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SERVICE DATE – JULY 28, 2020

DO

FR-4915-01-P

SURFACE TRANSPORTATION BOARD

[Docket No. AB 303 (Sub-No. 57X)]

Wisconsin Central Ltd.—Discontinuance of Service Exemption—in Barron County, Wis.

Wisconsin Central Ltd. (WCL) has filed a verified notice of exemption under 49 C.F.R. part 1152 subpart F—Exempt Abandonments and Discontinuances of Service to discontinue service over an approximately 4.52-mile portion of WCL's Barron Subdivision between milepost 85.40 at Poskin (immediately east of 9¾ Street) and extending west to milepost 80.88 at Almena (approximately 1.0 mile southwest of the railroad crossing at Lightning Creek), all in Barron County, Wis. (the Line). The Line traverses U.S. Postal Service Zip Codes 54805 and 54889.

WCL has certified that: (1) no local traffic has moved over the Line for at least two years; (2) overhead traffic (of which none exists) could be rerouted over other lines; (3) no formal complaint filed by a user of rail service on the Line (or a state or local government entity acting on behalf of such user) regarding cessation of service over the Line either is pending with the Surface Transportation Board (Board) or any U.S. District Court or has been decided in favor of a complainant within the two-year period; and (4) the requirements at 49 C.F.R. § 1105.12 (newspaper publication) and 49 C.F.R. § 1152.50(d)(1) (notice to governmental agencies) have been met.

As a condition to this exemption, any employee adversely affected by the discontinuance of service shall be protected under Oregon Short Line Railroad—

Abandonment Portion Goshen Branch Between Firth & Ammon, in Bingham & Bonneville Counties, Idaho, 360 I.C.C. 91 (1979). To address whether this condition adequately protects affected employees, a petition for partial revocation under 49 U.S.C. § 10502(d) must be filed.

Provided no formal expression of intent to file an offer of financial assistance (OFA)¹ to subsidize continued rail service has been received, this exemption will be effective on August 27, 2020, unless stayed pending reconsideration. Petitions to stay that do not involve environmental issues and formal expressions of intent to file an OFA to subsidize continued rail service under 49 C.F.R. § 1152.27(c)(2)² must be filed by August 7, 2020.³ Petitions for reconsideration must be filed by August 17, 2020, with the Surface Transportation Board, 395 E Street, S.W., Washington, DC 20423-0001.

A copy of any petition filed with Board should be sent to WCL's representative, Bradon J. Smith, Fletcher & Sippel LLC, 29 N. Wacker Drive, Suite 800, Chicago, IL 60606.

¹ Persons interested in submitting an OFA to subsidize continued rail service must first file a formal expression of intent to file an offer, indicating the intent to file an OFA for subsidy and demonstrating that they are preliminarily financially responsible. See 49 C.F.R. § 1152.27(c)(2)(i).

² The filing fee for OFAs can be found at 49 C.F.R. § 1002.2(f)(25).

³ Because this is a discontinuance proceeding and not an abandonment, interim trail use/rail banking and public use conditions are not appropriate. Because there will be an environmental review during abandonment, this discontinuance does not require environmental review.

If the verified notice contains false or misleading information, the exemption is void ab initio.

Board decisions and notices are available at www.stb.gov.

Decided: July 23, 2020.

By the Board, Scott M. Zimmerman, Acting Director, Office of Proceedings.