



Oregon

Kate Brown, Governor

Department of Transportation

Rail and Public Transit Division

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February 22, 2019

BY ELECTRONIC FILING

The Honorable Cynthia T. Brown

Chief, Section of Administration, Office of Proceedings

Surface Transportation Board

395 E Street, S.W.

Washington, D.C. 20423-0001

247197

ENTERED

Office of Proceedings

February 25, 2019

Part of

Public Record

Re: Docket No. AB-570 (Sub-No. 4X), Palouse River & Coulee City Railroad, L.L.C. – Discontinuance Exemption – In Walla Walla County, Washington and Umatilla County, Oregon

Dear Ms. Brown:

In the above referenced docket, the Palouse River & Coulee City Railroad, LLC (PCC) filed for exemption from the prior approval requirements of 49 U.S.C. § 10903 to discontinue its lease operations over approximately 55.56 miles of rail line owned by Union Pacific Railroad Company (UP) in Washington and Oregon (the Line). Approximately 21.2 miles of the Line are in Umatilla County, Oregon and four of the Line's 12 local customers have facilities along the Oregon segment.

The Oregon Department of Transportation (ODOT) notes that PCC, and its predecessor Blue Mountain Railroad, have provided common carrier railroad service to this region for over 26 years. In its petition PCC asserts that upon discontinuance the Line will continue to receive service from either Union Pacific or a new operator.

As the transportation agency for the State of Oregon, ODOT has a strong interest in preservation of railroad service, especially in rural areas. ODOT does not oppose PCC's discontinuance petition but asks the Board ensure there is a service succession plan to be implemented upon retirement of PCC so that the common carrier obligation is not extinguished.

Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Respectfully submitted,

H. A. (Hal) Gard, Administrator

ODOT Rail and Public Transit Division

cc:

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