

33085

SERVICE DATE - OCTOBER 21, 2002

SURFACE TRANSPORTATION BOARD

WASHINGTON, DC 20423

ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

AB - 55 (SUB-NO. 623X)

**CSX TRANSPORTATION, INC. ABANDONMENT EXEMPTION IN PUTNAM
COUNTY, INDIANA**

BACKGROUND

CSX Transportation Company (CSX) filed a notice of exemption pursuant to the Board's regulations at 49 CFR 1152.50. The notice of exemption is for abandonment of its line of railroad lying between railroad Milepost OOQ-189.18 (north side of Grant Street) and the end of track at railroad Milepost OOQ-189.65, a distance of approximately 0.47 miles, which traverses through United States Postal Service Zip Code 46120 in Cloverdale, Putnam county, Indiana.¹ A map depicting the rail line in relationship to the area served is appended to the report. If the exemption becomes effective, the railroad will be able to salvage track, ties and other railroad appurtenances, and to dispose of the right-of-way.

ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW

The railroad has submitted an environmental report that concludes the quality of the human environment will not be affected significantly as a result of the abandonment or any post-abandonment activities, including salvage and disposition of the right-of-way. The railroad has served the environmental report on a number of appropriate Federal, state, and local agencies as required by the Board's environmental rules at 49 CFR 1105.7(b). We have investigated the record in this proceeding. Also, we have contacted appropriate agencies and individuals to verify the railroad's report and to obtain additional information and comments regarding the potential environmental effects of the proposed abandonment: Department of Transportation, National Park Services, National Geodetic Survey, Department of Natural Resources, Division of Historic Preservation and Archaeology, National Park Service, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, U.S. Department of Agriculture, and Coastal Zone Management.

¹ CSX states that at the time all requisite notifications were distributed, CSX intended to abandon .58 miles (from Milepost OOQ189.07 to Milepost OOQ189.65). Prior to this filing, however, CSX shortened the abandonment limits to meet the needs of an existing customer.

LAND USE

In a letter dated September 4, 2002, the City of Cloverdale Planning Commission stated that they would like to see the abandonment limits expanded to encompass the active track through Fulton Street instead of Grant Street. CSX states that it needs the additional track to meet the service needs of an existing customer and has excluded this section from the abandonment notice. Based on the fact that the line has not generated any traffic during the past two years, CSX believes the proposed action is not inconsistent with local land use plans.

TRANSPORTATION

Traffic has not moved over this line for two years. There will be no diversion of rail traffic to motor carriage.

BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (CORPS) advised that it does not appear that a Department of Army permit would be needed since the proposed line does not include or contain any water of the United States. The US Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) has indicated that the proposed project would have no significant effect on wetlands and will not affect any Federally endangered species.

HISTORIC

The Indiana Division of Historic Preservation and Archaeology has not completed its review of the proposed abandonment. Therefore, we recommend that a condition be placed on any decision granting abandonment authority, requiring the CSX to retain its interest in the line until completion of the Section 106 process of the National Historic Preservation Act, 16 U.S.C. 470f.

If there are any planned activities which could disturb or destroy any geodetic station markers discovered on the line, the National Geodetic Survey (NGS) should be contacted, NGS requires not less than 90 days' notification in advance of such activities in order to plan for their relocation. Two geodetic station markers, B 63 and S 51, have been identified that may be affected by the proposed abandonment.

CONDITIONS

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CONCLUSIONS

Based on the information provided from all sources to date and subject to the recommended condition, we conclude that, as currently proposed, abandonment of the line will not significantly affect the quality of the human environment. Therefore, the environmental impact statement process is unnecessary.

Alternatives to the proposed abandonment would include denial (and, therefore, no change in operations), discontinuance of service without abandonment and continued operation by another operator. In any of these cases, the existing quality of the human environment and energy consumption should not be affected.

PUBLIC USE

If abandonment and salvage of the rail line does take place, the right-of-way may be suitable for other public use. A request containing the requisite four-part showing for imposition of a public use condition (49 CFR 1152.28) must be filed with the Board and served on the railroad within the time specified in the Federal Register notice.

TRAILS USE

A request for a notice of interim trail use (NITU) is due to the Board, with a copy to the railroad, within 10 days of publication of the notice of exemption in the Federal Register. However, the Board will accept late-filed requests as long as it retains jurisdiction to do so. This request must comply with the Board's rules for use of rights-of-way as trails (49 CFR 1152.29).

PUBLIC ASSISTANCE

The Board's Office of Public Services (OPS) responds to questions regarding interim trail use, public use, and other reuse alternatives. You may contact OPS directly at (202) 565-1592, or mail inquiries to Surface Transportation Board, Office of Public Services, Washington, DC 20423.

ENVIRONMENTAL COMMENTS

If you wish to file comments regarding this environmental assessment, send an **original and two copies** of your comments to the Surface Transportation Board, Case Control Unit, Washington, DC 20423, to the attention of Phillis Johnson-Ball, who prepared this environmental assessment. **Please refer to Docket No. AB- 55 (Sub-No. 623X) in all correspondence addressed to the Board.** If

you have questions regarding this environmental assessment, you should contact Phillis Johnson-Ball at (202) 565-1530.

Date made available to the public: October 21, 2002.

Comment due date: November 5, 2002.

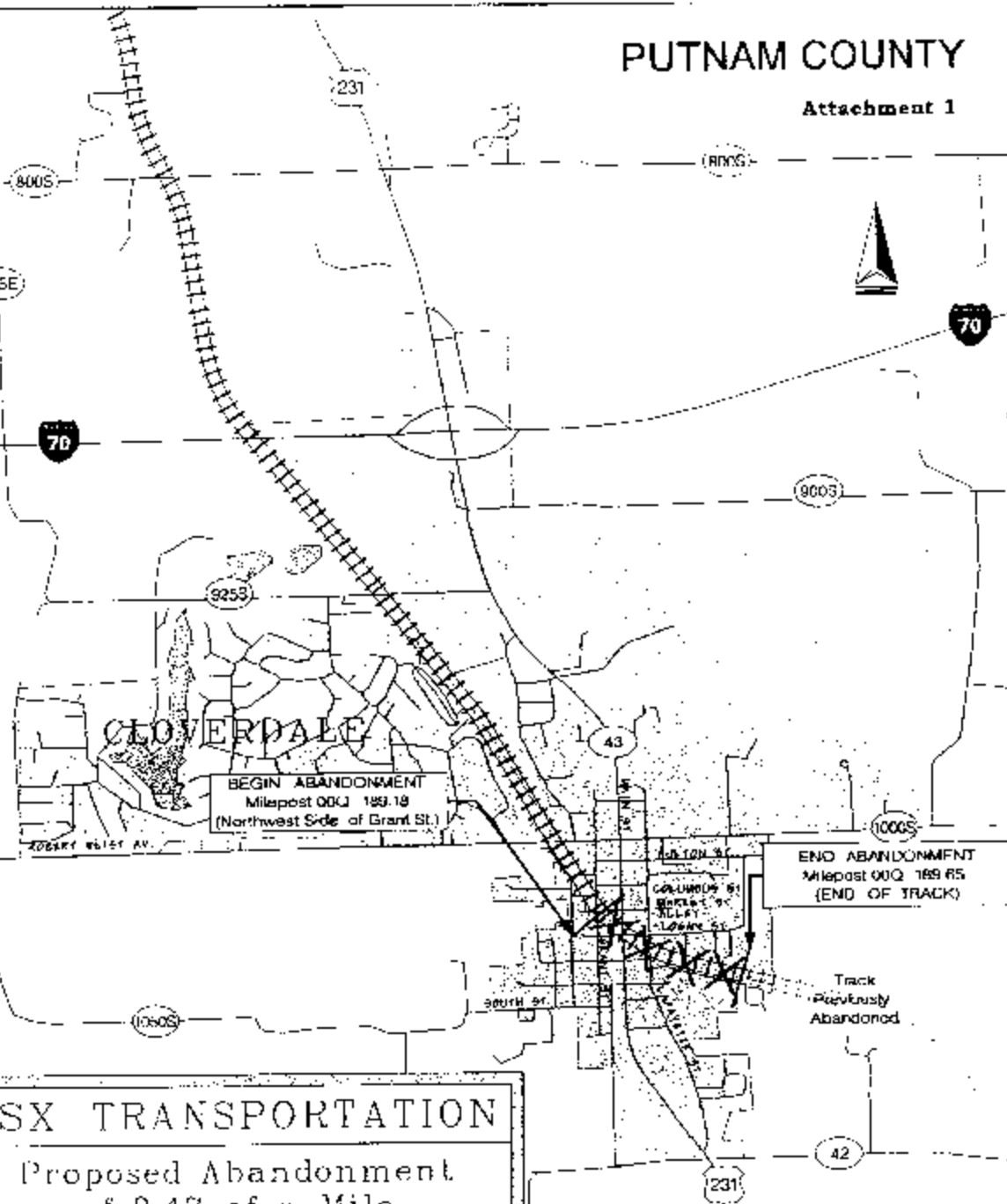
By the Board, Vicki Rutson, Chief, Section of Environmental Analysis.

Vernon A. Williams
Secretary

Attachment

PUTNAM COUNTY

Attachment 1



CSX TRANSPORTATION

Proposed Abandonment
of 0.47 of a Mile

City: Cloverdale
County: Putnam
State: Indiana
Fips: 18133
Site ID:

VAL: V-L&N-242/Sheet 3,
S-3A
GIS: 24559, 24560
Scale: 1" = 2700'
Date: 09/04/02
Drawn By: JKOr

LEGEND

PROPOSED ABANDONMENT

XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX

Total Distance = 0.47 of a Mile +