

**SURFACE TRANSPORTATION BOARD
OFFICE OF ENVIRONMENTAL ANALYSIS**

EO-2057
D4W

FINAL ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

ENVIRONMENTAL RECOMMENDATIONS IN
DOCKET NO. AB 290 (Sub-No. 335X)
AND
DOCKET NO. AB 290 (SUB-NO. 340X)

March 29, 2013

ABANDONMENT TYPE

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

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

() **NO NEW COMMENTS WERE RECEIVED**

(X) **NEW COMMENTS WERE RECEIVED**

In this proceeding, the Alabama Great Southern Railroad Company and the Tennessee, Alabama and Georgia Railway Company (jointly Applicants) filed a notice under 49 C.F.R. § 1152.52 seeking exemption from the requirements of 49 U.S.C. § 10903 to abandon approximately 4.25 miles of interconnected rail line located in Gadsden, Etowah County, Alabama. The Office of Environmental Analysis (OEA) served an Environmental Assessment (EA) for this proceeding on March 8, 2013 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.

OEA received correspondence from one agency during the 15-day comment period. The comment is summarized below. In this Final EA, OEA is adding a new consultation condition that would require Applicants to consult with the U.S. Department of Commerce, National Geodetic Service (NGS) prior to initiating salvage operations.

Comments on the EA

By email dated March 22, 2013, NGS commented that there is one geodetic marker in the area of the proposed abandonment. Therefore, OEA is recommending a new condition that requires Applicants to notify NGS at least 90 days prior to beginning salvage activities that will disturb or destroy this geodetic station marker.

Conclusions

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

1. The Alabama Great Southern Railroad Company and the Tennessee, Alabama and Georgia Railway Company (collectively, Applicants) railroad shall, prior to commencement of any salvage activities, consult with Alabama Department of Environmental Management and the City of Gadsden regarding their stormwater requirements and shall comply with their reasonable requirements.
2. Applicants shall retain its interest in and take no steps to alter the historic integrity of all historic properties including sites, buildings, structures, and objects within the project right-of-way (the Area of Potential Effect) that are eligible for listing or listed in the National Register of Historic Places until the Section 106 process of the National Historic Preservation Act, 16 U.S.C. 470f, has been completed. Applicants shall report back to the Office of Environmental Analysis (OEA) regarding any consultations with the State Historic Preservation Office and the public. Applicants may not file its 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 this condition.
3. Applicants shall consult with the U.S. Department of Commerce, 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.

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

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03/27/2013 02:26 PM

From: Simon Monroe <simon.monroe@noaa.gov>
To: Kearston.StDennis@nscorp.com
Cc: Surface Transportation Board <sea@stb.dot.gov>, Lucy Hall <Lucy.Hall@noaa.gov>, Simon Monroe <Simon.Monroe@noaa.gov>
Date: 03/22/2013 04:22 PM
Subject: NGS Response, STB Docket AB-290 (SUB NO. 335X) & STB Docket No. AB-290 (Sub-No. 340X)

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