

Docket #: EP-749-1
Railbanking

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Railbanking is an important tool for communities to use when preserving railroad right of way for future use for transportation. Having the time to negotiate with property owners, such as railroad operators, is incredibly important. Railroad operators primary focus is operating their rail lines. Property disposition is a secondary task and often one that is not given high priority. As an example, the community I live in has been attempting to work with a rail operator on a piece of land that they no longer use for rail service. Over the last ten years, we have had roughly four meetings with them, all at their convenience. The acquisition of land for the the Kickapoo Railtrail in Champaign County took over 20 years to be completed. Time restrictions, fees and other rules changes will only make this process more difficult. Ultimately, this will result in these very important, continuous corridors not being preserved for ongoing transportation uses. Once they are broken into pieces and segments, reassembling them is nearly impossible.

Thank you for reconsidering proposed changes to the rules on railbanking. It is very much appreciated.

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