

National Association of Reversionary Property Owners (NARPO)

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AB 33 (Sub-No. 262X)

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Surface Transportation Board
Chairman Ann Begeman
395 E Street
Washington, DC 20423

September 15, 2017

Dear Ms. Begeman:

The National Association of Reversionary Property Owners (NARPO) is a non-profit foundation dedicated to the preservation of property rights. NARPO has appeared before the STB and the ICC since 1988 on behalf of our members, and we have been the plaintiff in court suits involving the ICC/STB. NARPO has also precipitated two rules makings before the ICC/STB over the years.

What causes us to write today is the recent letter to the STB from the Illinois Department of Natural Resources dated September 14, 2017 in AB33-262X. This letter asks for an extension of another 180 days for an Interim Trail Use certificate that was originally granted back in early 2008. If you take the time to go back and count all the extensions and other paperwork on this particular Interim Trails Use certificate, you will see there are at least 21 times the STB has had to administer this certificate. Notice that the STB allows the government agencies to have the \$445.00 filing fees waived for these Interim Trail Use extensions. This means on this one abandonment and certificate issue, the STB has expended countless useless hours administrating it while the STB costs are being charged off to other legitimate worthwhile issues the STB attends to.

The purpose in this letter is to object to another Interim Trail Use extension for AB33-262X as it is an onerous detriment to the abutting property owners who have reversionary rights to the right of way. There are over 110 individual property owners along the 24 miles of this proposed trail; many of which are members of NARPO. Also I am sure the STB has many important issues on its plate.

Also I would like the STB to consider a rule making that would set a definite time frame for an Interim Trail Use agreement to be completed by the trail proponent and the abandoning railroad; like a firm order of 180 days, with no extensions, from the date of issuance of the Interim Trails Use Certificate much like the 180 days of the Public Use Condition that is put on most abandonments.

Sincerely yours,

Richard Welsh, Executive Director, NARPO

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