

F. Environmental Justice Considerations

In accordance with Executive Order 12898 (Federal Actions to Address Environmental Justice in Minority and Low-Income Populations), OPS has considered the effects of the demonstration project on minority and low-income populations. As explained above, this project will not result in any significant environmental impacts, because Chevron will be complying with current applicable pipeline safety regulations. Residents along the segment will have the same level of protection that they presently have, regardless of the residents' income level or minority status. Therefore, the proposed project does not have any disproportionately high or adverse health or environmental effects on any minority or low-income populations near the demonstration facility.

G. Information Made Available to States, Local Governments, and Individuals

Since August 1997, OPS has used an Internet-accessible data system called the Pipeline Risk Management Information System (PRIMIS), available via the OPS Home Page at <http://ops.dot.gov>, to collect, update, and exchange information about all demonstration candidates, including Chevron. OPS has made the following documents publicly available through PRIMIS, and incorporates them by reference into this environmental assessment:

(1) "Demonstration Project Prospectus: Chevron Pipe Line Company", available by contacting Elizabeth M. Callsen at 202-366-4572. Includes a map of the demonstration segment. Purpose is to reach the public, local officials, and other stakeholders, and to solicit their input about the proposed project. The prospectus has been mailed to Local Emergency Planning Committees (LEPC) and other local safety officials, Regional Response Teams (RRT) representing other federal agencies, state pipeline safety officials, conference attendees, and members of public interest groups.

(2) "Chevron Pipe Line Company—Application for DOT-OPS Risk Management Demonstration Program".

(3) "OPS Project Review Team Evaluation of Chevron Demonstration Project".

(4) Notice of Intent to Approve Project, published concurrently with this environmental assessment.

OPS has provided additional information to the public about the Chevron project, and has requested public comment, using many different sources. OPS aired four electronic broadcasts (June 5, 1997; September 17, 1997; December 4, 1997; and March 26, 1998) reporting on demonstration project proposals (including Chevron's proposal). An earlier **Federal Register** notice (62 FR 53052; October 10, 1997) informed the public that Chevron was interested in participating in the Demonstration Program, provided general information about technical issues and risk control activities to be explored, and identified the geographic areas the demonstration project would traverse.

At a November 19, 1997, public meeting OPS hosted in Houston, TX, Chevron officials presented a summary of the proposed demonstration project and

answered questions from meeting attendees. (Portions of this meeting were broadcast on December 4, 1997 and March 26, 1998.)

No issues or concerns about Chevron's proposal have been raised.

H. Listing of the Agencies and Persons Consulted, Including Any Consultants

Persons/Agencies Directly Involved in Project Evaluation
 Stacey Gerard, OPS/U.S. Department of Transportation
 Tom Fortner, OPS/U.S. Department of Transportation
 Elizabeth Callsen, OPS/U.S. Department of Transportation
 Bruce Hansen, OPS/U.S. Department of Transportation
 Edward Ondak, OPS/U.S. Department of Transportation
 Joseph Robertson, OPS/Western Region/U.S. Department of Transportation
 Kent Evans, Utah Department of Commerce
 Dennis Lloyd, Washington Utilities and Transportation Commission
 Steve Rieger, Washington Utilities and Transportation Commission
 Robert Brown, Cycla Corporation (Consultant)
 Jim Quilliam, Cycla Corporation (Consultant)
 Persons/Agencies Receiving Briefings/Project Prospectus/Requests for Comment

Regional Response Team (RRT), Regions 8 & 10, representing the Environmental Protection Agency; the Coast Guard; the U.S. Departments of Interior, Commerce, Justice, Transportation, Agriculture, Defense, State, Energy, Labor; Health and Human Services; the Nuclear Regulatory Commission; the General Services Administration; and the Federal Emergency Management Agency (RRT Co-Chairs: Doug Skie, EPA Region 8; Cdr. Ed Stanton, Coast Guard 8th District; James Everts, EPA Region 10; and Capt. James Morris, Coast Guard 13th District).

I. Conclusion

Based on the above-described analysis of the proposed risk management demonstration project, OPS has determined that there are no significant impacts associated with this action.

[FR Doc. 98-34145 Filed 12-23-98; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4910-60-P

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Surface Transportation Board

[STB Docket No. AB-57 (Sub-No. 44X)]

Soo Line Railroad Company— Abandonment Exemption—in St. Louis County, MN

Soo Line Railroad Company (Soo) has filed a notice of exemption under 49 CFR 1152 Subpart F—*Exempt Abandonments* to abandon an approximately 1.18+/- mile portion of the West Duluth Line between milepost 464.25+/- and milepost 465.43+/- in West

Duluth, St. Louis, County, MN.¹ The line traverses United States Postal Service Zip Code 55802.

Soo has certified that: (1) No local traffic has moved over the line for at least 2 years; (2) any overhead traffic formerly handled 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 January 23, 1999, unless stayed pending reconsideration. Petitions to stay that do not involve environmental issues,² formal expressions of intent to file an OFA under 49 CFR 1152.27(c)(2),³ and trail use/rail banking requests under 49 CFR 1152.29 must be filed by January 4, 1999. Petitions to reopen or requests for public use conditions under 49 CFR 1152.28 must be filed by January 13,

¹ Pursuant to 49 CFR 1150.50(d)(2), the railroad must file a verified notice with the Board at least 50 days before the abandonment or discontinuance is to be consummated. The applicant in its verified notice, indicated a proposed consummation date of January 25, 1999. However, because the verified notice was filed on December 7, 1998, consummation may not take place prior to January 26, 1999. Applicant's representative has been contacted and has confirmed that the correct consummation date is on or after January 26, 1999.

² 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.

³ 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).

1999, 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: Larry D. Starns, Esq., Leonard, Street and Deinard Professional Association, 150 South Fifth Street, Suite 2300, Minneapolis, MN 55402.

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

Soo has filed an environmental report which addresses the abandonments effects, if any, on the environment and historic resources. The Section of Environmental Analysis (SEA) will issue an environmental assessment (EA) by December 29, 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), Soo 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 Soo's filing of a notice of consummation by December 24, 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: December 17, 1998.

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

Vernon A. Williams,
Secretary.

[FR Doc. 98-34022 Filed 12-23-98; 8:45 am]

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DEPARTMENT OF THE TREASURY

Customs Service

Proposed Collection; Comment Request; North American Free Trade Agreement Duty Deferral

ACTION: Notice and request for comments.

SUMMARY: As part of its continuing effort to reduce paperwork and respondent burden, Customs invites the general public and other Federal agencies to comment on an information collection requirement concerning the North American Free Trade Agreement Duty Deferral. This request for comment is being made pursuant to the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995 (Public Law 104-13; 44 U.S.C. 3505(c)(2)).

DATES: Written comments should be received on or before February 22, 1999, to be assured of consideration.

ADDRESSES: Direct all written comments to U.S. Customs Service, Information Services Group, Attn.: J. Edgar Nichols, 1300 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW, Room 3.2C, Washington, DC 20229.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Requests for additional information should be directed to U.S. Customs Service, Attn.: J. Edgar Nichols, 1300 Pennsylvania Avenue NW, Room 3.2C, Washington, DC 20229, Tel. (202) 927-1426.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: Customs invites the general public and other Federal agencies to comment on proposed and/or continuing information collections pursuant to the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995 (Public Law 104-13; 44 U.S.C. 3505(c)(2)). The comments should address: (1) whether the collection of information is necessary for the proper performance of the functions of the agency, including whether the information shall have practical utility; (b) the accuracy of the agency's estimates of the burden of the collection of information; (c) ways to enhance the quality, utility, and clarity of the information to be collected; (d)

ways to minimize the burden including the use of automated collection techniques or the use of other forms of information technology; and (e) estimates of capital or start-up costs and costs of operations, maintenance, and purchase of services to provide information. The comments that are submitted will be summarized and included in the Customs request for Office of Management and Budget (OMB) approval. All comments will become a matter of public record. In this document Customs is soliciting comments concerning the following information collection:

Title: North American Free Trade Agreement Duty Deferral.

OMB Number: 1515-0208.

Form Number: N/A.

Abstract: The North American Free Trade Agreement Duty Deferral Program prescribe the documentary and other requirements that must be followed when merchandise is withdrawn from a U.S. duty-deferral program for exportation to another NAFTA country.

Current Actions: There are no changes to the information collection. This submission is being submitted to extend the expiration date.

Type of Review: Extension (without change).

Affected Public: Businesses, Individuals, Institutions.

Estimated Number of Respondents: 1,783.

Estimated Time Per Respondent: 120 hours.

Estimated Total Annual Burden Hours: 250,000.

Estimated Total Annualized Cost on the Public: \$3,900,000.

Dated: December 17, 1998.

J. Edgar Nichols,

Team Leader, Information Services Group.

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