



King County

Parks and Recreation Division

Department of Natural Resources and Parks

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Office of Proceedings

November 1, 2018

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November 1, 2018

Ms. Cynthia T. Brown
Chief, Section of Administration
Office of proceedings
Surface Transportation Board
395 E Street, SW
Washington, DC 20423

RE: Docket EP-749-1 Proposed Rulemaking to Limit NITU's to a maximum of six (6) 180-Day Extensions

Dear Ms. Brown:

King County is home to over 300 miles of regional trails, many of which are railbanked. King County Parks owns and manages many railbanked trails including the East Lake Sammamish Trail, the Eastside Rail Corridor, the Cedar River Trail and a portion of the Snoqualmie River Trail. These railbanked trails are an integral part of a system that provides residents access to nature, promotes tourism and economic development and creates transportation alternatives in a rapidly growing region.

Over the decades, railbanking has been successful in preserving railroad corridors to allow for interim trail use. This trail use provides open, accessible public spaces for people to enjoy, recreate and commute while maintaining the integrity of corridors that would be nearly impossible to acquire in this rapidly growing region.

The Surface Transportation Board's proposal to limit the total available time in which a railbanking agreement can be negotiated to only three years will limit the number of railbanking projects that can be approved. These projects can be immensely complex due to financing, federal and state regulatory processes, and other jurisdictional issues. In our region, we would welcome new railbanked corridors but understand that these negotiations can take years. Securing funding alone is typically a multi-year process. These corridors are too important to lose because of an arbitrary timeframe. Most of our railbanking projects have exceeded this three year period, and we cannot imagine this region without these legacy corridors.

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This proposed change to limit extensions will not serve the public interest in preserving these corridors. We have always been strong advocates for railbanking because our railbanked trails are a treasured piece of this region. They connect us to our environment, to our communities and to one another. We look forward to continuing to grow this network in the years to come.

Thank you.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Kathryn Terry". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Kathryn Terry
Acting Division Director