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**Northern Pacific Railroad. Letter from the Secretary of the Interior, in response to a resolution of the House calling for information in regard to the definite location of various parts of the line of the Northern Pacific Railroad.**

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NORTHERN PACIFIC RAILROAD.

LETTER

FROM

THE SECRETARY OF THE INTERIOR,

IN RESPONSE TO

*A resolution of the House calling for information in regard to the definite location of various parts of the line of the Northern Pacific Railroad.*

MARCH 12, 1884.—Referred to the Committee on Pacific Railroads and ordered to be printed.

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR,  
*Washington, March 11, 1884.*

SIR: In answer to House resolution of the 21st ultimo, directing me to furnish the House of Representatives with information concerning the date of the definite location of each of the several portions of the Northern Pacific Railroad, and of the filing of the plat thereof; and also concerning the claims of the company constructing said road to lands entered under the pre-emption or homestead laws, prior to the time of such definite location of said road, and the *status* of such claims in this Department, I have the honor to inclose herewith copy of the report of the Commissioner of the General Land Office on the subject.

Very respectfully,

H. M. TELLER,  
*Secretary.*

The Hon. SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES.

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR, GENERAL LAND OFFICE,  
*Washington, D. C., February 28, 1884.*

SIR: I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt, by reference from you under date 25th inst., of the resolution of the House of Representatives, of 21st inst., herewith returned. Said resolution is as follows:

That the Secretary of the Interior be, and he is hereby, directed to inform the House when the line of the Northern Pacific Railroad, and of each part thereof, was definitely and finally located, and the plat or plats of such definite and final location filed in the office of the Commissioner of the General Land Office, so far as said railroad has been definitely located, giving the date of the filing of each plat in said office, if more than one plat has been filed, and the length of line designated in each plat. And that he also inform the House whether the Northern Pacific Railroad Company has claimed or is claiming any lands on which homestead or pre-emption entries had been made within the limits of the grant to said company opposite to any part of the line of said railroad prior to the time of final definite location of such part of said line, and, if so, whether such claims of said company are being considered by his Department.

I am instructed to report the information called for.

The Northern Pacific Railroad has been definitely located from a point in the State of Wisconsin, about nine miles west of the Montreal River, to a point near Wallula, Wash., and from Portland, Oreg., to Tacoma, Wash. The branch line has been definitely located from a point near the city of Yakima, Wash., to a junction with the main line near Ainsworth, in the same Territory.

A map showing the main line as constructed from a junction with the Lake Superior and Mississippi Railroad, in T. 48 N., R. 16 W., fourth principal meridian, in Minnesota, to the Red River of the North, a distance of 228.2 miles, was received in this office November 21, 1871, with Department letter of 20th, same month. This map was accepted and treated as the definite location of the road, no evidence of such location having been presented prior to that time.

Other maps of the main line of the road have been filed as follows:

Map showing the line from the Red River of the North to the Missouri River, in the Territory of Dakota, 196.4 miles, as located and adopted by the board of directors of the company May 8, 1873, received May 26, 1873; with Department letter of same date.

Map showing the line from the Missouri River to the Little Missouri River, in Dakota, 150 miles, as located and approved by the executive committee of the board of directors of the company, July 17, 1880, received July 20, 1880, with Department letter of July 19.

Map of the line from the Little Missouri River to the Yellowstone River, at the mouth of Glendive Creek, in Montana Territory, 66 miles, as located and approved by the board of directors of the company October 21, 1880, received here October 25, 1880, by reference from the Department under date 23d, same month.

Map of the line as located from the mouth of Glendive Creek to the mouth of Tongue River, in Montana, 80 miles, approved by the board of directors of the company May 19, 1881, received June 25, 1881, by reference from the Department on June 24, 1881.

Map of the line as located from the mouth of Tongue River to the eastern boundary of the Crow Indian Reservation in Montana, 55 miles, approved by the executive committee of the board of directors of the company June 21, 1881, received on the 25th same month, by reference as above.

Map of the line from the eastern boundary of the Crow Indian Reservation, across the same and adjacent territory, to the western boundary of said reservation (then the Yellowstone River), in Montana, 200 miles, as located and approved by the executive committee of the board of directors of the company June 21, 1881, received June 27, 1881, by reference from the Department under date 25th, same month.

Map showing the line from the last crossing of the Yellowstone River (then the western boundary of the Crow Indian Reservation) to a point on the Little Blackfoot River, in Sec. 1, T. 9 N., R. 7 W, Montana, estimated at 151.5 miles, as located and approved by the board of directors of the company May 9, 1882, received July 6, 1882, by reference from the Department under date July 6, 1882.

Map of the line as located from the point on the Little Blackfoot River before mentioned to the south boundary of the Flathead Indian Reservation in Montana, estimated at 112.25 miles, and approved by the board of directors of the company May 9, 1882, received July 6, 1882, by reference as above.

Map showing the line from the southern boundary of said Flathead Indian Reservation across the southwestern part of the same to the

western boundary thereof, 53.26 miles, as located and approved by the board of directors May 9, 1882, received June 8, 1883, by reference from the Department under date June 6, 1883.

Map of constructed line in Washington Territory, from Kalama northward 65 miles, received September 12, 1873, with Department letter of September 12, 1873, and map of constructed line from the terminus of the foregoing to Tacoma, 41.1 miles, received May 14, 1874, with Department letter dated same day. These maps were accepted and treated as the definite location.

Map showing the line from Kalama, Wash., to Portland, Oreg., 40.94 miles; as located and approved by the board of directors of the company May 14, 1882, received September 22, 1882, by reference from the Department under date September 21, 1882.

Map showing the line from a point near Wallula, Wash., northeasterly to a point near Spokane Falls, 152 miles, as located and approved by the board of directors September 28, 1880, received October 4, 1880, by reference from the Department under date 2d, same month.

Map of the line from Spokane Falls, Wash., to Lake Pend d'Oreille, Idaho, 66 miles, as located and approved by the executive committee of the board of directors of the company August 24, 1881, received August 30, 1881, by reference from the Department under date 29th, same month.

Map of the line from a point on Lake Pend d'Oreille, Idaho, to a point on the north bank of Clark's Fork of the Columbia River opposite the mouth of the Missoula River in Montana Territory, 122 miles, as located and approved by the board of directors of the company November 16, 1882, received December 12, 1882, by reference from the Department under date December 11, 1882. This line connected with the definite location through the Flathead Indian Reservation from the east, and completed the location of the main line between the Lake Superior and Mississippi Railroad junction in Minnesota and Wallula junction in Washington Territory.

Map of the line from a point in Sec. 1, T. 48 N. R., 17 W., fourth principal meridian, Minnesota, eastward to a point in Sec. 15, T. 47 N., R. 2 W., fourth principal meridian, Wisconsin, 100 miles, as located, approved by the board of directors of the company May 9, 1882, received July 6, 1882, by reference from the Department under date 5th, same month.

The eastern terminus of the line shown on this map is about 9 miles west of the mouth of Montreal River, the initial point of the general route of the main line. The total length of located main line herein given is 1,888.65 miles.

A map of the branch line in Washington Territory is definitely located from a point near Yakima to a junction with the main line near Ainsworth, 85.86 miles, approved by the board of directors of the company June 21, 1883, was received June 29, 1883, by reference from the Department under date 27th, same month. This map was submitted with my report of December 5 last, upon the application of the president of the company for the appointment of commissioners to examine a portion of the line constructed, and was accepted and returned by you with letter of 4th ultimo, received on the 7th ultimo.

So far as this office is advised, no part of the main line or branch lines of said railroad other than as herein set forth has been definitely located.

The railroad company is claiming land in odd numbered sections within the limits of its grant upon which pre-emption and homestead

settlements or entries have been made prior to the date of the definite location of its road, and subsequent to the date of the withdrawals upon general route, which it is held by the Department and this office were authorized by section 6 of the act of July 2, 1864, and such claims are being considered. The rule is that where a valid claim or settlement is shown to have been subsisting at the date of withdrawal upon general route, the land covered thereby is held to have been excepted from said withdrawal and from the grant.

In the absence of such a claim or settlement at that date, the right of the company has been recognized as superior, but, in view of proposed legislation touching said grant, action on claims initiated and entries made subsequently has been suspended.

Very respectfully,

N. C. McFARLAND,  
*Commissioner.*

Hon. H. M. TELLER,  
*Secretary of the Interior.*