The transaction is scheduled to be consummated on or after June 1, 1998.[2]

This notice is filed under 49 CFR 1180.2(d)(7). If it 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. 33600, 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 Michael J. Barron, Jr., Esq., Wisconsin Central Ltd., 6250 North River Road, Suite 9000, Rosemont, IL 60018.

Decided: May 26, 1998.

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

Vernon A. Williams,

Secretary.

[FR Doc. 98–14468 Filed 6–1–98; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4915–00–P

Western Ry. Co.—Trackage Rights—BN, 354 I.C.C. 605 (1978), as modified in *Mendocino Coast Ry., Inc.—Lease and Operate*, 360 I.C.C. 653 (1980). Section 11326(b) provides that parties may agree to terms other than as provided in that subsection.

[2] The notice to employees discussed in *WCL Exemption* and recently adopted as a requirement for certain transactions in *Acquisition of Rail Lines Under 49 U.S.C. 10901 and 10902—Advance Notice of Proposed Transactions*, STB Ex Parte No. 562 (STB served Sept. 9, 1997), does not apply to exempt trackage rights transactions.

DEPARTMENT OF THE TREASURY

Community Development Financial Institutions Fund

[No. 981–0158]

Notice Inviting Applications to the Presidential Awards for Excellence in Microenterprise Development

AGENCY: Community Development Financial Institutions Fund, Treasury.

ACTION: Notice inviting applications.

SUMMARY: The Presidential Awards for Excellence in Microenterprise Development (''Microenterprise Awards'') is a non-monetary awards program created as a result of one of the commitments made by the United States at the United Nations Fourth World Conference on Women held in Beijing, China in September 1995. As a key development finance initiative of the Administration, the Community Development Financial Institutions Fund (''Fund'') of the U.S. Department of the Treasury was selected to administer the Microenterprise Awards Program. The Community Development Banking and Financial Institutions Act of 1994 (12 U.S.C. 4701 *et seq.*) created the Fund to promote economic revitalization and community development through investment in community development financial institutions. This Notice provides guidance on the Microenterprise Awards Program requirements, selection criteria and how to obtain an application packet.

DATES: Applications are currently being accepted by the Fund. The deadline for receipt of an application is 6 p.m. EDT, July 31, 1998. Applications received in the office of the Fund after that date and time will be returned to the sender. Applications sent electronically or by facsimile will not be accepted.

ADDRESSES: Applications shall be sent to: Awards Manager, the Community Development Financial Institutions Fund, U.S. Department of the Treasury, 601 Thirteenth Street, NW., Washington DC 20005.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Microenterprise Awards Program Manager, the Community Development Financial Institutions Fund, U.S. Department of the Treasury, 601 Thirteenth Street, NW., Suite 200 South, Washington DC 20005, (202) 622–8662. (This is not a toll free number.) If you have any questions about this Notice or the application packet, you may call or write to the Fund at the above telephone number or address, or you may send questions via facsimile to (202) 622–7754. To request an application packet, please send by facsimile a written request which includes the name of the requester, the organization, mailing address, telephone number and facsimile number. Requests for an application packet should be sent by facsimile to (202) 622–7754.

SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION:

I. Background

The Presidential Awards for Excellence in Microenterprise Development (''Microenterprise Awards'') were created to recognize the important and growing role of microenterprises within the economy of the United States. In the past decade, the number of microenterprises and Microentrepreneurs has grown significantly, as well as the number of community development organizations that have worked to facilitate the growth and development of this Microenterprise industry. A microenterprise is a sole proprietorship, partnership, family business or an incorporated entity that has no more than five employees, including the owner(s), does not generally have access to the commercial banking sector, and has use for and/or seeks a loan of $25,000 or less. The Microenterprise Awards reflect a national commitment to advance the role that microenterprise development plays in enhancing entrepreneurial opportunities for all Americans, particularly women, low income people, and others that have had difficulty gaining access to the financial services industry and the economic mainstream. By recognizing outstanding microenterprise development and support organizations, the Microenterprise Awards' mission is to advance an understanding of ''best practices'' in the field of microenterprise development and bring wider public attention to the important successes of microenterprise development in the United States. Awards are non-monetary and given annually. They are available in different categories designed to reflect the diverse activities, purposes and challenges faced by the microenterprise industry.

II. Definitions

(a) *Low Income* means having an income of no more than 80 percent of the area median family income.

(b) *Microenterprise Development Organization (MDO)* means a ''practitioner'' organization that works directly with Microentrepreneurs and meets three tests, primary purpose, domestic program and program activities.

(i) *Primary Purpose.* The organization must have a primary purpose of promoting Microenterprise development. An applicant will be considered to have such a primary purpose if it:

(A) Has been in operation for at least two complete calendar or fiscal years;

(B) Made at least one Micro Loan to a Microenterprise within the past 12-months; and

(C) Has targeted its efforts principally to activities that support Microentrepreneurs. Such activity targeting may be evaluated by the number of Microentrepreneurs served, number of Micro Loans made, the total dollar amount of Micro Loans made, or other criteria deemed appropriate by the Fund. The primary purpose requirement will be applied to the applicant as a whole or an affiliate, division or a discrete program of a larger organization, as deemed appropriate by the Fund.

(ii) *Domestic Program.* The organization must exclusively serve or have a program that exclusively serves

individuals that are residents of the United States, including the District of Columbia, or any territory of the United States, the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, Guam, American Samoa, the Trust Territories of the Pacific Islands, the Virgin Islands, and the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands.

(iii) *Program Activities.* The organization must currently provide the following services to Microentrepreneurs:

(A) Access to Micro Loans, directly or through a formal partnership, as evidenced by a written agreement or letter of understanding, with another organization; and

(B) Access to training, counseling or technical assistance, directly or through a formal partnership, as evidenced by a written agreement or letter of understanding, with another organization. Such training, counseling or technical assistance must provide assistance to Microentrepreneurs for the purpose of enhancing business planning, marketing, management, financial management, or other aspects of developing a successful business.

(c) *Microenterprise Support Organization (MSO)* means an entity that does not work directly with Microentrepreneurs but supports the efforts of MDOs through financial or technical assistance, research or other activities. An MSO shall either:

(i) Provide financial or technical assistance directly to MDOs; or

(ii) Make contributions indirectly to the field of MDOs through research or other activities that enhance the knowledge, capacity, or visibility of the Microenterprise field.

Further, an MSO shall not provide services directly to Microentrepreneurs as its principal line of business.

(d) *Micro Loan* means a loan made for business purposes to a Microentrepreneur in a principal amount which does not exceed $25,000. A loan for business purposes does not include a loan made for the purpose of the acquisition, construction, or rehabilitation of real estate.

(e) *Microenterprise* means a sole proprietorship, partnership, family business, or an incorporated entity that has no more than five employees, including the owner(s), does not generally have access to the commercial banking sector, and has use for and/or seeks a loan of $25,000 or less.

(f) *Microentrepreneur* means the owner of a Microenterprise or an individual seeking to establish a Microenterprise.

(g) *Poverty* means the state or condition of being poor as defined by the U.S. Bureau of the Census.

III. Award Categories

The Microenterprise Awards Program consists of five categories in which awards may be given. The award categories are intended to embrace the diverse activities and purposes of Microenterprise development and the key opportunities and challenges faced by the Microenterprise field. Up to two awards may be made in each award category. Applicants may apply under only one award category each year. The award categories are as follows:

(a) *Excellence in Providing Access to Capital.* This award category recognizes MDOs that have achieved outstanding success in broadening the availability of credit to Microentrepreneurs through the provision of Micro Loans or Micro Loan guarantees;

(b) *Excellence in Developing Entrepreneurial Skills.* This award category recognizes MDOs that have demonstrated effectiveness in building entrepreneurial skills through providing training, technical assistance or other skill development activities that help develop successful Microentrepreneurs;

(c) *Excellence in Poverty Alleviation.* This award category recognizes MDOs that have developed effective and innovative strategies or methods of alleviating poverty and/or improving the well being of Low Income individuals through the development of Microentrepreneurs. (Applicants in this category need not work exclusively with Low Income clients. However, this category is intended to recognize programs that target a significant portion of their efforts to serve Low Income clients.);

(d) *Excellence in Program Innovation.* This award category recognizes MDOs that best reflect a new level of development for the Microenterprise field and/or a new strategy for addressing a problem of significant concern to the Microenterprise field; and

(e) *Excellence in Public or Private Support for Microenterprise Development.* This award category recognizes outstanding MSOs that have provided significant or innovative support to MDOs or the development of the Microenterprise field.

IV. Eligibility

The eligibility requirements of the Microenterprise Awards are established by each award category. MDOs are eligible to apply under the following categories: Excellence in Providing Access to Capital; Excellence in Developing Entrepreneurial Skills; Excellence in Poverty Alleviation; and Excellence in Program Innovation. MSOs are eligible to apply under the Excellence in Public or Private Support for Microenterprise Development award category. If an applicant has previously received an award in a specific award category, such applicant is ineligible to apply for an award in the same category for a period of three years. (For example, a 1997 award winner in a category cannot apply for an award in that same category until the year 2000.)

V. Selection Process and Criteria

Winners of the Microenterprise Awards will be selected through a competitive application and review process. Each award category has a set of ''category specific'' criteria that will be used to evaluate the extent of an applicant's achievement of excellence. In addition, all applicants will be evaluated using ''organization'' criteria which will gauge their viability and overall condition. Successful applicants must demonstrate both qualitatively and quantitatively their effectiveness and/or excellence under both the category-specific and the organization selection criteria.

The Microenterprise Awards application packet includes application forms and questions that are tailored to each award category. The category-specific criteria are summarized below:

(a) *Excellence in Providing Access to Capital:* scope and scale; impact; program design effectiveness; quality; and sustainability.

(b) *Excellence in Developing Entrepreneurial Skills:* scope and scale; impact; program design effectiveness; and creativity.

(c) *Excellence in Poverty Alleviation:* scope and scale; impact; program design effectiveness; and extent of targeting.

(d) *Excellence in Program Innovation:* scope and scale; impact; program design effectiveness; creativity; and relevance to the industry.

(e) *Excellence in Public or Private Support for Microenterprise Development:* scope and scale; impact; program design effectiveness; creativity; and commitment.

The ''organization'' criteria for the Excellence in Providing Access to Capital, Excellence in Developing Entrepreneurial Skills, Excellence in Poverty Alleviation, and Excellence in Program Innovation award categories are: financial health and organizational strength; program management and implementation; replicability; and leadership. The ''organization'' evaluation criteria for the Excellence in Public or Private Support for Microenterprise Development award category are program implementation, replicability, and leadership. The

category specific and organization criteria are fully discussed in the application materials which can be obtained from the Fund.

Authority: Pub. L. 103–325, 108 Stat. 2166, 2189 (12 U.S.C. 4703); chapter X, Pub. L. 104–19, 109 Stat. 237 (12 U.S.C. 4703 note).

Dated: May 28, 1998.

Ellen Lazar,

Director, Community Development Financial Institutions Fund.

[FR Doc. 98–14531 Filed 6–1–98; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4810–70–P

DEPARTMENT OF THE TREASURY

Customs Service

[T.D. 98–53]

Customs Bond Cancellation Standards for Imports of Softwood Lumber From Canada

AGENCY: U. S. Customs Service, Department of the Treasury.

ACTION: General notice.

SUMMARY: Under section 623(c) of the Tariff Act of 1930, as amended (19 U.S.C. 1623(c)), the Secretary of the Treasury is required to publish guidelines for the cancellation of Customs bonds or charges thereunder. On February 26, 1997, Customs published T.D. 97–9 in the **Federal Register** (62 FR 8620) setting forth interim amendments to the Customs Regulations concerning the entry of certain softwood lumber products from Canada. Those amendments included additions to the conditions of the basic importation bond (19 CFR 113.62) to cover the production of, and liability for liquidated damages for failure to produce, export permit information pertaining to such softwood lumber products. This document publishes guidelines for cancellation of bond charges arising from such defaults.

EFFECTIVE DATE: These guidelines will take effect on June 2, 1998, and shall be applicable to all cases which are currently open at the petition or supplemental petition stage.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Jeremy Baskin, Penalties Branch, Office of Regulations and Rulings (202–927–2344).

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Background

Section 1904 of the Omnibus Trade and Competitiveness Act of 1988 (Pub. L. 100–418, 102 Stat. 1107) amended section 623(c) of the Tariff Act of 1930, as amended (19 U.S.C. 1623(c)), to require that the Secretary of the Treasury publish guidelines establishing standards for setting the terms and conditions for cancellation of Customs bonds or charges thereunder. The authority to promulgate such guidelines had been delegated to the Commissioner of Customs by Paragraph 1 of Treasury Department Order No. 165, revised (T.D. 53654). Guidelines pursuant to section 623(c) were initially published by Customs in the **Federal Register** in T.D. 89–48 on April 21, 1989 (54 FR 16182), and those guidelines were subsequently revised and republished in their entirety in T.D. 94–38 which appeared in the **Federal Register** on April 14, 1994 (59 FR 17830).

On February 26, 1997, Customs published T.D. 97–9 in the **Federal Register** (62 FR 8620) setting forth interim amendments to the Customs Regulations concerning the entry of certain softwood lumber products from Canada. Those amendments included the addition of a new § 12.140 (19 CFR 12.140) which sets forth special entry requirements for the subject lumber, including the obligation of the importer of record to obtain and provide to Customs information regarding the issuance of a Canadian export permit for the lumber. T.D. 97–9 also amended the provisions of the basic importation bond in § 113.62 (19 CFR 113.62) by the addition of a new paragraph (k) (with existing paragraph (k) redesignated as paragraph (l)) and by the addition of a new subparagraph (5) under newly designated paragraph (l). New paragraph (k) obligates the bond principal, as required by new § 12.140(a), to assume the obligation to ensure within 20 working days of release of the merchandise, and establish to the satisfaction of Customs, that the applicable export permit has been issued by the Government of Canada. Under new paragraph (l)(5), failure of the bond principal to meet the paragraph (k) obligation will result in assessment of liquidated damages equal to $100 per thousand board feet of the imported lumber.

In accordance with the provisions of section 623(c), this document sets forth standards for the cancellation of claims for liquidated damages assessed under §§ 12.140, 113.62(k) and 113.62(l)(5). These standards distinguish those claims in which the required export permits are presented in an untimely fashion from those instances where the export permits are not presented at all. The standards permit cancellation of liquidated damages incurred for late presentation of the necessary information upon payment of an amount between 25 and 50 percent of the claim but not less than $500 and not more than $3,000 per entry depending upon the experience of the importer and the number of violations incurred by the importer as compared to the number of importations made. If the claim is issued for $500 or less, no relief will be granted. If the necessary information is never provided, the claim will be collected in full. These claims for liquidated damages may only be assessed with regard to entries filed subsequent to the effective date of the interim regulations.

The text of the new guidelines is set forth below:

Guidelines for Cancellation of Claims for Late Filing or Failure to File Softwood Lumber Information (19 CFR 12.140, 19 CFR 113.62(k), 19 CFR 113.62(l)(5))

A. Late presentation of export permit information. Claims for liquidated damages for late presentation of export permit information shall be processed in accordance with the following guidelines.

1. Modified CF–5955A. Notices of liquidated damages incurred may be issued on a modified CF–5955A. The modified form shall specify two options from which the petitioner may choose to resolve the demand.

a. *Option 1.* He may pay a specified sum within 60 days and the case will be closed. By electing this option in lieu of petitioning, he waives his right to file a petition.

b. *Option 2.* Petition for relief. The bond principal or surety may file a petition for relief. By filing a petition for relief, the petitioner will no longer be afforded the Option 1 mitigation amount. The Fines, Penalties, and Forfeitures Officer shall grant full relief when the petitioner demonstrates that the violation did not occur or occurred solely as a result of Customs error. If the petitioner fails to demonstrate that the violation did not occur or occurred solely as a result of Customs error, the Fines, Penalties, and Forfeitures Officer may cancel the claim upon payment of an amount no less than $100 greater than the Option 1 amount.

2. Cancellation of claims for late presentation of export permit information. Liquidated damages incurred for late presentation of the necessary information may be cancelled upon payment of an amount between 25 and 50 percent of the claim but not less than $500 and not more than $3,000. Such amount may be afforded as an Option 1 amount. Mitigation shall be based upon the experience of the importer and the number of violations incurred compared with the number of importations made. No relief shall be