

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Chi D. Tran, Program Administrator, Office of the Legal Adviser, U.S. Department of State (telephone: 202-632-6471; email: section2459@state.gov). The mailing address is U.S. Department of State, L/PD, 2200 C Street NW (SA-5), Suite 5H03, Washington, DC 20522-0505.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The foregoing determinations were made pursuant to the authority vested in me by the Act of October 19, 1965 (79 Stat. 985; 22 U.S.C. 2459), E.O. 12047 of March 27, 1978, the Foreign Affairs Reform and Restructuring Act of 1998 (112 Stat. 2681, *et seq.*; 22 U.S.C. 6501 note, *et seq.*), Delegation of Authority No. 234 of October 1, 1999, and Delegation of Authority No. 236-3 of August 28, 2000.

Matthew R. Lussenhop,

Acting Assistant Secretary, Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs, Department of State.

[FR Doc. 2021-24536 Filed 11-9-21; 8:45 am]

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SURFACE TRANSPORTATION BOARD

[Docket No. AB 979 (Sub-No. 3X)]

Connecticut Southern Railroad, Inc.— Abandonment Exemption—in Hartford County, Conn.

Connecticut Southern Railroad, Inc. (CSO), has filed a verified notice of exemption under 49 CFR part 1152 subpart F—*Exemption Abandonments* to abandon a rail line between approximately milepost 8.33 (Station 5730+04) and milepost 9.40 (Station 5673+42) in Hartford County, Conn. (the Line). There are no stations on the Line. The Line traverses U.S. Postal Service Zip Code 06042.

CSO has certified that: (1) No local traffic has moved over the Line since approximately July 2016; (2) because the Line is not a “through line,” there is no overhead traffic that would need to be rerouted; (3) no formal complaint filed by a user of rail service on the Line (or by state or local government on behalf of such user) regarding cessation of service over the Line either is pending with the Surface Transportation Board (Board) 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 publications), and 49 CFR 1152.50(d)(1) (notice to government 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 December 10, 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 request under 49 CFR 1152.29 must be filed by November 22, 2021.³ Petitions to reopen or requests for public use conditions under 49 CFR 1152.28 must be filed by November 30, 2021.

All pleadings, referring to Docket No. AB 979 (Sub-No. 3X), 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 CSO’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.

CSO 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 November 15, 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 or historic preservation matters must be

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.

filed within 15 days after the Draft 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), CSO 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 CSO’s filing of a notice of consummation by November 10, 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: November 5, 2021.

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

Eden Besera,

Clearance Clerk.

[FR Doc. 2021-24568 Filed 11-9-21; 8:45 am]

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SURFACE TRANSPORTATION BOARD

[Docket No. FD 36550]

Missouri Eastern Railroad, LLC— Acquisition and Change of Operator Exemption—V and S Railway, LLC, and Central Midland Railway Company

Missouri Eastern Railroad, LLC (MER), a noncarrier, has filed a verified notice of exemption under 49 CFR 1150.31 to acquire: (1) From V and S Railway, LLC (V&S), an approximately 42.89-mile rail line between milepost 19.0 near Vigus, Mo., and milepost 61.89 near Union, Mo., (the Line); and (2) incidental overhead trackage rights over a rail line owned by Union Pacific Railroad Company between milepost 19.0 near Vigus and milepost 10.3 at Rock Island Junction, Mo. (the TR Segment).

According to the verified notice, MER and V&S are in the process of finalizing the terms of an asset purchase agreement (the Agreement), pursuant to which MER will assume ownership of the Line. The verified notice indicates that Central Midland Railway Company (Central Midland) currently operates the Line (and also leases the TR Segment), and that, in light of MER’s purchase of the Line, Central Midland has agreed that MER will replace it as the common carrier operator on the Line, thus effectuating a change of operator. MER states that it plans to replace Central Midland as the common carrier operator on the Line on or after January 1, 2022,