

POST ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

ENVIRONMENTAL RECOMMENDATIONS IN
STB DOCKET NO. AB-570 (Sub-No. 3X)

September 2, 2009

ABANDONMENT TYPE

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

(X) Notice of Exemption () Petition for Exemption () Regulated Abandonment

(X) NO NEW COMMENTS WERE RECEIVED

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SEA served an Environmental Assessment (EA) for this proceeding on August 14, 2009 for public review and comment. In the EA, SEA recommended three environmental conditions and concluded that the proposed action would not significantly impact the quality of the human environment. No additional comments were received during the comment period.

Conclusions

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

1. The Palouse River & Coulee City Railroad, Inc. shall consult with the National Geodetic Survey (NGS) and notify NGS at least 90 days prior to beginning salvage activities that will disturb or destroy any geodetic station markers.
2. Pursuant to Section 7 of the Endangered Species Act, the Palouse River & Coulee City Railroad, Inc. (PRCC) shall retain a botanist to conduct a survey of the project area and shall submit the results of that survey to the Board's Section of Environmental Analysis (SEA). If Spalding's catchfly (*Silene spaldingii*) is found in the project area, SEA shall initiate Section 7 consultations with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to determine whether the proposed rail line abandonment is likely to adversely affect the species and, if so, to develop appropriate mitigation measures.
3. Prior to commencement of any salvage activities, the Palouse River & Coulee City Railroad, Inc. shall develop a hazardous waste contingency plan and consult with the Idaho Department of Environmental Quality regarding salvaging and abandonment procedures. The railroad shall report the results of these consultations in writing to the Board's Section of Environmental Analysis prior to the onset of salvage operations.

If the above conditions are imposed, SEA believes that the proposed action will not significantly affect the quality of the human environment.

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