

promulgated by RSPA/OPS. After completion of the hydrostatic test, the pressure is relieved and the water is removed from the pipeline during de-watering procedures.

The de-watering process involves connecting a temporary de-watering line to the main pipeline with mechanical couplers and adequately securing the temporary de-watering line to prevent displacement. A de-watering pig is then forced through the main pipeline using several hundred pounds pressure of compressed air. As the pig is forced through the pipeline with air pressure, the water remaining in the line from hydrostatic testing is pushed out of the main pipeline through the temporary de-watering line.

During the de-watering process, significant and sudden variations in pressure often occur within the main pipeline and temporary de-watering line. These variations can be caused by changes in pig velocity as it passes through bends in the pipeline or changes in pig and water velocity due to changes in pipeline elevation. Compressed air escaping around the pig, which can combine with air already present in the main pipeline at high spots in the pipe, can also create a source for stored energy within the main pipeline. These sudden pressure changes produce surges that are transferred from the main pipeline to the temporary de-watering line. This can result in movement of the temporary de-watering line, as the pressures can easily exceed the working pressures and bending capabilities of the temporary de-watering line couplers. The movement of the de-watering line can result in violent failure of the temporary piping system, particularly when the temporary piping is not properly anchored. This situation can be exacerbated when the temporary pipeline suddenly changes direction, when couplers or pipe sections have worn beyond the specified tolerances established by the manufacturer of the de-watering piping system, or when the entire de-watering manifold is inadequately designed for the stresses that can be imposed while de-watering.

RSPA/OPS recognizes the existence of hazards associated with testing pipelines and requires operators to protect their employees and the public during hydrostatic testing. Section 192.515(a) states that “* * * each operator shall insure that every reasonable precaution is taken to protect its employees and the general public during the testing.” In addition, § 195.402(c) requires each pipeline operator to prepare and follow

procedures for safety during maintenance and normal operation.

Advisory Bulletin (ADB-04-01)

To: Owners and operators of gas and hazardous liquid pipeline systems.

Subject: Hazards associated with de-watering of pipelines.

Purpose: To advise owners and operators of gas and hazardous liquid pipelines to consider hazards associated with pipeline de-watering operations and to follow recommended work practices and guidelines to reduce the potential for unexpected separation of temporary de-watering pipes.

Advisory: Each operator of a gas or hazardous liquid pipeline should take recommended precautions against the unexpected separation of temporary de-watering pipes during de-watering procedures. This advisory bulletin was originally issued jointly with the Department of Labor’s Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) as Safety and Health Information Bulletin SHIB 06-21-2004. The original advisory bulletin issued by OSHA can be viewed at <http://www.osha.gov>, or the RSPA/OPS Web site at <http://www.ops.gov>.

The following guidelines will help reduce the risk of injury to employees involved in de-watering activities:

- *Study the piping system.* During the initial planning stage of a de-watering operation, an engineering analysis of the existing and temporary piping system should be performed to identify the pressure associated with fluids and other forces that could adversely affect the integrity of the pipeline or the stability of the drainage and its components. The operator should design the de-watering system and develop installation techniques based on the expected forces of the particular project. Alternatively, designs and techniques could be developed for a “worst case” scenario that could be applied to all de-watering projects.

- *Anchor the de-watering lines.* It is accepted industry practice to adequately anchor or secure de-watering piping to prevent movement and separation of the piping. Operators should establish effective anchoring systems based on expected forces and ensure that the systems are used during de-watering projects.

- *Ensure condition of couplings and parts.* All couplings and parts of the de-watering system need to be properly selected for their application. The associated piping which the couplings connect is a significant variable in the entire mechanical piping system. The couplings are manufactured in a controlled environment, and variations

in the quality of the couplings should be limited. Operators should ensure that couplings are within manufacturer’s tolerances and free of damage that may result in connection failure. A chain is only as strong as its weakest link—in de-watering piping systems, the weakest link frequently is the temporary de-watering pipe connections.

- *Provide adequate employee training.* This training should instruct employees on de-watering installation designs and techniques, including proper coupling and anchoring methods. Operators should ensure that employees understand the potential hazards of improperly installed de-watering systems, provide employees a means of determining whether the pipe groove meets manufacturer’s tolerances, and the procedures they should implement to protect themselves and others working around them.

- *Proper procedures.* Operators should ensure that proper installation and de-watering procedures are followed on the job site.

Operators may refer to recommended practices provided by national consensus standards organizations, such as American Petroleum Institute (API) Recommended Practice for Occupational Safety for Oil and Gas Well Drilling and Servicing Operations (API RP 54-1999, Section 12.4.3); American National Standards Institute (ANSI) Power Piping (ANSI B31.1-1973, Section 121.2); and U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) Safety and Health Requirements Manual (EM 285-1-1, 1996 Section 20).

Issued in Washington, DC, on September 23, 2004.

Stacey L. Gerard,

Associate Administrator for Pipeline Safety.

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DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Surface Transportation Board

[STB Docket No. AB-6 (Sub-No. 425X)]

The Burlington Northern and Santa Fe Railway Company—Abandonment Exemption—in Chase, Morris, Marion and Dickinson Counties, KS

The Burlington Northern and Santa Fe Railway Company (BNSF) has filed a notice of exemption under 49 CFR part 1152 subpart F—*Exempt Abandonments*, to abandon a 25.57-mile line of railroad between BNSF milepost 0.00 near Neva and milepost 25.45 near Lost Springs, in Chase, Morris, Marion and Dickinson Counties, KS. The line

traverses United States Postal Service Zip Codes 66838, 66850, 66859 and 66869.

BNSF has certified that: (1) No local traffic has moved over the line for at least 2 years; (2) all overhead traffic can be rerouted over other lines; (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 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 report), 49 CFR 1105.8 (historic report), 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 29, 2004, unless stayed pending reconsideration. Petitions to stay that do not involve environmental issues,¹ formal expressions of intent to file an OFA under 49 CFR 1152.27(c)(2),² and trail use/rail banking requests under 49 CFR 1152.29 must be filed by October 12, 2004. Petitions to reopen or requests for public use conditions under 49 CFR 1152.28 must be filed by October 19, 2004, 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 BNSF's representative: Michael Smith, Freeborn & Peters, 311 S. Wacker Dr., Suite 3000, Chicago, IL 60606-6677.

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

BNSF has filed an environmental report which addresses the abandonment's effects, if any, on the environment and historic resources. SEA will issue an environmental assessment (EA) by October 4, 2004. 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), BNSF 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 BNSF's filing of a notice of consummation by September 29, 2005, 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 21, 2004.

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

Vernon A. Williams,
Secretary.

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DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Surface Transportation Board

[STB Docket No. AB-6 (Sub-No. 426X)]

The Burlington Northern and Santa Fe Railway Company—Abandonment Exemption—In Matagorda and Wharton Counties, TX

The Burlington Northern and Santa Fe Railway Company (BNSF) has filed a notice of exemption under 49 CFR 1152 Subpart F—*Exempt Abandonments* to abandon 20.89 miles of rail line between BNSF milepost 66.95 in Bay City and milepost 54.00 near Cane Junction and between milepost 0.00 near Cane Junction and milepost 7.94 near Newgulf, in Matagorda and Wharton Counties, TX. The line traverses United States Postal Service Zip Codes 77414, 77420 and 77482.

BNSF has certified that: (1) No local traffic has moved over the line for at least 2 years; (2) any overhead traffic can be rerouted over other lines; (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 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 29, 2004, unless stayed pending reconsideration. Petitions to stay that do not involve environmental issues,¹ formal expressions of intent to file an OFA under 49 CFR 1152.27(c)(2),² and trail use/rail banking requests under 49 CFR 1152.29 must be filed by October 12, 2004. Petitions to reopen or requests for public use conditions under 49 CFR 1152.28 must be filed by October 19, 2004, 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 UP's representative: Michael Smith, Freeborn & Peters, 311 S. Wacker Dr., Suite 3000, Chicago, IL 60606-6677.

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

BNSF has filed an environmental report which addresses the effects, if any, of the abandonment on the

¹ 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.

² Each OFA must be accompanied by the filing fee, which currently is set at \$1,100. See 49 CFR 1002.2(f)(25).

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