

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 of 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 or discontinuance of trackage rights 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 May 8, 2008, unless stayed pending reconsideration. Petitions to stay that do not involve environmental issues,<sup>2</sup> formal expressions of intent to file an OFA under 49 CFR 1152.27(c)(2),<sup>3</sup> and trail use/rail banking requests under 49 CFR 1152.29 must be filed by April 18, 2008. Petitions to reopen or requests for public use conditions under 49 CFR

1152.28 must be filed by April 28, 2008, with the Surface Transportation Board, 395 E Street, SW., Washington, DC 20423-0001.

A copy of any petition filed with the Board should be sent to UP's representative: Gabriel S. Meyer, Assistant General Attorney, 1400 Douglas Street, STOP 1580, Omaha, NE 68179.

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

UP has filed a combined environmental and historic report addressing the effects, if any, of the abandonment and discontinuance of the trackage rights on the environment and historic resources. SEA will issue an environmental assessment (EA) by April 11, 2008. Interested persons may obtain a copy of the EA by writing to SEA (Room 1100, Surface Transportation Board, Washington, DC 20423-0001) or by calling SEA, at (202) 245-0305. [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), UP 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 UP's filing of a notice of consummation by April 8, 2009, 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: April 1, 2008.

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

**Anne K. Quinlan,**

*Acting Secretary.*

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**DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS**

**Joint Biomedical Laboratory Research and Development and Clinical Science Research and Development Services Scientific Merit Review Board; Notice of Meetings**

The Department of Veterans Affairs gives notice under the Public Law 92-463 (Federal Advisory Committee Act) that the subcommittees of the Joint Biomedical Laboratory Research and Development and Clinical Science Research and Development Services Scientific Merit Review Board will meet from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. as indicated below:

Subcommittee for	Date(s)	Location
Mental Hlth & Behav Sci-A	May 5, 2008	L'Enfant Plaza Hotel.
Respiration	May 9, 2008	Marriott Crystal City Hotel.
Endocrinology-A&B	May 12-13, 2008	L'Enfant Plaza Hotel.
Neurobiology-E	May 15, 2008	L'Enfant Plaza Hotel.
Hematology	May 16, 2008	L'Enfant Plaza Hotel.
Cardiovascular Studies	May 19, 2008	The Westin.
Immunology-A	May 20, 2008	Marriott Crystal City.
Cellular & Molecular Medicine	May 21, 2008	*VA Central Office.
Clinical Research Program	May 22, 2008	Marriott Crystal City.
Infectious Diseases-A	May 23, 2008	The Westin.
Infectious Diseases-B	May 28, 2008	Marriott Crystal City.
Mental Hlth & Behav Sci-B	May 29, 2008	Marriott Crystal City.
Neurobiology-C	June 2-3, 2008	St. Gregory Hotel.
Epidemiology	June 3, 2008	*VA Central Office.
Nephrology	June 6, 2008	L'Enfant Plaza Hotel.
Neurobiology-A	June 9, 2008	*VA Central Office.
Neurobiology-D	June 9, 2008	The Westin.
Surgery	June 9, 2008	The Westin.
Gastroenterology	June 12, 2008	The Westin.
Oncology	June 12-13 2008	L'Enfant Plaza Hotel.
Immunology-B	June 13, 2008	L'Enfant Plaza Hotel.

<sup>2</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>3</sup> Each OFA must be accompanied by the filing fee, which currently is set at \$1,300. *See* 49 CFR 1002.2(f)(25).

The addresses of the hotels and VA Central Office are:

L'Enfant Plaza Hotel, 480 L'Enfant Plaza, SW., Washington, DC; Marriott Crystal City, 1999 Jefferson Davis Highway, Arlington, VA; St. Gregory Hotel, 2033 M Street, NW., Washington, DC; VA Central Office, 1722 Eye Street, NW., Washington, DC; The Westin Washington DC City Center Hotel, 1400 M Street, NW., Washington, DC.

\*Teleconference

The purpose of the Merit Review Board is to provide advice on the scientific quality, budget, safety and mission relevance of investigator research proposals submitted for VA merit review consideration. Proposals submitted for review by the Board involve a wide range of medical specialties within the general areas of biomedical, behavioral and clinical science research.

The subcommittee meetings will be open to the public for approximately one hour at the start of each meeting to discuss the general status of the program. The remaining portion of each subcommittee meeting will be closed to the public for the review, discussion, and evaluation of initial and renewal projects.

The closed portion of each meeting involves discussion, examination, reference to staff and consultant critiques of research protocols. During this portion of each subcommittee meeting, discussion and recommendations will deal with qualifications of personnel conducting the studies, the disclosure of which would constitute a clearly unwarranted invasion of personal privacy, as well as research information, the premature disclosure of which could significantly frustrate implementation of proposed

agency action regarding such research projects.

As provided by subsection 10(d) of Public Law 92-463, as amended, closing portions of these subcommittee meetings is in accordance with 5 U.S.C., 552b(c) (6) and (9)(8). Those who plan to attend or would like to obtain a copy of minutes of the subcommittee meetings and rosters of the members of the subcommittees should contact LeRoy G. Frey, PhD, Chief, Program Review (121F), Department of Veterans Affairs, 810 Vermont Avenue, NW., Washington, DC 20420 at (202) 254-0288.

Dated: March 31 2008.

By direction of the Secretary.

**E. Philip Riggin,**

*Committee Management Officer.*

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