

#EO-2797

**SURFACE TRANSPORTATION BOARD  
OFFICE OF ENVIRONMENTAL ANALYSIS**

**FINAL ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT**

ENVIRONMENTAL RECOMMENDATIONS IN  
DOCKET NO. AB 6 (SUB-NO. 492X)

June 3, 2016

**ABANDONMENT TYPE**

The time for comments on the Environmental Assessment (EA) has expired in this:

☒ Notice of Exemption    ☐ Petition for Exemption    ☐ Regulated Abandonment

☒ **NO NEW COMMENTS WERE RECEIVED**

☐ **NEW COMMENTS WERE RECEIVED**

In this proceeding, BNSF Railway Company (BNSF) filed a notice under 49 C.F.R. § 1152.50 seeking exemption from the requirements of 49 U.S.C. § 10903 in connection with the abandonment of 1.43 miles of rail line located between milepost 14.57 and milepost 16.0 in Belmore, Thurston County, Washington. The Office of Environmental Analysis (OEA) served an Environmental Assessment (EA) for this proceeding on May 16, 2016 for public review and comment. In the EA, OEA recommended two environmental conditions and concluded that the proposed action would not significantly impact the quality of the human environment.

**Conclusion**

The EA comment period has ended. Accordingly, OEA recommends that the two conditions recommended in the EA should be imposed upon any decision granting abandonment authority. The conditions are:

1. Pursuant to Section 7 of the Endangered Species Act (16 U.S.C. §1535), BNSF Railway Company (BNSF) shall consult with the Board's Office of Environmental Analysis (OEA) and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to determine if the proposed abandonment could adversely impact any federally listed species, candidate species, or designated critical habitats within the project area. If any such species are located within the right-of-way, USFWS may recommend avoidance and impact mitigation measures in order to develop appropriate mitigation measures, if necessary. BNSF may not file its consummation notice or initiate any salvage activities related to abandonment (including removal of tracks and ties) until the Section 7 consultation process is complete and the Board has removed this condition.

2. In the event that any unanticipated archaeological sites, human remains, funerary items or associated artifacts are discovered during the railroad's salvage activities, BNSF shall immediately cease all work and notify OEA and the Washington State Department of Archaeology and Historic Preservation (State Historic Preservation Office or SHPO), pursuant to 36 C.F.R. § 800.13(b). OEA shall then consult with the SHPO, BNSF, and other consulting parties, if any, to determine whether appropriate mitigation measures are necessary.

OEA concludes that if the above conditions are imposed, the proposed action would not significantly affect the quality of the human environment.

OEA CONTACT:     Diana Wood   
                             202-245-0302  
                             [woodd@stb.dot.gov](mailto:woodd@stb.dot.gov)

Distribution:        Office of Proceedings  
                             OEA Chron  
                             ECT