

the **Federal Register** pursuant to the authority indicated below.

Comment closing date: June 28, 1998.

(49 U.S.C. 30118 and 30120; delegations of authority at 49 CFR 1.50 and 501.8)

Issued on: May 14, 1998.

L. Robert Shelton,

Associate Administrator for Safety Performance Standards.

[FR Doc. 98-13520 Filed 5-20-98; 8:45 am]

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DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Surface Transportation Board

[STB Finance Docket No. 33567]

Albany & Eastern Railroad Company—Acquisition and Operation Exemption—The Burlington Northern and Santa Fe Railway Company

Albany & Eastern Railroad Company (AERC), a noncarrier, has filed a verified notice of exemption under 49 CFR 1150.31 to acquire from The Burlington Northern and Santa Fe Railway Company (BNSF), and to operate 17.40 miles of rail line between MP-14.50, at or near Lebanon, and MP-31.90, at or near Foster, in Linn County, OR.¹ AERC also is acquiring incidental trackage rights over Union Pacific Railroad Company's (UP) rail line between MP-688.96, at or near Lebanon, and MP-691.52, at or near Albany, and over BNSF's line between MP-0.0, at Albany, and MP-0.89, east of Albany, in Linn County, OR, a total of 13.62 miles. The incidental trackage rights will permit AERC to interchange traffic with BNSF at its Albany yard.

The transaction was expected to be consummated on or shortly after May 8, 1998.

If the verified notice contains false or misleading information, the exemption is void *ab initio*. Petitions to revoke the exemption under 49 U.S.C. 10502(d) may be filed at any time. The filing of a petition to revoke will not automatically stay the transaction.

An original and 10 copies of all pleadings, referring to STB Finance Docket No. 33567, must be filed with the Surface Transportation Board, Office of the Secretary, Case Control Unit, 1925 K Street, N.W., Washington, DC 20423-0001. In addition, one copy of each pleading must be served on Fritz R. Kahn, Suite 750 West, 1100 New York Avenue, N.W., Washington, DC 20005-3934.

¹ AERC will acquire the track, ties, and other improvements, and a permanent, irrevocable easement to operate on this line, but not the real estate.

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Decided: May 14, 1998.

By the Board, David M. Konschnik, Director, Office of Proceedings.

Vernon A. Williams,

Secretary.

[FR Doc. 98-13593 Filed 5-20-98; 8:45 am]

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DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Surface Transportation Board

[STB Docket No. AB-494X]

Akron Barberton Cluster Railway Company—Abandonment Exemption—in Summit County, OH

Akron Barberton Cluster Railway Company (ABCR) has filed a notice of exemption under 49 CFR 1152 Subpart F—*Exempt Abandonments* to abandon 4.14 miles of its line of railroad from Valuation Station 440 + 00 at Main Street to Valuation Station 658 + 63 at Seiberling Avenue, in Summit County, OH. The line traverses United States Postal Service Zip Codes 44301, 44305, 44300 and 44311.

ABCR has certified that: (1) no local traffic has moved over the line for at least 2 years; (2) any overhead traffic on the line can be rerouted over other lines; (3) no formal complaint filed by a user of rail service on the line (or by a state or local government entity acting on behalf of such user) regarding cessation of service over the line either is pending with the Surface Transportation Board (Board) or with any U.S. District Court or has been decided in favor of complainant within the 2-year period; and (4) the requirements at 49 CFR 1105.7 (environmental reports), 49 CFR 1105.8 (historic reports), 49 CFR 1105.11 (transmittal letter), 49 CFR 1105.12 (newspaper publication), and 49 CFR 1152.50(d)(1) (notice to governmental agencies) have been met.

As a condition to this exemption, any employee adversely affected by the abandonment shall be protected under *Oregon Short Line R. Co.—Abandonment—Goshen*, 360 I.C.C. 91 (1979). To address whether this condition adequately protects affected employees, a petition for partial revocation under 49 U.S.C. 10502(d) must be filed. Provided no formal expression of intent to file an offer of financial assistance (OFA) has been received, this exemption will be effective on June 20, 1998, unless stayed pending reconsideration. Petitions to stay that do not involve environmental

issues,¹ formal expressions of intent to file an OFA under 49 CFR 1152.27(c)(2),² and trail use/rail banking requests under 49 CFR 1152.29 must be filed by June 1, 1998. Petitions to reopen or requests for public use conditions under 49 CFR 1152.28 must be filed by June 10, 1998, with: Surface Transportation Board, Office of the Secretary, Case Control Unit, 1925 K Street, NW, Washington, DC 20423. A copy of any petition filed with the Board should be sent to applicant's representative: Christopher E. V. Quinn, Oppenheimer Wolff & Donnelly, Two Prudential Plaza, 45 Floor, 180 North Stetson Avenue, Chicago, IL 60601.

If the verified notice contains false or misleading information, the exemption is void *ab initio*.

ABCR has filed an environmental report which addresses the abandonment's effects, if any, on the environment and historic resources. The Section of Environmental Analysis (SEA) will issue an environmental assessment (EA) by May 26, 1998. Interested persons may obtain a copy of the EA by writing to SEA (Room 500, Surface Transportation Board, Washington, DC 20423) or by calling SEA, at (202) 565-1545. Comments on environmental and historic preservation matters must be filed within 15 days after the EA becomes available to the public.

Environmental, historic preservation, public use, or trail use/rail banking conditions will be imposed, where appropriate, in a subsequent decision.

Pursuant to the provisions of 49 CFR 1152.29(e)(2), ABCR shall file a notice of consummation with the Board to signify that it has exercised the authority granted and fully abandoned the line. If consummation has not been effected by ABCR's filing of a notice of consummation by May 21, 1999, and there are no legal or regulatory barriers to consummation, the authority to abandon will automatically expire.

Board decisions and notices are available on our website at "WWW.STB.DOT.GOV."

Decided: May 8, 1998.

¹ The Board will grant a stay if an informed decision on environmental issues (whether raised by a party or by the Board's Section of Environmental Analysis in its independent investigation) cannot be made before the exemption's effective date. See *Exemption of Out-of-Service Rail Lines*, 5 I.C.C.2d 377 (1989). Any request for a stay should be filed as soon as possible so that the Board may take appropriate action before the exemption's effective date.

² Each offer of financial assistance must be accompanied by the filing fee, which currently is set at \$1000. See 49 CFR 1002.2(f)(25).