

SURFACE TRANSPORTATION BOARD
SECTION OF ENVIRONMENTAL ANALYSIS

POST ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

ENVIRONMENTAL RECOMMENDATIONS IN DOCKET NO. AB-55 (Sub-No. 701X)

August 2, 2010

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**

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The Section of Environmental Analysis (SEA) served an EA for this proceeding on June 29, 2010 for public review and comment. In the EA, SEA recommended two environmental conditions and concluded that the proposed action would not significantly impact the quality of the human environment.

Comments on the EA

On July 15, 2010, SEA received a letter from the railroad, CSX Transportation, Inc. The letter included attached comments from the Indiana Department of Natural Resources (IDNR) on the railroad's environmental report for the proposed abandonment. IDNR raised a number of concerns related to potential salvaging impacts to forested habitat, wetlands and streams, and recommended a suite of best management practices and other measures to avoid, minimize or mitigate these potential impacts. However, based on the predominantly urban and upland setting of the proposed action, and limited nature and extent of salvage activities planned by the railroad, SEA believes that forested habitat, wetland and stream impacts would not likely occur. Therefore, SEA is recommending no additional conditions because of IDNR's comments.

Modifications to the EA

SEA is not making any changes to the environmental conditions recommended in the EA.

Conclusions

The EA comment period has ended. Accordingly, SEA recommends that the following conditions previously recommended in the EA be imposed upon any decision granting abandonment authority:

1. CSX Transportation, Inc. shall consult with the National Geodetic Survey (NGS) and notify NGS at least 90 days prior to beginning salvage activities that would disturb or destroy any geodetic station markers.
2. CSX Transportation, Inc. (CSXT) shall retain its interest in 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 until the Section 106 process of the National Historic Preservation Act, 16 U.S.C. § 470f, has been completed. CSXT shall report to the Section of Environmental Analysis (SEA) regarding any consultations with the State Historic Preservation Office and the public. CSXT may not file its consummation notice or initiate any salvage activities related to abandonment (including removal of tracks and ties) until the Section 106 process has been completed and the Board has removed this condition.

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

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