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ENTERED
Office of Chief Counsel
January 15, 2026
Part of
Public Record

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January 15, 2026

VIA E-FILING

Chief of Case Administration
Office of Chief Counsel
Surface Transportation Board
395 E Street, SW
Washington DC 20423-0001

 GRANTED Office of Chief Counsel ☐	DECISION ID NO.: 52900
	DECIDED DATE: 1/27/2026
	SERVED DATE: 1/27/2026
	APPROVED: Chief Counsel

Re: Central of Georgia Railroad Company – Trackage Rights Exemption – Southern
Electric Railroad Company, FD 36872

Dear Chief of Case Administration:

Central of Georgia Railroad Company (“CGA”) hereby files in the above-captioned proceeding a Motion for Protective Order (“Motion”) pursuant to 49 C.F.R. 1104.14(b) in the above-caption proceeding. This Motion is being concurrently filed with CGA’s Verified Notice of Exemption (“Notice”) and relates to the trackage rights agreement and amendments entered into between CGA and Southern Electric Railroad Company (“SERC”). The Notice contains the agreement and amendments (“Agreement”). The Agreement is being filed as both a Public Version and a Confidential version. The protective order is necessary in order to prevent the Confidential version from being disclosed to the public. If there are any questions about this matter, please contact me directly, either by telephone at 202-663-7823 or by e-mail: at wmullins@mullinslawgroup.net. If I am unavailable, you may contact Spencer M. Naake who can be reached at (202) 663-7829 or by e-mail at snaake@mullinslawgroup.net.

Respectfully submitted,

/s/ **William A. Mullins**

William A. Mullins
Attorney for Central of Georgia Railroad Company

Enclosures

**BEFORE THE
SURFACE TRANSPORTATION BOARD
WASHINGTON, DC**

FD 36872

**CENTRAL OF GEORGIA RAILROAD COMPANY – TRACKAGE RIGHTS EXEMPTION –
SOUTHERN ELECTRIC RAILROAD COMPANY**

MOTION FOR PROTECTIVE ORDER

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January 15, 2026

**Attorneys for Central of Georgia Railroad
Company**

**BEFORE THE
SURFACE TRANSPORTATION BOARD
WASHINGTON, DC**

FD 36872

**CENTRAL OF GEORGIA RAILROAD COMPANY
– TRACKAGE RIGHTS EXEMPTION –
SOUTHERN ELECTRIC RAILROAD COMPANY**

MOTION FOR PROTECTIVE ORDER

Concurrently, Central of Georgia Railroad Company (“CGA”), a Class III railroad and a wholly-owned subsidiary of Norfolk Southern Railway Company (“NSR”), has filed a Verified Notice of Exemption (“Notice”) pursuant to 49 C.F.R. § 1180.2(d)(7) and the procedures at 49 C.F.R. § 1180.4(g) in the above captioned proceedings to allow CGA to acquire approximately 2.64 miles of trackage rights pursuant to a draft written second amendment to a trackage rights agreement between CGA and Southern Electric Railroad Company (“SERC”).¹ Consistent with 49 CFR §1180.6(a)(7)(ii), CGA and SERC filed a draft written second amendment and also included redacted copies of the original 1996 trackage rights agreement and first amendment (collectively, the “Agreements”).

The information redacted from the public version of the Agreements is confidential and relates to the terms and conditions of the Agreements. The proposed protective order is necessary to protect the confidential information from public disclosure. Moreover, the protective order will facilitate the disclosure of information related to CGA’s Verified Notice to support the proposed transaction.²

¹ See CGA’s Verified Notice of Exemption (“Notice”) filed on January 15, 2026.

² As previously referenced in CGA’s Notice, CGA, SERC, and CSX Transportation, Inc. (“CSXT”) originally entered into a Trackage Rights Agreement on December 3, 1996. The parties operated under the agreement for nearly 28 years; however, CGA could not locate any record demonstrating that CGA

Specifically, to support its Verified Notice, CGA wishes to submit the December 3, 1996, Trackage Rights Agreement, as well as the June 2, 2011, First Amendment to the agreement. The proposed protective order will enable CGA to file the unredacted Agreements with the Board, and, upon appropriate request, to make those Agreements available for interested parties.

The proposed protective order is in the form of such orders issued in other Surface Transportation Board proceedings. See Norfolk Southern Railway Company – Trackage Rights Exemption – CSXT Transportation, Inc., FD 36790 (STB served September 30, 2024); see also Norfolk Southern Railway Company – Trackage Rights Exemption – Union County Industrial Railroad Company, FD 36614 (STB served July 6, 2022). Accordingly, CGA hereby moves the Board pursuant to 49 C.F.R. §1104.14(b) to enter a protective order (in the form set forth in Appendix A) in the above-captioned proceeding, including the forms of confidentiality undertakings that accompany it.

Respectfully submitted,

/s/ William A. Mullins

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January 15, 2026

had formally sought the proper authority for the trackage rights. As the parties negotiated a second amendment to the 1996 Agreement, CGA discovered its omissions and is now filing for new trackage rights to correct its prior omissions. See Id. at 2, n. 2.

APPENDIX A

PROTECTIVE ORDER

1. Any party producing information, data, documents, or other material (hereinafter collectively referred to as “material”) to another party to this proceeding, or submitting material in pleadings, that the party in good faith believes reflects proprietary or confidential information, may designate and stamp such material as “CONFIDENTIAL,” and such material must be treated as confidential. Such material, any copies, and any data or notes derived therefrom:
 - a. Shall be used solely for the purpose of this proceeding and any judicial review proceeding arising therefrom, and not for any other business, commercial, or competitive purpose or use in any other judicial or administrative proceeding.
 - b. May be disclosed only to employees, counsel, or agents of the party requesting such material who have a need to know, handle, or review the material for purposes of this proceeding and any judicial review proceeding arising therefrom, and only where such employee, counsel, or agent has been given and has read a copy of this Protective Order, agrees to be bound by its terms, and executes the attached Undertaking for Confidential Material prior to receiving access to such materials, and provides a copy of the executed Undertaking to counsel for party providing the CONFIDENTIAL material.
 - c. Must be destroyed by the requesting party, its employees, counsel, and agents, at the completion of this proceeding and any judicial review proceeding arising therefrom. However, counsel and consultants for a party are permitted to retain file copies of all pleadings, which they are authorized to review under this Protective Order provided; however, that any such retained documents that are subject to this Protective Order remain subject to this Protective Order until destroyed.
 - d. If contained in any pleading filed with the Board, shall, in order to be kept confidential, be filed only in pleadings submitted in a package clearly marked on the outside “Confidential Materials Subject to Protective Order.” See 49 C.F.R. § 1104.14.
 - e. If any party wishes to challenge such designation, the party may bring such matter to the attention of the Board.
 - f. Any party producing material to another party to this proceeding, or submitting material in pleadings may in good faith designate and stamp particular material, such as material containing shipper-specific rate or cost data, or other competitively sensitive material, including any future plans for the line and right of way, solicitation of potential customers, appraisals and related valuation data, as “HIGHLY CONFIDENTIAL.” Material that is so designated may be disclosed only to outside counsel or outside consultants of the party requesting such materials who have a need to know, handle, or review the materials for purposes of this proceeding and any judicial review proceeding arising

therefrom, provided that such outside counsel or outside consultants have been given and have read a copy of this Protective Order, agree to be bound by its terms, execute the attached Undertaking for Highly Confidential Material prior to receiving access to such materials, and provide a copy of the executed undertaking to counsel for the party providing the “HIGHLY CONFIDENTIAL” material. Material designated as “HIGHLY CONFIDENTIAL” and produced under this provision shall be subject to all of the other provisions of this Protective Order, including without limitation Paragraph 1(a), (c), (d), and (e).

2. In the event that a party produces material, which should have been designated as “CONFIDENTIAL” or “HIGHLY CONFIDENTIAL” and inadvertently fails to designate the material as “CONFIDENTIAL” or “HIGHLY CONFIDENTIAL,” the producing party may notify the other party in writing within 5 days of discovery of its inadvertent failure to make the confidentiality designation. The party who received the material without the confidentiality designation will return the non-designated portion (including any and all copies) or destroy it, as directed by the producing party, or take such other steps as the parties agree to in writing. The producing party will promptly furnish the receiving party with properly designated material.
3. In the event that a party inadvertently produces material that is protected by the attorney-client privilege, work product doctrine, or any other privilege, the producing party may make a written request within a reasonable time after the producing party discovers the inadvertent disclosure that the other party returns the inadvertently produced privileged document. The party who received the inadvertently produced document will either return the document to the producing party or destroy the document immediately upon receipt of the written request, as directed by the producing party. By returning or destroying the document, the receiving party is not conceding that the document is privileged and is not waiving its right to later challenge the substantive privilege claim, provided that it may not challenge the privilege claim by arguing that the inadvertent production waived the privilege.
4. If any party intends to use “CONFIDENTIAL” and/or “HIGHLY CONFIDENTIAL” material at hearings in this proceeding, or in any judicial review proceeding arising here from, the party so intending shall submit any proposed exhibits or other documents setting forth or revealing such “CONFIDENTIAL” and/or “HIGHLY CONFIDENTIAL” material to the Board, or the court, as appropriate, with a written request that the Board or the court: (a) restrict attendance at the hearings during discussion of such “CONFIDENTIAL” and/or “HIGHLY CONFIDENTIAL” material, and (b) restrict access to the portion of the record or briefs reflecting discussion of such “CONFIDENTIAL” and/or “HIGHLY CONFIDENTIAL” material in accordance with the terms of this Protective Order.
5. If any party intends to use “CONFIDENTIAL” and/or “HIGHLY CONFIDENTIAL” material in the course of any deposition in this proceeding, the party so intending shall so advise counsel for the party producing the materials, counsel for the deponent, and all other counsel attending the deposition, and all portions of the deposition at which any such “CONFIDENTIAL” and/or “HIGHLY CONFIDENTIAL” material is used shall be restricted to persons who may review the material under this Protective Order. All portions of deposition transcripts and/or exhibits that consist of or disclose

“CONFIDENTIAL” and/or “HIGHLY CONFIDENTIAL” material shall be kept under seal and treated as “CONFIDENTIAL” and/or “HIGHLY CONFIDENTIAL” material in accordance with the terms of this Protective Order.

6. To the extent that “CONFIDENTIAL” material is produced by a party in this or any related proceedings, and is held and used by the receiving person in compliance with the terms of this Protective Order, such production, disclosure, and use of the material and of the data that the material contains will be deemed essential for the disposition of this and any related proceedings and will not be deemed a violation of 49 U.S.C. § 11904 or any other relevant provision of the ICC Termination Act of 1995.
7. Except for this proceeding, the parties agree that if a party is required by law or order of a governmental or judicial body to release “CONFIDENTIAL” or “HIGHLY CONFIDENTIAL” material produced by the other party or copies or notes thereof as to which it obtained access pursuant to this Protective Order, the party so required shall notify the producing party in writing within 3 working days of the determination that the “CONFIDENTIAL” material, “HIGHLY CONFIDENTIAL” material, or copies or notes are to be released, or within 3 working days prior to such release, whichever is soonest, to permit the producing party the opportunity to contest the release.
8. Each party has a right to view its own data, information, and documentation (i.e., information originally generated or compiled by or for that party), even if that data, information, and documentation has been designated as “HIGHLY CONFIDENTIAL” by a producing party, without securing prior permission from the producing party. If a party (the “filing party”) files and serves upon the other party (the “reviewing party”) a pleading or evidence containing “HIGHLY CONFIDENTIAL” material of the filing party, the filing party shall also contemporaneously provide to outside counsel for the reviewing party a list of the “HIGHLY CONFIDENTIAL” information of the filing party contained in the pleading that must be redacted from the “HIGHLY CONFIDENTIAL” version prior to review by the in-house personnel of the reviewing party.
9. Nothing in this Protective Order restricts the right of any party to disclose voluntarily any “CONFIDENTIAL” or “HIGHLY CONFIDENTIAL” material originated by that party if such material does not contain or reflect any “CONFIDENTIAL” or “HIGHLY CONFIDENTIAL” material originated by any other party.
10. Any party filing with the Board a “CONFIDENTIAL” or “HIGHLY CONFIDENTIAL” pleading in this proceeding should simultaneously file a public version of the pleading.

UNDERTAKING

CONFIDENTIAL MATERIAL

I, _____, have read the Protective Order served on _____, 2026, governing the production of confidential documents in FD 36872, understand the same, and agree to be bound by its terms. I agree not to use or permit the use of any data or information obtained under this Undertaking, or to use or permit the use of any techniques disclosed or information learned as a result of receiving such data or information, for any purposes other than the preparation and presentation of evidence and argument in FD 36872 or any judicial review proceeding arising therefrom. I further agree not to disclose any data or information obtained under this Protective Order to any person who has not executed an Undertaking in the form hereof. At the conclusion of this proceeding and any judicial review proceeding arising therefrom, I will promptly destroy any copies of such designated documents obtained or made by me or by any outside counsel or outside consultants working with me, provided, however, that counsel and consultants may retain copies of pleadings which they were authorized to review under the Protective Order.

I understand and agree that monetary damages would not be a sufficient remedy for breach of this Undertaking and that parties producing confidential documents shall be entitled to specific performance and injunctive or other equitable relief as a remedy for any such breach, and I further agree to waive any requirement for the securing or posting of any bond in connection with such remedy. Such a remedy shall not be deemed to be the exclusive remedy for breach of this Undertaking but shall be in addition to all remedies available at law or equity.

Dated: _____

UNDERTAKING

HIGHLY CONFIDENTIAL MATERIAL

I, _____, have read the Protective Order served on _____, 2026, governing the production of highly confidential documents in FD 36872, understand the same, and agree to be bound by its terms. I further agree not to disclose any data, information, or material designated “HIGHLY CONFIDENTIAL” to any person or entity who: (i) is not eligible for access to “HIGHLY CONFIDENTIAL” material under the terms of the Protective Order, or (ii) has not executed an Undertaking for Highly Confidential Material in the form hereof. I also understand and agree, as a condition precedent to my receiving, reviewing, or using copies of any documents designated “HIGHLY CONFIDENTIAL” that I will limit my use of those documents and the information they contain to this proceeding and any judicial review proceeding arising therefrom; that I will take all necessary steps to assure that said documents and information will be kept on a confidential basis by any outside counsel or outside consultants working with me; that under no circumstances will I permit access to said documents or information by personnel of my client, its subsidiaries, affiliates, or owners; and that at the conclusion of this proceeding and any judicial review proceeding arising therefrom, I will promptly destroy any copies of such designated documents obtained or made by me or by any outside counsel or outside consultants working with me, provided, however, that outside counsel and consultants may retain file copies of pleadings filed with the Board. I further understand that I must destroy all notes or other documents containing “HIGHLY CONFIDENTIAL” information in compliance with the terms of the Protective Order. Under no circumstances will I permit access to documents designated “HIGHLY CONFIDENTIAL” by, or disclose any information contained therein to, any persons or entities for which I am not acting in this proceeding.

I understand and agree that money damages would not be a sufficient remedy for breach of this Undertaking and that parties producing confidential documents shall be entitled to specific performance and injunctive or other equitable relief as a remedy for any such breach, and I further agree to waive any requirement for the securing or posting of any bond in connection with such remedy. Such a remedy shall not be deemed to be the exclusive remedy for breach of this Undertaking but shall be in addition to all remedies available at law or equity.

Dated: _____