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SERVICE DATE – JANUARY 3, 2014

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DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Surface Transportation Board

[Docket No. AB 303 (Sub-No. 43X)]

Wisconsin Central Ltd.—Abandonment Exemption—in Barron County, Wis.

On December 16, 2013, Wisconsin Central Ltd. (WCL)¹ filed with the Surface Transportation Board (Board) a petition under 49 U.S.C. § 10502 for exemption from the prior approval requirements of 49 U.S.C. § 10903 to abandon a 0.80-mile line of railroad between mileposts 55.2 and 56.0 in Rice Lake, Barron County, Wis. (the Line).² The Line traverses United States Postal Service Zip Code 54868.

WCL states that, based on information in its possession, the Line does not contain federally granted rights-of-way. Any documentation in WCL's possession will be made available promptly to those requesting it.

¹ WCL is a wholly owned indirect subsidiary of Canadian National Railway Company.

² WCL states that the Line is a stub-ended line that begins at a connection with its mainline at milepost 55.2 and ends at milepost 56.0. The track north of milepost 56.0 was approved for abandonment in Wisconsin Central Ltd.—Abandonment Exemption—in Douglas, Washburn, & Barron Counties, Wis., AB 303 (Sub-No. 12X) (ICC served Apr. 20, 1993). According to WCL, the abandoned line in that proceeding is now a trail, except for a small portion immediately north of milepost 56.0, on which abandonment was consummated, but the track remains in place to allow for headroom for switching purposes.

The interest of railroad employees will be protected by the conditions set forth in Oregon Short Line Railroad—Abandonment Portion Goshen Branch Between Firth & Ammon, In Bingham & Bonneville Counties, Idaho, 360 I.C.C. 91 (1979).

By issuance of this notice, the Board is instituting an exemption proceeding pursuant to 49 U.S.C. § 10502(b). A final decision will be issued by April 4, 2014.

Any offer of financial assistance (OFA) under 49 C.F.R. § 1152.27(b)(2) will be due no later than 10 days after service of a decision granting the petition for exemption. Each OFA must be accompanied by a \$1,600 filing fee. See 49 C.F.R. § 1002.2(f)(25).

All interested persons should be aware that, following abandonment of rail service and salvage of the Line, the Line may be suitable for other public use, including interim trail use. Any request for a public use condition under 49 C.F.R. § 1152.28 or for trail use/rail banking under 49 C.F.R. § 1152.29 will be due no later than January 23, 2014. Each trail use request must be accompanied by a \$250 filing fee. See 49 C.F.R. § 1002.2(f)(27).

All filings in response to this notice must refer to Docket No. AB 303 (Sub-No. 43X) and must be sent to: (1) Surface Transportation Board, 395 E Street, S.W., Washington, DC 20423-0001; and (2) Audrey L. Brodrick, Fletcher & Sippel LLC, 29 North Wacker Drive, Suite 920, Chicago, IL 60606. Replies to the petition are due on or before January 23, 2014.

Persons seeking further information concerning abandonment procedures may contact the Board's Office of Public Assistance, Governmental Affairs and Compliance

at (202) 245-0238 or refer to the full abandonment or discontinuance regulations at 49 C.F.R. pt. 1152. Questions concerning environmental issues may be directed to the Board's Office of Environmental Analysis (OEA) at (202) 245-0305. [Assistance for the hearing impaired is available through the Federal Information Relay Service (FIRS) at 1-800-877-8339.]

An environmental assessment (EA) (or environmental impact statement (EIS), if necessary) prepared by OEA will be served upon all parties of record and upon any agencies or other persons who commented during its preparation. Other interested persons may contact OEA to obtain a copy of the EA (or EIS). EAs in these abandonment proceedings normally will be made available within 60 days of the filing of the petition. The deadline for submission of comments on the EA generally will be within 30 days of its service.

Board decisions and notices are available on our website at
“WWW.STB.DOT.GOV.”

Decided: December 30, 2013.

By the Board, Rachel D. Campbell, Director, Office of Proceedings.