

Discussion of Comments

RSPA received public comments on Notice 1 from six gas pipeline operators and one pipeline related trade association. All seven commenters endorsed the alternative approach proposed by the petitioner and believed that the plan of action would ensure pipeline safety. Two pipeline operators stated that "CNGT's proposal appears to be an excellent implementation of RSPA's proposed implementation of Risk Based Pipeline Operations procedures."

Action on Petition

In accordance with the foregoing and by this order, RSPA finds that the requested waiver would not be inconsistent with pipeline safety. However, if during the hydrostatic testing required under Alternative A, a leak other than a specified minor leak occurs, CNGT is required to implement Alternative B. Accordingly, CNGT's petition for waiver from compliance with the requirements of 49 CFR 192.611(a) is granted under the provisions set out in Alternate A and Alternate B (above) under the heading Alternate Approach.

Issued in Washington, DC on September 24, 1996.

Richard B. Felder,

Associate Administrator for Pipeline Safety.
[FR Doc. 96-24863 Filed 9-26-96; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4910-60-P

Surface Transportation Board¹

[STB Finance Docket No. 33115]

North Coast Railroad Authority—Lease and Operation Exemption—California Northern Railroad Company

Northwestern Pacific Railroad Authority, and Golden Gate Bridge, Highway and Transportation District North Coast Railroad Authority (NCRA), a Class III railroad, has filed a notice of exemption under 49 CFR 1150.41 to acquire by lease and operate approximately 142.2 miles of California Northern Railroad Company (CNRC) line,² known as the Northwestern

Pacific Line,³ located in Mendocino, Sonoma, Marin and Napa Counties, CA.⁴ In addition, the Northwestern Pacific Railroad Authority and the Golden Gate Bridge, Highway and Transportation District have agreed to grant surface freight and passenger excursion easement to NCRA for a total of 67.9 miles of line (that portion of the Northwestern Pacific Line not owned by NCRA). The line is comprised of four segments: (1) the Willits Segment—extending from NWP milepost 142.5 near Outlet Station to NWP milepost 68.22 near Healdsburg, CA, a distance of approximately 74.3 miles;⁵ (2) the Healdsburg Segment—extending from NWP milepost 68.2 near Healdsburg, CA, to NWP milepost 26.96 near Novato, CA, a distance of approximately 41.2 miles; (3) the Novato Segment—extending from NWP milepost 26.96 near Novato, CA, to NWP milepost 25.6 near Ignacio, CA, a distance of approximately 1.4 miles; and (4) the Lombard Segment—extending from NWP milepost 25.6 near Ignacio, CA, to Lombard Station in Napa County, CA, SPM milepost 63.4, a distance of approximately 25.3 miles.

The transaction was scheduled to be consummated on or after the effective date of September 12, 1996.

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 does not automatically stay the transaction.

An original and 10 copies of all pleadings, referring to STB Finance Docket No. 33115, must be filed with the Surface Transportation Board, Office of the Secretary, Case Control Branch, 1201 Constitution Avenue, N.W., Washington, DC 20423. In addition, a copy of each pleading must be served on: Christopher J. Neary, Esq., 110 South Main Street, Suite C, Willits, CA 95490. Telephone: (707) 459-5551.

Decided: September 18, 1996.

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

Vernon A. Williams,
Secretary.

[FR Doc. 96-24703 Filed 9-26-96; 8:45 am]

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¹ The ICC Termination Act of 1995, Pub. L. No. 104-88, 109 Stat. 803, which was enacted on December 29, 1995, and took effect on January 1, 1996, abolished the Interstate Commerce Commission and transferred certain functions to the Surface Transportation Board (Board). This notice relates to functions that are subject to Board jurisdiction pursuant to 49 U.S.C. 10902.

² CNRC is assigning to NCRA its rights obtained by Lease Agreement dated August 27, 1993, and amended April 30, 1996, between the Southern Pacific Transportation Company and CNRC.

³ NCRA will be the operator of the Northwestern Pacific Line and will be doing business under the name "Northwestern Pacific Railroad."

⁴ NCRA is currently operating over approximately 131.7 miles of the Northwestern Pacific Line under a trackage rights arrangement previously exempted by the Board. See *North Coast Railroad Authority—Trackage Rights Exemption—California Northern Railroad Company*, Finance Docket No. 32994 (STB served July 19, 1996).

⁵ Rail line owned by NCRA.

[STB Finance Docket No. 33120]

Connecticut Southern Railroad, Inc.—Acquisition and Operation Exemption—Lines of Consolidated Rail Corporation

Connecticut Southern Railroad, Inc. (CSO), a noncarrier, has filed a verified notice of exemption under 49 CFR 1150.31 to acquire and operate 23.1 miles of rail lines in the State of Connecticut from Consolidated Rail Corporation (Conrail) between milepost 0.0, at East Hartford, and milepost 6.7, at East Windsor; between milepost 0.0, at Windsor Locks, and milepost 4.2, at Suffield; between milepost 0.0, at Hartford, and milepost 9.6, at Manchester; and between milepost 0.0, at Hartford, and milepost 2.6, at Wethersfield. In addition, CSO will acquire by assignment Conrail's rail freight easement over 55 miles of rail line owned by the National Railroad Passenger Corporation in the States of Connecticut and Massachusetts between Amtrak milepost 7.0, near North Haven, CT, and Amtrak milepost 62.0, at Springfield, MA.

The transaction is expected to be consummated on September 20, 1996.

This transaction is related to STB Finance Docket No. 33121, *RailTex, Inc.—Continuance in Control Exemption—Connecticut Southern Railroad, Inc.*, wherein RailTex, Inc. has concurrently filed a verified notice to continue in control of CSO, upon its becoming a Class III rail carrier.

If the verified notice contains false or misleading information, the exemption is void *ab initio*. Petitions to reopen the proceeding 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. 33120, must be filed with the Surface Transportation Board, Office of the Secretary, Case Control Branch, 1201 Constitution Avenue, N.W., Washington, DC 20423. In addition, a copy of each pleading must be served on Karl Morell, Esq., Ball, Janik LLP, 1455 F Street, N.W., Suite 225, Washington, DC 20005.

Decided: September 18, 1996.

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

Vernon A. Williams,
Secretary.

[FR Doc. 96-24708 Filed 9-26-96; 8:45 am]

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