

SURFACE TRANSPORTATION BOARD
OFFICE OF ENVIRONMENTAL ANALYSIS

SUPPLEMENTAL FINAL ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

ENVIRONMENTAL RECOMMENDATIONS IN
DOCKET NO. AB 57 (Sub-No. 62X)

November 9, 2015

RECOMMENDATION: Remove Section 106 Condition

In this proceeding, Soo Line Railroad Company (Soo Line) filed a notice of exemption to abandon a 0.4-mile line of railroad near in Hennepin County, Minnesota. Because the Section 106 process of the National Historic Preservation Act, 54 U.S.C. § 306108 (NHPA), had not been completed at the time of the Board's October 13, 2015, decision, the Board imposed a condition requiring that Soo Line (a) 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 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 Minnesota Historical Society (the State Historic Preservation Office or 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 October 30, 2015, OEA received a letter from the Minnesota Historical Society (SHPO) stating its opinion that no historic properties will be affected by the proposed rail line abandonment. Based on that information, as well as previous consultations with the SHPO and Soo Line, OEA has determined that Soo Line's proposed abandonment of the entire 0.4-mile line would not affect historic properties listed in or eligible for inclusion in the National Register of Historic Places.¹ Accordingly, the Board has satisfied its responsibilities under Section 106 of the NHPA

¹ The documentation for this finding, as specified at 36 C.F.R. § 800.11(e), consists of the railroad's Historic Report, all relevant correspondence, and the September 18, 2015, Environmental Assessment, which have been provided to the SHPO and made available to the public through posting on the Board's website at <http://www.stb.dot.gov>.

in this proceeding, and OEA recommends 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 October 13, 2015, decision. OEA believes that the proposed action will not significantly affect the quality of the human environment.

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