surface Transportation Board to place the Coos Bay Line under the authority of the Port; and

WHEREAS; the Surface Transportation Board is meeting in Eugene on August 21, 2008, to discuss these issues, partially in response to a request from Lane County; and

WHEREAS; the loss of rail capacity at the Port threatens the economic investments of several Oregon firms, which combined provide between 700 to 800 family wage jobs in Lane, Coos and Douglas Counties; and

WHEREAS; the loss of rail capacity at the Port has been required replacement by 1100 truck trips per month, many of which are travelling into or through Lane County communities; and

WHEREAS; the loss of rail capacity at the Port reduces the ability of the Port to compete for further industrial development, the impact of which will be felt in Lane County communities;

NOW, THEREFORE, IT IS HEREBY RESOLVED THAT:

Lane County opposes Central Oregon and Pacific Railroad's proposed abandonment of the Coos Bay Line as being contrary to the interests of the citizens of Lane County, and it is further resolved that;

Lane County supports the Port's Feeder Line application filed with the Surface Transportation Board to acquire ownership and control of the Coos Bay Line as benefiting the interests of the citizens of Lane County, and it is further resolved that;

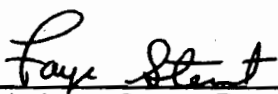
Chairman Faye Stewart and Commissioner Peter Sorenson will deliver Lane County's opposition to the proposed abandonment of the Coos Bay Line to the Surface Transportation Board hearing on August 21, 2008, and it is further resolved that;

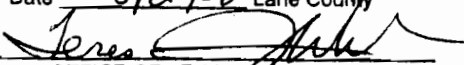
Chairman Faye Stewart and Commissioner Peter Sorenson will deliver Lane County's support of the Feeder Line Application filed by the Port to the Surface Transportation Board hearing on August 21, 2008, and it is further resolved that;

Lane County will encourage the development of economically viable and sustainable railroad infrastructure in Lane County such that the movement of freight to Southwest Oregon communities and ocean ports is expedited, provided that such infrastructure addresses the needs of those Lane County citizens most impacted by rail transit.

Lane County will seek to initiate a regional dialogue among stakeholders to ensure that the development of rail infrastructure in Western Lane County, and the expenditure of any public funds on such infrastructure, provides an economic benefit to its citizens and ensures the safety of those most impacted by such development.

DATED this 20th day of August, 2008.


Chair, Lane County Board of Commissioners

APPROVED AS TO FORM
Date 8/29/08 Lane County

OFFICE OF LEGAL COUNSEL



Oregon

Theodore R. Kulongoski, Governor

E1-9657

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August 25, 2008

State Land Board

Theodore R. Kulongoski
Governor

Christa Dean
Surface Transportation Board
Case Control Unit
395 E Street SW
Washington DC 20423

Bill Bradbury
Secretary of State

Randall Edwards
State Treasurer

Subject: STB Docket No. AB-515 (Sub-No. 2)

Dear Ms. Dean:

The Oregon Department of State Lands (DSL) is in receipt of the Environmental Assessment (STB Docket No. AB-515 (Sub-No. 2) for Central Oregon and Pacific Railroad Inc. Abandonment and Discontinuation of Service – in Coos, Douglas and Lane Counties, OR, dated August 15, 2008.

DSL manages the state's ownership of the beds and banks of tidal and other navigable waters in Oregon. The subject rail line includes at least 30 crossings on DSL property including, but not limited to, the Coquille River, Isthmus Slough, Davis Slough, Shinglehouse Slough, Coalbank Slough, lower Coos Bay, North Tenmile Lake, Schölfield Creek, the Umpqua River, Tahkenitch Lake, Siltcoos Lake and the Siuslaw River. The Environmental Assessment (page 6) indicates that CORP does not plan to remove any bridges as part of the proposed project. The Assessment goes on to state (page 10) that it would not be appropriate or consistent with Board precedent for SEA to recommend a condition regarding rail removal or responsibility for maintenance.

DSL is very concerned about the abandonment of structures on state property with no designated responsible party and the liability imposed upon the State by such a situation. Such abandonment may be considered a trespass pursuant to Oregon Revised Statute 273.185 and 274.992.

DSL would also like to reiterate its concern that abandoned culverts and bridges, left unmaintained, will eventually fill with debris or collapse thereby blocking fish passage. Many of the streams crossed by the CORP line are designated by the state of Oregon as Essential Salmonid Habitat, thereby receiving the highest level of state protection. Failure of these structures could block important fish migrations including federal Endangered Species Act (ESA)-listed fish species.

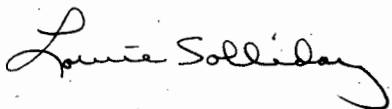
Christa Dean
August 25, 2008
Page 2

This likely adverse effect to ESA-listed species does not appear to be addressed in the Environmental Assessment.

For these reasons, DSL strongly encourages the SEA to require the removal of rail appurtenances from all DSL properties and fish-bearing waterways if the abandonment is approved. The SEA's recommendation that CORP contact DSL to discuss our concerns is simply insufficient to ensure protection of the State's interest in this matter.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the Environmental Assessment. Please contact Kirk Jarvie at DSL, 503-986-5320, if you have questions or comments on this transmittal.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Louise Solliday".

Louise Solliday
Director

cc: Chris Warner, Oregon Dept. of Transportation



Oregon

Theodore R. Kulongoski, Governor

Parks and Recreation Department

State Historic Preservation Office

725 Summer St. NE, Suite C

Salem, OR 97301-1266

(503) 986-0707

FAX (503) 986-0793

www.hcd.state.or.usNature
HISTORY
Discovery

August 15, 2008

Mr. Terence Hynes
Sidley Austin LLP
1501 K St NW
Washington, DC 20005

RE: SHPO Case No. 08-1481

Central OR & Pacific RR (CORP) Abandonment Project
Multiple legals, Various, Coos/Douglas/Lane County

Dear Mr. Hynes:

We have reviewed the materials submitted on the project referenced above, and we do not concur with your determination that the property is ineligible for the National Register. We believe that the rail line is eligible for the National Register of Historic Places as a linear district in accordance with 36 CFR Part 60.4.

Although we believe the property is eligible, we also believe that a no adverse effect finding is warranted for the abandonment of this line if the Central Oregon and Pacific Railroad, Inc. does not plan to remove any of the features of the rail line. If removal is planned, then additional documentation and coordination should occur with this office to mitigate for the adverse effect.

Our response here is to assist you with your responsibilities under Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act (per 36 CFR Part 800). Please feel free to contact me if you have further questions, comments or need additional assistance.

Sincerely,

Sarah Jalving

Historic Compliance Specialist

(503) 986-0679 or Sarah.Jalving@state.or.us

Xc: fax to Christa Dean: Surface Transportation Board, 202-245-0454

EI-8726
CD



"MELBO Robert I"
<Robert.I.MELBO@odot.state.or.us>

08/21/2008 07:05 PM

To <christa.dean@stb.dot.gov>

cc "Brown, Sandra L." <Sandy.Brown@troutmansanders.com>

bcc

Subject Environmental Assessment; STB Docket No. AB-515
(Sub-No. 2)

Dear Ms. Dean:

I reviewed the STB's Environmental Assessment for STB Docket No. AB-515 (Sub-No. 2) and have three observations to offer.

1. Regarding the bridges, was the U.S. Coast Guard asked to comment? At least four bridges cross navigable waters (three of these are major center swing span structures: specifically, the spans crossing the entrance to Coos Bay, Siuslaw River and Umpqua River). Hard to believe that the Coast Guard would not require these major structures to be removed as well as the former but now inoperable drawbridge at Coalbank Slough.

2. On page 4, the assessment says: *"The City of Oakridge was designated a PM non-attainment area in 1994, and last exceeded the standard in 1993. Both areas [Oakridge and Eugene, OR] currently meet the standard and are in the process of formally regaining attainment status."* A footnote indicates the STB confirmed this with the EPA on August 5, 2008. Apparently things have changed because today's (August 21) newspapers carry an Associated Press story reporting that the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency has designated Oakridge (and Klamath Falls, OR) as out of compliance with tightened standards for airborne particles.

3. At the top of page 6 the EA reports that CORP states there are eight tunnels on the portion of the line that is proposed for abandonment. I believe the correct number of tunnels is nine, unless CORP plans not to abandon the first tunnel west of Eugene, which is Tunnel No. 13. Also, the EA does not mention what will become of the tunnels. Shouldn't the disposition of these structures be of some concern too?

Bob Melbo
State Rail Planner
Oregon Department of Transportation - Rail Division
Salem, OR
(503) 986-4137



Oregon

Theodore R. Kulongoski, Governor

Department of State Lands

775 Summer Street NE, Suite 100

Salem, OR 97301-1279

(503) 986-5200

FAX (503) 378-4844

www.oregonstatelands.us.

COPY

August 25, 2008

State Land Board

Theodore R. Kulongoski
Governor

Bill Bradbury
Secretary of State

Randall Edwards
State Treasurer

Christa Dean
Surface Transportation Board
Case Control Unit
395 E Street SW
Washington DC 20423

Subject: STB Docket No. AB-515 (Sub-No. 2)

Dear Ms. Dean:

The Oregon Department of State Lands (DSL) is in receipt of the Environmental Assessment (STB Docket No. AB-515 (Sub-No. 2) for Central Oregon and Pacific Railroad Inc. Abandonment and Discontinuation of Service – in Coos, Douglas and Lane Counties, OR, dated August 15, 2008.

DSL manages the state's ownership of the beds and banks of tidal and other navigable waters in Oregon. The subject rail line includes at least 30 crossings on DSL property including, but not limited to, the Coquille River, Isthmus Slough, Davis Slough, Shinglehouse Slough, Coalbank Slough, lower Coos Bay, North Tenmile Lake, Scholfield Creek, the Umpqua River, Tahkenitch Lake, Siltcoos Lake and the Siuslaw River. The Environmental Assessment (page 6) indicates that CORP does not plan to remove any bridges as part of the proposed project. The Assessment goes on to state (page 10) that it would not be appropriate or consistent with Board precedent for SEA to recommend a condition regarding rail removal or responsibility for maintenance.

DSL is very concerned about the abandonment of structures on state property with no designated responsible party and the liability imposed upon the State by such a situation. Such abandonment may be considered a trespass pursuant to Oregon Revised Statute 273.185 and 274.992.

DSL would also like to reiterate its concern that abandoned culverts and bridges, left unmaintained, will eventually fill with debris or collapse thereby blocking fish passage. Many of the streams crossed by the CORP line are designated by the state of Oregon as Essential Salmonid Habitat, thereby receiving the highest level of state protection. Failure of these structures could block important fish migrations including federal Endangered Species Act (ESA)-listed fish species.

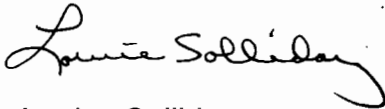
Christa Dean
August 25, 2008
Page 2

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For these reasons, DSL strongly encourages the SEA to require the removal of rail appurtenances from all DSL properties and fish-bearing waterways if the abandonment is approved. The SEA's recommendation that CORP contact DSL to discuss our concerns is simply insufficient to ensure protection of the State's interest in this matter.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the Environmental Assessment. Please contact Kirk Jarvie at DSL, 503-986-5320, if you have questions or comments on this transmittal.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Louise Solliday".

Louise Solliday
Director

cc: Chris Warner, Oregon Dept. of Transportation

Jody McCaffree, Executive Director
Citizens Against LNG
P.O. Box 1113
North Bend, OR 97459
(541) 756-0759

Lee
E1-11827
CD

August 21, 2008

Surface Transportation Board
395 E Street, S.W.
Washington, DC 20423-0001

AB-515 Sub 2
FD 35160

Chairman Charles D. "Chip" Nottingham
Vice Chairman Francis P. Mulvey
Board Member W. Douglas Buttrey

Dear STB Board:

Thank you so much for coming to our beautiful state and for allowing this hearing to take place. Because the press on this meeting was vague, many people in our area did not realize that they needed to submit a letter to you by August 11th to be able to testify at this hearing. I would like to request that the record remain open for an additional 2 weeks to give a sufficient amount of time to the public so that they are able to fully participate in this process.

I am a tax paying citizen of the Port of Coos Bay and also the executive director of an all volunteer grassroots group some 4,000 strong and growing, known as the Citizens Against LNG. I would like to speak on my behalf and also express the concerns of our group in regards to the Coos Bay Railline and the Port's attempt to become the owner of that line.

We feel that a operational rail line from Coos Bay to Eugene is an important and necessary transportation infrastructure for our area. We currently have no buss service to and from the area and are in the process of losing our Portland connection by air. In light of rising fuel cost along with tranportation impacts on global warming, we feel a light rail system designed to transport people by rail should be considered as a viable mode of potential future transportation possibillites. This is probably not likely to happen without some form of public partnership/ownership of these lines. History has seemed to indicate that to be the case in regards to the success of the railroad. The Railroad Act of 1862 put government support behind the transcontinental railroad and helped create the Union Pacific Railroad, which subsequently joined with the Central Pacific at Promontory, Utah, on May 10, 1869, and signaled the linking of the continent. This likely would not have been a success without the government's involvement.

We have a vast array of public transportation highways that are maintained for the most part by public funds. Imagine the chaos if automobile and truck manufacturers where forced to maintain ownership and upkeep of our public highway systems. But this is exactly what we have been expecting our railroads to do. Even though railroads are part of a statewide transportation system, there are no state funds or federal funds for that matter to help a railroad when they get into a pinch. There are funds for airports and other transportation modes but not rail. According to Kelly Taylor in an article that came out in our local paper on December 27th 2006, Oregon actually has a state statue in place to do this known as the "State Railroad Rehabilitation Fund" but "Nobody's ever put a dime into it" she said of the Legislature.

While an operational rail line to Eugene is an important and necessary transportation infrastructure for our area, we do not feel the Oregon International Port of Coos Bay should be the owner/operator of this line. We feel an elected state or regional board or body specific to the railroad would be a better solution.

We feel strongly that the Oregon International Port of Coos Bay should not own or operate the Coos Bay Rail line for numerous reasons:

- 1) **The Oregon International Port of Coos Bay Port Commission is a non-elected body that is not accountable nor has listened to the public. Port Commissioners are appointed positions.** There would be no accountability to tax payers with Port ownership. The Port has a history of violating public trust and due process. Information to this effect has been sent and are on file with both the Governor's staff and several governing bodies in the legislature. (Copies available upon request.)
- 2) **The Oregon International Port of Coos Bay has no experience in operating a rail line. Taxpayers are being asked to fund a project that could be extremely costly and in the end may not be viable because of that cost.** In the Oregon Southwest Economic Transportation Team pamphlet on the Oregon Gateway, Corp estimates upgrades needed to the Coos Bay line to cost between \$120 to \$140 million. (See exhibit A.) With a public entity like the Port running the line, these costs would shift to tax payers. The railroad currently is in terrible condition as noted by these pictures shown in exhibits B & C. (For even more pictures visit this website: <http://www.brian894x4.com/CentralOregonandPacificRR.html>) **Necessary repairs will involve more than just fixing up a few tunnels.** The cost of repairs could and most likely would be far more than what Corp has stated. During Senate Bill 21A hearings in Salem last year, the issue of the Coos Bay rail line and its poor dilapidated condition was brought to the attention of the Ways and Means legislative body. (See exhibit D.) Despite testimony on the railroads dilapidated condition, the legislative body allocated no money for repairs to the railroad. Without a functioning railroad, the 60 million allocated by the State for the Ports dredging project would be a very expensive waste. When we brought this to our State Senators attention, we were informed that this would not be an issue, as private money would fix the railroad line. As you can see, that has not happened. In the end the allocated state funds for the Port's dredging project were made contingent on there being agreements with CORP. **This is a significant issue and one of the reasons why the Port wants to take over this line.** 60 million in allocated funds from the State to the Oregon International Port of Coos Bay depend on this rail line being operational with adequate rail infrastructure and service capacity. An agreement of some sort needs to be in place between the rail carrier and a containerized cargo carrier. (See Exhibit E.)
- 3) **The Oregon International Port of Coos Bay has not demonstrated competence. Industries and businesses they have tried to bring into our area under the guise of creating jobs have been for the most part economically, environmentally, and logistically inappropriate for the area.** Port business dealings are usually done in secret, behind closed doors and without public oversight and/or approval. The outcome of operating like this has been one sequential Port boondoggle after another and all at taxpayer's expense. This also comes at the expense of other better-suited businesses that may have located in our area.

- 4) **The Oregon International Port of Coos Bay has not demonstrated that they are responsible. The Port has not maintained many past Port publicly funded infrastructure projects that were built at taxpayer's expense.** The Port is always willing to start a project and sink millions of taxpayer dollars into it, but never seems willing or able to finish or maintain it. The Port's investment into a host of ever changing and expensive "pie in the sky" new projects is generally done with little public oversight. Many Port Infrastructures that have already had millions sunk into them are deteriorating and are not being maintained while the Port goes on to new projects:

- a) **T-Dock** – A several million dollar investment currently sits rotting and unusable.
- b) **Barge Slip** - Was never maintained. Current attempts to upgrade this slip to a usable condition are costing thousands of dollars.
- c) **Cross line Ferry** – Poor Port investment that taxpayers lost money on.
- d) **Transpacific Rail Spur / Transpacific Realignment Project** – This line was to connect businesses, mainly Southport Lumber's new mill on the North Spit, with the Coos Bay Rail line. Southport Lumber moved from south of town and built a modern new mill on prime Port North Spit property. The mill is now located in an Enterprise Zone (tax free) and now requires less people to operate. Essentially taxpayers have made substantial Port investments (in the millions) to have fewer jobs in the area. The Port has continued to allocate funds (over a million dollars) towards the Transpacific Railroad Realignment project, even after CORP had imposed an embargo on the Coos Bay Line it connects to.
- e) **North and South Jetties**: While the Port works to get funding from the State for yet another speculative project, our jetties, which are vital to our shipping and many industries in the area, currently sit in disrepair. Elected officials and the Army Corps of Engineers scramble to get money each year for band-aid repairs. Up-keeping this vital infrastructure should be of utmost importance to our Port.

With the Central Oregon and Pacific Railroad (COPR) only abandoning the portion of the Coos Bay Line between Vaughn and Cordes, Ore and not the entire line to Eugene, public ownership of only this portion of the line they are abandoning would leave taxpayers at their mercy. COPR would have us over a barrel. We could essentially own a line that goes to nowhere. What would stop CORP from placing outlandish tariffs and transportation fees on the section of line they would still own to Eugene? One owner needs to own the entire line.

If the Jordan Cove Energy LNG Project gets approval, any accidents that might occur involving the Hazardous Natural Gas Liquids that Jordan Cove plans on transporting on this rail line, would fall on taxpayers if the line becomes publicly owned. Given the Port's past history of not keeping up the infrastructure they have invested in, and the fact the rail lines current condition appears to be unsafe (See exhibit B & C.), **we are concerned that the condition of the track could be setting up taxpayers for a huge liability.** According to a leading hazard expert, Dr. Jerry Havens, in a report he did for the city of Long Beach ¹ imported LNG from foreign sources

¹ "...It has already been stated that the composition of LNG imported into the United States varies significantly depending on several factors, most prominently the gas source location. LNG is imported from some locations that provide nearly pure methane. LNG is also imported from some other locations with concentrations of heavier hydrocarbons as high as 15-20%. Such gas is termed "hot gas" in the industry because its calorific value (energy content) is higher than an equivalent volume of methane. Typical heavy hydrocarbon gases present in LNG are ethane and propane, but others are present as well."
– Page 25 – *"An Assessment of the Potential Hazards to the Public Associated with Siting an LNG Import Terminal in the Port of Long Beach"* – Dr. Jerry Havens - September 14, 2005

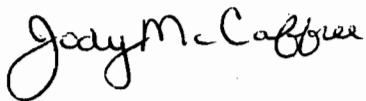
could contain as much as 15 – 20 percent of the heavier (Natural Gas Liquids (NGL)) hydrocarbons such as propane and ethane. Jordan cove Energy Project plans on producing one billion cubic feet a day of regasified LNG and transporting this gas out by way of the Pacific Connector Pipeline. They plan on taking out the heavier hydrocarbons (hot gases) beforehand and shipping these Natural Gas Liquids (NGL) out by rail. 1 billion cubic feet a day of foreign LNG from sources that contain 15 % NGL by volume would produce approximately 1.87 million gallons of NGL a day as bi-product. These are very large volumes of very hazardous liquids that potentially would be shipped out by way of this Coos Bay rail line. We want to make sure that the line would be in a condition that is able to safely handle these types and volumes of hazardous liquids and would like to know before public ownership what that would entail. We also have other questions that we feel need to be answered also such as;

- 1) How much is the current net worth of the Coos Bay rail line and what is the projected cost that will be necessary to repair the line as determined by a third nonpartisan party.
- 2) If public ownership of the line was to occur, where would the locomotive and cars to operate the line come from and at what cost.
- 3) What guarantees would the public have that the line would not be a money loser.
- 4) How has the Oregon International Port of Coos Bay determined they would be a better operator of this line than the Central Oregon and Pacific Railroad (CORP) has been?
- 5) What guarantee would citizens have that the line would be operated in a safe and reliable manner?

We as a group do not oppose a public partnership/ownership of the railroad but are adamant that any public involvement or funds concerning this Coos Bay Line have strict oversight by an elected (by the people) statewide or regional board specific to the railroad. This board needs to be highly accountable to the public. Since this Coos Bay line impacts Coos, Douglas and Lane counties and extends beyond the jurisdiction of the Oregon International Port of Coos Bay, an elected regional or state board would help give better representation and oversight to impacted landowners and businesses in all these counties.

We hope the Surface Transportation Board will consider all these issues before accepting the feeder line application by the Oregon International Port of Coos Bay.

Sincerely,



Jody McCaffree

Final C/PV

EI-

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My name is Nancy Nichols. I live at 93849 Deadwood Creek Road. Deadwood, Oregon. I came to speak to the environmental issues in this case before you.

I have been a member of the Leadership Board of the Siuslaw Watershed Council for over 10 years. I have seen the Council repeatedly reach out to this railroad, offering help to replace culverts that are blocking fish passage. They have not been interested, even with culverts that clearly had safety problems in addition to the fish passage issues. The owners of this rail line have been consciously refusing needed repairs for years.

If you allow RailAmerica to abandon this line, require real abandonment. Require removal of all culverts and bridges. Require replanting the rail bed with native vegetation. Require that RailAmerica put the landscape back the way it was before there was a rail line. Require RailAmerica to post a bond sufficient to do this work for their offer to be accepted.

While complete removal of the railroad might seem the best choice from an environmental point of view, this may not be the case. Rail is very energy efficient transportation. This is an important factor arguing to keep this railroad running. A fair balance could be had with an accessible local owner who addressed the railroad's environmental problems.

If you accept the offer from the Port of Coos Bay, I believe local groups will find a partner they can work with to improve local salmon runs. To make sure, the Board should add wording which encourages the Port to address fish passage issues. You have the opportunity here to make a decision that improves the local economy in more than one way. Fishing is in trouble and anything that increases access to spawning grounds will increase the number of fish. More fish benefits commercial fishing, the tourist industry, and general quality of life in the coastal area.

1.5 min

E1-11819



Chuck Wheeler
<Chuck.Wheeler@noaa.gov>

09/17/2008 01:52 PM

To christa.dean@stb.dot.gov

cc

bcc

Subject Contact for NMFS

Christa, It was nice talking to you this morning. According to 50 CFR 402.14 any federal agency is required to consult with NMFS if their action may affect listed species or critical habitat. You said abandoning the bridges requires a license which is a federal action. Because parts of the bridge are creosote treated lumber, creosote leaches contaminants for decades after installation, and the bridges are located within designated critical habitat, I believe a may affect determination is warranted.

Here is the contact information for my State Director, the one you would direct consultation to:

Kim Kratz Director
Oregon State Habitat Office Habitat Conservation Division
1201 NE Lloyd Boulevard, Suite 1100
Portland, OR 97232

If you have any questions, please call or write!

--

Chuck Wheeler
Fishery Biologist
National Marine Fisheries Service
2900 NW Stewart Parkway
Roseburg, Oregon 97470

Ph. 541.957.3379

Robin Hartmann, Southern Oregon LNG Coordinator
Oregon Chapter Sierra Club
1721 SE Main Street
Roseburg, Oregon 97470
541-817-2275
robinhartmann@msn.com

August 21, 2008

Surface Transportation Board
395 E Street, S.W.
Washington, D.C. 20423-0001

Dear Members of the Surface Transportation Board:

Thank you for holding this hearing today in Oregon, where the rail line is located. This has allowed some of us to testify who would not be able to make it to D.C. and also serves to draw greater public attention to this important issue here in our state.

My name is Robin Hartmann. I have worked over the past year for Oregon Chapter of Sierra Club to help citizens engage in the proposal by the Port of Coos Bay, Jordan Cove Energy Project and Williams Pipeline to build a liquefied natural gas (LNG) terminal at Coos Bay and a 231-mile, 36-inch diameter pipeline to send the gas across Oregon rivers, forests and ranch land south to the California market. In addition to the impacts of the dredging required for the LNG tankers to come into Coos Bay, and impacts of the construction of the pipeline on private and public property including five major river crossings, the Jordan Cove Energy Project would involve moving large quantities of volatile gases along this rail line, which could result in significant environmental and safety issues, especially given the state of disrepair of the line.

I'm a resident of Douglas County and live in Roseburg, Oregon along the I-5 corridor. I also work for Oregon Shores Conservation Coalition, which has worked for the past 37 years to protect the environment within Oregon's coastal zone - which extends from the crest of the coast range out three miles into Oregon's Territorial Sea. Together, the Sierra Club and Oregon Shores have thousands of members living in Eugene and the coastal region, through which this line runs, and who would be impacted by the decisions made to abandon this dilapidated rail line or purchase and operate the line into the future.

Today, there are two broad issues I would like to bring to the attention of the board. First, the board should be aware of the many safety and environmental issues associated with the current state of the rail line and require that those issues be addressed before the line is abandoned. And second, the board should be aware of the significant changes proposed for future use of the rail line when and if the proposed liquefied natural gas facility is approved for Coos Bay.

As you well know, there are serious concerns about the safety of the tunnels on the rail line, but numerous other environmental and safety issues exist all along the line that need to be addressed. We have received first hand reports from coastal residents about the disrepair of the line.

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E1-11824
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AB-515 Sub 2
FO-35160

Residents, for example, who have lived on property adjacent to the line south of Florence on Canary Road for the past 25 years describe a long history of regular derailment of cars, many carrying wood chips from the mill. It has been reported that there are areas where the rails themselves are "out of alignment" and running on unstable ground.

Since its virtual abandonment, many trees are still down and lying across the line from last year's storms. Invasive species are becoming a big issue along the line. The rail line is currently blocking fish passage on a number of historic salmon-bearing streams. These links to upstream salmon spawning areas should be restored. The use of herbicides and pesticides along the rail line also impact watersheds, water quality and human health. Alternative treatment practices should be sought and used, especially where the line goes through key fish-bearing watersheds and along coastal lakes.

The dangerous condition of this rail line, in its current state of disrepair, is particularly important to consider before approving any purchase or new uses of the line, especially by the Port of Coos Bay to support their proposal for a liquified natural gas terminal with Jordan Cove Energy Project.

At the risk of oversimplifying a very complicated issue, when liquefied natural gas will be shipped in from Russia or other foreign countries, it will arrive in Coos Bay as "hot gas" which has a high concentration of natural gas liquids (NGLs) that can't be sent through the pipeline once the super-cooled liquid is regasified. These more dangerous components will be removed on-site and will become by-products of the "Btu control system" then will be available for separate sale as propane, ethane and butane.

Jordan Cove Energy Project and the Port of Coos Bay have provided very limited information about how much of these natural gas liquids will be shipped via railcars along this line into Eugene, but leave the public and others to make some difficult conversions and estimations to make a ballpark guess – but even with conservative estimates the number of railcars could be in the thousands each year.

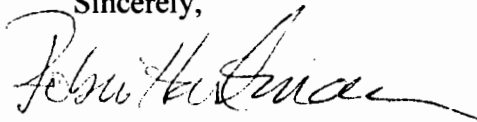
Here's what we do know: The facility will be able to process and regasify 1 billion cubic feet per day. We know some percentage of that includes natural gas liquids (NGLs) – estimates by some experts run between 10 to 20 percent or more. We know that the gas will be shipped as "Y-Grade" to Eugene, then on to one of two plants in the Midwest – either in Conway, Kansas or Mt. Belvieu, Texas -- where it will be processed into ethane, butane or propane – because there are no such Y-grade fractionators in the Pacific Northwest. We know that the Y-Grade will be loaded into DOT certified railcars, typically 112J340W cars, with a capacity of 33,700 gallons. We know that some of the NGL will be stored on the Coos Bay site in three to five 1,500 barrel "bullets."

So even if someone converted cubic feet to barrels and gallons, we still don't know what fraction of the liquified natural gas is considered (NGLs) and how many 33,700 gallon railcars will be heading to Eugene each day. The board needs to ask these questions and obtain clear answers, and the public must be informed about how these railcars of dangerous gas will be handled and how all the potential hazards along the line will be addressed.

Though their application to the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission includes a woefully inadequate description of the plans to ship these NGLs via railcar, I've attached that portion to my testimony for the boards review. Their brief narrative does indicate that *"The purchaser will assume custody of the mixed NGLs, referred to within the industry as Y-Grade, at the discharge flange of the metering skid,"* and that, *"Once railcars are loaded with Y-Grade, custody would be turned over to the Central Oregon and Pacific railroad which would deliver the cars to a Class 1 rail yard at Eugene/Springfield."* Though the Port and Jordan Cove indicate that FERC doesn't require more information because this aspect of the project will be handled by third parties, the Surface Transportation Board needs to have more detail about the number of railcars and how the current disrepair of the rail line and serious derailment issues and other hazards are to be addressed given the plans to ship these dangerous gases across key salmon watersheds, through the backyards of coastal residents, through tender-dry forests and into the heart of Eugene.

In closing I would recommend that no exemptions be given on the abandonment of this line and that the Surface Transportation Board's Section of Environmental Analysis (SEA) conduct a full review of the environmental and safety hazards of the abandonment, and a similar NEPA review to assess the future uses of the rail line and to assure all repair issues are addressed before the line is sold to a new entity. Full public participation should be part of the board's review process. Again, thank you for your time and for visiting our beautiful state of Oregon.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Robin Hartmann", written in dark ink.

Robin Hartmann

1.1.3 FERC Nonjurisdictional Facilities

1.1.3.1 Natural Gas Liquids Recovery

Natural Gas Liquids (NGLs) are by-products of the Btu control system which is integral to the operations of the LNG terminal site. The removal of NGLs from the LNG stream occurs in the deethanizer column. There will be no NGL storage capability on the LNG terminal site other than the liquid levels maintained within the deethanizer column and the deethanizer reboiler. The NGL levels are maintained in these two process units to insure stable process operation. NGL product pumps will pump the recovered NGLs through a custody transfer metering skid that will be located adjacent to the Roseburg Forest Products Company (Roseburg) property. The NGLs will be transported from the site by rail cars using the existing rail line adjacent to the LNG terminal site. A rail car loading facility will be constructed by others on land adjacent to the LNG terminal site. The rail car loading facility is the only nonjurisdictional facility. The potential location of this facility and the existing rail lines in relation to the LNG terminal site are shown in Figure 1.1-10.

The purchaser will assume custody of the mixed NGLs, referred to within the industry as Y-Grade, at the discharge flange of the metering skid. While JCEP has had discussions with a third-party Y-Grade purchaser, no decision has been taken as to the precise sale and purchase arrangements. JCEP has, however, identified a site location adjacent to the JCEP terminal for a NGL storage and load out facility that could be owned and operated by a third-party purchaser. JCEP holds an option to purchase the site property from Roseburg. The site is currently zoned industrial and has historically supported the wood chip export operations of Roseburg. It is currently served by an existing rail spur and a paved road that handles the delivery of approximately 200 wood chip semi-trailer loads per day.

A typical Y-Grade storage and load-out facility that could be constructed on this site would contain from three to five 1,500 barrel horizontal storage tanks, referred to as bullets. These bullets are similar to those currently used for the storage of propane at retail locations around the country and specifically at the two existing propane distribution terminals located within the North Bend city limits. Additionally, a typical Y-Grade load-out facility would contain a rail loading rack with from one to three loading stations. The Y-Grade would be loaded into DOT certified railcars, typically 112J340W cars with a capacity of 33,700 gallons. Once railcars are loaded with Y-Grade, custody would be turned over to the Central Oregon and Pacific railroad which would deliver the cars to a Class 1 rail yard at Eugene/Springfield. From Eugene/Springfield the rail cars would be delivered to processing facilities where the Y-Grade is fractionated into final products of ethane, propane, n-butane and i-butane. There are presently no Y-Grade fractionators located in the Pacific Northwest. Consequently, all of the Y-Grade produced from the JCEP facility will be transported to fractionators located in the central United States. The largest of these facilities are located at the market hubs of Conway, Kansas and Mont Belvieu, Texas. The market is large, well established and highly transparent, allowing an efficient market mechanism that ensures the lifting of all of the Y-Grade produced by the JCEP.

Correspondence

EI-11822

PORT OF SIUSLAW

Serving Western Lane County and The Central Oregon Coast

Creating quality jobs and businesses through the development and application of Port of Siuslaw

20 August 2008

The Honorable Anne K. Quinlan
Acting Secretary
Surface Transportation Board
395 E St. SW
Washington, DC 20423-0001



Re: Docket No. AB-515 (Sub-No. 2X), *Central Oregon & Pacific Railroad, Inc. – Abandonment and Discontinuance – in Coos, Douglas, and Lane Counties, OR (Coquille to Vaughn)*
Docket No. 35160 (Finance) (*Oregon International Port of Coos Bay—Feeder Line Application—Coos Bay Line of Central Oregon & Pacific Railroad, Inc.*)

Dear Ms. Quinlan,

This letter is in regard to CORP's application to abandon the rail line from Coquille to Eugene. The Port of Siuslaw is opposed to the STB's granting abandonment status for a number of reasons. These reasons include: significant economic damage to the coastal economy, loss of jobs in the short run and fewer economic possibilities in the long term, increased truck traffic in and around the Florence area, environmental impacts of rail line removal and lack of CORP accountability should any situation arise as a result of the abandonment process.

Again, the Port of Siuslaw never received the "Combined Environmental and Historic Report" of the Central Oregon & Pacific Railroad ("CORP") regarding CORP's planned abandonment of the rail line that passes through the Port of Siuslaw's district. CORP apparently did not see fit to include this Port in their correspondence and did not return phone calls. If these are indicators of their attitude and responsiveness, the Port suggests the STB deny their abandonment application.

Additionally, the Port of Siuslaw supports the feeder line application made by the Oregon International Port of Coos Bay. This Port views job retention and job creation as key factors in the local, State and regional economies. The re-opening of the rail line under responsible and interested entities is in the public interest.

The Port of Siuslaw was established in 1909 and has a district of over 700 square miles that reaches as far inland as Lorane. Florence is a coastal city of about 9000 residents, a combined area population of around 20,000 and was originally built on the timber and fishing industries. Canary, Cushman, Mapleton, Swisshome (Richardson) and Deadwood all lie within the Port district and encompasses the area served by CORP up until their unilateral 21 September 2007 closure. Business runs in cycles and we expect new uses for this rail line to emerge.

Business also likes certainty and options. The abandonment of the CORP operated rail line creates uncertainty and would limit options for existing businesses and hamper recruitment efforts for new businesses. This is troubling for any economic situation and is magnified by the current economic slowdown.

From an environmental and economic standpoint, a single rail car can carry the freight of three trucks. This saves fuel, reduces costs for business and is more environmentally friendly. Abandonment of the rail line in the face of these circumstances might lead one to wonder how or why such an action was being contemplated in the first place.

While tourism and retirement related business draw large revenue streams to the area, industrial sites that can be served by rail are important future considerations. The Port of Siuslaw owns a 40 acre parcel within the City of Florence that is deemed "shovel ready" by the State of Oregon. Adjacent to this parcel, the City of Florence has a business park with similar parcels available for business customers. As fuel costs rise, proximity to rail service will become a key factor in attracting future business to the Oregon coast and to this comparatively disadvantaged part of Lane County. Upriver industrial sites formerly served by the CORP rail line can again be served by rail when circumstances change to allow for new uses.

CORP's report raises a number of issues that are worrisome to the Port of Siuslaw, and I would like to use this opportunity to share these concerns with the Section of Environmental Analysis of the Surface Transportation Board.

First, I am concerned about the increased truck traffic that will result from the abandonment of the rail line. The Report notes that a total of 37,656 truck trips per year (18,828 full and 18,828 empty) will be created by the abandonment, with many of these truck trips traveling through Florence on U.S. Route 101 to Newport or on State Highway 126 to Eugene and I-5.

U.S. 101 is mostly a two lane undivided highway. The magnitude of this truck traffic increase would negatively impact the quality of life in Florence because Route 101 is one of the main streets [or is "Main Street"] in Florence. We have already seen an increase in truck traffic since the rail line has been shut down. On page 9, the Report states that the increase only represents 5 trucks per hour, but such a calculation is based on a 24-hour work day, six days per week. When using a more conventional 9-hour work day and 5-day work week, the increase in truck traffic is over 16 trucks per hour. Additionally, the Report appears to disregard the traffic and other truck impacts by stating that the rail line is in a "rural area," but Route 101 travels directly through Florence. If CORP is allowed to abandon the rail line, I urge the Section of Environmental Analysis to look closely at the traffic, safety, noise, and air pollution impacts of this abandonment and impose conditions to mitigate this harm.

State Highway 126 is also a two lane undivided highway that connects Florence and Mapleton to Eugene. Eugene is the second largest metropolitan area in Oregon and is the site of a major rail switching yard. The degraded condition of this road would be exacerbated by the increased truck traffic. The negative effects are amplified by the fact the State of Oregon has few available funds to maintain this road even in this distressed condition.

Secondly, as described on page 13 of the Report, the planned deconstruction or "salvage" of the rail line and the rail bridge over the Siuslaw River raises a number of questions about the impact on the local environment. If CORP is permitted to abandon this rail line, the rail bridge over the Siuslaw River will have to be removed. However, the removal will have significant consequences that must be mitigated.

As I stated above, recreation and tourism has been growing as people take advantage of the nearby Oregon Dunes National Recreation Area, fishing on the Siuslaw River, and other outdoor activities. The Siuslaw is known as one of the best fishing rivers in the western United States, and passes through Florence (as well as Mapleton, Swisshome, Deadwood and Cushman) on its way from the Coast Range Mountains to the Pacific Ocean. Avid anglers come from across Oregon and out of state to try their hand at fly fishing in the Siuslaw and its tributaries. Boat or shore based fishing is a staple of our local economy. Local fishing guides, hotels, restaurants, and other businesses benefit from the popularity of fishing and outdoor activities in the greater Florence area.

Chinook Salmon, Coho Salmon and Steelhead Trout are just a few of the fish that can be found in the Siuslaw. Crucially, all three of these species are born in the river, then spend their adulthood in the ocean before returning to spawn in the river. I am concerned that CORP has not properly addressed environmental concerns associated with the removal of the Siuslaw River rail bridge, as well as the removal of tracks in the vicinity of the river and its tributaries. Without proper environmental mitigation, this salvage activity will damage the water quality of the Siuslaw River by introducing sediment into the water and by increasing the possibility of future erosion from riverbanks and streambanks in the area. Increased sedimentation will damage the water quality and may deter salmon and trout from reaching the ocean and/or returning to spawn.

I am also concerned CORP's Report does not address the fact that the bridge removal process itself may result in contamination of the water from things such as bridge debris, paint, oils, or grease. As described on page 15 of the Report, I notice that CORP is planning no mitigation actions in connection with the planned abandonment. I urge the Section of Environmental Analysis to carefully consider the water quality impacts of CORP's plan to de-construct and salvage the rail line and the Siuslaw River bridge and impose appropriate mitigation to ameliorate the harm it would otherwise cause.

The Cushman Bridge over the Siuslaw River incorporates a crossing of State Highway 126. In removal of this bridge during the proposed abandonment process, significant engineering and disruption may occur. During the demolition, rebuilding and/or reconfiguration phases, there may be negative impacts on the Port, the City of Florence, the State of Oregon and business far beyond surrounding communities such as Mapleton.

The Federal government considers the Siuslaw River navigable up to Mapleton. The bridge over the Siuslaw River at Cushman is usually kept in the closed position, but can be opened with 24 hours (or more) notice. This situation can hinder pleasure as well as commercial activities.

If CORP is granted their desired abandonment that includes their retention of the Vaughn to Danebo section, what is to prevent them from attempting to abandon this section of the line if

there is "not enough" traffic on the line? Will we then revisit some form of this process? In the end, western Lane County as well as the Oregon Coast might be crippled by a lack of rail service in an era of rising fuel costs.

If CORP can be seen as unresponsive toward customer service issues and basic correspondence, how will they act (or be held to account) if the rail were to be abandoned and there arose subsequent economic or environmental consequences related to this proposed abandonment?

The following points are worth noting and summarizing in this process:

1. The entire abandonment application should be rejected as CORP proposes to retain a 20 mile section of rail from Vaughn to Danebo. If this part of the application were to be approved and the feeder line application approved, this would unfairly benefit CORP for subsequent improvements to the rest of the line and allow for potentially capricious control of a short line segment.
2. CORP neglected maintenance on this line for years, sought public support and now seeks to harm the public interest through this abandonment application. Abandonment would cause undue hardship for coastal businesses by increasing their costs and/or force some to relocate their operations. Future economic development in areas covered by this rail line would be crippled by a lack of rail service.
3. Abandonment of the rail line is the last thing to be considering when: higher fuel prices are the norm, trucks put out more pollution and more strain on the road system, rail lines are more efficient than trucks in moving cargo.
4. The abandonment process, if approved, would have many environmental issues to resolve in removing rails and bridges.

In summary, the Port of Siuslaw urges the STB to deny CORP's abandonment application and to hold them accountable for their past, present and future actions that might be harmful to the public interest.

Once again, the Port of Siuslaw supports the Oregon International Port of Coos Bay's feeder line application to operate the entire line and to ensure responsible short and long term management of this rail line for all customers and for the present and future jobs that depend on this service.

Thank you for this opportunity to participate in the abandonment proceeding. Please do not hesitate to contact me if you have any questions.

Sincerely,



Mark Freeman
Port Manager

cc: Terence M. Hynes, attorney for CORP
Oregon International Port of Coos Bay

BEFORE THE
SURFACE TRANSPORTATION BOARD

Lee

EI-11831
CD

Central Oregon & Pacific Railroad, Inc. -
Coos Bay Bay Rail Line

)
) Docket No. AB 515 (Sub-No. 2X)
) Finance Docket No. 35160
)

only discuss
Feeder line

ORAL TESTIMONY OF BILL GOODMAN

My name is Bill Goodman. I am the Group Manager – Western Lumber for Georgia-Pacific West, Inc. (GPW), a wholly owned subsidiary of Georgia-Pacific LLC (GP). I have been with GP for 22 years and currently have manufacturing and sales / marketing responsibility for the western lumber group. GP and its subsidiaries operate 56 wood products manufacturing facilities throughout the United States employing over 10,000 employees. I am here to speak in support of the Port of Coos Bay's Feeder Line Application to reestablish rail service on the line embargoed by the Central Oregon & Pacific Railroad (CORP).

GPW operates a sawmill at Coos Bay, OR which produces Douglas fir lumber. Until the embargo by the CORP, the Coos Bay facility was the largest shipper on the line, receiving up to 40 carloads of logs per month and shipping up to 275 carloads of finished lumber and wood chips per month.

As with most wood products companies, we are heavily dependent on the rail freight network. This is especially true of the Coos Bay sawmill, due to its geographic location on the Oregon coast and the markets served. Coos Bay is 80 to 90 miles from the Interstate 5 corridor, affecting the cost and availability of motor carrier capacity. Primary destinations are the population centers in the

West where length of haul and volumes requires the strategic advantage of rail to compete effectively.

When the rail embargo was first imposed by the CORP on September 21, 2007 with only one day's notice, it created immediate and significant issues for our supply chain. Candidly, we were surprised at the lack of communication as GP had developed an effective business relationship over the years with the CORP.

While the GP logistics team was able to quickly develop transportation alternatives - - predominantly rail service via a Eugene, OR area reload and additional motor carrier capacity - - the impact of the short notice period for the embargo caused us to temporarily shut-down production at Coos Bay putting 125 people out of work for several weeks.

On an ongoing basis, the impact of the rail embargo has resulted in a transportation cost increase on finished lumber of 17 to 21% over what we were paying prior to the embargo. The sawmill is currently operating at around 60% of capacity resulting in a freight cost impact of approximately \$1.5 million in 2008. At full production, this would translate to a cost impact of approximately \$2.5 million per year on finished lumber.

In addition, the rail embargo has adversely affected the freight cost on wood fiber - - the inbound shipment of logs and outbound shipment of wood chips. At current production levels, the cost impact on wood fiber is approximately \$550,000 per year. At full production, the cost impact would be

approximately \$935,000 per year. This volume is moving via motor carrier in the absence of rail service.

There are ancillary effects as well: increased highway congestion on two-lane coastal and mountain roads such as Highway 101 and the environmental and safety impact of additional trucks on the highway.

In summary, the absence of direct rail service will seriously jeopardize the GP Coos Bay sawmill's long-term ability to compete and sustain profitable operations. We strongly support the Port of Coos Bay Feeder Line Application as the vehicle to restore rail service to the region.

Upon the restoration of rail service, the GP Coos Bay mill operation would be considered by the company as a platform for growth. This could lead to capital investment and production expansion.

Thank you.

received on 9/19/2008

E1-12234

CD

U.S. Department of
Homeland Security

United States
Coast Guard



Commandant
United States Coast Guard

470 L'Enfant Plaza East, SW
Room 7110
Washington, DC 20024-2135
Staff Symbol: CG-0921
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5730

C792753

SEP 16 2008

The Honorable Ron Wyden
United States Senate
223 Dirksen Senate Building
Washington, DC 20510-3703

Dear Senator Wyden:

This is in response to your letter dated August 29, 2008 regarding the disposition of three rail bridges on the Coos Bay Line, which are currently under review for Surface Transportation Board abandonment proceedings.

The Coast Guard's policy regarding bridges over navigable water that are no longer used for land transportation is to notify the owner that the bridge is in violation of federal law and constitutes an unreasonable obstruction to navigation. In addition, the Coast Guard would advise the bridge owner of the following options available to them:

- 1) Return the bridge to an active transportation function.
- 2) Remove the main navigation span and retain portions of the structure in the waterway. For this option, the bridge owner is required to consult with the U. S. Army Corps of Engineers (ACOE). Failure to obtain the ACOE's approval to leave parts of the structure in the waterway, after it has lost its character as a bridge will subject the bridge owner to removing the bridge in its entirety. This removal must occur down to or below the natural bottom of the waterway or such other elevation as deemed appropriate by the Coast Guard District Commander in consultation with the ACOE.
- 3) Completely remove the bridge from the waterway at no expense to the Federal Government. The Coast Guard's involvement in the removal process would include early review of the proposed removal plan to allow the Coast Guard to notify effected mariners to ensure that the reasonable needs of navigation are met during the removal operations.

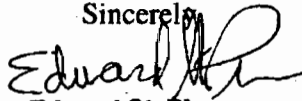
Hence if the Coos Bay Rail Line is formally abandoned, the three bridges referred to in your letter will be considered bridges that are no longer used for transportation and the Coast Guard would move forward with the process outlined above.

5730
C792753

Subj: RESPONSE TO LETTER DATED AUGUST 29, 2008 REGARDING THE
DISPOSITION OF THREE RAIL BRIDGES ON THE COOS BAY LINE

My Senate Liaison Office at (202) 224-2913 would be pleased to respond to any further
questions you or your staff may have.

Sincerely,



Edward St. Pierre
Commander, U.S. Coast Guard
Congressional and Governmental
Affairs Staff
By Direction

Surface Transportation Board

Incoming Correspondence Record

#EI-8725

E-Filing Correspondence Information

Status: In Process

* Required Fields

Recorded by Christa Dean on 08/19/2008

*Docket #:	AB 515 2	Affiliation:	Self / Individual
*Name of Sender:	Gene Holt	Letter Type:	
Group:		NEPA Type:	
Attention Of:	Unknown	In Public Docket?	☒ Yes ☐ No
*Date Received:	08/19/2008	Phone Number:	541 260 6633
Date of Letter:	08/19/2008	Email Address:	GHolt@cyber-freight.com
Group's Address:	Coos Bay, Oregon	Group's Zip Code:	97420-
Group's City:	Coos Bay		
Group's State:	Oregon		

Submitter's Comments

The following comments are meant for the upcoming division concerning the abandonment of the CORP rail line in Coos Bay.

The recent articles concerning this decision suggests an increase in fuel costs and additional trucks on our local highways. What is not mentioned is that most of the trees, in the form of trucked logs, come from inland sources that would be better served by existing mills closer to the resource source. What is also not mentioned, is the fact that the few interested parties trying to keep the rail line are only interested in the additional profit they make by keeping their mill work in a depressed area using cheap rail service and eliminating the need for trucks and drivers.

There has been a lot of discussion by the interested parties who are trying to keep the discussion along lines that make it look like all their ideas are for the good of the locals. This is not true. If the rails were removed, the resulting vacant land would be very valuable to the local economy as tourist related sites. This area no longer depends on logging and fishing as it has in the past and must look at the future. Tourism is the future for all of the Oregon Coast. Most areas are already well on their way to achieving those goals. Coos Bay needs to become a major player. Removing the rails will greatly advance that decision and benefit most, if not all, of the local taxpayers.

Please keep the majority of us in mind, not the minority.

Thank you,

Gene Holt, Coos Bay

STB's Comments

Image Attachment(s)

An attachment has not been added.