

**B.C.D. 14-27**

**December 10, 2014**

**EMPLOYER STATUS DETERMINATION**

**Pearl River Valley Railroad Company (PRVR)**

This is a determination of the Railroad Retirement Board concerning the status of Pearl River Valley Railroad Company (PRVR)(BA No. 2534) as an employer under the Railroad Retirement Act (45 U.S.C. §231 et seq.) and the Railroad Unemployment Insurance Act (45 U.S.C. §351 et seq.).

Information obtained from the Internet by the Board indicates that the Pearl River Valley Railroad was incorporated in Mississippi on May 22, 1917, for the purpose of constructing a railroad from Nicholson, Pearl River County, to Columbia, Marion County, Mississippi, about 60 miles.

On January 29, 1918, the company purchased from Crosby and Rowlands a line of railroad from Nicholson to Emery, Mississippi, a length of 10 miles. Of this line, four miles were built by Crosby and Rowlands Construction Company and six miles purchased. The purchased segment included 2.5 miles of the abandoned Cybur, Gulf & Northwestern Railroad. The purchase from Crosby and Rowlands also included 13 miles of right-of-way north of Emery, Mississippi. The five-mile line from Emery to Delton was built by the Crosby & Rowlands Construction Company, under contract, and completed in about April 1918. The rail line from Delton to a point near Anderson was also built by the C. & R. Construction Company. The distance from Nicholson to the northern terminus near Anderson, Mississippi was 17.335 miles.

The authorized capital stock was \$1,000,000 of which the entire amount was issued in 1918 to Crosby and Rowlands in payment for the railroad and equipment.

By February 1921, the railroad had reached Easley, 25.62 miles north of Nicholson, Mississippi. Between Milepost 13 and 17 the main line had been relocated to secure easier grades and less curves than the original line. This new line displaced 2.62 miles of the original line which was abandoned about June 1921. On the old segment there had been a logging camp, abandoned by the time of the relocation.

In the summer of 1926 the northern terminus was at Crosby, 25 miles from Nicholson, Mississippi. On August 14, 1926, the former Interstate Commerce Commission (ICC) authorized PRVR to operate under trackage rights over a line owned by the Goodyear Yellow Pine Company from Crosby, in a northerly direction, to Rowlands, Mississippi, a distance of 9.64 miles. Rowlands, Mississippi, which was established by the lumber company, at that time was a logging camp with a population of about 500.

The logging camp at Rowlands replaced one at Anderson, Mississippi which also had a population of about 500. In late 1926, with the camp at Rowlands in operation, the spur from Anderson Junction to Anderson, Mississippi, about 0.44 miles, was abandoned.

Logging operations around Rowlands were completed and the camp at Rowlands abandoned about June 1, 1931. Afterwards the line from Crosby to Rowlands was torn up. Trackage rights on this segment by PRVR were terminated on March 8, 1931.

On February 15, 1935, the former ICC authorized PRVR to operate under trackage rights over a line of railroad owned by the Goodyear Yellow Pine Company from Goodyear Junction in a northeasterly direction to a new logging camp, also known as Rowlands, about 22.5 miles, all in Pearl River and Hancock counties Mississippi.

With the establishment of new Camp Rowlands, PRVR received permission from the ICC on June 27, 1935 to abandon that part of its line extending from near Goodyear in a northerly direction to Etal, 20.07 miles, all in Pearl River County, Mississippi. Timber in this area had been cut out in July 1931, after which the line was operated at a loss. This section of the railroad had been built during the years 1918 through 1921.

Logging operations in the vicinity of new Camp Rowlands ceased on March 15, 1938; and April 5, 1938, the PRVR applied to the former ICC for permission to abandon operation of trackage rights on the line from Goodyear Junction to Rowlands, approximately 22.5 miles. The Goodyear Yellow Pine Company terminated its end of the trackage agreement about April 15, 1938, after which the entire line was removed. The application was granted on May 14, 1938.

The remaining segment of PRVR from Nicholson to Goodyear was operated to service the Crosby Forest Products and various Crosby-owned industries in the western part of Picayune, including Arizona Chemicals, until the line was finally abandoned about 2007. PRVR interchanged with Norfolk Southern Corporation (BA No. 9408).

Information concerning PRVR was provided in a letter dated May 1, 2008 from Mr. Roger McDowell, Controller for PRVR. Mr. Stewart Gammill, III, is the President of PRVR, according to Mr. McDowell. Mr. McDowell stated that Mr. Stewart Gammill, III and Lynn C. Gammill are the only stockholders of PRVR. Mr. McDowell stated that PRVR no longer exists. According to Mr. McDowell, PRVR ceased operations more than a decade ago. Mr. McDowell stated that PRVR was not sold to any party, merged into any other entity or operation. Mr. McDowell stated that there have been no reports with governmental agencies filed concerning PRVR. Additionally, Mr. McDowell stated that there has not been any revenue, expenses, or operations of any type to report.

Additional information concerning PRVR was provided by Mr. Steve Lendway, Manager Short Line Marketing for NS. Mr. Lendway stated that in May 2005, Arizona Chemical permanently closed its operations at Goodyear, Mississippi, causing PRVR to cease operations. According to Mr. Lendway, in view of PRVR no longer interchanging with NS and the lack of a formal agreement with NS regarding accounting or marketing, NS cancelled the informal handling line arrangement with PRVR effective August 1, 2005.

Board records show that PRVR last filed an "Employee Service and Compensation Report" reflecting two employees in calendar year 2003. No subsequent reports have been filed. Repeated efforts by the Board to obtain additional reports through the issuance of subpoenas has been futile.

Section 202.11 (20 CFR 202.11) of the Board's regulations states that:

The employer status of any company or person shall terminate whenever such company or person loses any of the characteristics essential to the existence of an employer status.

The evidence of record establishes that PRVR no longer possesses the characteristics of an operating railroad company. The Board therefore finds that effective April 30, 2005, the date of PRVR's last shipment, Pearl River Valley Railroad ceased being a covered employer under the Railroad Retirement and Railroad Unemployment Insurance Acts.

Original signed by:

FOR THE BOARD  
Martha P. Rico  
Secretary to the Board