

SURFACE TRANSPORTATION BOARD
OFFICE OF ENVIRONMENTAL ANALYSIS

SUPPLEMENTAL FINAL ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

ENVIRONMENTAL RECOMMENDATIONS IN
DOCKET NO. AB 290 (Sub-No. 331X)

February 4, 2015

RECOMMENDATION: Remove Section 106 Condition

In this proceeding, Norfolk Southern Railway Company (NS) filed a notice of exemption to abandon a 4.92-mile line of railroad between mileposts 4.80 M and 9.72 M in Henry and Spalding Counties, Georgia. Because the Section 106 process of the National Historic Preservation Act, 16 U.S.C. § 470f (NHPA), had not been completed at the time of the Board's February 1, 2012 decision, the Board imposed a condition requiring NS to: (a) retain its interest in, and take no steps to alter, the historic integrity of trestle bridge located at milepost 4.90 M that may be eligible for listing or are listed in the National Register of Historic Places until the Section 106 process of the NHPA has been completed; (b) report back to the Board's Office of Environmental Analysis (OEA) regarding any consultations with the State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) and the public; and (c) not file a consummation notice or initiate any salvage activities related to abandonment (including removal of tracks and ties) until the Section 106 process has been completed and the Board has removed the condition.

New Comments On the Abandonment

Section 106 Condition

On February 3, 2015, NS forwarded correspondence from the Georgia Department of Natural Resources, Historic Preservation Division, stating its position that the permanent archival record of the trestle bridge described in the Board's February 1, 2012 Decision is adequate mitigation for the adverse effects associated with abandonment of the line. The correspondence from the Georgia SHPO concludes the final step of the Section 106 process. Accordingly, the Board has satisfied its responsibilities under Section 106 of the NHPA in this proceeding, and OEA is recommending that the Board remove the Section 106 condition.

Conclusions

For the reasons stated above, OEA recommends that the Board remove the Section 106 condition that was imposed in the February 1, 2012 decision. If this

condition is removed, OEA believes that the proposed action will not significantly affect the quality of the human environment.

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