

⁴To modify the exemption to provide for design changes of the non-DOT specification portable tank manufactured in accordance with ASME Code criteria resulting in an increase of the Maximum Allowable Working Pressures; the addition of a 6700 gallon liquid helium tank.

⁵To modify the exemption to authorize shipments of solutions containing ethyl alcohol in inner packagings not exceeding 50 ounces each and that the total contents of the package not exceed 300 fluid ounces.

⁶To modify the exemption to eliminate the maximum service pressure requirement for the cylinders in this exemption for use as components of automobile vehicle safety systems. These pressure vessels may be charged with non-toxic, non-liquefied gases, or mixtures thereof.

⁷To modify the exemption to allow, on exclusive use carrier, condemned cylinders to be transported back to their originating location for gas disposal and cylinder destruction.

⁸To modify the exemption to authorize an alternative to the 100% radiographic inspection of longitudinal welds for the non-DOT specification cylinders for use as components of automotive vehicle safety systems.

⁹To reissue the exemption originally issued as an emergency for the use of UN 1A2 steel drums that do not meet the minimum thickness requirements for drums with a maximum capacity of less than 20 liters for the transportation of certain Division 1.3C materials.

¹⁰To reissue the exemption originally issued on an emergency basis to authorize the holder of this exemption to perform the function of a registered inspector for cargo tanks without meeting the requirements in 49 CFR 171.8.

¹¹To reissue the exemption originally issued on an emergency basis authorizing the use of UN 4G fiberboard boxes inadvertently marked with the wrong proper shipping name.

This notice of receipt of applications for modifications of exemptions is published in accordance with part 107 of the Federal hazardous materials transportation law (49 U.S.C. 5117(b); 49 CFR 1.53(b)).

Issued in Washington, DC, on March 12, 1999.

J. Suzanne Hedgepeth,

Director, Office of Hazardous Materials, Exemptions and Approvals.

[FR Doc. 99-6600 Filed 3-17-99; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4910-60-M

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Surface Transportation Board

[STB Docket Nos. AB-559 (Sub-No. 1X) and AB-55 (Sub-No. 572X)]

Gauley River Railroad, LLC— Abandonment and Discontinuance of Service—In Webster and Nicholas Counties, WV; SX Transportation, Inc.—Discontinuance of Service—In Webster and Nicholas Counties, WV

On February 26, 1999, Gauley River Railroad, LLC (GRIV) and CSX Transportation, Inc. (CSXT) jointly filed with the Surface Transportation Board (Board) petitions under 49 U.S.C. 10502 for exemption from the provisions of 49 U.S.C. 10903. GRIV seeks to abandon and discontinue service over: (1) a 10-mile line of railroad extending between milepost BUE-119 at Cowen, WV, and milepost BUE-129 at Allingdale, WV (Line A), and (2) a 8.3-mile line of railroad extending between milepost BUE-12.4 at Muddlety Falls, WV, and milepost BUE-20.7 at Muddlety, WV (including the McMillion Creek Branch and Delmont Branch) (Line C). Both GRIV and CSXT seek to discontinue service over a 12.4-mile line of railroad between milepost BUE-0.0 at Allingdale and milepost BUE-12.4 at Muddlety Falls (Line B).¹ The three lines total 30.7 miles in

Webster and Nicholas Counties, WV (collectively, the Line). The Line traverses U.S. Postal Service ZIP Codes 26205, 26651, 26266 and 26206, and includes the stations of Gauley Mill, Allingdale, Delphi, Ticoal, Gauley Eagle 4, and Muddlety.

The Line does not contain federally granted rights-of-way. Any documentation in the GRIV's and CSXT's possession will be made available promptly to those requesting it.

In STB Docket No. AB-559 (Sub-No. 1X), GRIV is proposing to abandon lines that constitute its entire rail system. When issuing abandonment authority for railroad lines that constitute the carrier's entire system, the Board does not impose labor protection, except in specifically enumerated circumstances. See *Northampton and Bath R. Co.—Abandonment*, 354 I.C.C. 784, 785-86 (1978) (*Northampton*). Therefore, if the Board grants the petition for exemption, in the absence of a showing that one or more of the exceptions articulated in *Northampton* are present, no labor protective conditions would be imposed. In STB Docket No. AB-55 (Sub-No. 572X), the interests of railroad employees will be protected by the conditions set forth in *Oregon Short Line R. Co.—Abandonment—Goshen*, 360 I.C.C. 91 (1979).

By issuance of this notice, the Board is instituting exemption proceedings pursuant to 49 U.S.C. 10502(b). A final decision will be issued by June 16, 1999.

Any offer of financial assistance (OFA) under 49 CFR 1152.27(b)(2) will be due no later than 10 days after service of a decision granting the petitions for exemption. Each offer must be accompanied by a \$1,000 filing fee. See 49 CFR 1002.2(f)(25).

All interested persons should be aware that, following abandonment of rail service and salvage of the line, the line may be suitable for other public use, including interim trail use. Any request for a public use condition under

certified that a copy of the petition was served on SC&M.

49 CFR 1152.28 or for trail use/rail banking under 49 CFR 1152.29 will be due no later than April 7, 1999. Each trail use request must be accompanied by a \$150 filing fee. See 49 CFR 1002.2(f)(27).

All filings in response to this notice must refer to STB Docket Nos. AB-559 (Sub-No. 1X) and AB-55 (Sub-No. 572X) and must be sent to: (1) Surface Transportation Board, Office of the Secretary, Case Control Unit, 1925 K Street, NW, Washington, DC 20423-0001, and (2) Robert A. Wimbish, Rea, Cross & Auchincloss, 1707 L Street, NW, Suite 570, Washington, DC 20036, and Charles M. Rosenberger, CSX Transportation, Inc., 500 Water Street, Jacksonville, FL 32202. Replies are due April 7, 1999.

Persons seeking further information concerning abandonment and discontinuance procedures may contact the Board's Office of Public Services at (202) 565-1592 or refer to the full abandonment or discontinuance regulations at 49 CFR part 1152. Questions concerning environmental issues may be directed to the Board's Section of Environmental Analysis (SEA) at (202) 565-1545. [TDD for the hearing impaired is available at (202) 565-1695.]

An environmental assessment (EA) (or environmental impact statement (EIS), if necessary) prepared by SEA will be served upon all parties of record and upon any agencies or other persons who commented during its preparation. Other interested persons may contact SEA to obtain a copy of the EA (or EIS). EAs in these abandonment proceedings normally will be made available within 60 days of the filing of the petition. The deadline for submission of comments on the EA will generally be within 30 days of its service.

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

Decided: March 12, 1999.

¹ Line B is owned by the Strouds Creek and Muddlety Railroad Company (SC&M). It was leased to CSXT's predecessor company on November 1, 1943, and then subleased to GRIV as part of the transaction in *Gauley River Railroad, LLC—Purchase, Lease and Operation Exemption—CSX Transportation, Inc.*, STB Finance Docket No. 33579 (STB served July 14, 1998). Petitioners

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

Vernon A. Williams,
Secretary.

[FR Doc. 99-6624 Filed 3-17-99; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4915-00-P

DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS

[OMB Control No. 2900-0355]

Proposed Information Collection Activity: Proposed Collection; Comment Request

AGENCY: Veterans Benefits Administration, Department of Veterans Affairs.

ACTION: Notice.

SUMMARY: The Veterans Benefits Administration (VBA), Department of Veterans Affairs (VA), is announcing an opportunity for public comment on the proposed collection of certain information by the agency. Under the Paperwork Reduction Act (PRA) of 1995, Federal agencies are required to publish notice in the **Federal Register** concerning each proposed collection of information, including each proposed extension of a currently approved collection and allow 60 days for public comment in response to the notice. This notice solicits comments on the information needed to pay benefits to veterans and other eligible persons pursuing approved programs of education.

DATES: Written comments and recommendations on the proposed collection of information should be received on or before May 17, 1999.

ADDRESSES: Submit written comments on the collection of information to Nancy J. Kessinger, Veterans Benefits Administration (20S52), Department of Veterans Affairs, 810 Vermont Avenue, NW, Washington, DC 20420. Please refer to "OMB Control No. 2900-0355" in any correspondence.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Nancy J. Kessinger at (202) 273-7079 or FAX (202) 275-5947.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: Under the PRA of 1995 (Public Law 104-13; 44 U.S.C., 3501-3520), Federal agencies must obtain approval from the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) for each collection of information they conduct or sponsor. This request for comment is being made pursuant to Section 3506(c)(2)(A) of the PRA.

With respect to the following collection of information, VBA invites comments on: (1) Whether the proposed collection of information is necessary

for the proper performance of VBA's functions, including whether the information will have practical utility; (2) the accuracy of VBA's estimate of the burden of the proposed collection of information; (3) ways to enhance the quality, utility, and clarity of the information to be collected; and (4) ways to minimize the burden of the collection of information on respondents, including through the use of automated collection techniques or the use of other forms of information technology.

Title: Verification of Pursuit of Course (Leading to a Standard College Degree Under Chapters 32, 34, and 35, Title 38, U.S.C., and Section 903 of Public Law 96-342), VA Form 22-6553.

OMB Control Number: 2900-0355.

Type of Review: Extension of a currently approved collection.

Abstract: The information collection is used to verify the continued enrollment or report change in enrollment status for any student receiving VA educational benefits for the pursuit of a college course. VA uses the information to determine if education benefits are to be continued unchanged, increased, decreased, or terminated. Without the information VA might underpay or overpay benefits.

Affected Public: State, Local or Tribal Governments, Not-for-profit Institutions.

Estimated Annual Burden: 24,485 hours.

Estimated Average Burden Per Respondent: 10 minutes.

Frequency of Response: The frequency of responses for each educational institution will vary according to the number of students who receive VA education benefits at that school. VA estimates an annual average of 27 responses per educational institution.

Estimated Number of Respondents: The number of respondents is arrived at based on the average number of educational institutions using VA Form 22-6553 which had veterans or eligible persons enrolled during the last 12 months, and a projected number of trainees. VA currently has an average of 5,441 active educational institutions (colleges, universities, or other institutions of higher learning).

Dated: February 10, 1999.

By direction of the Secretary.

Donald L. Neilson,

Director, Information Management Service.

[FR Doc. 99-6579 Filed 3-17-99; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 8320-01-P

DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS

[OMB Control No. 2900-0379]

Proposed Information Collection Activity: Proposed Collection; Comment Request

AGENCY: Veterans Benefits Administration, Department of Veterans Affairs.

ACTION: Notice.

SUMMARY: The Veterans Benefits Administration (VBA), Department of Veterans Affairs (VA), is announcing an opportunity for public comment on the proposed collection of certain information by the agency. Under the Paperwork Reduction Act (PRA) of 1995, Federal agencies are required to publish notice in the **Federal Register** concerning each proposed collection of information, including each proposed revision of a currently approved collection, and allow 60 days for public comment in response to the notice. This notice solicits comments on the information needed before VA can pay work-study benefits to veterans, reservists, and qualified dependents.

DATES: Written comments and recommendations on the proposed collection of information should be received on or before May 17, 1999.

ADDRESSES: Submit written comments on the collection of information to Nancy J. Kessinger, Veterans Benefits Administration (20S52), Department of Veterans Affairs, 810 Vermont Avenue, NW, Washington, DC 20420. Please refer to "OMB Control No. 2900-0379" in any correspondence.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Nancy J. Kessinger at (202) 273-7079 or FAX (202) 275-5947.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: Under the PRA of 1995 (Public Law 104-13; 44 U.S.C., 3501-3520), Federal agencies must obtain approval from the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) for each collection of information they conduct or sponsor. This request for comment is being made pursuant to Section 3506(c)(2)(A) of the PRA.

With respect to the following collection of information, VBA invites comments on: (1) Whether the proposed collection of information is necessary for the proper performance of VBA's functions, including whether the information will have practical utility; (2) the accuracy of VBA's estimate of the burden of the proposed collection of information; (3) ways to enhance the quality, utility, and clarity of the information to be collected; and (4) ways to minimize the burden of the