

point of connection with the Central Railroad Company of Indiana's (CIND) Westport Industrial Track near CIND milepost 225.0) to milepost 64.80, also at Craig (near the intersection of N County Road 250 W and West Base Road).

According to the verified notice of exemption, PLRI is a subsidiary of Lowe's Pellets & Grain, Inc. (Lowe's). PLRI states that CIND had operated over the Line to provide direct rail service to Lowe's for several years but recently declined to provide service, advising Lowe's that it appeared that the Line was owned by Conrail, not CIND. Lowe's created PLRI to purchase the Line from Conrail, which confirmed its ownership of the Line. PLRI states that, although it may elect to provide common carrier service itself should the need arise, it contemplates reaching an accord with CIND under which CIND would resume switching operations over the Line.

PLRI certifies that its projected annual revenues are not expected to exceed \$5 million, and will not exceed those that would qualify it as a Class III rail carrier. PLRI further certifies that the proposed transaction does not involve any provision or agreement that would limit future interchange with a third-party connecting carrier.

The transaction may be consummated on or after January 19, 2020, the effective date of the exemption (30 days after the verified notice was filed).

If the verified 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 will not automatically stay the effectiveness of the exemption. Petitions to stay must be filed no later than January 10, 2020 (at least seven days before the exemption becomes effective).

All pleadings, referring to Docket No. FD 36366, must be filed with the Surface Transportation Board either via e-filing or in writing addressed to 395 E Street SW, Washington, DC 20423-0001. In addition, a copy of each pleading must be served on PLRI's representative, Robert A. Wimbish, Fletcher & Sippel LLC, 29 North Wacker Drive, Suite 800, Chicago, IL 60606-3208.

According to PLRI, this action is categorically excluded from environmental review under 49 CFR 1105.6(c) and from historic preservation reporting requirements under 49 CFR 1105.8(b)(1).

Board decisions and notices are available at www.stb.gov.

Decided: December 27, 2019.

By the Board, Allison C. Davis, Director, Office of Proceedings.

Eden Besera,
Clearance Clerk.

[FR Doc. 2019-28392 Filed 1-2-20; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4915-01-P

SURFACE TRANSPORTATION BOARD

[Docket No. FD 36377]

BNSF Railway Company—Trackage Rights Exemption—Union Pacific Railroad Company

BNSF Railway Company (BNSF), a Class I rail carrier, has filed a verified notice of exemption under 49 CFR 1180.2(d)(7) for its acquisition of restricted, local, temporary trackage rights over two rail lines owned by Union Pacific Railroad Company (UP) between: (1) UP milepost 93.2 at Stockton, Cal., on UP's Oakland Subdivision, and UP milepost 219.4 at Elsey, Cal., on UP's Canyon Subdivision, a distance of 126.2 miles; and (2) UP milepost 219.4 at Elsey and UP milepost 280.7 at Keddie, Cal., on UP's Canyon Subdivision, a distance of 61.3 miles (collectively, the Lines).

Pursuant to a written temporary trackage rights agreement, UP has agreed to grant restricted trackage rights to BNSF over the Lines. The purpose of this transaction is to permit BNSF to move empty and loaded unit ballast trains to and from the ballast pit at Elsey, which is adjacent to the Lines. The agreement provides that the trackage rights are temporary in nature and are scheduled to expire on December 31, 2020.¹

The transaction may be consummated on or after January 19, 2020, the effective date of the exemption (30 days after the verified notice was filed).

As a condition to this exemption, any employees affected by the acquisition of the trackage rights will be protected by the conditions imposed in *Norfolk & Western Railway—Trackage Rights—Burlington Northern, Inc.*, 354 I.C.C. 605 (1978), as modified in *Mendocino Coast Railway—Lease & Operate—California Western Railroad*, 360 I.C.C. 653 (1980).

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)

¹ BNSF states that, because the trackage rights are for local rather than overhead traffic, it is not filing under the Board's class exemption for temporary overhead trackage rights under 49 CFR 1180.2(d)(8). Instead, BNSF has filed under the trackage rights class exemption at section summary 1180.2(d)(7). BNSF states that it will file a petition for partial revocation of this exemption to permit these proposed trackage rights to expire at midnight on December 31, 2020, as provided in the agreement.

may be filed at any time. The filing of a petition to revoke will not automatically stay the effectiveness of the exemption. Petitions for stay must be filed no later than January 10, 2020 (at least seven days before the exemption becomes effective).

All pleadings, referring to Docket No. FD 36377, must be filed with the Surface Transportation Board either via e-filing or in writing addressed to 395 E Street SW, Washington, DC 20423-0001. In addition, a copy of each pleading must be served on BNSF's representative, Peter W. Denton, Steptoe & Johnson LLP, 1330 Connecticut Avenue NW, Washington, DC 20036.

According to BNSF, this action is categorically excluded from environmental review under 49 CFR 1105.6(c)(3) and from historic preservation reporting requirements under 49 CFR 1105.8(b)(3).

Board decisions and notices are available at www.stb.gov.

Decided: December 27, 2019.

By the Board, Allison C. Davis, Director, Office of Proceedings.

Eden Besera,
Clearance Clerk.

[FR Doc. 2019-28396 Filed 1-2-20; 8:45 am]

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SURFACE TRANSPORTATION BOARD

[Docket No. MCF 21089]

Winthrop Sargent, John Cogliano, and Paul Fuerst—Acquisition of Control—Plymouth and Brockton Street Railway Company, Brush Hill Transportation Company, and McGinn Bus Company, Inc.

AGENCY: Surface Transportation Board.

ACTION: Notice tentatively approving and authorizing finance transaction.

SUMMARY: On December 6, 2019, Winthrop Sargent (Sargent), John Cogliano (Cogliano), and Paul Fuerst (Fuerst) (collectively, Applicants), all noncarriers, filed an application for authority after-the-fact to acquire control of Plymouth and Brockton Street Railway Company (P&B), Brush Hill Transportation Company (Brush Hill), and McGinn Bus Company, Inc. (McGinn), from George S. Anzuoni and Richard W. Anzuoni (collectively, Sellers). The Board is tentatively approving and granting after-the-fact authorization of the transaction, and, if no opposing comments are timely filed, this notice will be the final Board action. Persons wishing to oppose the application must follow Board regulations.

DATES: Comments may be filed by February 18, 2020. If any comments are filed, Applicants may file a reply by March 2, 2020. If no opposing comments are filed by February 18, 2020, this notice shall be effective on February 19, 2020.

ADDRESSES: Comments may be filed with the Board either via e-filing or in writing addressed to: Surface Transportation Board, 395 E Street SW, Washington, DC 20423-0001. In addition, send one copy of comments to Applicants' representative: Matthew J. Warren, Sidley Austin LLP, 1501 K Street NW, Washington, DC 20005.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Amy Ziehm at (202) 245-0391.

Assistance for the hearing impaired is available through the Federal Relay Service at (800) 877-8339.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: According to the application, Applicants are three individuals, "none of whom is a passenger motor carrier" or owns any other interest in a passenger motor carrier, and Sellers are two individuals who also are noncarriers and do not hold any other interest in regulated passenger motor carriers. (Appl. 2-3.) Under the transaction, Sellers have transferred to Applicants 69% of the stock in P&B¹ and 100% of the stock in Brush Hill and McGinn.² (*Id.* at 3.) Specifically, Sargent has acquired 35.19% of P&B's outstanding stock and 51% of the stock in Brush Hill and McGinn; Cogliano has acquired 20.7% of P&B's outstanding stock and 30% of the stock in Brush Hill and McGinn; and Fuerst has acquired 13.11% of P&B's outstanding stock and 19% of the stock in Brush Hill and McGinn. (*Id.*)

Applicants provide the following description of the three carriers:

¹ The remaining 31% of P&B's outstanding stock is owned by approximately 50 individual stockholders who are not parties to the instant transaction. (Appl. 1, n.1.)

² Applicants received state regulatory approval from the Massachusetts Department of Public Utilities to acquire a controlling interest of the motor carriers on May 13, 2019. (*Id.* at 2, 6.) Applicants state that they recognize that their application should have been filed with the Board prior to consummation of the transaction. (*Id.* at 2.) Applicants state that they inadvertently did not seek Board approval because of a misunderstanding and a belief that they only required approval from the state regulatory authorities. (*Id.*) Applicants ask the Board to allow them to correct this oversight by granting this after-the-fact approval of their acquisition of control over the three motor carriers. (*Id.*) The Board has permitted parties to obtain after-the-fact licensing authority for a transaction when the failure to seek approval was done without malice and by mistake. See *Allied Indus. Dev. Corp.—Pet. for Declaratory Order*, FD 35477, slip op. at 6 (STB served Sept. 17, 2015) (citing *Gen. Ry.—Exemption for Acquis. of R.R. Line—in Osceola & Dickinson Cts., Iowa.*, FD 34867, slip op. at 5 (STB served June 15, 2007)).

- P&B provides local and regional passenger bus service in interstate and intrastate commerce throughout the Commonwealth of Massachusetts and the northeastern United States. It has a fleet of 30 owned and seven leased full-size coaches, three trolleys, and one service truck. (*Id.* at 4.)

- Brush Hill provides local and regional passenger bus service in interstate and intrastate commerce throughout the Commonwealth of Massachusetts and the northeastern United States. It has a fleet of six full-size coaches and four trolleys. (*Id.* at 4-5.)

- McGinn provides local and regional passenger bus service in interstate and intrastate commerce throughout the Commonwealth of Massachusetts and the northeastern United States. It has a fleet of 10 full-size coaches and one service truck. (*Id.* at 5.)³

Applicants claim that the transaction would have no impact or adverse effect on available transportation options or level of competition in the motor passenger carrier sector. (*Id.* at 1.) They plan to manage the assets with the goal of continuing to provide safe and reliable motor passenger transportation. (*Id.*) They state that they have no current plans to materially alter the service available to the public, revise the controls that are in place to ensure the continued safety and reliability of that service, or make any significant changes that would adversely affect the motor carriers' employees or customers. (*Id.* at 1-2.)

Under 49 U.S.C. 14303(b), the Board must approve and authorize a transaction that it finds consistent with the public interest, taking into consideration at least: (1) The effect of the proposed transaction on the adequacy of transportation to the public, (2) the total fixed charges that result, and (3) the interest of affected carrier employees. Applicants have submitted the information required by 49 CFR 1182.2, including information to demonstrate that the transaction is consistent with the public interest under 49 U.S.C. 14303(b), see 49 CFR 1182.2(a)(7), and a jurisdictional statement under 49 U.S.C. 14303(g) that the aggregate gross operating revenues of the involved carriers exceeded \$2 million during the 12-month period immediately preceding the filing of the application, see 49 CFR 1182.2(a)(5).

³ Additional information about these motor carriers, including U.S. Department of Transportation (USDOT) numbers, motor carrier numbers, and USDOT safety fitness ratings, can be found in the application. (See Appl. 4-5; *id.* at Ex. 1.)

Applicants assert that the transaction will have a positive effect on the adequacy of transportation services for the public. Applicants state that they currently have no intention of materially altering the nature, extent, or frequency of the service provided by the motor carriers. (*Id.* at 7.) The carriers will continue to operate as they have been, albeit under new ownership. (*Id.*) According to the application, all of the motor carriers' systems will remain in place, as will management experienced in the operation of bus companies. (*Id.*) In the long term, Applicants state that they plan to modernize the motor carriers' fleet of vehicles and invest in technological upgrades and improvements. (*Id.*) Because Applicants control no other carriers, they assert that there will be no negative impact on competition. (*Id.*)

Applicants also maintain that the transaction will not affect fixed charges. (*Id.* at 8.) They state that the stock of the motor carriers has been acquired by Applicants individually, by and through their own personal financing. (*Id.*) No funds will be borrowed to finance the transaction, and therefore, no fixed charged will be incurred by the motor carriers. (*Id.*)

Finally, Applicants assert that there will be no material effect on employee or labor conditions. (*Id.*) They state that the transaction does not envision any immediate change in the day-to-day operations of the motor carriers that could negatively impact employees. (*Id.*) Applicants state that all existing employees, contracts, and programs currently in place will remain, subject to changing market and business demands in the future. (*Id.*)

The Board finds that the acquisition as described in the application is consistent with the public interest and should be tentatively approved and authorized after-the-fact. If any opposing comments are timely filed, these findings will be deemed vacated, and, if a final decision cannot be made on the record as developed, a procedural schedule will be adopted to reconsider the application. See 49 CFR 1182.6. If no opposing comments are filed by the expiration of the comment period, this notice will take effect automatically and will be the final Board action.

This action is categorically excluded from environmental review under 49 CFR 1105.6(c).

Board decisions and notices are available at www.stb.gov.

It is ordered:

1. The transaction is approved and authorized after-the-fact, subject to the filing of opposing comments.

2. If opposing comments are timely filed, the findings made in this notice will be deemed vacated.

3. This notice will be effective February 19, 2020, unless opposing comments are filed by February 18, 2020.

4. A copy of this notice will be served on: (1) The U.S. Department of Transportation, Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration, 1200 New Jersey Avenue SE, Washington, DC 20590; (2) the U.S. Department of Justice, Antitrust Division, 10th Street & Pennsylvania Avenue NW, Washington, DC 20530; and (3) the U.S. Department of Transportation, Office of the General Counsel, 1200 New Jersey Avenue SE, Washington, DC 20590.

Decided: December 23, 2019.

By the Board, Board Members Begeman, Fuchs, and Oberman.

Kenyatta Clay,
Clearance Clerk.

[FR Doc. 2019-28283 Filed 1-2-20; 8:45 am]

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DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

National Highway Traffic Safety Administration

[Docket No. NHTSA-2019-0094; Notice 1]

Porsche Cars North America, Inc., Receipt of Petition for Decision of Inconsequential Noncompliance

AGENCY: National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA), Department of Transportation (DOT).

ACTION: Receipt of petition.

SUMMARY: Porsche Cars North America, Inc. has determined that certain model year (MY) 2018 Porsche 911 GT3 motor vehicles do not fully comply with Federal Motor Vehicle Safety Standard (FMVSS) No. 108, *Lamps, reflective devices, and associated equipment*. Porsche filed a noncompliance report dated July 24, 2019. Porsche subsequently petitioned NHTSA on August 20, 2019, for a decision that the subject noncompliance is inconsequential as it relates to motor vehicle safety. This document announces receipt of Porsche's petition.

DATES: The closing date for comments on the petition is February 3, 2020.

ADDRESSES: Interested persons are invited to submit written data, views, and arguments on this petition. Comments must refer to the docket number and notice number cited in the title of this notice and may be submitted by any of the following methods:

- **Mail:** Send comments by mail addressed to the U.S. Department of Transportation, Docket Operations, M-30, West Building Ground Floor, Room W12-140, 1200 New Jersey Avenue SE, Washington, DC 20590.

- **Hand Delivery:** Deliver comments by hand to the U.S. Department of Transportation, Docket Operations, M-30, West Building Ground Floor, Room W12-140, 1200 New Jersey Avenue SE, Washington, DC 20590. The Docket Section is open on weekdays from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. except for Federal Holidays.

- **Electronically:** Submit comments electronically by logging onto the Federal Docket Management System (FDMS) website at <https://www.regulations.gov/>. Follow the online instructions for submitting comments.

- Comments may also be faxed to (202) 493-2251.

Comments must be written in the English language, and be no greater than 15 pages in length, although there is no limit to the length of necessary attachments to the comments. If comments are submitted in hard copy form, please ensure that two copies are provided. If you wish to receive confirmation that comments you have submitted by mail were received, please enclose a stamped, self-addressed postcard with the comments. Note that all comments received will be posted without change to https://www.regulations.gov, including any personal information provided.

All comments and supporting materials received before the close of business on the closing date indicated above will be filed in the docket and will be considered. All comments and supporting materials received after the closing date will also be filed and will be considered to the fullest extent possible.

When the petition is granted or denied, a notice of the decision will also be published in the **Federal Register** pursuant to the authority indicated at the end of this notice.

All comments, background documentation, and supporting materials submitted to the docket may be viewed by anyone at the address and times given above. The documents may also be viewed on the internet at https://www.regulations.gov by following the online instructions for accessing the dockets. The docket ID number for this petition is shown in the heading of this notice.

DOT's complete Privacy Act Statement is available for review in a **Federal Register** notice published on April 11, 2000 (65 FR 19477-78).

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

I. **Overview:** Porsche has determined that certain MY 2018 Porsche 911 GT3 motor vehicles do not fully comply with Paragraph S8.1.4 and Table I-a of FMVSS No. 108, *Lamps, reflective devices, and associated equipment*. (49 CFR 571.108). Porsche filed a noncompliance report dated July 24, 2019, pursuant to 49 CFR part 573, *Defect and Noncompliance Responsibility and Reports*. Porsche subsequently petitioned NHTSA on August 20, 2019, for an exemption from the notification and remedy requirements of 49 U.S.C. Chapter 301 on the basis that this noncompliance is inconsequential as it relates to motor vehicle safety, pursuant to 49 U.S.C. 30118(d) and 30120(h) and 49 CFR part 556, *Exemption for Inconsequential Defect or Noncompliance*.

This notice of receipt of Porsche's petition is published under 49 U.S.C. 30118 and 30120 and does not represent any Agency decision or other exercises of judgment concerning the merits of the petition.

II. **Vehicles Involved:** Approximately 2,610 MY 2018 Porsche 911 GT3 motor vehicles, manufactured between August 30, 2017, and December 21, 2018, are potentially involved.

III. **Noncompliance:** Porsche explains that the noncompliance is that the subject vehicles are equipped with rear reflex reflectors that do not meet the height requirements as specified in paragraph S8.1.4 and Table I-a of FMVSS No. 108. Specifically, the rear reflex reflectors are mounted approximately 0.20 inches below the required 15 inches above road surface. The actual height is approximately 14.8 inches.

IV. **Rule Requirements:** Paragraph S8.1.4 and Table I-a of FMVSS No. 108 includes the requirements relevant to this petition. The reflective devices should not be mounted less than 15 inches, and no more than 60 inches in height.

V. Summary of Porsche's Petition:

The following views and arguments presented in this section, V. Summary of Porsche's Petition, are the views and arguments provided by Porsche. They have not been evaluated by the Agency and do not reflect the views of the Agency.

Porsche described the subject noncompliance and stated that the noncompliance is inconsequential as it relates to motor vehicle safety.

Porsche submitted the following views and arguments in support of the petition:

1. The installation height requirements of reflex reflectors as defined by paragraph S8.1.4 of FMVSS