

found that most rates have declined since 1985. However, one category of rates examined by GAO—grain rates—diverged from the industry trends. According to the GAO report, the amount of grain traffic with comparatively high markups over variable cost increased notably between 1985 and 2004.

The Board will hold a public hearing, as a forum for interested persons to provide views and information about the market conditions that led to these observations by GAO and about grain transportation markets in general. Because U.S. grain producers compete in a broader North American, and global, marketplace, the Board also invites information regarding the interplay between the American and Canadian wheat markets, how the Canadian regulatory system differs from the American system, and what impact those differences might have on grain production in the United States.

*Date of Hearing.* The hearing will begin at 10 a.m. on Thursday, November 2, 2006, in the 7th floor hearing room at the Board's headquarters in Washington, DC, and will continue, with short breaks if necessary, until every person scheduled to speak has been heard.

*Notice of Intent To Participate.* Any person wishing to speak at the hearing should file with the Board a written notice of intent to participate, and should identify the party, the proposed speaker, the time requested, and topic(s) to be covered, as soon as possible, but no later than October 23, 2006.

*Testimony.* Each speaker should file with the Board his/her written testimony by October 30, 2006. Also, any interested person who wishes to submit a written statement without appearing at the November 2 hearing should file that statement by October 30, 2006.

*Board Releases and Live Audio Available Via the Internet.* Decisions and notices of the Board, including this notice, are available on the Board's Web site at <http://www.stb.dot.gov>. This hearing will be available on the Board's Web site by live audio streaming. To access the hearing, click on the "Live Audio" link under "Information Center" at the left side of the home page beginning at 10 a.m. on November 2, 2006.

This action will not significantly affect either the quality of the human environment or the conservation of energy resources.

Dated: October 11, 2006.

By the Board, Vernon A. Williams,  
Secretary.

**Vernon A. Williams,**  
Secretary.

[FR Doc. E6-17151 Filed 10-16-06; 8:45 am]

**BILLING CODE 4915-00-P**

## DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

### Surface Transportation Board

[STB Finance Docket No. 34927]

#### **Coast Belle Rail Corp. d/b/a Santa Maria Valley Railroad—Lease and Operation Exemption—Line of Coast Belle Rail, LLC**

Coast Belle Rail Corp. d/b/a Santa Maria Valley Railroad (CBRC), a noncarrier, has filed a verified notice of exemption under 49 CFR 1150.31 to operate approximately 8.74 miles of rail line owned by Coast Belle Rail, LLC. The line extends between milepost 3.26 near Guadalupe, CA, and milepost 9.0 at Santa Maria, CA, and includes the Airbase branch between milepost 9A at Santa Maria and milepost 12A. In the notice, CBRC also seeks to lease by assignment and operate 4.26 miles of rail line between milepost 0.0 and milepost 3.26, including the branch between milepost 3A at Betteravia Junction southeast and milepost 4A in Betteravia, CA, all located in Santa Barbara County, CA. The lease of this line of railroad, owned by the Union Pacific Railroad Company and presently leased to Santa Maria Valley Railroad Company, is being assigned to CBRC. CBRC will operate a total of 13.0 miles of rail line.

CBRC certifies that its projected annual revenues as a result of the transaction will not exceed those that would qualify it as a Class III rail carrier.

The transaction was scheduled to be consummated on or soon after September 26, 2006, the effective date of the exemption (7 days after the exemption was filed).

This transaction is related to a concurrently filed verified notice of exemption in STB Finance Docket No. 34923, *Coast Belle Rail, LLC—Acquisition Exemption—Santa Maria Valley Railroad Company*. In that proceeding, Coast Belle Rail, LLC seeks to acquire the 8.74 miles of rail line in Santa Barbara County, CA, that CBRC seeks to operate.

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. 34927, must be filed with the Surface Transportation Board, 1925 K Street, NW., Washington, DC 20423-0001. In addition, a copy of each pleading must be served on Sidney L. Strickland, Jr., Sidney Strickland and Associates, PLLC, 3050 K Street, NW., Suite 101, Washington, DC 20007.

Board decisions and notices are available on our Web site at <http://www.stb.dot.gov>.

Decided: October 6, 2006.

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

**Vernon A. Williams,**  
Secretary.

[FR Doc. E6-17144 Filed 10-13-06; 8:45 am]

**BILLING CODE 4915-01-P**

## DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

### Surface Transportation Board

[STB Finance Docket No. 34923]

#### **Coast Belle Rail, LLC—Acquisition Exemption—Santa Maria Valley Railroad Company**

Coast Belle Rail, LLC (CBRL), a noncarrier, has filed a verified notice of exemption under 49 CFR 1150.31 to acquire from the Santa Maria Valley Railroad Company (SMVRR) approximately 8.74 miles of rail line between milepost 3.26 near Guadalupe, CA, and milepost 9.0 at Santa Maria, CA, including the Airbase branch between milepost 9A at Santa Maria and milepost 12A, all located in Santa Barbara County, CA.

CBRL certifies that its projected annual revenues as a result of the transaction will not exceed those that would qualify it as a Class III rail carrier.

The transaction was expected to be consummated on or soon after September 26, 2006, the effective date of this exemption (7 days after the exemption was filed).

This transaction is related to a concurrently filed verified notice of exemption in STB Finance Docket No. 34927, *Coast Belle Rail Corp. d/b/a Santa Maria Valley Railroad—Lease and Operation Exemption—Line of Coast Belle Rail, LLC*. In that proceeding, Coast Belle Rail Corp. d/b/a Santa Maria Valley Railroad (CBRC) seeks to (1) operate the 8.74-mile line of railroad being acquired by CBRL, and (2) lease and operate an adjoining 4.26 miles of rail line owned by Union