

confidential information was redacted by inserting asterisks where material was deleted. In addition, the confidential submission must be clearly marked "Business Confidential" in large, bold letters at the top and bottom of every page of the documents. The public version that does not contain business confidential information must be clearly marked either "Public Version" or "Non-Confidential" in large, bold letters at the top and bottom of every page. The file name of any documents containing business confidential information attached to an e-mail transmission should begin with the characters "BC-", and the file name of the public version should begin with the characters "P-". The "P-" or "BC-" should be followed by the name of the person or party submitting the petition. Submissions by e-mail should not include separate cover letters or messages in the message area of the e-mail; information that might appear in any cover letter should be included directly in the submission. The e-mail address for submissions is [FR0508@ustr.eop.gov](mailto:FR0508@ustr.eop.gov). Public versions of all documents relating to this review will be available for review shortly after the due date by appointment in the USTR Public Reading Room, 1724 F Street, NW., Washington, DC. Availability of documents may be ascertained and appointments may be made from 9:30 a.m. to noon and 1 p.m. to 4 p.m., Monday through Friday, by calling (202) 395-6186.

**Carmen Suro-Bredie,**

*Chair, Trade Policy Staff Committee.*

[FR Doc. 05-18701 Filed 9-19-05; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3190-W5-P

## DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

### Federal Highway Administration

#### Environmental Impact Statement: Multiple Counties, Alabama

**AGENCY:** Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), DOT.

**ACTION:** Notice of intent.

**SUMMARY:** The FHWA is issuing this notice to advise the public that an Environmental Impact Statement will be prepared for a proposed highway project that will traverse the west central section of the State of Alabama.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Mr. Joe D. Wilkerson, Division Administrator, Federal Highway Administration, 500 Eastern Boulevard, Suite 200, Montgomery, Alabama 36117-2018, Telephone (334) 223-7370.

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:** The FHWA, in cooperation with the State of Alabama Department of Transportation, will prepare an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for Project NCPD-PE02(910). The proposed action is to construct a multi-lane, limited-access roadway to provide a connecting link in the freeway/Interstate system between I-59/I-20 near the Mississippi State line and I-85 in Montgomery, Alabama. The highway will have an approximate length of 140 miles. The study area includes large parts of six Black Belt Counties (Dallas, Hale, Lowndes, Marengo, Perry, and Sumter), as well as Autauga and Montgomery Counties. A new Interstate connector will improve system linkage, provide a safe and efficient transportation corridor, and enhance economic opportunities for the Black Belt and other areas in the region.

Alternatives under consideration include: (1) alternate route locations and (2) a no-action or no-build alternative.

The Alabama Department of Transportation and the Alabama Division Office of the Federal Highway Administration have begun a corridor study. Letters describing the proposed action and soliciting comments were sent to appropriate Federal, State, and local agencies and to private organizations and citizens who previously expressed or were known to have interest in this proposal.

In addition to the early coordination already accomplished, additional meetings will be held as appropriate, and formal public hearings will be held. Public notice will be given of the time and place for the meetings and hearings. The Draft Environmental Impact Statement will be available for public and agency review and comment prior to the public hearings.

To ensure that the full range of issues related to this proposed action are addressed and all significant issues are identified, comments and suggestions are invited from all interested parties. An interagency scoping meeting was scheduled for September 22, 2005, in Selma, Alabama. Comments or questions concerning this proposed action and the EIS should be directed to the FHWA at the address provided above.

(Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance Program Number 20.205, Highway Planning and Construction. The regulations implementing Executive Order 12372 regarding intergovernmental consultation on Federal programs and activities apply to this program.)

Issued on: September 8, 2005.

**Joe D. Wilkerson,**

*Division Administrator, Montgomery.*

[FR Doc. 05-18627 Filed 9-19-05; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4910-22-M

## DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

### Surface Transportation Board

[STB Ex Parte No. 658]

#### The 25th Anniversary of the Staggers Rail Act of 1980: A Review and Look Ahead

**AGENCY:** Surface Transportation Board, DOT.

**ACTION:** Notice of public hearing.

**SUMMARY:** The Surface Transportation Board will hold a public hearing beginning at 10 a.m. on Wednesday, October 19, 2005, at its offices in Washington, DC. The purpose of the public hearing will be to examine the impact, the effectiveness, and the future of the Staggers Rail Act of 1980 (Staggers Act). Persons wishing to speak at the hearing should notify the Board in writing.

**DATES:** The public hearing will take place on Wednesday, October 19, 2005. Any person wishing to speak at the hearing should file with the Board a written notice of intent to participate, and should identify the party, the proposed speaker, the time requested, and the topic(s) to be covered, as soon as possible but no later than October 7, 2005. Each speaker should also file with the Board his/her written testimony by October 12, 2005. Written submissions by interested persons who do not wish to appear at the hearing will also be due by October 12, 2005. A list of speakers and time will be published by October 14, 2005.

**ADDRESSES:** All notices of intent to participate and testimony may be submitted either via the Board's e-filing format or in the traditional paper format. Any person using e-filing should comply with the Board's "www.stb.dot.gov" Web site, at the "E-FILING" link. Any person submitting a filing in the traditional paper format should send an original and 10 copies of the filing to: Surface Transportation Board, Attn: STB Ex Parte No. 658, 1925 K Street, NW., Washington, DC 20423-0001.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:**

Joseph H. Dettmar, (202) 565-1609.

[Assistance for the hearing impaired is available through the Federal Information Relay Service (FIRS) at: (800) 877-8339.]

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:** The Board will hold a public hearing to provide a forum for the expression of views on the impact, effectiveness, and future of the Staggers Act. Interested persons, including large and small rail customers, large and small railroad companies, representatives of local communities, and State and Federal government officials, are invited to participate. The hearing is not intended to offer a forum for discussion of pending cases, but rather is intended as an opportunity for interested persons to address broader issues regarding the Staggers Act generally.

**Date of Hearing.** The hearing will begin at 10 am on Wednesday, October 19, 2005, in the 7th floor hearing room at the Board's headquarters in Washington, DC, and will continue, with short breaks if necessary, until every person scheduled to speak has been heard.

**Notice of Intent To Participate.** Any person wishing to speak at the hearing should file with the Board a written notice of intent to participate, and should identify the party, the proposed speaker, the time requested, and topic(s) to be covered, as soon as possible, but no later than October 7, 2005.

**Testimony.** Each speaker should file with the Board his/her written testimony by October 12, 2005. Also, any interested person who wishes to submit a written statement without appearing at the October 19 hearing should file that statement by October 12, 2005.

**Board Releases and Live Audio Available Via the Internet.** Decisions and notices of the Board, including this notice, are available on the Board's Web site at "<http://www.stb.dot.gov>." This hearing will be available on the Board's Web site by live audio streaming. To access the hearing, click on the "Live Audio" link under "Information Center" at the left side of the Home page beginning at 10 a.m. on October 19, 2005.

This action will not significantly affect either the quality of the human environment or the conservation of energy resources.

Dated: September 14, 2005.

**Vernon A. Williams,**  
Secretary.

[FR Doc. 05-18681 Filed 9-19-05; 8:45 am]

**BILLING CODE 4915-01-P**

## DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

### Surface Transportation Board

[STB Docket No. AB-43 (Sub-No. 176X)]

#### Illinois Central Railroad Company— Abandonment Exemption—in Rankin County, MS

Illinois Central Railroad Company (IC) has filed a notice of exemption under 49 CFR 1152 Subpart F—*Exempt Abandonments* to abandon a 1.52-mile line of railroad, on its Flowood Trackage, between milepost 70.20 and milepost 71.72, in Flowood, Rankin County, MS. The line traverses United States Postal Service Zip Code 39232.

IC 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 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 October 20, 2005, 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

<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 (SEA) 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> Each OFA must be accompanied by the filing fee, which currently is set at \$1,200. See 49 CFR 1002.2(f)(25).

trail use/rail banking requests under 49 CFR 1152.29 must be filed by September 30, 2005. Petitions to reopen or requests for public use conditions under 49 CFR 1152.28 must be filed by October 11, 2005, with the Surface Transportation Board, 1925 K Street, NW., Washington, DC 20423-0001.

A copy of any petition filed with the Board should be sent to IC's representative: Michael J. Barron, Jr., Illinois Central Railroad Company, c/o CN, 17641 S. Ashland Avenue, Homewood, IL 60430.

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

IC has filed environmental and historic reports which address the effects, if any, of the abandonment on the environment and historic resources. SEA will issue an environmental assessment (EA) by September 23, 2005. Interested persons may obtain a copy of the EA by writing to SEA (Room 500, Surface Transportation Board, Washington, DC 20423-0001) or by calling SEA, at (202) 565-1539. [Assistance for the hearing impaired is available through the Federal Information Relay Service (FIRS) at 1-800-877-8339.] 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.

Pursuant to the provisions of 49 CFR 1152.29(e)(2), IC shall file a notice of consummation with the Board to signify that it has exercised the authority granted and fully abandoned the line. If consummation has not been effected by IC's filing of a notice of consummation by September 20, 2006, and there are no legal or regulatory barriers to consummation, the authority to abandon will automatically expire.

Board decisions and notices are available on our Web site at <http://www.stb.dot.gov>.

Decided: September 14, 2005.

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

**Vernon A. Williams,**  
Secretary.

[FR Doc. 05-18746 Filed 9-19-05; 8:45 am]

**BILLING CODE 4915-01-P**