docket at the above address both before and after that date. To the extent possible, comments filed after the closing date will also be considered. Notice of final action will be published in the **Federal Register** pursuant to the authority indicated below.

Authority: 49 U.S.C. 30141(a)(1)(B) and (b)(1); 49 CFR 593.8; delegations of authority at 49 CFR 1.50 and 501.8.

Issued on May 11, 1998.

Marilynne Jacobs,

Director, Office of Vehicle Safety Compliance.

[FR Doc. 98–13014 Filed 5–14–98; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4910–59–P

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Surface Transportation Board

[STB Finance Docket No. 33589]

Gulf & Ohio Railways Holding Co., Inc.—Continuance in Control Exemption—Knoxville & Holston River Railroad Co., Inc.

Gulf & Ohio Railways Holding Co., Inc. has filed a notice of exemption to continue in control of the Knoxville & Holston River Railroad Co., Inc. (KHRR), upon KHRR's becoming a Class III railroad.

The transaction is/was scheduled to be consummated on or after May 7, 1998.

This transaction is related to STB Finance Docket No. 33588, *Knoxville & Holston River Railroad Co., Inc.—Acquisition and Operation Exemption—Norfolk Southern Railway Company,* wherein KHRR seeks to acquire and operate 2 lines of track and incidental overhead trackage rights from the Norfolk Southern Railway Company.

Applicant controls eight existing Class III railroads: Albany Bridge Company, operating in the State of Georgia; Georgia & Florida Railroad Co., Inc., operating in the States of Georgia and Florida; Gulf & Ohio Railways, Inc.,[1] operating in the State of Mississippi and Georgia; Lexington & Ohio Railroad Co., Inc., operating in the State of Kentucky; Live Oak, Perry & Georgia Railroad Company, Inc., operating in the States of Georgia and Florida; Piedmont & Atlantic Railroad, Inc., operating in the State of North Carolina; Rocky Mount & Western Railroad Co., Inc., operating in the State of North Carolina; and Wiregrass Central Railroad Company, Inc., operating in the State of Alabama.

Applicant states that: (i) the rail lines to be operated by KHRR do not connect with any railroad in the corporate family; (ii) the transaction is not part of a series of anticipated transactions that would connect KHRR's lines with any railroad in the corporate family; and (iii) the transaction does not involve a Class I carrier. Therefore, the transaction is exempt from the prior approval requirements of 49 U.S.C. 11323. *See* 49 CFR 1180.2(d)(2).

Under 49 U.S.C. 10502(g), the Board may not use its exemption authority to relieve a rail carrier of its statutory obligation to protect the interests of its employees. Section 11326(c), however, does not provide for labor protection for transactions under sections 11324 and 11325 that involve only Class III rail carriers. Because this transaction involves Class III rail carriers only, the Board, under the statute, may not impose labor protective conditions for this transaction.

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 will not automatically stay the transaction.

An original and 10 copies of all pleadings, referring to STB Finance Docket No. 33589, must be filed with the Surface Transportation Board, Office of the Secretary, Case Control Unit, 1925 K Street, N.W., Washington, DC 20423–0001. In addition, a copy of each pleading must be served on Jo A. DeRoche, Esq., Weiner, Brodsky, Sidman & Kider, P.C., 1350 New York Avenue, N.W., Suite 800, Washington, DC 20005–4797.

Board decisions and notices are available on our website at ''WWW.STB.DOT.GOV.''

Decided: May 6, 1998.

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

Vernon A. Williams,

Secretary.

[FR Doc. 98–12694 Filed 5–13–98; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4915–00–P

[1] Gulf & Ohio Railways, Inc., operates in the State of Mississippi under the trade name of Mississippi Delta Railroad and in the State of Georgia under the trade name of Atlantic & Gulf Railroad.

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Surface Transportation Board

[STB Finance Docket No. 33588]

Knoxville & Holston River Railroad Co., Inc.—Acquisition and Operation Exemption—Norfolk Southern Railway Company

Knoxville & Holston River Railroad Co., Inc. (KHRR), a noncarrier, has filed a verified notice of exemption under 49 CFR 1150.31 to acquire from Norfolk Southern Railway Company (NS) and operate 2 lines of track in the State of Tennessee as follows: (1) the North Belt/River Extension, extending from milepost 67.1CG (former) = 0.4RFE, in Knoxville, to the end of the line in Marbledale, a distance of approximately 15.18 miles; and (2) the K&A Belt (formerly the South Knoxville Spur), extending from milepost 0.1, in Knoxville, to the end of the line, also in Knoxville, a distance of approximately 3.8 miles. In addition, KHRR will also acquire incidental overhead trackage rights on 4 segments of NS's trackage in Knoxville as follows: (1) from milepost 0.0C to milepost 3.0C; (2) from milepost 130.0A to milepost 132.4A; (3) from milepost 0.0KA to milepost 1.1KA; and (4) approximately 0.1-mile between NS's K&A Line and its K&A Belt.

The transaction is scheduled to be consummated on or after May 7, 1998.

This transaction is related to STB Finance Docket No. 33589, *Gulf & Ohio Railways Holding Co., Inc.—Continuance in Control Exemption—Knoxville & Hoston River Railroad Co., Inc.,* wherein Gulf & Ohio Railways Holding Co., Inc. has concurrently filed a verified notice to continue in control of KHRR 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. 33588, must be filed with the Surface Transportation Board, Office of the Secretary, Case Control Unit, 1925 K Street, NW., Washington, DC 20423–0001. In addition, a copy of each pleading must be served on Jo A. DeRoche, Esq., Weiner, Brodsky, Sidman & Kider, P.C., 1350 New York Avenue, NW., Suite 800, Washington, DC 20005–4797.

Board decisions and notices are available on our website at ''WWW.STB.DOT.GOV.''

Decided: May 6, 1998.

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

Vernon A. Williams,

Secretary.

[FR Doc. 98–12695 Filed 5–14–98; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4915–00–P

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Surface Transportation Board

[STB Finance Docket No. 33592]

Providence and Worcester Railroad Company—Corporate Family Transaction Exemption—Connecticut Central Railroad Company

Providence and Worcester Railroad Company (P&W) and Connecticut Central Railroad Company (CCCL),[1] Class III railroads, have jointly filed a verified notice of exemption. The exempt transaction is a merger of CCCL into P&W.

The earliest the transaction can be consummated is May 12, 1998, the effective date of the exemption (7 days after the notice of exemption was filed).

The proposed merger is intended to provide more efficient service to shippers. Moreover, because of P&W's multiple connections to other carriers, it can provide customers on CCCL's lines with price and source competition not previously enjoyed by them.

This is a transaction within a corporate family of the type specifically exempted from prior review and approval under 49 CFR 1180.2(d)(3). The parties state that the transaction will not result in adverse changes in service levels, significant operational changes, or a change in the competitive balance with carriers outside the corporate family.

Under 49 U.S.C. 10502(g), the Board may not use its exemption authority to relieve a rail carrier of its statutory obligation to protect the interests of its employees. Section 11326(c), however, does not provide for labor protection for transactions under sections 11324 and 11325 that involve only Class III rail carriers. Because this transaction involves Class III rail carriers only, the Board, under the statute, may not impose labor protective conditions for this transaction.

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 reopen will not automatically stay the transaction.

An original and 10 copies of all pleadings, referring to STB Finance Docket No. 33592, must be filed with the Surface Transportation Board, Office of the Secretary, Case Control Unit, 1925 K Street, N.W., Washington, DC 20423–0001. In addition, a copy of each pleading must be served on Heidi J. Eddins, Esq., Providence and Worcester Railroad Company, 75 Hammond Street, Worcester, MA 01610.

Board decisions and notices are available on our website at ''WWW.STB.DOT.GOV.''

Decided: May 8, 1998.

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

Vernon A. Williams,

Secretary.

[FR Doc. 98–12819 Filed 5–14–98; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4915–00–P

[1] CCCL is a wholly owned subsidiary of P&W. CCCL operates in the State of Connecticut, and P&W operates in the States of Connecticut, Massachusetts, Rhode Island and New York.

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Surface Transportation Board

[STB Docket No. AB–103 (Sub–No. 13X)]

The Kansas City Southern Railway Company—Abandonment Exemption—in Webster Parish, LA

The Kansas City Southern Railway Company (KCS) has filed a notice of exemption under 49 CFR 1152 Subpart F—*Exempt Abandonments* to abandon a 1.70-mile line of its railroad between milepost 46.78 at the Arkansas-Louisiana State Line and milepost 48.48 approximately 200 feet south of Vine Street in Springhill, Webster Parish, LA. The line traverses United States Postal Service Zip Code 71075.

KCS has certified that: (1) no local traffic has moved over the line for at least 2 years; (2) there is no overhead traffic on the line; (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 Surface Transportation Board (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 and discontinuance 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 June 14, 1998, 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 May 26, 1998. Petitions to reopen or requests for public use conditions under 49 CFR 1152.28 must be filed by June 4, 1998, with: Surface Transportation Board, Office of the Secretary, Case Control Unit, 1925 K Street, N.W., Washington, DC 20423.

A copy of any petition filed with the Board should be sent to applicant's representative: Thomas F. McFarland, Jr., McFarland & Herman, 20 North Wacker Drive, Suite, 1330, Chicago, IL 60606–2902.

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

KCS has filed an environmental report which addresses the effects, if any, of the abandonment and discontinuance on the environment and historic resources. The Section of Environmental Analysis (SEA) will issue an environmental assessment (EA) by May 20, 1998. Interested persons may obtain a copy of the EA by writing to SEA (Room 500, Surface Transportation Board, Washington, DC 20423) or by calling SEA, at (202) 565–1545. 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

[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 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 offer of financial assistance must be accompanied by the filing fee, which currently is set at $1000. *See* 49 CFR 1002.2(f)(25).