

information must be provided in a letter signed by an authorized representative of the grantee or sub-grantee at least 30 days before the departure of the project director or as soon as it is known that the project director will be absent. The grant may be terminated if arrangements are not approved in advance by SJI.

G. Withdrawal of or Change in Project Director

If the project director relinquishes or expects to relinquish active direction of the project, SJI must be notified immediately. In such cases, if the grantee or sub-grantee wishes to terminate the project, SJI will forward procedural instructions upon notification of such intent. If the grantee wishes to continue the project under the direction of another individual, a statement of the candidate's qualifications should be sent to SJI for review and approval. The grant may be terminated if the qualifications of the proposed individual are not approved in advance by SJI.

H. Transferring or Contracting Out of Grant-Supported Activities

No principal activity of a grant-supported project may be transferred or contracted out to another organization without specific prior approval by SJI. All such arrangements must be formalized in a contract or other written agreement between the parties involved. Copies of the proposed contract or agreement must be submitted for prior approval to SJI at the earliest possible time. The contract or agreement must state, at a minimum, the activities to be performed, the time schedule, the policies and procedures to be followed, the dollar limitation of the agreement, and the cost principles to be followed in determining what costs, both direct and indirect, will be allowed. The contract or other written agreement must not affect the grantee's overall responsibility for the direction of the project and accountability to SJI.

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Jonathan D. Mattiello,

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SURFACE TRANSPORTATION BOARD

[Docket No. AB 646 (Sub-No. 1X)]

Atlantic and Western Railway, Limited Partnership—Abandonment Exemption—in Lee County, NC

Atlantic and Western Railway, Limited Partnership (ATW), has filed a verified notice of exemption under 49 CFR part 1152 subpart F—*Exempt Abandonments* to abandon a rail line between approximately milepost 2.71 and milepost 3.76 in Sanford, NC (the Line). There are no stations on the Line. The Line traverses U.S. Postal Service Zip Codes 27330 and 27332.

ATW has certified that: (1) No local traffic has moved over the Line since 2016; (2) because the Line is not a through line, there is no overhead traffic on the Line that would need to be rerouted; (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 a complainant within the two-year period; and (4) the requirements at 49 CFR 1105.7(b) and 1105.8(c) (notice of environmental and historic reports), 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 Railroad*—

Abandonment Portion Goshen Branch Between Firth & Ammon, in Bingham & Bonneville Counties, Idaho, 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,¹ this exemption will be effective on November 24, 2021, 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), and interim trail use/rail banking requests under 49 CFR 1152.29 must be filed by November 4, 2021.³ Petitions to reopen or requests for public use conditions under 49 CFR 1152.28 must be filed by November 15, 2021.

All pleadings, referring to Docket No. AB 646 (Sub-No. 1X), should be filed with the Surface Transportation Board via e-filing on the Board's website. In addition, a copy of each pleading must be served on ATW's representative, Eric M. Hocky, Clark Hill PLC, Two Commerce Square, 2001 Market Street, Suite 2620, Philadelphia, PA 19103.

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

ATW has filed a combined environmental and historic report that addresses the potential effects, if any, of the abandonment on the environment and historic resources. OEA will issue a Draft Environmental Assessment (Draft EA) by October 29, 2021. The Draft EA will be available to interested persons on the Board's website, by writing to OEA, or by calling OEA at (202) 245-0294. Assistance for the hearing impaired is available through the Federal Relay Service at (800) 877-8339. Comments on environmental and historic preservation matters must be filed within 15 days after the Draft EA becomes available to the public.

¹ Persons interested in submitting an OFA must first file a formal expression of intent to file an offer, indicating the type of financial assistance they wish to provide (*i.e.*, subsidy or purchase) and demonstrating that they are preliminarily financially responsible. See 49 CFR 1152.27(c)(2)(i).

² The Board will grant a stay if an informed decision on environmental issues (whether raised by a party or by the Board's Office of Environmental Analysis (OEA) in its independent investigation) cannot be made before the exemption's effective date. See *Exemption of Out-of-Serv. 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 Filing fees for OFAs and trail use requests can be found at 49 CFR 1002.2(f)(25) and (27), respectively.

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), ATW 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 ATW's filing of a notice of consummation by October 25, 2022, and there are no legal or regulatory barriers to consummation, the authority to abandon will automatically expire.

Board decisions and notices are available at www.stb.gov.

Decided: October 19, 2021.

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

Brendetta Jones,
Clearance Clerk.

[FR Doc. 2021-23162 Filed 10-22-21; 8:45 am]

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OFFICE OF THE UNITED STATES TRADE REPRESENTATIVE

[Docket Number USTR-2021-0018]

Applications for Inclusion on the Binational Panels Roster Under the United States-Mexico-Canada Agreement

AGENCY: Office of the United States Trade Representative.

ACTION: Invitation for applications.

SUMMARY: The United States-Mexico-Canada Agreement (USMCA) provides for the establishment of a roster of individuals to serve on binational panels convened to review final determinations in antidumping or countervailing duty (AD/CVD) proceedings and amendments to AD/CVD statutes of a USMCA Party. The United States annually renews its selections for the roster. The Office of the United States Trade Representative (USTR) invites applications from eligible individuals wishing to be included on the roster for the period April 1, 2022, through March 31, 2023.

DATES: USTR must receive your application by November 22, 2021.

ADDRESSES: You should submit your application through the Federal eRulemaking Portal: <http://www.regulations.gov> (regs.gov), using docket number USTR-2021-0018. Follow the instructions for submitting comments below.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Philip Butler, Associate General Counsel, Philip.A.Butler@ustr.eop.gov, (202) 395-5804.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

A. Binational Panel AD/CVD Reviews Under the USMCA

Article 10.12 of the USMCA provides that a party involved in an AD/CVD proceeding may obtain review by a binational panel of a final AD/CVD determination of one USMCA Party with respect to the products of another USMCA Party. Binational panels decide whether AD/CVD determinations are in accordance with the domestic laws of the importing USMCA Party using the standard of review that would have been applied by a domestic court of the importing USMCA Party. A panel may uphold the AD/CVD determination, or may remand it to the national administering authority for action not inconsistent with the panel's decision. Panel decisions may be reviewed in specific circumstances by a three-member extraordinary challenge committee, selected from a separate roster composed of 15 current or former judges.

Article 10.11 of the USMCA provides that a USMCA Party may refer an amendment to the AD/CVD statutes of another USMCA Party to a binational panel for a declaratory opinion as to whether the amendment is inconsistent with the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT), the GATT Antidumping or Subsidies Codes, successor agreements, or the object and purpose of the USMCA with regard to the establishment of fair and predictable conditions for the liberalization of trade. If the panel finds that the amendment is inconsistent, the two USMCA Parties must consult and seek to achieve a mutually satisfactory solution.

B. Roster and Composition of Binational Panels

Annex 10-B.1 of the USMCA provides for the maintenance of a roster of at least 75 individuals for service on Chapter 10 binational panels, with each USMCA Party selecting at least 25 individuals. A separate five-person panel is formed for each review of a final AD/CVD determination or statutory amendment. To form a panel, the two USMCA Parties involved each appoint two panelists, normally by drawing upon individuals from the roster. If the Parties cannot agree upon the fifth panelist, one of the Parties, decided by lot, selects the fifth panelist from the roster. The majority of individuals on each panel must consist of lawyers in good standing, and the chair of the panel must be a lawyer.

When there is a request to establish a panel, roster members from the two involved USMCA Parties will complete

a disclosure form that is used to identify possible conflicts of interest or appearances thereof. The disclosure form requests information regarding financial interests and affiliations, including information regarding the identity of clients of the roster member and, if applicable, clients of the roster member's firm.

C. Criteria for Eligibility for Inclusion on Roster

The United States bases the selection of individuals for inclusion on the Chapter 10 roster on the eligibility criteria set out in Annex 10-B.1 of the USMCA. Annex 10-B.1 provides that Chapter 10 roster members must be citizens of a USMCA Party, must be of good character and of high standing and repute, and are to be chosen strictly on the basis of their objectivity, reliability, sound judgment, and general familiarity with international trade law. Aside from judges, roster members may not be affiliated with the governments of any of the three USMCA Parties. Annex 10-B.1 also provides that, to the fullest extent practicable, the roster shall include judges and former judges.

USTR is committed to diversity, equity, inclusion, and accessibility, and encourages all qualified individuals to apply.

D. Adherence to the USMCA Code of Conduct for Binational Panelists

The Code of Conduct under Chapter 10 and Chapter 31 (Dispute Settlement) (see <https://can-mex-usa-sec.org/secretariat/agreement-accord-acuerdo/umca-aceum-tmec/code-code-codigo.aspx?lang=eng>), which was established pursuant to Article 10.17 of the USMCA, provides that current and former Chapter 10 roster members "shall avoid impropriety and the appearance of impropriety and shall observe high standards of conduct so that the integrity and impartiality of the dispute settlement process is preserved." The Code of Conduct also provides that candidates to serve on Chapter 10 panels, as well as those who ultimately are selected to serve as panelists, have an obligation to "disclose any interest, relationship or matter that is likely to affect [their] impartiality or independence, or that might reasonably create an appearance of impropriety or an apprehension of bias." Annex 10-B.1 of the USMCA provides that roster members may engage in other business while serving as panelists, subject to the Code of Conduct and provided that such business does not interfere with the performance of the panelist's duties. In particular, Annex 10-B.1 states that