

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION**Federal Railroad Administration****Application for Approval of Discontinuance or Modification of a Railroad Signal System or Relief From the Requirements of Title 49 Code of Federal Regulations Part 236**

Pursuant to Title 49 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) Part 235 and 49 U.S.C. App. 26, the following railroads have petitioned the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) seeking approval for the discontinuance or modification of the signal system or relief from the requirements of 49 CFR Part 236 as detailed below.

Block Signal Application (BS-AP)—No. 3458

Applicant: Duluth, Missabe and Iron Range Railway Company, Mr. D.B. Moore, Chief Engineer, Engineering Department, 329 Second Street, Proctor, Minnesota 55810-1091

The Duluth, Missabe and Iron Range Railway Company seeks approval of the proposed modification of the traffic control system, on the single main track, at Bridge 19A, near Milepost 18.2, between BN Saunders and Ambridge, Wisconsin, on the Missabe Division, Interstate Branch, consisting of the replacement of the existing DC coded track circuit with a wheel count-based trap circuit, over the steel decked bridge.

The reasons given for the proposed changes are that the insulated bridge pads are approaching the end of their useful life, and steadily increasing annual costs for maintenance and train delays associated with troubleshooting and repairs. The pads are only available from an Australian supplier and full scale replacement cost is estimated at \$65,000.

BS-AP-No. 3459

Applicant: CSX Transportation, Incorporated, Mr. R.M. Kadlick, Chief Engineer Train Control, 500 Water Street (S/C J-350), Jacksonville, Florida 32202

CSX Transportation, Incorporated seeks approval of the proposed modification of the automatic block and traffic control signal systems, on the single main track and siding, near Washington, Indiana, between milepost BC-169 and milepost BC-174, Illinois/Indiana Subdivisions, Louisville Service Lane, consisting of the discontinuance and removal of absolute control signals 3L, 3R, 5RA, and 5L and automatic block signals 1713A and 1714; installation of new automatic block signals 1718A, 1718B, and 1719 at W.E. Washington; and installation of a new absolute control signal 5L and power-

operated switch at the east end of Washington.

The reason given for the proposed changes is to eliminate facilities no longer needed in present day operation and increase operating efficiency.

BS-AP-No. 3460

Applicant: CSX Transportation, Incorporated, Mr. R.M. Kadlick, Chief Engineer Train Control, 500 Water Street (S/C J-350), Jacksonville, Florida 32202

CSX Transportation, Incorporated seeks approval of the proposed modification of the automatic block signal system, on the single main track and siding, near Rushville, Indiana, milepost BD-85.5, Indianapolis Subdivision, Louisville Division, consisting of the conversion of absolute control signal E2 to automatic signal 856; and discontinuance and removal of absolute control signals E1, W1, WA2, and WD2 associated with the previous removal of the N.K.P. railroad crossing at grade.

The reason given for the proposed changes is to eliminate facilities no longer needed in present day operation.

BS-AP-No. 3461

Applicant: Long Island Railroad, Mr. Frederick E. Smith, P.E., Chief Engineer, Hillside Maintenance Complex, 93-59 183 Street, Hollis, New York 11423

The Long Island Railroad seeks approval of the proposed modification to Brook and Van Interlockings, in Brooklyn, New York, consisting of the discontinuance and removal of Brook Interlocking Signals 12R, 8L, 14R, 10L, and A1, and Van Interlocking Signal 8R, associated with numerous signal aspect changes and installation of a new crossover switch at Brook Interlocking.

The reason given for the proposed changes is to modernize and upgrade the existing facilities.

BS-AP-No. 3462

Applicant: CSX Transportation, Incorporated, Mr. R.M. Kadlick, Chief Engineer Train Control, 500 Water Street (S/C J-350), Jacksonville, Florida 32202

CSX Transportation, Incorporated seeks approval of the proposed discontinuance and removal of the automatic block signal system, on the single main track and sidings, between Howell, milepost 00H-323.5 and Mount Vernon, milepost 00H-344.9, Indiana, St. Louis Subdivision, Chicago Service Lane, a distance of approximately 21 miles, operate exclusively by a Direct Traffic Control Block system, and provide for the installation of inoperative approach signals at Howell and the Mt. Vernon rail crossing at grade.

The reason given for the proposed changes is to eliminate facilities no longer needed in present day operation.

Any interested party desiring to protest the granting of an application shall set forth specifically the grounds upon which the protest is made, and contain a concise statement of the interest of the Protestor in the proceeding. The original and two copies of the protest shall be filed with the Associate Administrator for Safety, FRA, 400 Seventh Street, S.W., Mail Stop 25, Washington, D.C. 20590 within 45 calendar days of the date of publication of this notice. Additionally, one copy of the protest shall be furnished to the applicant at the address listed above.

FRA expects to be able to determine these matters without an oral hearing. However, if a specific request for an oral hearing is accompanied by a showing that the party is unable to adequately present his or her position by written statements, an application may be set for public hearing.

Issued in Washington, D.C. on March 17, 1998.

Grady C. Cothen, Jr.,

Deputy Associate Administrator for Safety Standards and Program Development.

[FR Doc. 98-8230 Filed 3-27-98; 8:45 am]

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DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION**Surface Transportation Board**

[STB Docket No. AB-57 (Sub-No. 40X)]

Soo Line Railroad Company; Abandonment Exemption; in Hennepin County, MN

On March 10, 1998, Soo Line Railroad Company, operating under the trade name Canadian Pacific Railway (Soo Line), filed with the Surface Transportation Board (Board) a petition under 49 U.S.C. 10502 for exemption from the provisions of 49 U.S.C. 10903 to abandon its line of railroad known as the Hiawatha/Cedar Avenue Wye, extending from milepost 423.59±, near the eastern edge of Cedar Avenue to mileposts 423.26± and 423.21±, respectively, near the eastern edge of Hiawatha Avenue, a total distance of approximately 1 mile, in Hennepin County, MN. The line traverses U.S. Postal Service Zip Code 55407, and includes the station of Minneapolis at milepost 423.

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

The interest 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 an exemption proceeding pursuant to 49 U.S.C. 10502(b). A final decision will be issued by June 26, 1998.¹

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 petition for exemption. Each OFA 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 49 CFR 1152.28 or for trail use/rail banking under 49 CFR 1152.29 will be due no later than April 20, 1998. 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 No. AB-57 (Sub-No. 40X) and must be sent to: (1) Surface Transportation Board, Office of the Secretary, Case Control Unit, 1925 K Street, N.W., Washington, DC 20423-0001; and (2) Larry D. Starns, Esq., Leonard, Street and Deinard, 150 South 5th St., Suite 2300, Minneapolis, MN 55402.

Persons seeking further information concerning abandonment 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.

Decided: March 23, 1998.

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

Vernon A. Williams,

Secretary.

[FR Doc. 98-8118 Filed 3-27-98; 8:45 am]

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DEPARTMENT OF THE TREASURY

Customs Service

Announcement of National Customs Automation Program Test: Semi-Monthly Statement Processing Prototype

AGENCY: Customs Service, Treasury.

ACTION: General notice.

SUMMARY: This notice announces Customs plan to test the semi-monthly filing and statement processing program (semi-monthly processing), and invites all eligible importers to participate. Semi-monthly processing provides for periodic filing of entry summaries and payment of duties, taxes, and fees. Semi-monthly processing allows filers to go to a periodic statement and filing process, whereby all estimated duties, taxes, and fees along with the corresponding entry summaries for a semi-monthly period (fifteen days) are due seven days following the end of a fifteen day period. This notice provides a description of the semi-monthly processing prototype, outlines the evaluation methodology to be used, and sets forth the eligibility requirements to participate.

EFFECTIVE DATES: The semi-monthly processing prototype will commence no earlier than April 1998, will be implemented over an 18-month period, and will end when the periodic payment/statement feature of ACE is available through a NCAP/P test or otherwise in the semi-monthly prototype ports. Evaluations of the semi-monthly processing at the ports will be conducted periodically. All applications to participate in the prototype test must be received within 30 days of the date of this notice.

ADDRESSES: Applications should be addressed to Rosalyn McLaughlin-Nelson, U.S. Customs Service, ACE, 7501 Boston Blvd, Springfield, VA 22153.

FOR INFORMATION CONTACT: For inquiries regarding the specifics of the semi-monthly processing prototype contact Rosalyn McLaughlin-Nelson at (703)921-7494. Individual port contact persons will be provided to the

participants at a later date. For inquiries regarding the eligibility of specific importers, contact Margaret Fearon, Process Analysis and Requirements Team (202) 927-1413.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Background

Title VI of the North American Free Trade Agreement Implementation Act (the Act), Pub.L. 103-182, 107 Stat. 2057 (December 8, 1993), contains provisions pertaining to Customs Modernization (107 Stat. 2170). Subtitle B of Title VI establishes the National Customs Automation Program (NCAP)—an automated and electronic system for the processing of commercial importations. Pursuant to these provisions, Customs is in the process of developing a new commercial processing system, the Automated Commercial Environment (ACE). The ACE is being designed to support the new Trade Compliance processes. One of the main features of the ACE will be the periodic summary filing and periodic statements function, which will enable each account to pay duties, taxes, fees, and other payments owed using a periodic statement cycle. During the latter development of the NCAP/P the periodic summary filing and periodic statements functional capabilities will be fully integrated into the new ACE system. Semi-monthly processing using the current Automated Commercial System (ACS) will eventually cease as the ACE system is deployed nationwide.

For programs designed to evaluate existing and planned components of the National Customs Automation Program (NCAP), § 101.9(b) of the Customs Regulations (19 CFR 101.9(b)), implements the NCAP testing procedures. This test concerns an existing component of the NCAP relating to the electronic payment of duties, fees, and taxes, and is established pursuant to that regulation.

I. Development Methodology

The semi-monthly processing test will be monitored by an evaluation team consisting of representatives from the Customs Trade Compliance Redesign/ACE Project Team, the Office of Finance, Financial Systems Division, and Entry personnel from the semi-monthly processing prototype ports. This team will conduct periodic evaluations to monitor progress, resolve issues, and evaluate program effectiveness.

II. Eligibility Requirements

Customs will select a limited number of applicants for the semi-monthly

¹ Soo Line requests expedited handling of this petition to enable it to facilitate the removal of rail materials and structures from the right-of-way before the State of Minnesota resumes construction of Highway 55 on July 1, 1998. If the record supports an abandonment, we will attempt to accommodate Soo Line's request.