

SURFACE TRANSPORTATION BOARD

DECISION

Docket No. AB 490 (Sub-No. 2X)

GREENVILLE COUNTY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION—
ABANDONMENT EXEMPTION—IN GREENVILLE COUNTY, S.C.

Decided: February 6, 2015

Greenville County Economic Development Corporation (GCEDC) filed a verified notice of exemption under 49 C.F.R. pt. 1152 subpart F—Exempt Abandonments for GCEDC to abandon approximately 3.29 miles of railroad line extending between milepost AJK 585.34 in East Greenville, S.C., and milepost AJK 588.63 in Greenville, S.C. Notice of the exemption was served and published in the Federal Register on January 9, 2015 (80 Fed. Reg. 1,470). The exemption is scheduled to become effective on February 8, 2015.

The Board's Office of Environmental Analysis (OEA) served an environmental assessment (EA) on January 16, 2015, recommending that four environmental conditions be imposed. In the EA, OEA states that it received comments from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (Corps) regarding GCEDC's intended salvage activities on the line. The Corps comments that permits may be required prior to salvage and requests that GCEDC consult with the Corps before such activities are conducted. Therefore, OEA recommends a condition requiring GCEDC to consult with the Corps prior to commencement of any salvage activities regarding potential impacts to waters of the United States, including wetlands, and to comply with the reasonable requirements of the Corps.

In the EA, OEA also states that the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) submitted comments stating that USFWS resources do not indicate that National Parks or National Wildlife Refuges are present along the right-of-way. Although no federally designated critical habitat is located within the project corridor, USFWS recommends that GCEDC conduct surveys along the project corridor for each of the threatened and endangered species that occur within Greenville County, notably two plant species, the dwarf flowered heartleaf (*Hexastylis naniflora*) and the bunched arrowhead (*Sagittaria fasciculata*). Accordingly, OEA recommends a condition requiring GCEDC to consult with USFWS before beginning any salvage activities regarding the implementation and documentation of field surveys, comply with the reasonable requirements of USFWS, and report the results of consultation with USFWS in writing to OEA before beginning salvage activities.

OEA also states that the South Carolina Department of Health and Environmental Control (DHEC) submitted comments recommending that any permits required by future actions by GCEDC be obtained and indicating that GCEDC is responsible for notifying DHEC of any

contamination at the site and for remediating any contamination. Therefore, OEA recommends a condition that, if any contamination is found within the area of the proposed abandonment, GCEDC shall consult with DHEC prior to beginning salvage activities that may affect remediation efforts underway or necessary and that GCEDC shall report the results of consultation with DHEC in writing to OEA prior to beginning salvage activities.

Finally, OEA states that the National Geodetic Survey (NGS) commented that three geodetic station markers are located within the area of the proposed abandonment. Therefore, OEA recommends a condition requiring GCEDC to consult with and notify NGS at least 90 days prior to beginning salvage activities that will disturb or destroy any geodetic station markers.

Comments on the EA were due by February 2, 2015. No comments were received. Accordingly, the four conditions recommended by OEA in the EA will be imposed.

Based on OEA's recommendation, the proposed abandonment, if implemented as conditioned, will not significantly affect either the quality of the human environment or the conservation of energy resources.

It is ordered:

1. This proceeding is reopened.
2. Upon reconsideration, the notice served and published in the Federal Register on January 9, 2015, exempting the abandonment of the line described above is subject to the following conditions:
 - (a) Prior to conducting any salvage activities, GCEDC shall consult with the Corps regarding potential impacts to waters of the United States, including wetlands, and shall comply with the reasonable requirements of the Corps.
 - (b) GCEDC shall consult with USFWS prior to commencement of any salvage activities regarding the implementation and documentation of field surveys and shall comply with the agency's reasonable recommendations. GCEDC shall report the results of this consultation in writing to OEA prior to beginning salvage activities.
 - (c) If any contamination is found within the project area, GCEDC shall consult with DHEC prior to beginning salvage activities that may affect remediation efforts underway or necessary. GCEDC shall report the results of this consultation in writing to OEA prior to beginning salvage activities.
 - (d) GCEDC shall consult with and notify NGS at least 90 days prior to beginning salvage activities that will disturb or destroy any geodetic station markers.

3. This decision is effective on its service date.

By the Board, Rachel D. Campbell, Director, Office of Proceedings.