

National Association of Reversionary Property Owners (NARPO)

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STB

Chief Secretary of Administration

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Part of

Public Record

STB Docket No. AB 1296X

**R.L. Corman Railroad Property LLC–Abandonment Exemption–
In Scott, Campbell, and Anderson Counties, Tenn.**

Comment on AB 1296X

On February 20, 2020, R. J. Corman Railroad Properties LLC (RJC), filed a verified notice of exemption to abandon a 41.05 mile rail line in Tenn. A NITU was issued on April 17, 2020 to Tennessee Citizens for Wilderness Planning (TCWP) for AB 1296X.

Allegedly during the past 5 years TWCP and RJC have been in negotiations for a Trail use Agreement. The STB in their April 10, 2025 Decision on AB1296X spelled out all the alleged details of prior negotiations for the Trail Use Agreement. Obviously nothing has come to pass in 5 years. Now a new NITU sponsor, The Trust for Public Land (TPL), has been mixed into the negotiations at the last minute before the 4 year maximum NITU negotiation period is expiring, See EP 749 (Sub-No 1) and 49 CFR 1152.29(d)(1).

The National Association of Reversionary Property Owners (NARPO) opposes any further NITU extension of the NITU negotiation period after April 17, 2025. No extraordinary reasons have been shown by either TCWP, RJC or TPL. The world nor the United States did not come to a standstill during the two years of the COVID issue. The economy kept moving along, people were still talking, the railroads were still moving goods, contracts were still being negotiated and the STB was still open for business. The problem seems to be TWCP did not have any support from the local communities, and they still don't have local support because the hundreds of abutting property owners do not want a trail through or alongside their properties.

NARPO does not think the excuses put forth by TWCP and TPL are sufficient to to be considered extraordinary reasons for consideration of the restrictions in 49 CFR 1152.29 (d)(1) on trail use negotiation extensions beyond 4 years. All of the TCWP and TPL excuses were their own doing mainly because of no local support and no financing both of which should have been accomplished during the past 4 years.

I am sure the STB is aware the United States Presidential administration changed on January 20, 2025, and that administration has been on an efficiency and waste in the federal

government mode ever since. Assuming that the STB allows the NITU in AB 1296X to extend beyond April 17, 2025 and a Trail Use Agreement is signed by RJC and TPL, more than 300 property owners will then have to sue the federal government in the U.S. Court of Federal Claims for their just compensation for the taking of their property by the proposed trail. Those 300 plus property owners will have a claim of close to \$1 billion for the taking of their property plus the cost of litigation that will also be at the expense of the federal taxpayers.

The Parties of Record to AB 1296X have been served with email on 4/13/2025.

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