

which are less costly or less environmentally damaging while achieving similar transit objectives. Scoping is not the appropriate time to indicate a preference for a particular alternative. Comments on preferences should be communicated after the Draft EIS/EIR has been completed. If you wish to be placed on the mailing list to receive further information as the project develops, contact Sue Olive as previously described.

Description of Study Area and Project Need

The project is to construct an electrified light rail line on the surface and in subway along the Third Street corridor in San Francisco as an alternative to the MUNI 15 and 9X diesel bus lines that currently serve the area. The project would provide many San Francisco residents with more efficient access to downtown job centers, the Mission Bay project area and proposed new waterfront ballpark, and would enhance mobility by improving connections with local and regional transit lines. This major transit investment is also intended to help achieve desired community and economic development objectives for the Bayshore Corridor communities of Potrero Hill, Bayview-Hunters Point and Visitacion Valley. The new light rail line would connect these neighborhoods with downtown San Francisco, and possibly Chinatown.

Alternatives

The Third Street Light Rail Project is examining two alternatives to be carried forward into environmental analysis (Draft EIS/EIR). The two alternatives are:

- The "No Build" Diesel Bus Alternative would be a continuation or expansion of the MUNI 15-Third and 9X San Bruno Expresses that are currently the major trunk lines serving the project area, and
- A "Build" Light Rail Alternative, which assumes construction of a light rail line linking some or all of Chinatown, Downtown, South of Market, Potrero Hill, Bayview-Hunters Point and Visitacion Valley neighborhoods, primarily along Third Street. The Light Rail Alternative has multiple downtown and Mission Bay alignment options that will be evaluated and screened during the initial seven-month study phase. All options share a common alignment along Third between the southern terminus at the Bayshore CalTrain Station and 16th Street. The Third Street light rail line would operate in a dedicated median right-of-way along Bayshore Boulevard and use the existing Highway 101 overcrossing

to reach Third Street. Along Third Street, the alignment would remain in the median as it traverses the Bayview commercial core, over Islais Creek, and through the Central Waterfront area to 16th Street. A new light rail operations and maintenance facility is proposed for a 10-acre site east of I-280 between 16th Street and Mariposa Streets. North of 16th Street, three primary surface and subway alignment options, each containing suboption variants, are being studied. The project also hopes to use rail as a catalyst for revitalizing the Third Street commercial core in Bayview-Hunters Point.

Probable Effects

FTA and the local lead agency plan to evaluate in the EIS/EIR all significant social, economic, and environmental impacts of the alternatives. Among the primary issues are the expected increase in transit ridership, traveltime savings, the capital outlays needed to construct the project, the cost of operating and maintaining the facilities created by the project, and the financial impacts on the funding agencies. Environmental and social impacts and benefits proposed for analysis include: land use and neighborhood impacts; parklands; traffic and parking impacts, particularly in the Bayview commercial core and near stations; visual impacts; impacts on historic architecture properties and archaeological resources; and noise and vibration impacts. Impacts on natural areas, biology, hazards, air and water quality, groundwater and geology will also be covered. The impacts will be evaluated both for the construction period and for the long-term period of operation. Measures to mitigate significant adverse impacts will be considered.

FTA Procedures

In accordance with the Federal Transit Act and FTA policy, the Draft EIS/EIR will be prepared first. After its publication, the Draft EIS/EIR will be available for 45-day public and agency review and comment period, and a public hearing will be held. On the basis of the Draft EIS/EIR and the comments received, the San Francisco Public Transportation Commission will select a locally preferred alternative. Then the Final EIS/EIR will be prepared responding to all comments on the Draft EIS/EIR, and FTA will issue a Record of Decision on the proposed federal action.

Issued on: October 22, 1996.
 Leslie Rogers,
Regional Administrator, FTA.
 [FR Doc. 96-27496 Filed 10-24-96; 8:45 am]
BILLING CODE 4910-57-U

Research and Special Programs Administration (RSPA)

Meetings of Pipeline Safety Advisory Committees

Pursuant to section 10(a)(2) of the Federal Advisory Committee Act (Pub. L. 92-463, 5 U.S.C. App. 1) notice is hereby given of the following meetings of the Technical Pipeline Safety Standards Committee (TPSSC) and the Technical Hazardous Liquid Pipeline Safety Standards Committee (THLPSSC). Each Committee meeting, as well as a joint session of the two Committees, will be held at the Department of Transportation, Room 2230, 400 Seventh Street, S.W., Washington, DC 20590.

On November 6, 1996, at 10:00 a.m., the THLPSSC will meet. Agenda items include:

1. Emergency Flow Restriction Devices
2. API Risk Based Approach to Hydrostatic Testing
3. Breakout Tanks and Tank Standards
4. Lines Operating below 20% of SMYS
5. OPA Status Update
6. Progress in Defining Unusually Sensitive Areas

On November 6, 1996, at 1:00 p.m., the THLPSSC will be joined by members of the TPSSC for a joint session which will include:

1. Welcome by the OPS Associate Administrator
2. Panel on Reauthorization and the Budget
3. Regulatory Reform Phase II
4. Compliance Policy Task Force
5. General Regulatory Update
6. Preparation for Risk Management Demonstration Project
7. Strategy for Improving Access to Pipeline Data and Meeting the Government Performance Results Act

On November 7, 1996, from 9:30 a.m. to 12:00 noon, the joint TPSSC-THLPSSC session will include:

1. OPS Rulemakings Update
2. Report on National Pipeline Mapping Project and Follow-up Strategy
3. Non-Destructive Evaluation Project
4. Offshore Update
5. Proposed Damage Prevention Quality Action Team
6. Operator Qualification Negotiated Rulemaking

At 1:00 p.m. on November 7, the TPSSC will meet. Agenda items include:

1. Welcome by the OPS Associate Administrator
2. Definition of Gas Gathering Lines
3. Liquid Natural Gas Regulatory Updates
4. Excess Flow Valve Performance Standards Customer Notification

5. Determining the Extent of Corrosion on Exposed Gas Lines
6. Passage of Instrumented Internal Inspection Devices
7. Plastic Pipe Issues

Each meeting will be open to the public. Members of the public may present oral statements on the topics. Due to the limited time available, each person who wants to make an oral statement must notify Mary Jo Cooney, Room 2335, Department of Transportation Building, 400 Seventh Street, S.W., Washington, DC 20590, telephone (202) 366-4774, not later than October 31, 1996, on the topics to be addressed and the time requested to address each topic. The presiding officer may deny any request to present an oral statement and may limit the time of any oral presentation. Members of the public may present written statements to the Committee before or after any meeting.

Issued in Washington, DC on October 21, 1996.

Richard B. Felder,
Associate Administrator for Pipeline Safety.
[FR Doc. 96-27487 Filed 10-24-96; 8:45 am]
BILLING CODE 4910-60-P

Surface Transportation Board

[STB Finance Docket No. 33133]

Dakota Rail, Inc.—Acquisition of Control Exemption—Otter Tail Valley Railroad Company, Inc.

Dakota Rail, Inc. (Dakota), has filed a notice of exemption to acquire control, through stock purchase, of Otter Tail Valley Railroad Company, Inc. (OTVR).¹ OTVR, a Class III rail carrier, operates solely in Minnesota.²

Dakota, a Class III rail carrier, is a wholly owned subsidiary of RailAmerica, Inc. It operates a noncontiguous rail line from Hutchinson, MN, to Wayzata, MN. Under the terms of an agreement with OTVR, Dakota will acquire 100% of the

outstanding stock of OTVR.³ The effective date of the exemption was October 11, 1996.

This transaction is related to a notice of exemption filed in STB Finance Docket No. 33138, *RailAmerica, Inc.—Acquisition of Control Exemption—Otter Tail Valley Railroad Company, Inc.*, wherein RailAmerica seeks to acquire control, through Dakota, of OTVR.

Dakota indicates that: (1) OTVR does not connect with any other railroads in Dakota's corporate family; (2) the involved transaction is not part of a series of anticipated transactions that would connect Dakota with any other railroad in its corporate family; and (3) 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). The purpose of the transaction is to achieve operating economies and to improve service over the lines.

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. 33133, 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, one copy of all pleadings must be served on: Edward D. Greenberg, Canal Square, 1054 Thirty-First Street, N.W., Washington, DC 20007.

Decided: October 17, 1996.

By the Board, Joseph H. Dettmar, Acting Director, Office of Proceedings.
Vernon A. Williams,
Secretary.

[FR Doc. 96-27422 Filed 10-24-96; 8:45 am]
BILLING CODE 4915-00-P

³ By decision served October 9, 1996, the Board's Secretary granted a motion for a protective order permitting the stock purchase agreement to be filed under seal.

[STB Finance Docket No. 33138]

RailAmerica, Inc.—Acquisition of Control Exemption—Otter Tail Valley Company, Inc.

RailAmerica, Inc. (RailAmerica), a noncarrier, has filed a notice of exemption to acquire control, through its wholly owned subsidiary Dakota Rail, Inc., of Otter Tail Valley Railroad Company, Inc. (OTVR).¹ OTVR, a Class III rail carrier, operates solely in Minnesota.²

RailAmerica also controls the following eight Class III rail carriers that do not connect with OTVR: Huron & Eastern Railway Company, Inc., the Saginaw Valley Railway Company, Inc., the South Central Tennessee Railroad Company, Dakota, the West Texas & Lubbock Railroad Company, Inc., the Plainview Terminal Company, Evansville Terminal Company, Inc., and the Cascade and Columbia River Railroad Company.³ The effective date of the exemption was October 11, 1996.

This transaction is related to a notice of exemption filed in STB Finance Docket No. 33133, *Dakota Rail, Inc.—Acquisition of Control Exemption—Otter Tail Valley Railroad Company, Inc.*, wherein Dakota seeks to acquire control, through stock purchase, of OTVR.

RailAmerica states that: (1) OTVR does not connect with any other railroads in its corporate family; (2) the involved transaction is not part of a

¹ Dakota seeks to acquire control, through stock purchase, of OTVR, in a concurrently filed notice of exemption in STB Finance Docket No. 33133, *Dakota Rail, Inc.—Acquisition of Control Exemption—Otter Tail Valley Railroad Company, Inc.*

² OTVR's main line runs from milepost 185.1, near Fergus Falls, MN, northwest to Barnesville Junction, MN (milepost 218.6 = 0). From Barnesville Junction, milepost 0, the main line runs northwest to Moorehead, MN, at milepost 21.25. In addition, a branch line runs from milepost 49.0, at Fergus Falls, west to milepost 61.5, at Foxhome, MN.

³ Common control of these carriers was approved in: *John H. Marino, Eric D. Gerst, and Mariner Corporation—Control Exemption—Saginaw Valley Railway Company, Inc.*, Finance Docket No. 31196 (ICC served Apr. 23, 1991); *RailAmerica, Inc.—Control Exemption—South Central Tennessee Railroad Company*, Finance Docket No. 32421 (ICC served Jan. 18, 1994); *RailAmerica, Inc.—Control Exemption—Prairie Holding Corporation and Dakota Rail, Inc.*, Finance Docket No. 32750 (ICC served Sept. 25, 1995); *RailAmerica, Inc.—Continuance in Control Exemption—West Texas and Lubbock Railroad Company, Inc. and Plainview Terminal Company*, Finance Docket No. 32797 (ICC served Dec. 27, 1995); *RailAmerica, Inc.—Continuance in Control Exemption—Evansville Terminal Company, Inc.*, STB Finance Docket No. 32990 (STB served July 17, 1996); and *RailAmerica, Inc.—Continuance in Control Exemption—Cascade and Columbia River Railroad Company*, STB Finance Docket No. 33048 (STB served Sept. 13, 1996).

¹ On October 4, 1996, Dakota filed a request to amend its verified notice of exemption filed on September 25, 1996, in this proceeding to properly characterize the transaction as "acquisition of control" rather than "acquisition of control and merger." Dakota states that, while it intends to merge OTVR into Dakota, there will be a period where OTVR will exist as a separate entity, with Dakota owning 100% of OTVR's outstanding stock and thus controlling OTVR. It indicates that it will seek separate approval of the merger of OTVR into Dakota.

² OTVR's main line runs from milepost 185.1, near Fergus Falls, MN, northwest to Barnesville Junction, MN (milepost 218.6 = 0). From Barnesville Junction, milepost 0, the main line runs northwest to Moorehead, MN, at milepost 21.25. In addition, a branch line runs from milepost 49.0, at Fergus Falls, west to milepost 61.5, at Foxhome, MN.