

compliance with National Ambient Air Quality Standards. The new start alternative will be compared to both the no-build and TSM alternatives.

3. For "operating efficiencies"—the forecast change in operating cost per passenger-mile (forecast year), for that part of the system that will be directly affected by the proposed new investment, expressed in terms of absolute dollar value. The new start will be compared to both the TSM and no-build alternatives.

4. For "cost-effectiveness"—the incremental change in total capital and operating cost per incremental passenger, based on the forecast change in annual transit ridership (forecast year) and the annualized total (Federal and local) capital investment and operating cost, compared to the no-build and TSM alternatives.

5. For "transit supportive existing land use policies and future patterns"—the degree to which local land use policies are likely to foster transit supportive land use, measured in terms of the kinds of policies in place, and the commitment to these policies. A combined rating consisting of both "high," "medium," and "low" ratings and corresponding descriptive indicators will be used to assess each of the following six factors: (1) existing land use; (2) containment of sprawl; (3) transit-supportive corridor policies; (4) supportive zoning regulations near transit stations; (5) tools to implement land use policies; and (6) the performance of land use policies. The ratings for each factor will then be combined into a single ordinal rating for transit supportive land use.

6. For "other factors"—(1) the degree to which the institutions (local transportation planning, programming and parking policies, etc.) are in place as assumed in the forecasts, (2) project management capability, and (3) additional factors relevant to local and national priorities and relevant to the success of the project. Ratings will be expressed as appropriate in ordinal ratings and descriptive statements.

#### *b. Local Financial Commitment*

The local financial commitment to a proposed project will continue to be evaluated according to the following measures:

1. The proposed local share of project costs, defined as the percentage of capital costs to be met using funds from sources other than Section 5309, including both the local match required by Federal law and any additional capital funding ("overmatch"). Consideration will be given to the use of (1) innovative financing techniques,

as described in the May 9, 1995 Federal Register notice on *FTA's Innovative Financing Initiative*; and (2) "flexible funds" as provided under the Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Improvement Program (CMAQ) and the Surface Transportation Program (STP) under ISTEA.

2. The strength of the proposed capital financing plan, according to (1) the stability and reliability of each proposed source of local match, including inter-governmental grants, tax sources, and debt obligations, with an emphasis on availability within the project timetable; (2) whether adequate provisions have been made to cover unanticipated cost overruns. The strength of the capital finance plan will be rated high, medium, or low.

3. The ability of the local transit agency to fund operation of the system as planned once the guideway project is built, according to (1) an evaluation of the operating revenue base and (2) its ability to expand to meet the incremental operating costs associated with a new fixed guideway investment and any other new services and facilities. Ratings of high, medium, and low will be used to describe stability and reliability of operating revenue.

Issue Date: December 16, 1996.

Gordon J. Linton,  
*Administrator.*

[FR Doc. 96-32199 Filed 12-18-96; 8:45 am]  
BILLING CODE 4910-57-P

### **Surface Transportation Board**

[STB Finance Docket No. 33304]

#### **Track Tech, Inc.—Acquisition and Operation Exemption—Burlington Northern Railroad Company**

Track Tech, Inc. (TTI) has filed a verified notice of exemption under 49 CFR 1150.31: (1) to acquire and operate approximately 65.01 miles of rail line owned by the Burlington Northern Railroad Company as follows: between milepost 25.15 at Denrock, IL, and milepost 28.35 at Lyndon, IL; between milepost 96.30 at Bladen, NE,<sup>1</sup> and milepost 119.34 at Hildrath, NE; between milepost 98.00 at Hamar, ND, and milepost 103.92 at Warwick, ND; between milepost 4.00 at Tatman Junction (near Minot), ND, and milepost 16.70 at Tatman Air Force Base, ND;<sup>2</sup> between milepost 761.80 at Amarillo, TX, and milepost 775.70 at Bushland,

<sup>1</sup> TTI has confirmed that the milepost at Bladen, NE, is milepost 96.30 (rather than milepost 95.82).

<sup>2</sup> TTI has confirmed that the milepost at Tatman Air Force Base, ND, is milepost 16.70 (rather than 12.70).

TX; and between milepost 351.15 and milepost 357.40 at Lubbock, TX. The proposed transaction was to be consummated not sooner than November 27, 1996, the effective date of the exemption.

If the notice contains false or misleading information, the exemption is void *ab initio*. Petitions 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. 33304, must be filed with the Surface Transportation Board, Office of the Secretary, Case Control Branch, 1201 Constitution Avenue, N.W., Washington, DC 20423 and served on: T. Scott Bannister, 1300 Des Moines Building, 405 6th Avenue, Des Moines, Iowa 50309

Decided: December 12, 1996.

By the Board, David M. Konschnik,  
Director, Office of Proceedings.  
Vernon A. Williams,  
*Secretary.*

[FR Doc. 96-32232 Filed 12-18-96; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4915-00-P

[STB Docket No. AB-88 (Sub-No. 8X)]

#### **Bessemer and Lake Erie Railroad Company—Abandonment Exemption—in Armstrong and Butler Counties, PA**

Bessemer and Lake Erie Railroad Company (B&LE) has filed a notice of exemption under 49 CFR 1152 Subpart F—*Exempt Abandonments* to abandon 3.13 miles of its line of railroad, known as the Western Allegheny Branch, extending from Station 2294+53 eastward to the end of the track at Station 2460+01, in Armstrong and Butler Counties, PA.

B&LE has certified that: (1) No local traffic has moved over the line for at least 2 years; (2) there is no overhead traffic on the line; (3) no formal complaint filed by a user of rail service on the line (or by a state or local government entity acting on behalf of such user) regarding cessation of service over the line either is pending with the Surface Transportation Board (Board) or with any U.S. District Court or has been decided in favor of complainant within the 2-year period; and (4) the requirements at 49 CFR 1105.7 (environmental reports), 49 CFR 1105.8 (historic reports), 49 CFR 1105.11 (transmittal letter), 49 CFR 1105.12 (newspaper publication), and 49 CFR 1152.50(d)(1) (notice to governmental agencies) have been met.

As a condition to this exemption, any employee adversely affected by the abandonment shall be protected under *Oregon Short Line R. Co.—Abandonment—Goshen*, 360 I.C.C. 91 (1979). To address whether this condition adequately protects affected employees, a petition for partial revocation under 49 U.S.C. 10502(d) must be filed.

Provided no formal expression of intent to file an offer of financial assistance (OFA) has been received, this exemption will be effective on January 18, 1997, unless stayed pending reconsideration. Petitions to stay that do not involve environmental issues,<sup>1</sup> formal expressions of intent to file an OFA under 49 CFR 1152.27(c)(2),<sup>2</sup> and trail use/rail banking requests under 49 CFR 1152.29<sup>3</sup> must be filed by December 30, 1996. Petitions to reopen or requests for public use conditions under 49 CFR 1152.28 must be filed by January 8, 1997, with: Office of the Secretary, Case Control Branch, Surface Transportation Board, 1201 Constitution Avenue, N.W., Washington, DC 20423.

A copy of any petition filed with the Board should be sent to applicant's representative: Robert J. Koch, Esq., Bessemer and Lake Erie Railroad Company, 135 Jamison Lane, P.O. Box 68, Monroeville, PA 15146.

If the verified notice contains false or misleading information, the exemption is void *ab initio*.

B&LE has filed an environmental report which addresses the abandonment's effects, if any, on the environment and historic resources. The Section of Environmental Analysis (SEA) will issue an environmental assessment (EA) by December 24, 1996. Interested persons may obtain a copy of the EA by writing to SEA (Room 3219, Surface Transportation Board, Washington, DC 20423) or by calling Elaine Kaiser, Chief of SEA, at (202) 927-6248. Comments on environmental and historic preservation matters must be filed within 15 days after the EA becomes available to the public.

Environmental, historic preservation, public use, or trail use/rail banking

conditions will be imposed, where appropriate, in a subsequent decision.

Decided: December 12, 1996.

By the Board, David M. Konschnik, Director, Office of Proceedings.

Vernon A. Williams,

Secretary.

[FR Doc. 96-32231 Filed 12-18-96; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4915-00-P

#### [STB Docket No. AB-167 (Sub-No. 1172X)]

#### **Consolidated Rail Corporation; Abandonment Exemption in Middlesex County, NJ**

Consolidated Rail Corporation (Conrail) has filed a notice of exemption under 49 CFR 1152 Subpart F—*Exempt Abandonments* to abandon a 1.08-mile portion of its line of railroad known as the Raritan North Shore Industrial Track between milepost 0.00 and milepost 1.08 in the city of Perth Amboy, Middlesex County, NJ.

Conrail has certified that: (1) No local traffic has moved over the line for at least 2 years; (2) there is no overhead traffic on the line; (3) no formal complaint filed by a user of rail service on the line (or by a state or local government entity acting on behalf of such user) regarding cessation of service over the line either is pending with the Surface Transportation Board (Board) or with any U.S. District Court or has been decided in favor of complainant within the 2-year period; and (4) the requirements at 49 CFR 1105.7 (environmental reports), 49 CFR 1105.8 (historic reports), 49 CFR 1105.11 (transmittal letter), 49 CFR 1105.12 (newspaper publication), and 49 CFR 1152.50(d)(1) (notice to governmental agencies) have been met.

As a condition to this exemption, any employee adversely affected by the abandonment shall be protected under *Oregon Short Line R. Co.—Abandonment—Goshen*, 360 I.C.C. 91 (1979). To address whether this condition adequately protects affected employees, a petition for partial revocation under 49 U.S.C. 10502(d) must be filed.

Provided no formal expression of intent to file an offer of financial assistance (OFA) has been received, this exemption will be effective on January 18, 1997, unless stayed pending reconsideration. Petitions to stay that do not involve environmental issues,<sup>1</sup>

formal expressions of intent to file an OFA under 49 CFR 1152.27(c)(2),<sup>2</sup> and trail use/rail banking requests under 49 CFR 1152.29<sup>3</sup> must be filed by December 30, 1996. Petitions to reopen or requests for public use conditions under 49 CFR 1152.28 must be filed by January 8, 1997, with: Office of the Secretary, Case Control Branch, Surface Transportation Board, 1201 Constitution Avenue, N.W., Washington, DC 20423.

A copy of any petition filed with the Board should be sent to applicant's representative: John K. Enright, Associate General Counsel, Consolidated Rail Corporation, 2001 Market Street—16A, Philadelphia, PA 19101-1416.

If the verified notice contains false or misleading information, the exemption is void *ab initio*.

Conrail has filed an environmental report which addresses the abandonment's effects, if any, on the environment and historic resources. The Section of Environmental Analysis (SEA) will issue an environmental assessment (EA) by December 24, 1996. Interested persons may obtain a copy of the EA by writing to SEA (Room 3219, Surface Transportation Board, Washington, DC 20423) or by calling Elaine Kaiser, Chief of SEA, at (202) 927-6248. Comments on environmental and historic preservation matters must be filed within 15 days after the EA becomes available to the public.

Environmental, historic preservation, public use, or trail use/rail banking conditions will be imposed, where appropriate, in a subsequent decision.

Decided: December 12, 1996.

By the board, David M. Konschnik, Director, Office of Proceedings.

Vernon A. Williams,

Secretary.

[FR Doc. 96-32230 Filed 12-18-96; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4915-00-P

#### **DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS**

#### **Advisory Committee on Prosthetics and Special-Disabilities Programs, Notice of Meeting**

The Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) gives notice under Public Law 92-

*of-Service Rail Lines*, 5 I.C.C.2d 377 (1989). Any request for a stay should be filed as soon as possible so that the Board may take appropriate action before the exemption's effective date.

<sup>2</sup> See *Exempt. of Rail Abandonment—Offers of Finan. Assist.*, 4 I.C.C.2d 164 (1987).

<sup>3</sup> The Board will accept late-filed trail use requests as long as the abandonment has not been consummated and the abandoning railroad is willing to negotiate an agreement.

<sup>1</sup> The Board will grant a stay if an informed decision on environmental issues (whether raised by a party or by the Board's Section of Environmental Analysis in its independent investigation) cannot be made before the exemption's effective date. See *Exemption of Out-of-Service Rail Lines*, 5 I.C.C.2d 377 (1989). Any request for a stay should be filed as soon as possible so that the Board may take appropriate action before the exemption's effective date.

<sup>2</sup> See *Exempt. of Rail Abandonment—Offers of Finan. Assist.*, 4 I.C.C.2d 164 (1987).

<sup>3</sup> The Board will accept late-filed trail use requests as long as the abandonment has not been consummated and the abandoning railroad is willing to negotiate an agreement.

<sup>1</sup> The Board will grant a stay if an informed decision on environmental issues (whether raised by a party or by the Board's Section of Environmental Analysis in its independent investigation) cannot be made before the exemption's effective date. See *Exemption of Out-*