

**SURFACE TRANSPORTATION BOARD
OFFICE OF ENVIRONMENTAL ANALYSIS**

FINAL ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

ENVIRONMENTAL RECOMMENDATIONS IN DOCKET NO. AB-6 (Sub-No. 495X)

27 July 2017

ABANDONMENT TYPE

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

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

(**X**) **NO NEW COMMENTS WERE RECEIVED**

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OEA served an Environmental Assessment (EA) for this proceeding on June 23, 2017 for public review and comment. In the EA, OEA recommended one environmental condition and concluded that the proposed action would not significantly impact the quality of the human environment.

As explained in the EA, the Section 106 historic review process has been completed for a portion of the 2.7 miles of rail line proposed for abandonment. There remains approximately 1.1 miles of the line that still awaits completion of the Section 106 process. To prevent the possibility of stranding this 1.1-mile rail segment from the rail network, OEA has revised the previously recommended Section 106 condition to clarify that BNSF may not file its consummation notice for any portion of the line until the Section 106 process has been completed for the entire line.

Conclusions

The EA comment period has ended. Accordingly, OEA recommends that the following revised condition previously recommended in the EA should be imposed upon any decision granting abandonment authority:

BNSF Railway Company (BNSF) shall not initiate any salvage activities related to abandonment (including removal of tracks and ties) and 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 from Milepost 1226.79 to Mileposts 1227.10 and 1227.58 until the Section 106 process of the National Historic Preservation Act, 54 U.S.C. § 306108, has been completed. BNSF shall report back to the Office of Environmental Analysis (OEA) regarding any

consultations with the Montana Historical Society (SHPO) and the public. BNSF may not file its consummation notice for any portion of the line until the Section 106 process has been completed and the Board has removed this condition.

If the above condition is imposed, OEA believes that the proposed action will not significantly affect the quality of the human environment.

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