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SERVICE DATE – OCTOBER 31, 2017

SURFACE TRANSPORTATION BOARD

DECISION

Docket No. FD 36095

PALMETTO RAILWAYS—CONSTRUCTION AND OPERATION EXEMPTION—
IN BERKELEY COUNTY, S.C.

Decided: October 30, 2017

By petition filed August 3, 2017, Palmetto Railways (PR) seeks an exemption under 49 U.S.C. § 10502 from the prior approval requirements of 49 U.S.C. § 10901 to construct and operate a new line of rail in Berkeley County, S.C. (the Line). PR states that the Line would extend approximately 22.7 miles between the A-Line of CSX Transportation, Inc. (CSXT) near Santee Cooper's Cross Generating Station (through the CSXT Cross Subdivision connection) and the Camp Hall Commerce Park (CHC Park).

PR is a Class III rail carrier and an instrumentality of the State of South Carolina and a Division of the South Carolina Department of Commerce. PR states that the purpose of the proposed construction is to provide rail service to CHC Park, an industrial park with tenants that will include Volvo Cars North America. PR explains that development of CHC Park has increased demand for rail service to connect CHC Park with a Class I rail network. PR states that the Line will provide freight transportation for current and future tenants of CHC Park, reducing the distribution and transportation burden on the surrounding communities and infrastructure.

The petition for exemption raises issues that require consideration by the Board. By this decision, the Board is instituting a proceeding under 49 U.S.C. § 10502(b). The issues presented by the petition will be addressed in a subsequent decision.

PR requests expedited consideration, though it does not request a decision by a specific date. The Board will endeavor to issue its decision as promptly as possible after completion of the environmental review process required under the National Environmental Policy Act.

It is ordered:

1. Under 49 U.S.C. § 10502(b), a proceeding is instituted.
2. This decision is effective on its date of service.

By the Board, Scott M. Zimmerman, Acting Director, Office of Proceedings.