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SERVICE DATE - FEBRUARY 16, 1999

DO

FR-4915-00-P

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Surface Transportation Board

[STB Finance Docket No. 33708]

The Blacklands Railroad Company—Operation Exemption—Lines of Northeast Texas Rural Rail Transportation District

The Blacklands Railroad Company (BLRR), a noncarrier, has filed a verified notice of exemption under 49 CFR 1150.31 to acquire from East Texas Central Railroad its rights under an agreement with Northeast Texas Rural Rail Transportation District (NETEX)¹ to operate over approximately 38 miles of rail line in the State of Texas as follows: (1) approximately 31 miles of rail line owned by NETEX, beginning at milepost 524.0, located approximately 6.2 miles west of Sulphur Springs, and proceeding west through Hopkins and Delta Counties to milepost 555.0, at Simtrott, in Hunt County; and (2) approximately 7 miles of rail line owned by the St. Louis Southwestern Railway Company, between milepost 524.0 and milepost 517.0, pursuant to trackage rights acquired by NETEX for the purpose of interchanging and switching at Sulphur Springs (subject lines).²

The transaction is scheduled to be consummated on or after the February 9, 1999 effective date of the exemption.

¹ See East Texas Central Railroad, Inc.--Operation Exemption--Northeast Texas Rural Rail Transportation District, STB Finance Docket No. 32841 (Sub-No. 1) (STB served Sept. 27, 1996).

² BLRR will operate the subject lines.

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If the verified notice contains false or misleading information, the exemption is void ab initio. Petitions to reopen the proceeding to revoke the exemption under 49 U.S.C. 10502(d) may be filed at any time. The filing of a petition to revoke will not automatically stay the transaction.

An original and 10 copies of all pleadings, referring to STB Finance Docket No. 33708, must be filed with the Surface Transportation Board, Office of the Secretary, Case Control Unit, 1925 K Street, N.W., Washington, DC 20423-0001. In addition, a copy of each pleading must be served on Jo A. DeRoche, Esq., Weiner, Brodsky, Sidman & Kider, P.C., 1350 New York Avenue, N.W., Suite 800, Washington, DC 20005-4797..

Board decisions and notices are available on our website at “WWW.STB.DOT.GOV.”

Decided: February 9, 1999.

By the Board, Joseph H. Dettmar, Acting Director, Office of Proceedings.

Vernon A. Williams

Secretary