

October 3, 2017

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Ann D. Begeman | Acting Chairman
Office of Proceedings - Surface Transportation Board
395 E Street, S.W., Room 1034
Washington, DC 20024

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Public Record

RE: Nickel Plate Railroad in Central Indiana | Docket FD-36137-0

Ms. Begeman,

Indiana Landmarks is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization founded in 1960 with offices in Indianapolis and nine regional locations. We help people save and revitalize historic places. Indiana Landmarks enjoys the distinction of the largest statewide preservation organization in the U.S. Our goal is to save the places that matter to Hoosiers—houses, barns, bridges, churches, schools, downtown districts, vintage neighborhoods.

The Nickel Plate Railroad dates back to 1849, when construction originally began. Over the years, the alignment of the railroad has remained virtually the same. Some of the older structures, combined with the original alignment, make this corridor an excellent contender for official recognition as a historic district. In addition, the City of Fishers has also designated a “Nickel Plate” district, further strengthening the argument that this railroad possesses historic and regional value to Indiana.

With respect to the Nickel Plate heritage railroad, we would like to notify the Surface Transportation Board that Indiana Landmarks was approached on April 4, 2017 for guidance on how to begin the process of registering the Nickel Plate railroad as a historical district on the National Register of Historic Places. On June 28, 2017, a team of nine individuals was assembled and Indiana Landmarks was engaged to consult throughout the process of submitting the project for a determination of eligibility and eventual nomination for the National Register. Due to the vast amount of research and data compilation required, we anticipate a packet for determination of eligibility to be submitted by mid-December 2017. The National Register nomination is a separate, secondary process and can take upwards of three years from start to finish.

There is an established precedent of historic railroad districts achieving designation on the National Register. The best example of this is in Minnesota where nearly all of Minnesota’s historic railroads were submitted in a nomination, and accepted into the National Register on August 14, 2013. We believe that the Nickel Plate railroad deserves and is capable of this same recognition.

In light of our efforts to submit the Nickel Plate railroad for designation as a historic district, we ask the Board to refrain from any ruling which may allow for any action which may detrimentally affect the eligibility of the railroad corridor for historic designation. Should any alignment changes or track removal occur, it is likely that the railroad would no longer qualify for historic designation.

Thank you for your consideration in this matter.

Respectfully submitted,



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I certify that these comments have been provided to the Applicant's Attorney of Record via email.
/S/ Mark Dollase