

**SURFACE TRANSPORTATION BOARD'S SECTION OF ENVIRONMENTAL ANALYSIS
ISSUES FINAL ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT, WITH WASHINGTON STATE DEPT.
OF TRANSPORTATION, FOR PROPOSED "NO. COLUMBIA BASIN" RAIL PROJECT**

The Surface Transportation Board announced today that its Section of Environmental Analysis (SEA) and the Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT) have issued a Final Environmental Assessment (EA) for the proposed Northern Columbia Basin Railroad Project (Project), an approximately 11.5-mile long railroad route that would be acquired and constructed in Grant County, Washington. The Project would provide rail service to an area designated for industrial development and attract to this area new businesses that would use rail transportation. The issuance of the Final EA completes the environmental review undertaken by SEA and WSDOT.

The Final EA responds to comments received on the SEA's Preliminary Environmental Assessment issued on November 7, 2008, and sets forth recommended mitigation measures to minimize or avoid potential adverse environmental impacts, should the Board approve the acquisition and construction proposal. Upon reviewing and considering the Final EA, and the transportation-related and environmental record developed in this case, the Board will then issue a final decision approving, approving with conditions or denying the request for acquisition and construction authority.

The Final EA was issued today, May, 8, 2009, in [Northern Columbia Basin Railroad Project—Construction Exemption—in Moses Lake, Washington, STB Finance Docket No. 34936](#) and in *Northern Columbia Basin Railroad Project—Acquisition Exemption—in Moses Lake, Washington*, STB Finance Docket No. 34936 (Sub-No. 1). The Final EA is available for viewing and downloading via the Board's Web site, at <http://www.stb.dot.gov>, under "E-LIBRARY," then under "Decisions & Notices," beneath the date "05/08/09."

###