

Alternatives under consideration include: (1) Taking no action; (2) improving existing facilities to increase their capacity to move goods, services, and people; (3) construction of a new crossing or crossings to increase capacity and provide redundancy; (4) expansion or implementation of non-highway modes of transportation (rail, marine, etc.); or (5) some combination of (2), (3), and (4). As part of the EIS, an Enhanced Scoping Information Package will be prepared. The Scoping Information Package will describe alternative locations for improving international crossing activity in southeast Michigan; inventory and map known resources; identify and map social, economic, and environmental constraints; and select practical alternatives. Letters describing the proposed action and soliciting comments will be sent to appropriate Federal, State, and local agencies, and to private organizations and citizens who have previously expressed, or are known to have, an interest in this proposal. Cooperating Federal agencies will be solicited.

A series of public meetings were held in Detroit, Michigan, Windsor, Ontario, and Sarnia, Ontario, on November 12–14, 2002. Other public meetings are planned as is a formal public hearing for the draft environmental impact statement. Public notice will be given of the time and place of the meetings and hearing. Meetings to review the enhanced Scoping Information Package will be held on dates yet to be determined.

To ensure that the full range of issues related to this proposed action are addressed and all significant issues identified, comments and suggestions are invited from all interested parties. Comments or questions concerning this proposed action should be directed to the FHWA at the address provided above.

(Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance Program Number 20.205, Highway Planning and Construction. The regulations implementing Executive Order 12372 regarding intergovernmental consultation of Federal programs and activities apply to this program).

Issued on: March 14, 2003.

James J. Steele,

Division Administrator, Lansing, Michigan.
[FR Doc. 03–6927 Filed 3–21–03; 8:45 am]

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DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Surface Transportation Board

[STB Docket No. AB–6 (Sub–No. 403X)]

The Burlington Northern and Santa Fe Railway Company—Abandonment Exemption—in Sedgwick County, KS

The Burlington Northern and Santa Fe Railway Company (BNSF) has filed a notice of exemption under 49 CFR part 1152 Subpart F—*Exempt Abandonments* to abandon its line of railroad, between milepost 494.22 and milepost 505.20 in and near Wichita, KS, and from milepost 515.23 to milepost 509.30 between Wichita and Valley Center, in Sedgwick County, KS, a total distance of 16.91 miles. The line traverses United States Postal Service Zip Codes 67147, 67204, 67206, 67208, 67214, 67219, and 67230.

BNSF 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 April 23, 2003, unless stayed pending reconsideration. Petitions to stay that do not involve environmental issues,¹ formal

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 (SEA) 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.

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 April 3, 2003. Petitions to reopen or requests for public use conditions under 49 CFR 1152.28 must be filed by April 14, 2003, with: Surface Transportation Board, 1925 K Street, NW., Washington, DC 20423–0001.

A copy of any petition filed with the Board should be sent to BNSF's representative: Michael Smith, Freeborn & Peters, 311 S. Wacker Drive, Suite 3000, Chicago, IL 60606–6677.

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

BNSF has filed an environmental report which addresses the abandonment's effects, if any, on the environment and historic resources. SEA will issue an environmental assessment (EA) by March 28, 2003. Interested persons may obtain a copy of the EA by writing to SEA (Room 500, Surface Transportation Board, Washington, DC 20423–0001) or by calling SEA, at (202) 565–1552. [Assistance for the hearing impaired is available through the Federal Information Relay Service (FIRS) at 1–800–877–8339.] 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), BNSF 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 BNSF's filing of a notice of consummation by March 24, 2004, 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 Web site at <http://www.stb.dot.gov>.

Decided: March 14, 2003.

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

Vernon A. Williams,
Secretary.

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² Each OFA must be accompanied by the filing fee, which currently is set at \$1,100. See 49 CFR 1002.2(f)(25).