

105–292), notice is hereby given that, on December 18, 2019, the Secretary of State, under authority delegated by the President, has designated each of the following as an “entity of particular concern” under section 301 of the Frank R. Wolf International Religious Freedom Act of 2016 (Pub. L. 114–281), for having engaged in particularly severe violations of religious freedom: al-Nusra Front, al-Qa’ida in the Arabian Peninsula, al-Qa’ida, al-Shabab, Boko Haram, the Houthis, ISIS, ISIS-Khorasan, and the Taliban.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:**

Howard Chyung, Office of International Religious Freedom, U.S. Department of State, (Phone: (202) 647–3865 or Email: [ChyungHH@state.gov](mailto:ChyungHH@state.gov)).

**Daniel L. Nadel,**

*Director, Office of International Religious Freedom, Department of State.*

[FR Doc. 2019–27787 Filed 12–23–19; 8:45 am]

**BILLING CODE 4710–18–P**

**SURFACE TRANSPORTATION BOARD**

[Docket No. FD 36370]

**CCET, LLC d/b/a Cincinnati Eastern Railroad—Lease and Operation Exemption—Norfolk Southern Railway Company**

CCET, LLC d/b/a Cincinnati Eastern Railroad (CCET), a Class III railroad, has filed a verified notice of exemption under 49 CFR 1150.41 to continue its lease of, and its provision of railroad common carrier service over, approximately 69.45 route miles of railroad owned by Norfolk Southern Railway Company (NSR), from milepost CT 9.0 at Clare, Ohio, at its west end, to milepost CT 78.45 at Mineral Springs, Ohio (the Line).

CCET states that it and NSR are parties to an agreement under which CCET has acquired a leasehold interest in, and operates, the Line, segments of which were leased to CCET in sequence beginning in 2014.<sup>1</sup> The verified notice indicates that recently, CCET and NSR agreed to amend the underlying lease agreement, including an extension of the term.

According to CCET, the amended lease agreement between CCET and NSR does not contain any provision that

prohibits, restricts, or otherwise limits, interchange of traffic with any third-party carrier.

CCET certifies that its projected annual revenues as a result of the proposed transaction will not exceed \$5 million and that the transaction will not result in the creation of a Class II or Class I rail carrier.

This transaction may be consummated on or after January 9, 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 for stay must be filed no later than January 2, 2020 (at least seven days before the exemption becomes effective).

All pleadings, referring to Docket No. FD 36370, 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 CCET’s representative, Robert A. Wimbish, Fletcher & Sippel LLC, 29 North Wacker Drive, Suite 800, Chicago, IL 60606–3208.

According to CCET, 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).

Board decisions and notices are available at [www.stb.gov](http://www.stb.gov).

Decided: December 18, 2019.

By the Board, Scott M. Zimmerman, Acting Director, Office of Proceedings.

**Jeffrey Herzig,**  
*Clearance Clerk.*

[FR Doc. 2019–27674 Filed 12–23–19; 8:45 am]

**BILLING CODE 4915–01–P**

**SURFACE TRANSPORTATION BOARD**

[Docket No. AB 434 (Sub-No. 4X)]

**Winchester & Western Railroad Company—Abandonment Exemption—in Cumberland County, N.J.**

Winchester & Western Railroad Co. (W&W) has filed a verified notice of exemption under 49 CFR part 1152 subpart F—*Exempt Abandonments* to abandon an approximately 0.5-mile line of railroad, from approximately milepost 16.2 to milepost 16.7, in the Township of Commercial, Cumberland

County, N.J. (the Line). The Line traverses U.S. Postal Service Zip Code 08349.

W&W has certified that: (1) No local common carrier freight traffic has moved over the Line for at least two years; (2) no overhead traffic has moved over the Line for at least two years and, therefore, there is no need to reroute any traffic; (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 any U.S. District Court or has been decided in favor of a complainant within the two-year period; and (4) the requirements at 49 CFR 1105.12 (newspaper publication), 49 CFR 1152.50(d)(1) (notice to governmental agencies), and 49 CFR 1105.7 and 1105.8 (environmental and historic report), have been met.

As a condition to this exemption, any employee adversely affected by the abandonment shall be protected under *Oregon Short Line Railroad—Abandonment Portion Goshen Branch Between Firth & Ammon, in Bingham & Bonneville Counties, Idaho*, 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,<sup>1</sup> this exemption will be effective on January 25, 2020, unless stayed pending reconsideration. Petitions to stay that do not involve environmental issues must be filed by January 3, 2020.<sup>2</sup> Formal expressions of intent to file an OFA under 49 CFR 1152.27(c)(2) and trail use/rail banking requests under 49 CFR 1152.29 must be filed by January 6, 2020.<sup>3</sup> Petitions to reopen or requests for public use conditions under 49 CFR 1152.28 must be filed by January 15,

<sup>1</sup> Persons interested in submitting an OFA must first file a formal expression of intent to file an offer, indicating the type of financial assistance they wish to provide (*i.e.*, subsidy or purchase) and demonstrating that they are preliminarily financially responsible. See 49 CFR 1152.27(c)(2)(i).

<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 Office of Environmental Analysis (OEA) in its independent investigation) cannot be made before the exemption’s effective date. See *Exemption of Out-of-Serv. 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> Filing fees for OFAs and trail use requests can be found at 49 CFR 1002.2(f)(25) and (27), respectively.

<sup>1</sup> See *CCET, LLC—Lease & Operation Exemption—Rail Line of Norfolk S. Ry. in Adams Cty., Ohio*, FD 36079 (STB served Dec. 7, 2016); *CCET, LLC—Lease & Operation Exemption—Rail Line of Norfolk S. Ry. in Clermont, Brown, & Adams Cts., Ohio*, FD 35900 (STB served Feb. 6, 2015); *CCET, LLC—Lease & Operation Exemption—Rail Line of Norfolk S. Ry., FD 35810* (STB served Apr. 4, 2014).