



SURFACE TRANSPORTATION BOARD
Washington, DC 20423

Office of Environmental Analysis

September 8, 2017

Berkeley County
Danny Thrower
Manager
PO Box 6122
Moncks Corner, SC 29461

RE: STB Finance Docket No. 36095, Palmetto Railways—Construction and Operation Exemption—In Berkeley County, South Carolina; Preliminary Consultation

Dear Mr. Thrower:

On August 3, 2017 the Palmetto Railways (Palmetto or Applicant) filed a petition with the Surface Transportation Board (Board), pursuant to 49 U.S.C. § 10502 for authority to construct and operate a 22.7-mile new rail line in Berkeley County, South Carolina. The Surface Transportation Board's (Board) Office of Environmental Analysis (OEA) and the United States Army Corps of Engineers (Corps), Charleston District, are beginning the environmental review of the proposed rail line construction project in compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act and related laws and regulations.

The purpose of this letter is to advise you of the proposed rail line project, request information from your agency on the resources under your jurisdiction that could be affected by the proposed project, and identify permits and approvals that could be required of the Applicant.

Project Background

The proposed rail line would be a short-line rail track that begins at a new connection to the A-Line of CSX Transportation (CSXT) (through the CSXT Cross Subdivision connection), and ends within the Camp Hall Commerce Park, an industrial park currently under development in Ridgville and near Interstate 26. The connection to CSXT would occur on the Santee Cooper property adjacent to its Cross Generating Station, and would cross the Diversion Canal between Lake Marion and Lake Moultrie, running south-southwest. South of the Diversion Canal, the right-of-way traverses the unincorporated rural community of Cross. Beyond the Cross

community, the proposed line passes through a mix of commercial, residential and silvicultural properties before reaching the Camp Hall Commerce Park.

The area is primarily covered by forests, forested wetlands, and open water. The proposed rail line crosses US Highway 176, SC Highway 311, and Old Highway 6, 15 secondary roads and 21 minor forestry/agricultural roads. The entire line would be located within Berkeley County. See Figure A, which shows Palmetto Railways' proposed route in the "Cross Corridor" that Palmetto Railways developed as part of its Alternative Analysis and Figure B, which depicts the additional alternatives studied by Palmetto Railways.

The proposed project is intended to bring rail service to the industrial park, to support the area's infrastructure needs and to alleviate highway congestion involving large commercial trucks in the area.

Environmental Review Process

OEA and the Corps will work as joint-lead agencies to evaluate the potential environmental effects of the proposed project, including any reasonable and feasible alternatives to the proposed route pursuant to the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (NEPA), as amended (42 U.S.C. § 4321 et seq.), the Board's environmental rules at 49 C.F.R. § 1105, the Corps' permitting authority under Section 404(b)(1) of the Clean Water Act (40 CFR Part 230), and other applicable federal, and state laws.

This letter begins the process by which OEA and the Corps will assess the potential environmental effects, both positive and negative, that may be associated with the proposed rail line construction and operation. We appreciate your assistance in identifying whether any resources of concern to your agency may be affected by the proposed project and welcome information on any additional issues or concerns that you consider appropriate.

To assist in your review of the proposed project, please review the additional information filed by the Applicant in support of its proposal. This information may be found on the Board and Corps' Project website at www.CampHallRailNEPA.com.

Request for Comments

We would like to hear from you regarding whether any resources under your jurisdiction could be affected by the proposed project, and whether this proposal would require permitting or approval requirements from your agency. We request your response by **October 8, 2017**, so that we may be able to schedule any meetings, site visits, or surveys; conduct necessary follow-up activities; and incorporate your response into the scope of study, as appropriate.

Please send your written comments to Diana Wood, OEA's Project Manager for the environmental analysis, by email at Diana.Wood@stb.gov, or by mail to:

Ms. Diana Wood
Surface Transportation Board
Docket No. FD 36095
c/o ICF
9300 Lee Highway
Fairfax, VA 22031

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We look forward to your participation in the environmental review process. If you have any questions or would like to arrange a call, please feel free to contact Diana Wood by phone at 202-245-0302 or by email at Diana.Wood@stb.gov or the Corps' project manager, Courtney Stevens by phone at 843-329-8027 or by email at Courtney.M.Stevens@usace.army.mil.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Victoria Rutson". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Victoria" and last name "Rutson" clearly distinguishable.

Victoria Rutson
Director
Office of Environmental Analysis

Enclosures:

Figure A-Proposed Route Map

Figure B-Palmetto Railways Alternatives Analysis Map

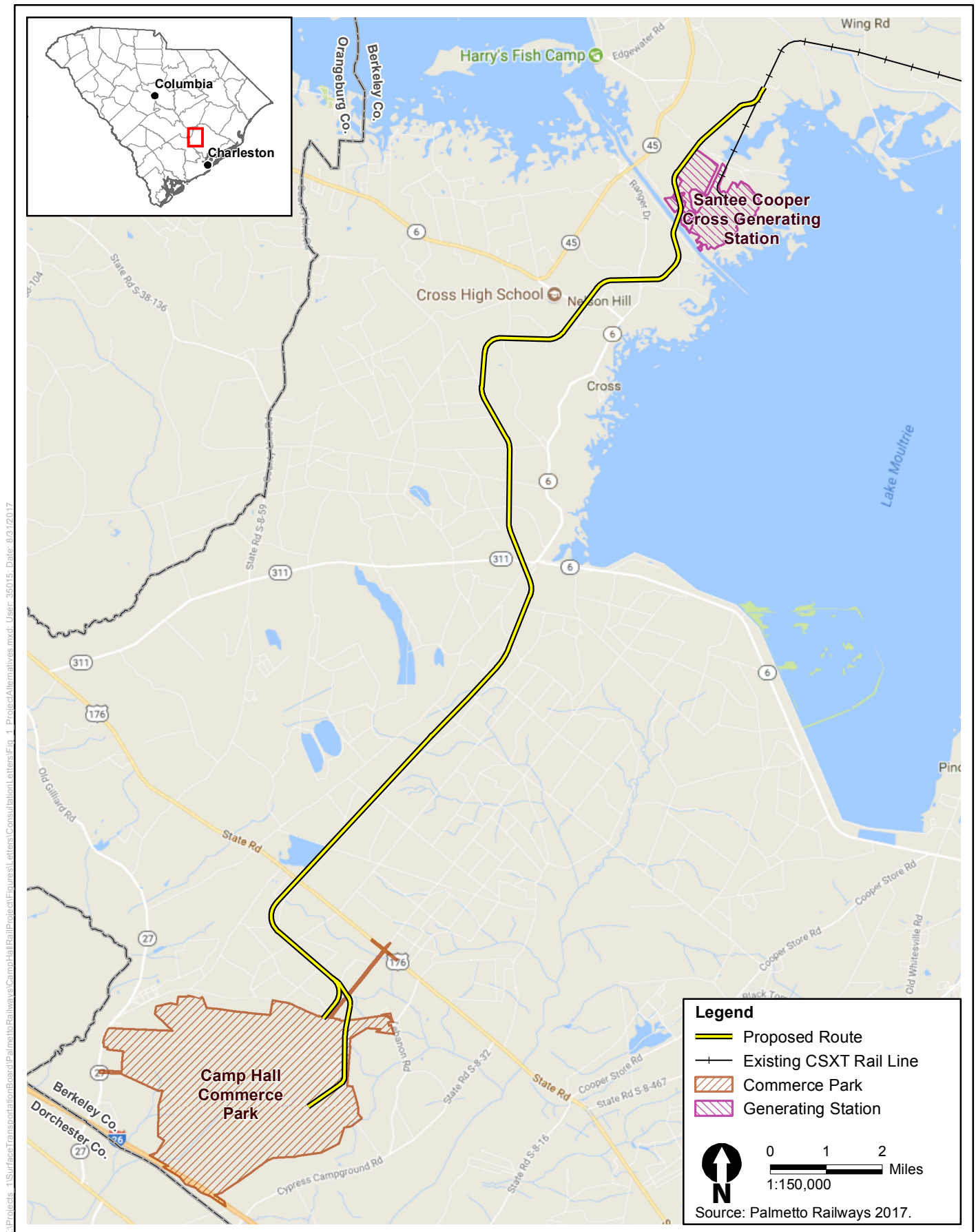


Figure A
Palmetto Railways Proposed Route





SURFACE TRANSPORTATION BOARD
Washington, DC 20423

Office of Environmental Analysis

September 8, 2017

Berkeley County
David Taschner
Director
223 North Live Oak Drive
Moncks Corner, SC 29461

RE: STB Finance Docket No. 36095, Palmetto Railways—Construction and Operation Exemption—In Berkeley County, South Carolina; Preliminary Consultation

Dear Mr. Taschner:

On August 3, 2017 the Palmetto Railways (Palmetto or Applicant) filed a petition with the Surface Transportation Board (Board), pursuant to 49 U.S.C. § 10502 for authority to construct and operate a 22.7-mile new rail line in Berkeley County, South Carolina. The Surface Transportation Board's (Board) Office of Environmental Analysis (OEA) and the United States Army Corps of Engineers (Corps), Charleston District, are beginning the environmental review of the proposed rail line construction project in compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act and related laws and regulations.

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Ms. Diana Wood
Surface Transportation Board
Docket No. FD 36095
c/o ICF
9300 Lee Highway
Fairfax, VA 22031

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Victoria Rutson
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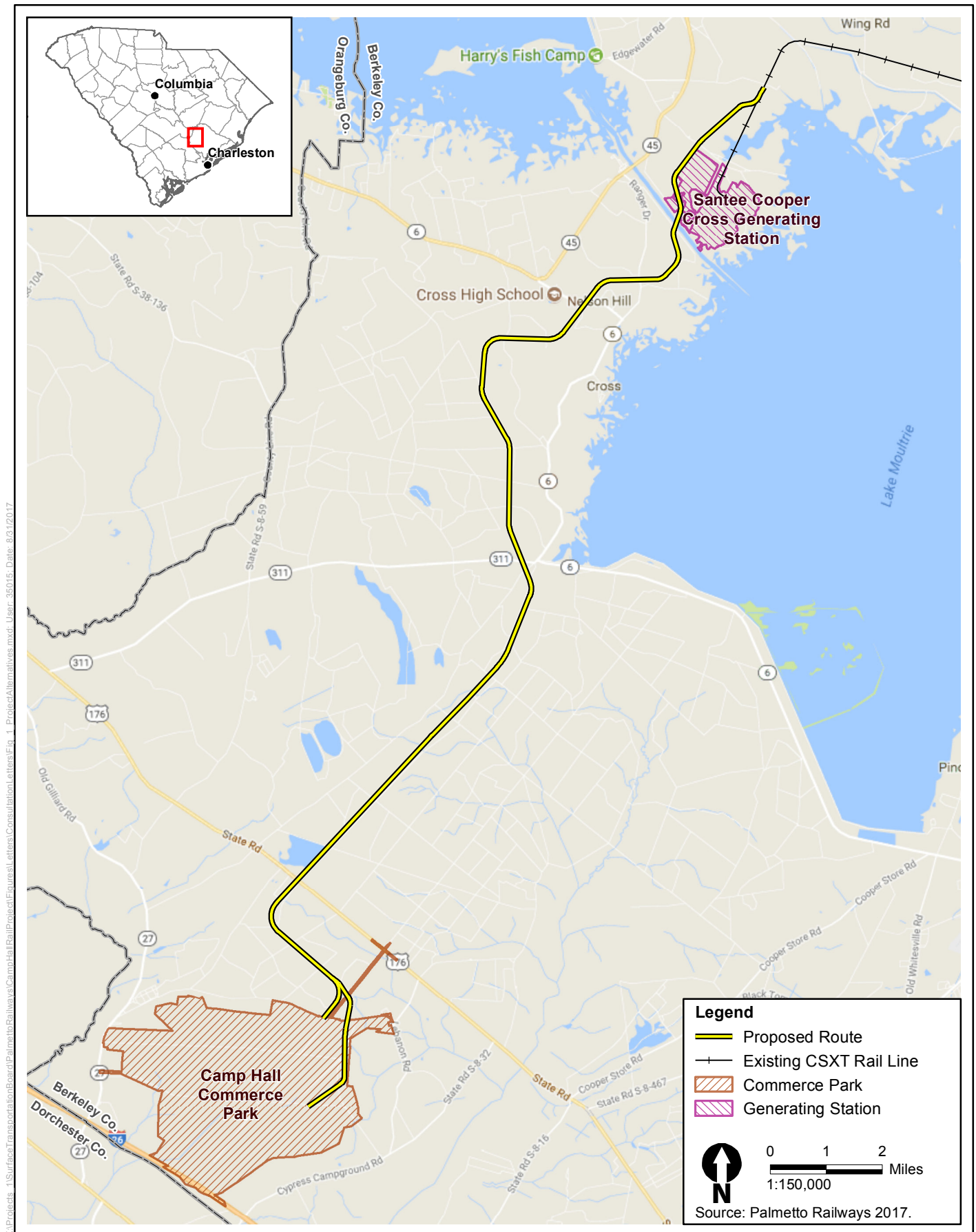


Figure A
Palmetto Railways Proposed Route



Figure B
Palmetto Railways Alternatives Analysis Map



SURFACE TRANSPORTATION BOARD
Washington, DC 20423

Office of Environmental Analysis

September 8, 2017

Berkeley County
Hank Jackson
Chief Building Official
1003 Us-52
Moncks Corner, SC 29461

RE: STB Finance Docket No. 36095, Palmetto Railways—Construction and Operation Exemption—In Berkeley County, South Carolina; Preliminary Consultation

Dear Mr. Jackson:

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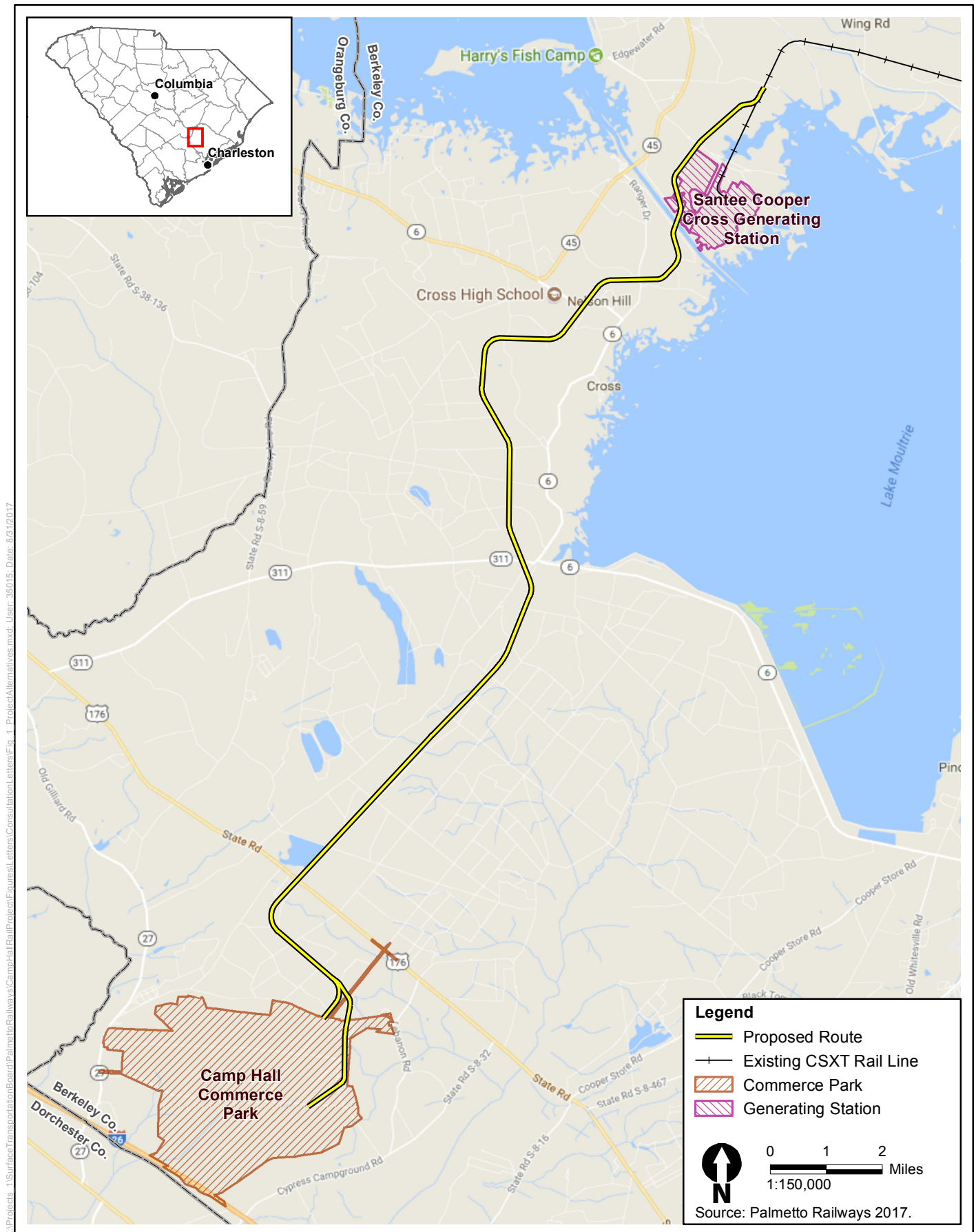


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SURFACE TRANSPORTATION BOARD
Washington, DC 20423

Office of Environmental Analysis

September 8, 2017

Berkeley County
Wilson Baggett
Assessor
PO Box 6122
Moncks Corner, SC 29461

RE: STB Finance Docket No. 36095, Palmetto Railways—Construction and Operation Exemption—In Berkeley County, South Carolina; Preliminary Consultation

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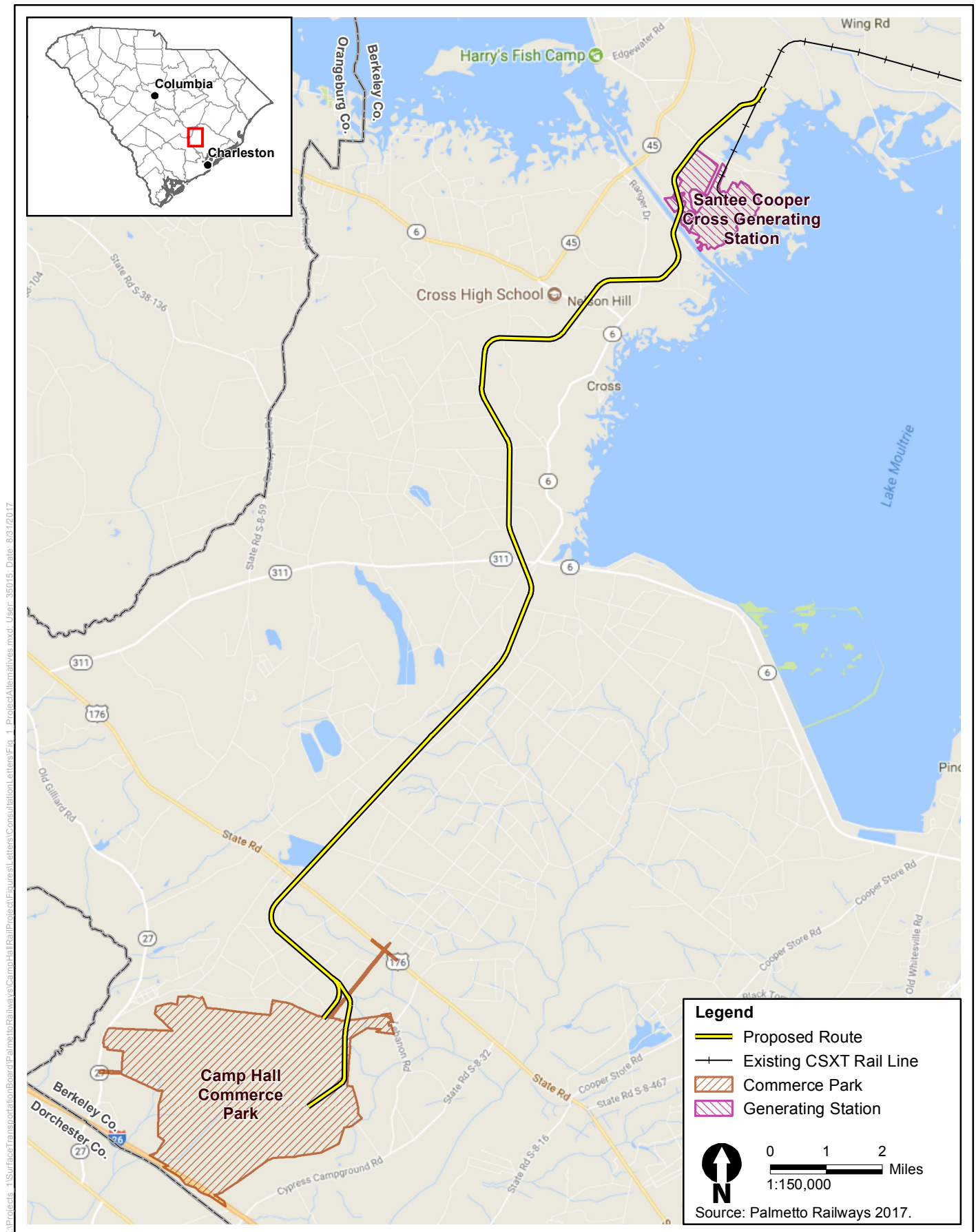


Figure A
Palmetto Railways Proposed Route



Figure B

Palmetto Railways Alternatives Analysis Map



SURFACE TRANSPORTATION BOARD
Washington, DC 20423

Office of Environmental Analysis

September 8, 2017

Berkeley County
S. Duane Lewis
Sherriff
PO Box 6122
Moncks Corner, SC 29461

RE: STB Finance Docket No. 36095, Palmetto Railways—Construction and Operation Exemption—In Berkeley County, South Carolina; Preliminary Consultation

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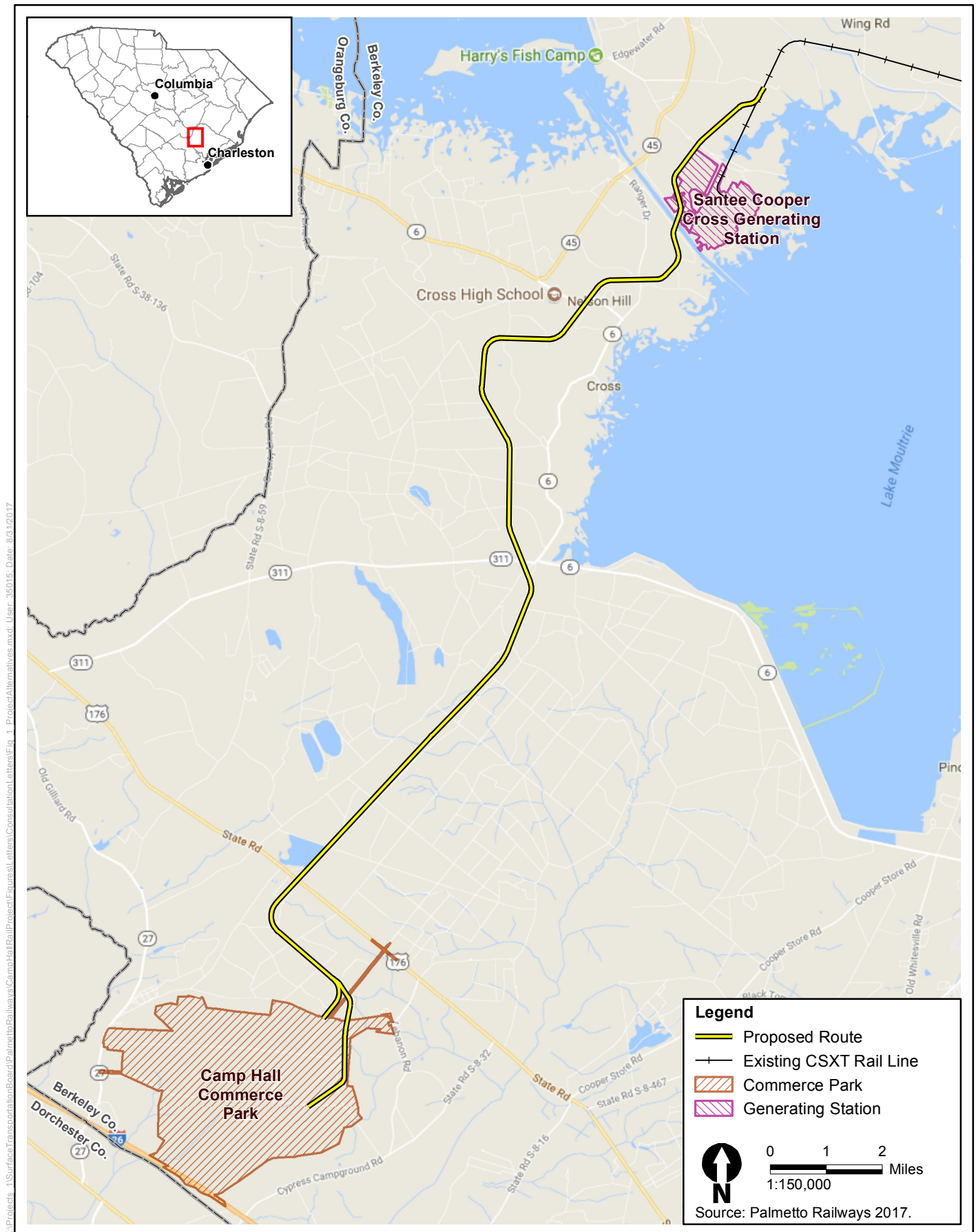


Figure A
Palmetto Railways Proposed Route



Figure B

Palmetto Railways Alternatives Analysis Map



SURFACE TRANSPORTATION BOARD
Washington, DC 20423

Office of Environmental Analysis

September 8, 2017

Berkeley County
Alison Simmons AICP
Planning and Zoning Director
PO Box 6122
Moncks Corner, SC 29461

RE: STB Finance Docket No. 36095, Palmetto Railways—Construction and Operation Exemption—In Berkeley County, South Carolina; Preliminary Consultation

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Office of Environmental Analysis

Enclosures:

Figure A-Proposed Route Map

Figure B-Palmetto Railways Alternatives Analysis Map

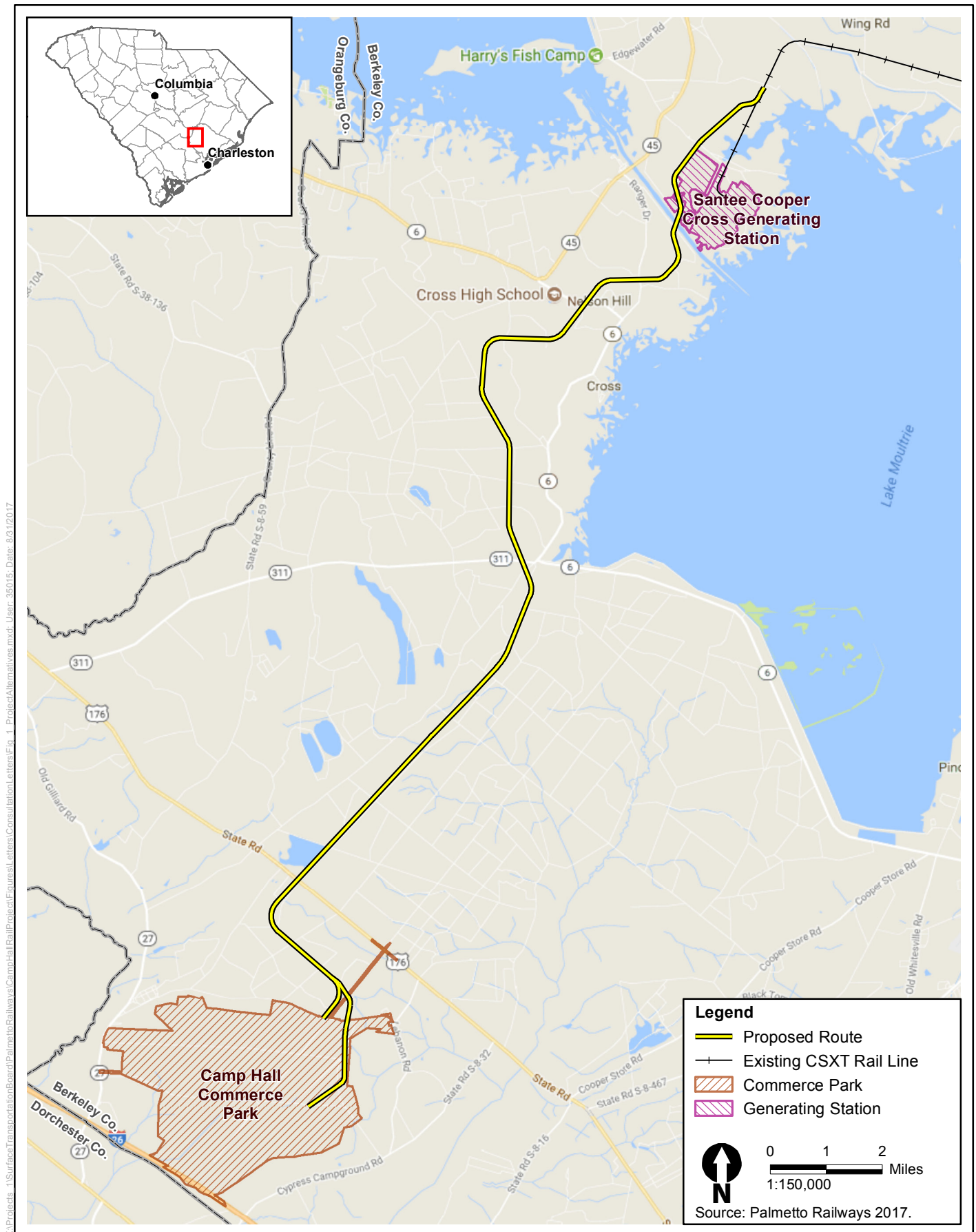


Figure A
Palmetto Railways Proposed Route





SURFACE TRANSPORTATION BOARD
Washington, DC 20423

Office of Environmental Analysis

September 8, 2017

Berkeley County Water and Sanitation
Doug Smits
Executive Director
212 Oakley Plantation Dr
Moncks Corner, SC 29461

RE: STB Finance Docket No. 36095, Palmetto Railways—Construction and Operation Exemption—In Berkeley County, South Carolina; Preliminary Consultation

Dear Mr. Smits:

On August 3, 2017 the Palmetto Railways (Palmetto or Applicant) filed a petition with the Surface Transportation Board (Board), pursuant to 49 U.S.C. § 10502 for authority to construct and operate a 22.7-mile new rail line in Berkeley County, South Carolina. The Surface Transportation Board's (Board) Office of Environmental Analysis (OEA) and the United States Army Corps of Engineers (Corps), Charleston District, are beginning the environmental review of the proposed rail line construction project in compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act and related laws and regulations.

The purpose of this letter is to advise you of the proposed rail line project, request information from your agency on the resources under your jurisdiction that could be affected by the proposed project, and identify permits and approvals that could be required of the Applicant.

Project Background

The proposed rail line would be a short-line rail track that begins at a new connection to the A-Line of CSX Transportation (CSXT) (through the CSXT Cross Subdivision connection), and ends within the Camp Hall Commerce Park, an industrial park currently under development in Ridgville and near Interstate 26. The connection to CSXT would occur on the Santee Cooper property adjacent to its Cross Generating Station, and would cross the Diversion Canal between Lake Marion and Lake Moultrie, running south-southwest. South of the Diversion Canal, the right-of-way traverses the unincorporated rural community of Cross. Beyond the Cross

community, the proposed line passes through a mix of commercial, residential and silvicultural properties before reaching the Camp Hall Commerce Park.

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The proposed project is intended to bring rail service to the industrial park, to support the area's infrastructure needs and to alleviate highway congestion involving large commercial trucks in the area.

Environmental Review Process

OEA and the Corps will work as joint-lead agencies to evaluate the potential environmental effects of the proposed project, including any reasonable and feasible alternatives to the proposed route pursuant to the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (NEPA), as amended (42 U.S.C. § 4321 et seq.), the Board's environmental rules at 49 C.F.R. § 1105, the Corps' permitting authority under Section 404(b)(1) of the Clean Water Act (40 CFR Part 230), and other applicable federal, and state laws.

This letter begins the process by which OEA and the Corps will assess the potential environmental effects, both positive and negative, that may be associated with the proposed rail line construction and operation. We appreciate your assistance in identifying whether any resources of concern to your agency may be affected by the proposed project and welcome information on any additional issues or concerns that you consider appropriate.

To assist in your review of the proposed project, please review the additional information filed by the Applicant in support of its proposal. This information may be found on the Board and Corps' Project website at www.CampHallRailNEPA.com.

Request for Comments

We would like to hear from you regarding whether any resources under your jurisdiction could be affected by the proposed project, and whether this proposal would require permitting or approval requirements from your agency. We request your response by **October 8, 2017**, so that we may be able to schedule any meetings, site visits, or surveys; conduct necessary follow-up activities; and incorporate your response into the scope of study, as appropriate.

Please send your written comments to Diana Wood, OEA's Project Manager for the environmental analysis, by email at Diana.Wood@stb.gov, or by mail to:

Ms. Diana Wood
Surface Transportation Board
Docket No. FD 36095
c/o ICF
9300 Lee Highway
Fairfax, VA 22031

You may also submit comments electronically through the Board's Web site at www.stb.gov by clicking on the "E-Filing" quick link on the right-hand side of the home page and then selecting "Environmental Comments." Brief comments may be typed within the comment field provided, or alternatively, you may attach comments as Microsoft Word or Adobe Acrobat files.

We look forward to your participation in the environmental review process. If you have any questions or would like to arrange a call, please feel free to contact Diana Wood by phone at 202-245-0302 or by email at Diana.Wood@stb.gov or the Corps' project manager, Courtney Stevens by phone at 843-329-8027 or by email at Courtney.M.Stevens@usace.army.mil.

Sincerely,

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Victoria Rutson
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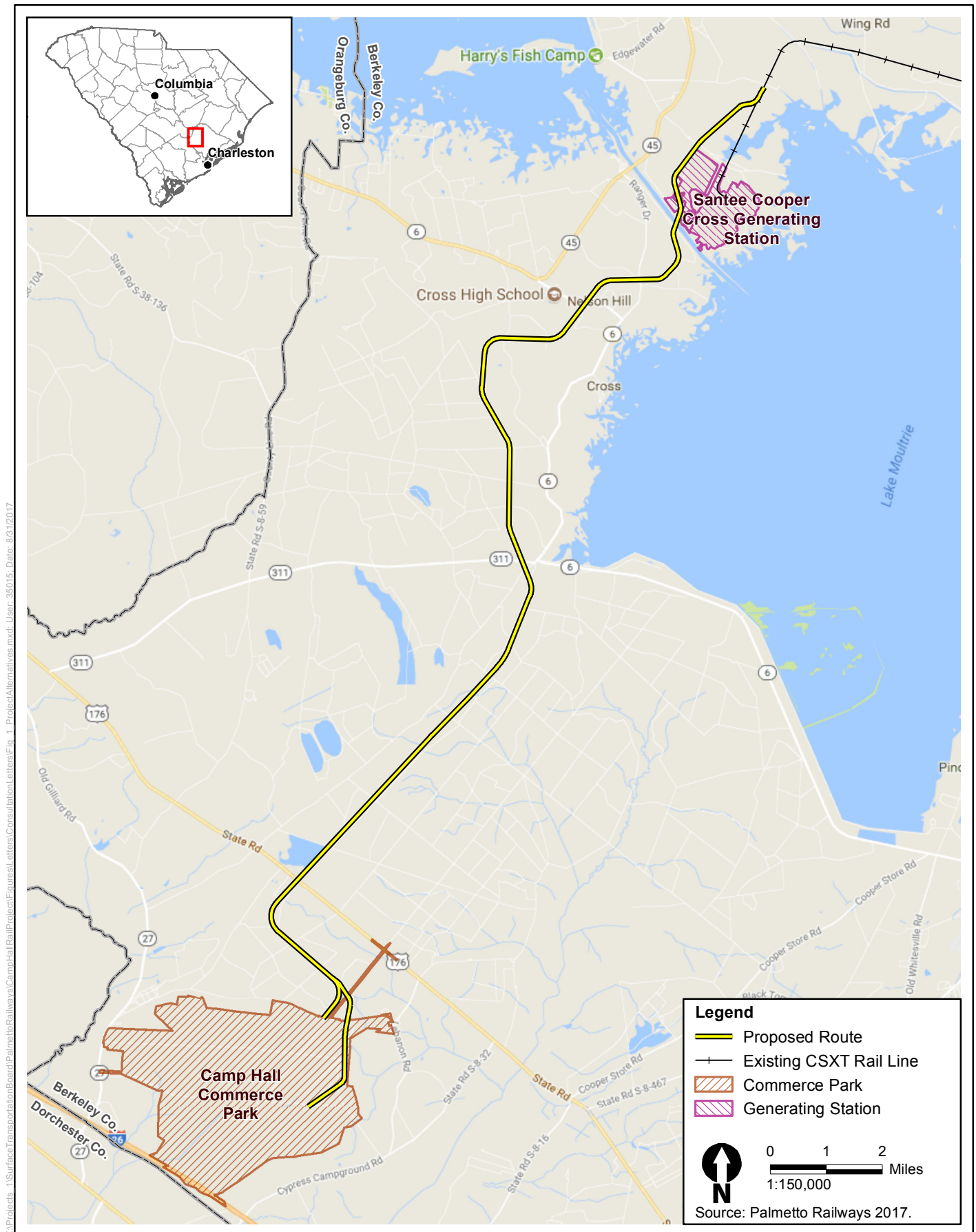


Figure A
Palmetto Railways Proposed Route



Figure B

Palmetto Railways Alternatives Analysis Map



SURFACE TRANSPORTATION BOARD
Washington, DC 20423

Office of Environmental Analysis

September 8, 2017

Berkeley-Charleston-Dorchester Council of Governments
Ron Mitchum
Executive Director
1362 McMillan Ave
North Charleston, SC 29405

RE: STB Finance Docket No. 36095, Palmetto Railways—Construction and Operation Exemption—In Berkeley County, South Carolina; Preliminary Consultation

Dear Mr. Mitchum:

On August 3, 2017 the Palmetto Railways (Palmetto or Applicant) filed a petition with the Surface Transportation Board (Board), pursuant to 49 U.S.C. § 10502 for authority to construct and operate a 22.7-mile new rail line in Berkeley County, South Carolina. The Surface Transportation Board's (Board) Office of Environmental Analysis (OEA) and the United States Army Corps of Engineers (Corps), Charleston District, are beginning the environmental review of the proposed rail line construction project in compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act and related laws and regulations.

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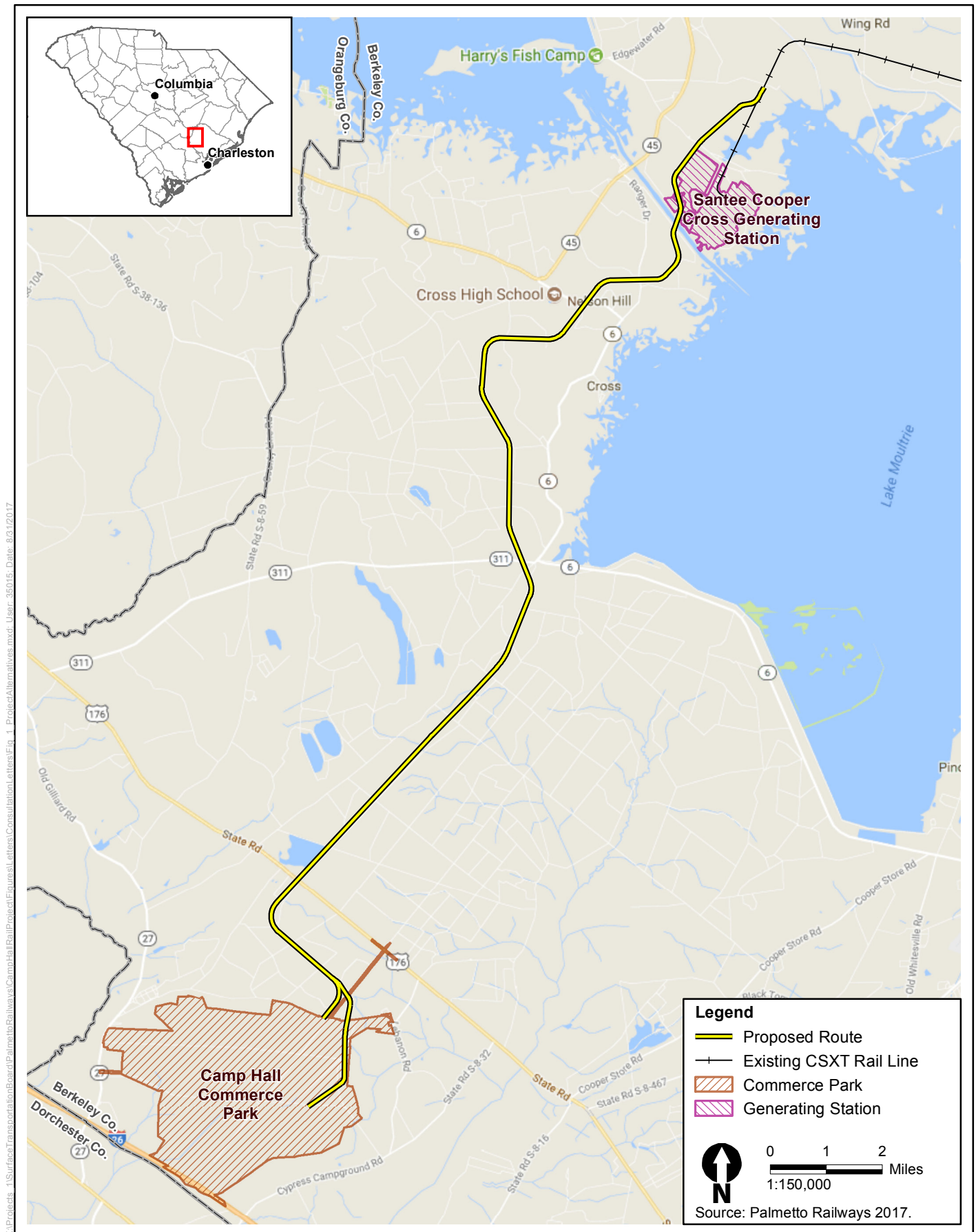


Figure A
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Palmetto Railways Alternatives Analysis Map



SURFACE TRANSPORTATION BOARD
Washington, DC 20423

Office of Environmental Analysis

September 8, 2017

Cross Rural Fire Department
Marvin Achterhof
Battalion Chief
821 S & S Campground Lane
Cross, SC 29436

RE: STB Finance Docket No. 36095, Palmetto Railways—Construction and Operation Exemption—In Berkeley County, South Carolina; Preliminary Consultation

Dear Mr. Achterhof:

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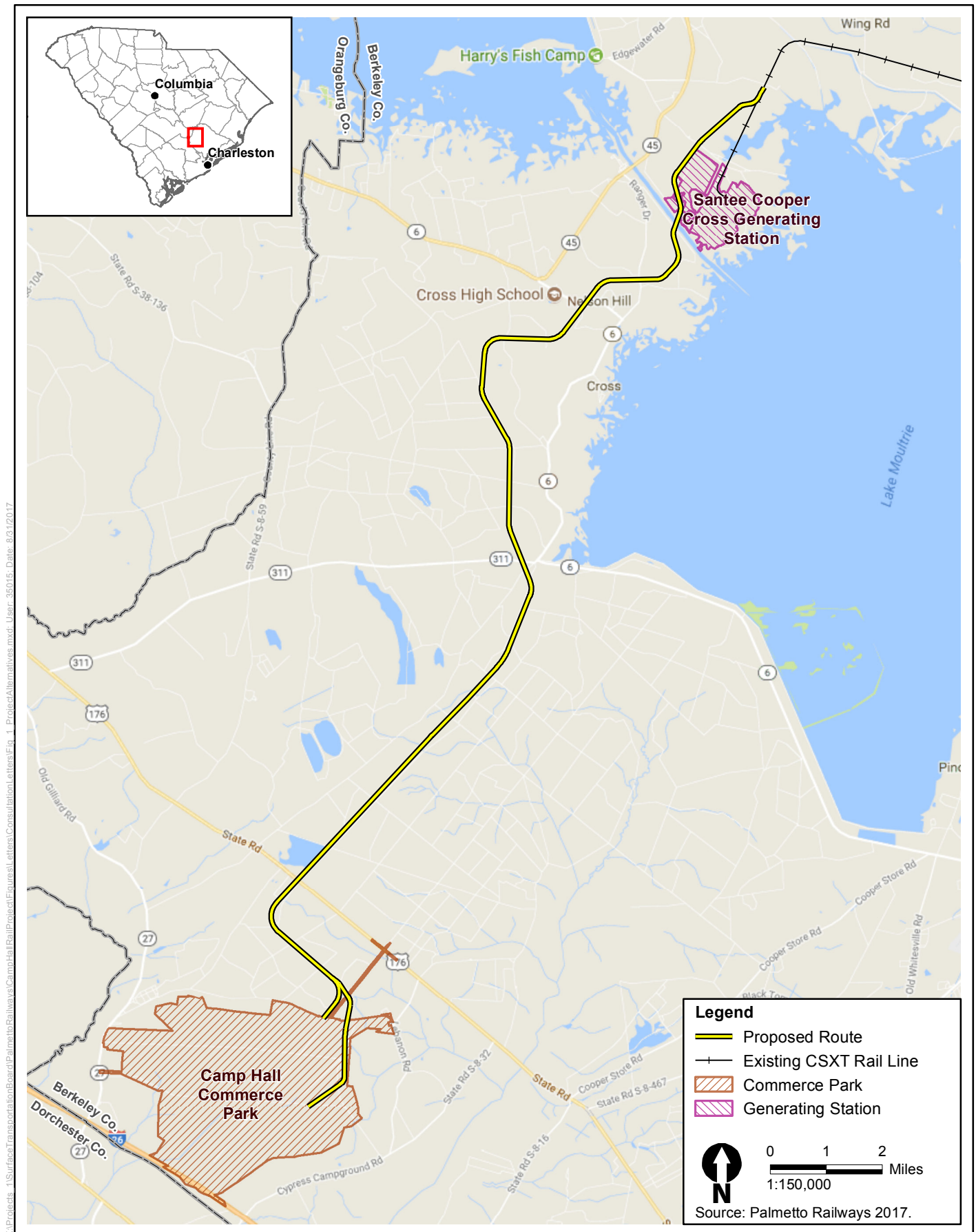


Figure A
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SURFACE TRANSPORTATION BOARD
Washington, DC 20423

Office of Environmental Analysis

September 8, 2017

Cross Rural Fire Department
Clayton Cole Jr.
Fire Chief
1007 Shortcut Rd
Cross, SC 29436

RE: STB Finance Docket No. 36095, Palmetto Railways—Construction and Operation Exemption—In Berkeley County, South Carolina; Preliminary Consultation

Dear Mr. Cole:

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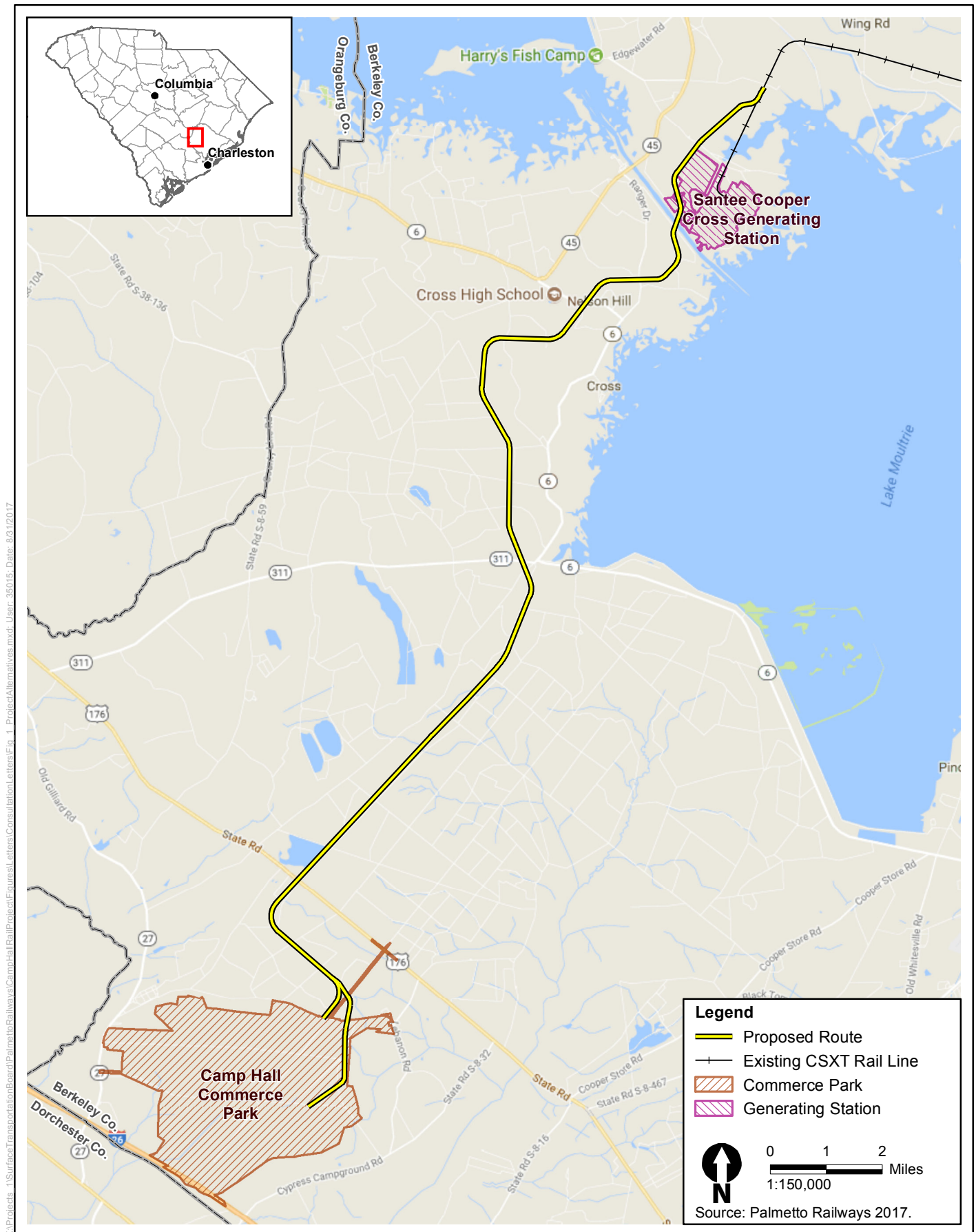


Figure A
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SURFACE TRANSPORTATION BOARD
Washington, DC 20423

Office of Environmental Analysis

September 8, 2017

Santee Cooper
Sam Bennett
Vice President of Administration
1 Riverwood Dr
Moncks Corner, SC 29461

RE: STB Finance Docket No. 36095, Palmetto Railways—Construction and Operation Exemption—In Berkeley County, South Carolina; Preliminary Consultation

Dear Mr. Bennett:

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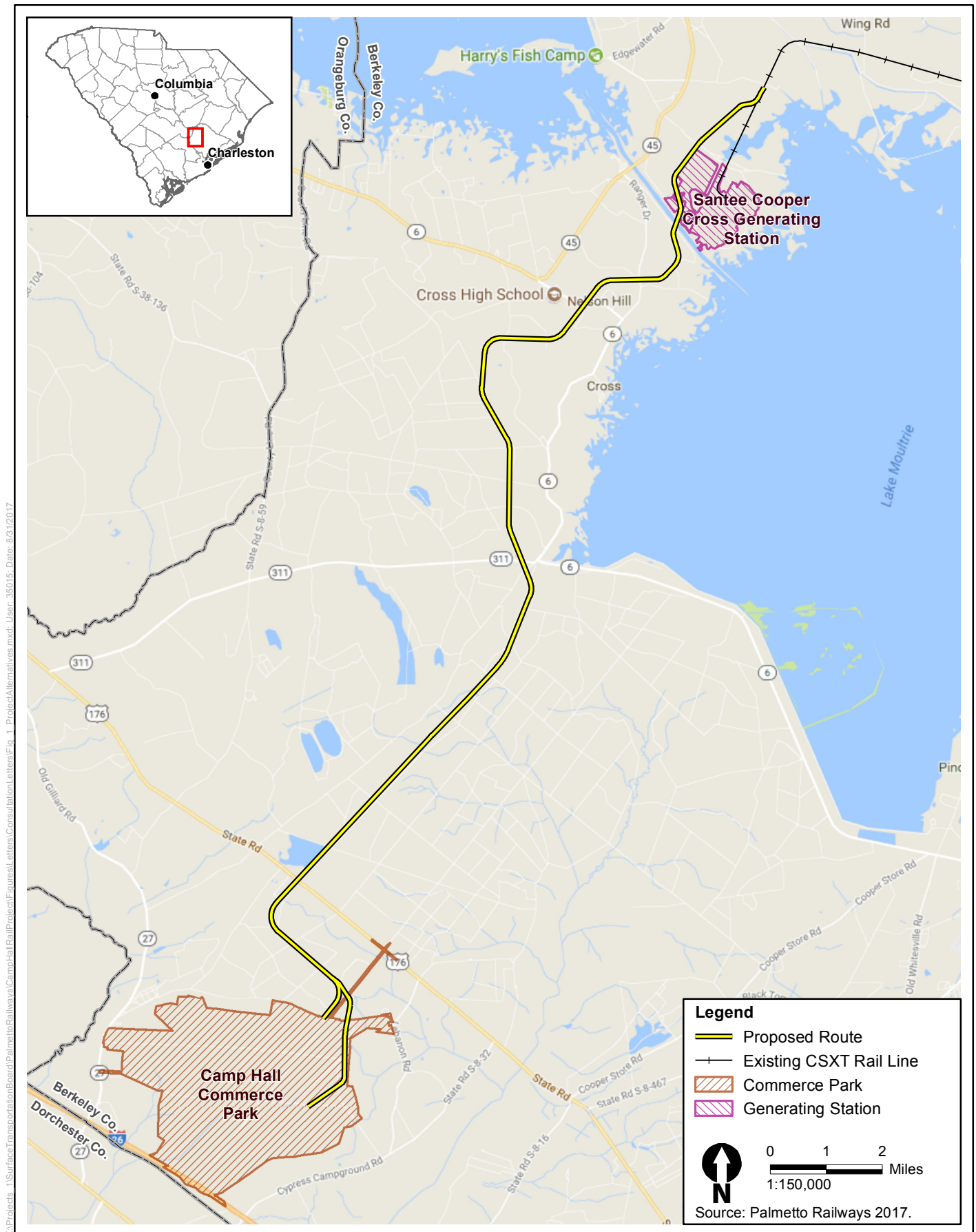


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Figure B
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SURFACE TRANSPORTATION BOARD
Washington, DC 20423

Office of Environmental Analysis

September 8, 2017

South Carolina Department of Agriculture
Hugh Weathers
Commissioner
Po Box 11280
Columbia, SC 29211

RE: STB Finance Docket No. 36095, Palmetto Railways—Construction and Operation Exemption—In Berkeley County, South Carolina; Preliminary Consultation

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We look forward to your participation in the environmental review process. If you have any questions or would like to arrange a call, please feel free to contact Diana Wood by phone at 202-245-0302 or by email at Diana.Wood@stb.gov or the Corps' project manager, Courtney Stevens by phone at 843-329-8027 or by email at Courtney.M.Stevens@usace.army.mil.

Sincerely,

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Victoria Rutson
Director
Office of Environmental Analysis

Enclosures:

Figure A-Proposed Route Map

Figure B-Palmetto Railways Alternatives Analysis Map

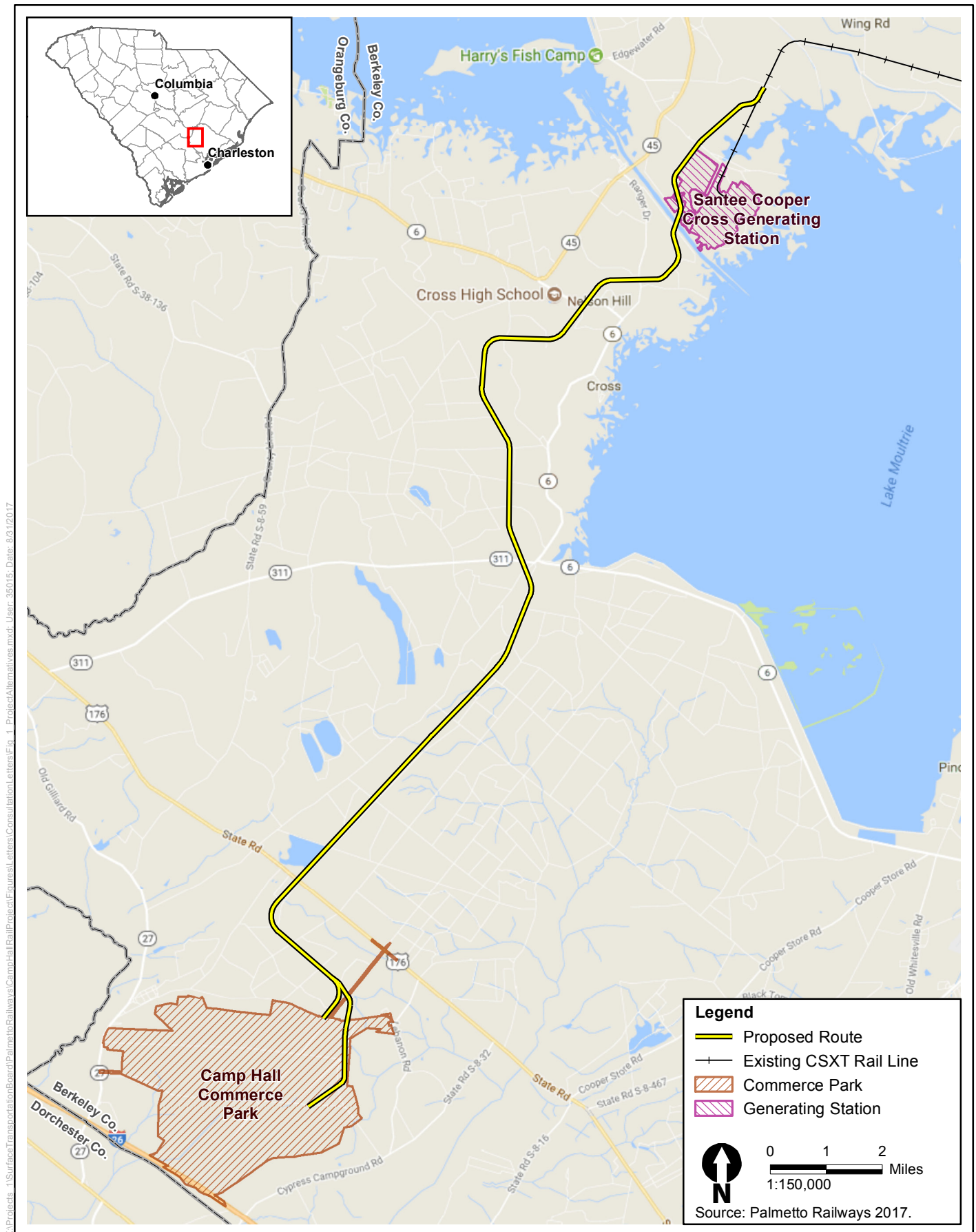


Figure A
Palmetto Railways Proposed Route



Figure B
Palmetto Railways Alternatives Analysis Map



SURFACE TRANSPORTATION BOARD
Washington, DC 20423

Office of Environmental Analysis

September 8, 2017

South Carolina Department of Commerce
Robert Hitt III
Secretary of Commerce
1201 Main Street, Suite 1600
Columbia, SC 29201-3200

RE: STB Finance Docket No. 36095, Palmetto Railways—Construction and Operation Exemption—In Berkeley County, South Carolina; Preliminary Consultation

Dear Mr. Hitt:

On August 3, 2017 the Palmetto Railways (Palmetto or Applicant) filed a petition with the Surface Transportation Board (Board), pursuant to 49 U.S.C. § 10502 for authority to construct and operate a 22.7-mile new rail line in Berkeley County, South Carolina. The Surface Transportation Board's (Board) Office of Environmental Analysis (OEA) and the United States Army Corps of Engineers (Corps), Charleston District, are beginning the environmental review of the proposed rail line construction project in compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act and related laws and regulations.

The purpose of this letter is to advise you of the proposed rail line project, request information from your agency on the resources under your jurisdiction that could be affected by the proposed project, and identify permits and approvals that could be required of the Applicant.

Project Background

The proposed rail line would be a short-line rail track that begins at a new connection to the A-Line of CSX Transportation (CSXT) (through the CSXT Cross Subdivision connection), and ends within the Camp Hall Commerce Park, an industrial park currently under development in Ridgville and near Interstate 26. The connection to CSXT would occur on the Santee Cooper property adjacent to its Cross Generating Station, and would cross the Diversion Canal between Lake Marion and Lake Moultrie, running south-southwest. South of the Diversion Canal, the right-of-way traverses the unincorporated rural community of Cross. Beyond the Cross

community, the proposed line passes through a mix of commercial, residential and silvicultural properties before reaching the Camp Hall Commerce Park.

The area is primarily covered by forests, forested wetlands, and open water. The proposed rail line crosses US Highway 176, SC Highway 311, and Old Highway 6, 15 secondary roads and 21 minor forestry/agricultural roads. The entire line would be located within Berkeley County. See Figure A, which shows Palmetto Railways' proposed route in the "Cross Corridor" that Palmetto Railways developed as part of its Alternative Analysis and Figure B, which depicts the additional alternatives studied by Palmetto Railways.

The proposed project is intended to bring rail service to the industrial park, to support the area's infrastructure needs and to alleviate highway congestion involving large commercial trucks in the area.

Environmental Review Process

OEA and the Corps will work as joint-lead agencies to evaluate the potential environmental effects of the proposed project, including any reasonable and feasible alternatives to the proposed route pursuant to the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (NEPA), as amended (42 U.S.C. § 4321 et seq.), the Board's environmental rules at 49 C.F.R. § 1105, the Corps' permitting authority under Section 404(b)(1) of the Clean Water Act (40 CFR Part 230), and other applicable federal, and state laws.

This letter begins the process by which OEA and the Corps will assess the potential environmental effects, both positive and negative, that may be associated with the proposed rail line construction and operation. We appreciate your assistance in identifying whether any resources of concern to your agency may be affected by the proposed project and welcome information on any additional issues or concerns that you consider appropriate.

To assist in your review of the proposed project, please review the additional information filed by the Applicant in support of its proposal. This information may be found on the Board and Corps' Project website at www.CampHallRailNEPA.com.

Request for Comments

We would like to hear from you regarding whether any resources under your jurisdiction could be affected by the proposed project, and whether this proposal would require permitting or approval requirements from your agency. We request your response by **October 8, 2017**, so that we may be able to schedule any meetings, site visits, or surveys; conduct necessary follow-up activities; and incorporate your response into the scope of study, as appropriate.

Please send your written comments to Diana Wood, OEA's Project Manager for the environmental analysis, by email at Diana.Wood@stb.gov, or by mail to:

Ms. Diana Wood
Surface Transportation Board
Docket No. FD 36095
c/o ICF
9300 Lee Highway
Fairfax, VA 22031

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Director
Office of Environmental Analysis

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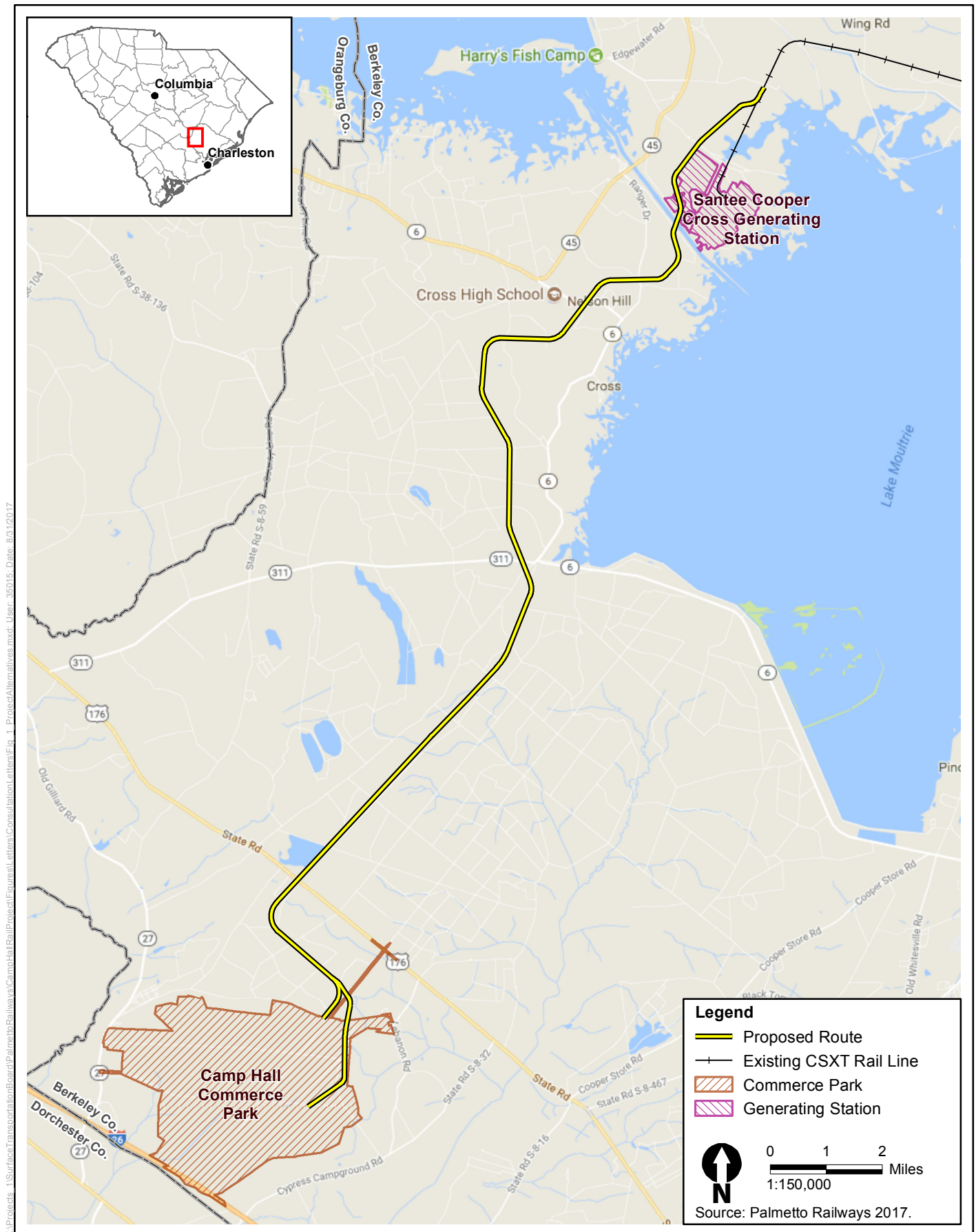


Figure A
Palmetto Railways Proposed Route



Figure B
Palmetto Railways Alternatives Analysis Map



SURFACE TRANSPORTATION BOARD
Washington, DC 20423

Office of Environmental Analysis

September 8, 2017

South Carolina Department of Health and Environmental Control
Myra Reece
Director of Environmental Affairs
2600 Bull St
Columbia, SC 29201

RE: STB Finance Docket No. 36095, Palmetto Railways—Construction and Operation Exemption—In Berkeley County, South Carolina; Preliminary Consultation

Dear Ms. Reece:

On August 3, 2017 the Palmetto Railways (Palmetto or Applicant) filed a petition with the Surface Transportation Board (Board), pursuant to 49 U.S.C. § 10502 for authority to construct and operate a 22.7-mile new rail line in Berkeley County, South Carolina. The Surface Transportation Board's (Board) Office of Environmental Analysis (OEA) and the United States Army Corps of Engineers (Corps), Charleston District, are beginning the environmental review of the proposed rail line construction project in compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act and related laws and regulations.

The purpose of this letter is to advise you of the proposed rail line project, request information from your agency on the resources under your jurisdiction that could be affected by the proposed project, and identify permits and approvals that could be required of the Applicant.

Project Background

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community, the proposed line passes through a mix of commercial, residential and silvicultural properties before reaching the Camp Hall Commerce Park.

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The proposed project is intended to bring rail service to the industrial park, to support the area's infrastructure needs and to alleviate highway congestion involving large commercial trucks in the area.

Environmental Review Process

OEA and the Corps will work as joint-lead agencies to evaluate the potential environmental effects of the proposed project, including any reasonable and feasible alternatives to the proposed route pursuant to the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (NEPA), as amended (42 U.S.C. § 4321 et seq.), the Board's environmental rules at 49 C.F.R. § 1105, the Corps' permitting authority under Section 404(b)(1) of the Clean Water Act (40 CFR Part 230), and other applicable federal, and state laws.

This letter begins the process by which OEA and the Corps will assess the potential environmental effects, both positive and negative, that may be associated with the proposed rail line construction and operation. We appreciate your assistance in identifying whether any resources of concern to your agency may be affected by the proposed project and welcome information on any additional issues or concerns that you consider appropriate.

To assist in your review of the proposed project, please review the additional information filed by the Applicant in support of its proposal. This information may be found on the Board and Corps' Project website at www.CampHallRailNEPA.com.

Request for Comments

We would like to hear from you regarding whether any resources under your jurisdiction could be affected by the proposed project, and whether this proposal would require permitting or approval requirements from your agency. We request your response by **October 8, 2017**, so that we may be able to schedule any meetings, site visits, or surveys; conduct necessary follow-up activities; and incorporate your response into the scope of study, as appropriate.

Please send your written comments to Diana Wood, OEA's Project Manager for the environmental analysis, by email at Diana.Wood@stb.gov, or by mail to:

Ms. Diana Wood
Surface Transportation Board
Docket No. FD 36095
c/o ICF
9300 Lee Highway
Fairfax, VA 22031

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Victoria Rutson
Director
Office of Environmental Analysis

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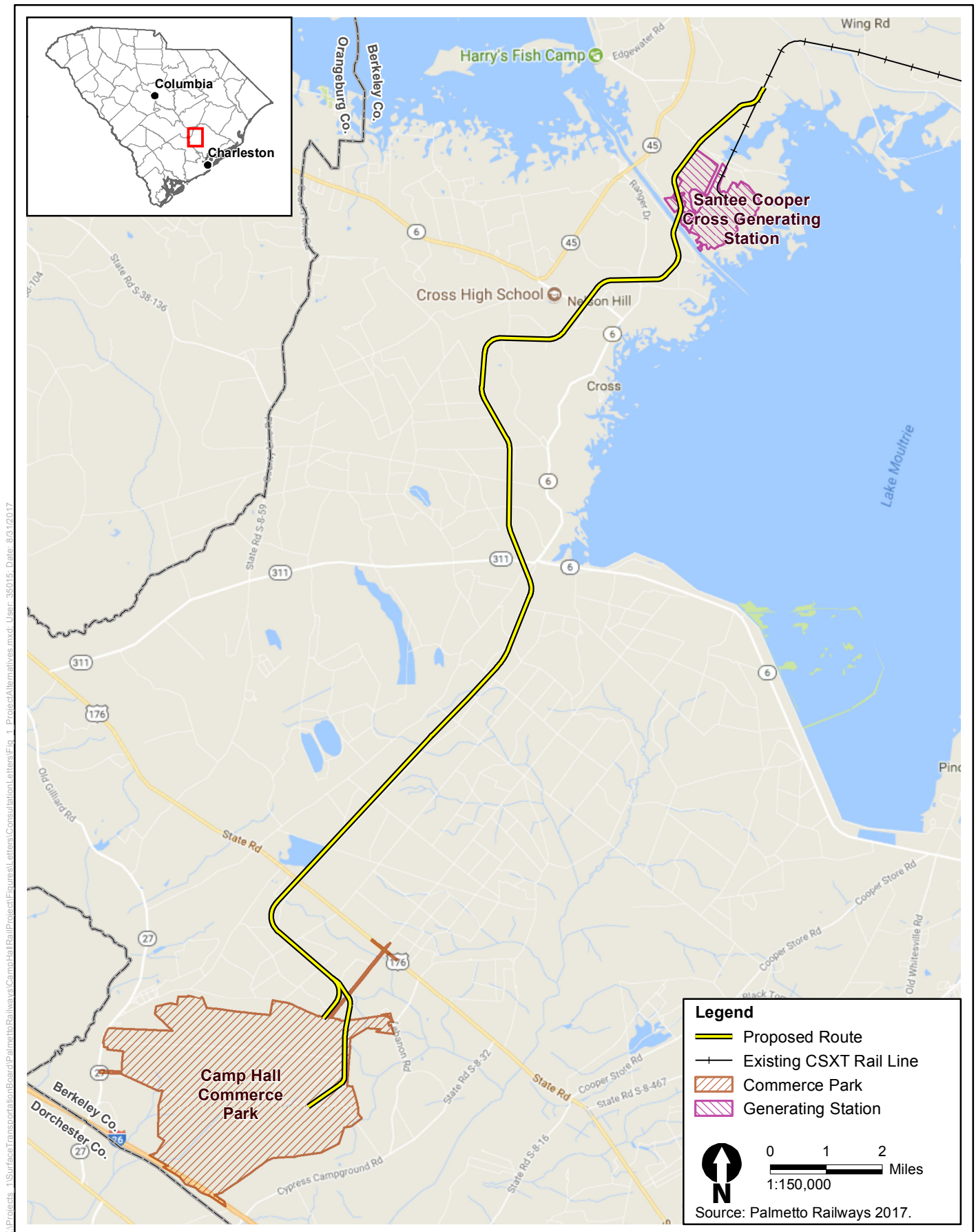




Figure B
Palmetto Railways Alternatives Analysis Map



SURFACE TRANSPORTATION BOARD
Washington, DC 20423

Office of Environmental Analysis

September 8, 2017

South Carolina Department of Health and Environmental Control
Blair Williams
Manager, Wetland Permitting Section
2600 Bull St
Columbia, SC 29201

RE: STB Finance Docket No. 36095, Palmetto Railways—Construction and Operation Exemption—In Berkeley County, South Carolina; Preliminary Consultation

Dear Blair Williams:

On August 3, 2017 the Palmetto Railways (Palmetto or Applicant) filed a petition with the Surface Transportation Board (Board), pursuant to 49 U.S.C. § 10502 for authority to construct and operate a 22.7-mile new rail line in Berkeley County, South Carolina. The Surface Transportation Board's (Board) Office of Environmental Analysis (OEA) and the United States Army Corps of Engineers (Corps), Charleston District, are beginning the environmental review of the proposed rail line construction project in compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act and related laws and regulations.

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Surface Transportation Board
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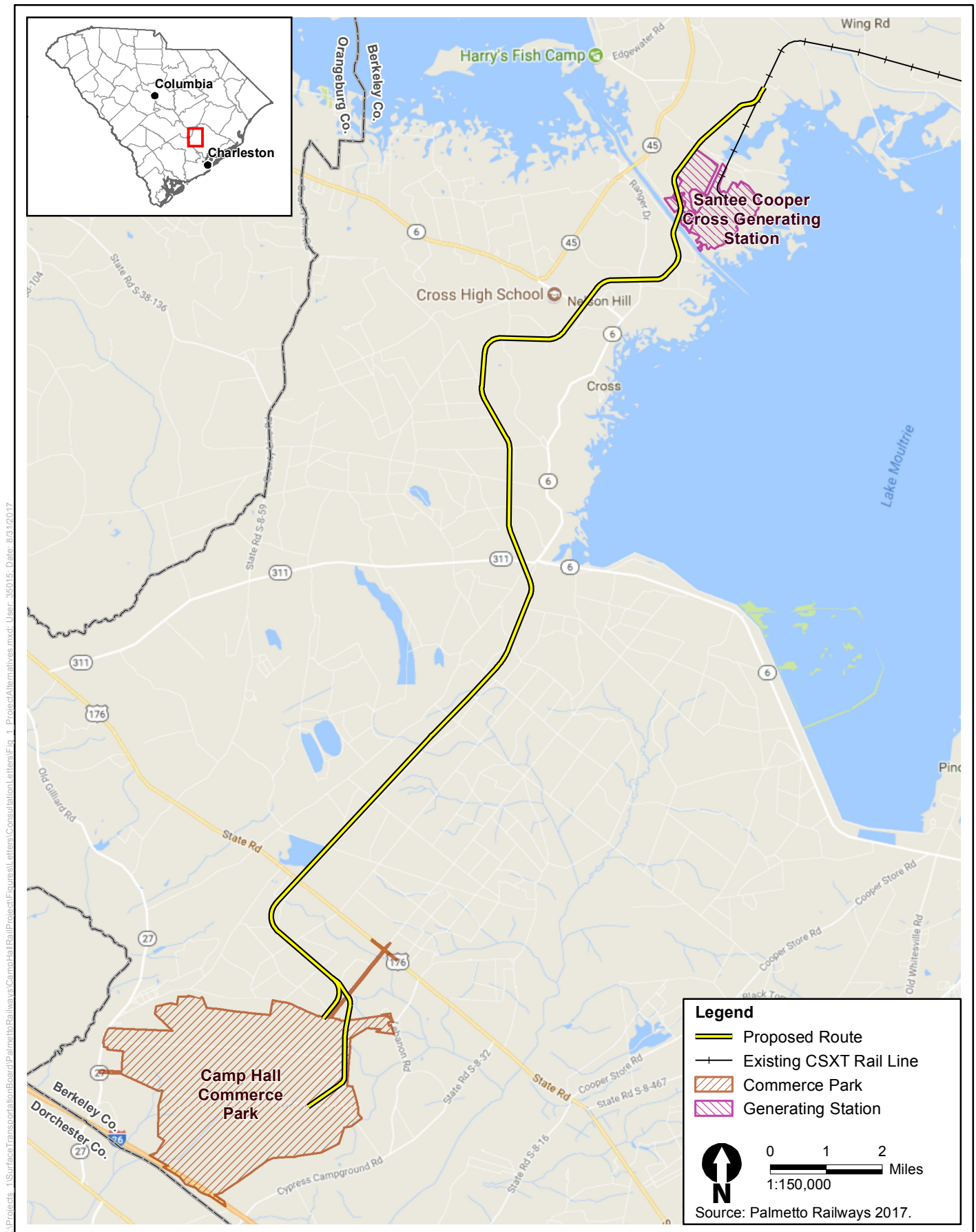


Figure A
Palmetto Railways Proposed Route



Figure B
Palmetto Railways Alternatives Analysis Map



SURFACE TRANSPORTATION BOARD
Washington, DC 20423

Office of Environmental Analysis

September 8, 2017

South Carolina Department of Health and Environmental Control
Catherine Heigel
Director
2600 Bull St
Columbia, SC 29201

RE: STB Finance Docket No. 36095, Palmetto Railways—Construction and Operation Exemption—In Berkeley County, South Carolina; Preliminary Consultation

Dear Ms. Heigel:

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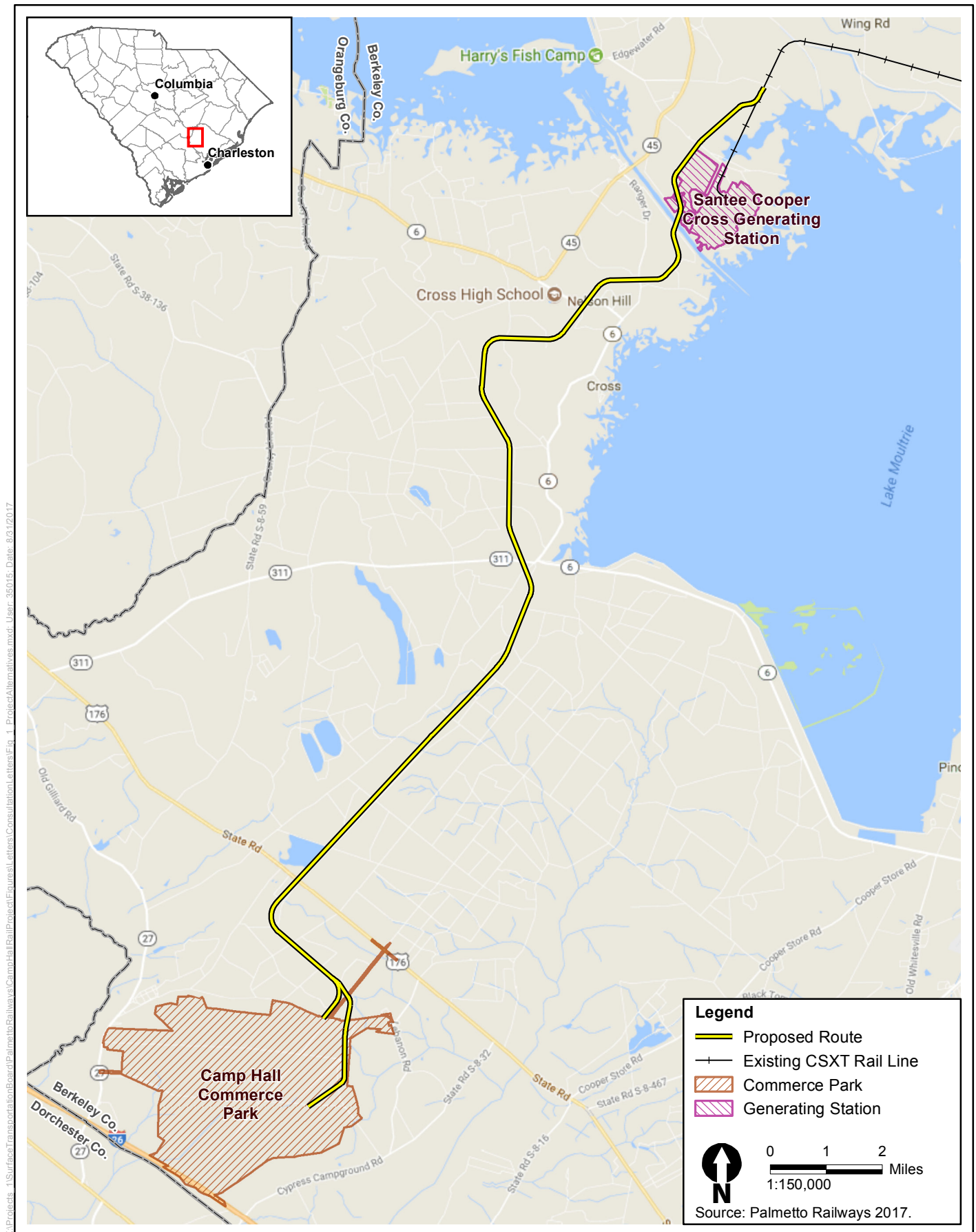


Figure A
Palmetto Railways Proposed Route





SURFACE TRANSPORTATION BOARD
Washington, DC 20423

Office of Environmental Analysis

September 8, 2017

South Carolina Department of Natural Resources
Susan Davis
Coastal Environmental Coordinator
PO Box 12559
Charleston, SC 29412

RE: STB Finance Docket No. 36095, Palmetto Railways—Construction and Operation Exemption—In Berkeley County, South Carolina; Preliminary Consultation

Dear Ms. Davis:

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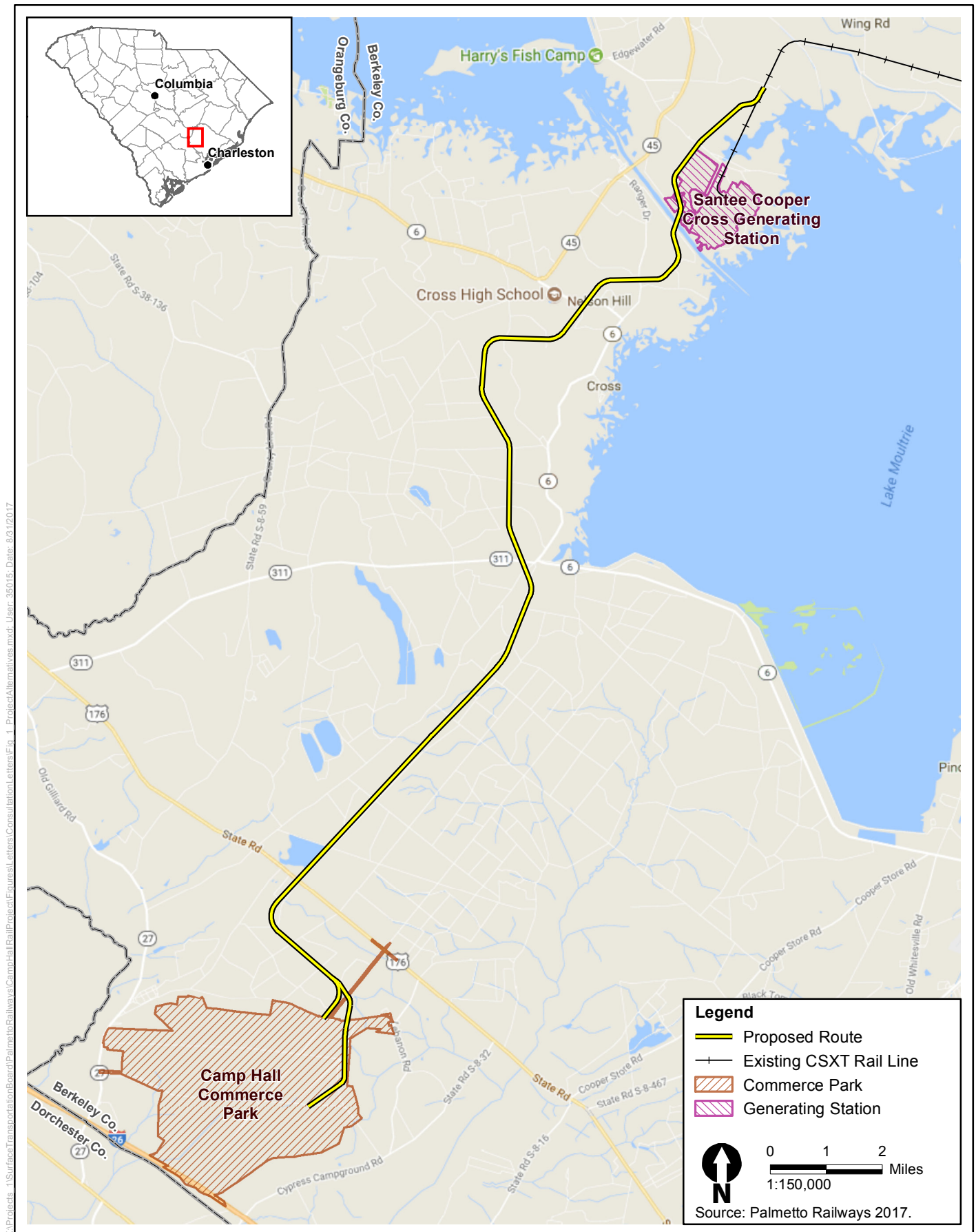
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Director
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Enclosures:

Figure A-Proposed Route Map

Figure B-Palmetto Railways Alternatives Analysis Map







SURFACE TRANSPORTATION BOARD
Washington, DC 20423

Office of Environmental Analysis

September 8, 2017

South Carolina Department of Natural Resources
Alvin Taylor
Director
PO Box 167
Columbia, SC 29202

RE: STB Finance Docket No. 36095, Palmetto Railways—Construction and Operation Exemption—In Berkeley County, South Carolina; Preliminary Consultation

Dear Mr. Taylor:

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Request for Comments

We would like to hear from you regarding whether any resources under your jurisdiction could be affected by the proposed project, and whether this proposal would require permitting or approval requirements from your agency. We request your response by **October 8, 2017**, so that we may be able to schedule any meetings, site visits, or surveys; conduct necessary follow-up activities; and incorporate your response into the scope of study, as appropriate.

Please send your written comments to Diana Wood, OEA's Project Manager for the environmental analysis, by email at Diana.Wood@stb.gov, or by mail to:

Ms. Diana Wood
Surface Transportation Board
Docket No. FD 36095
c/o ICF
9300 Lee Highway
Fairfax, VA 22031

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Sincerely,

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Victoria Rutson
Director
Office of Environmental Analysis

Enclosures:

Figure A-Proposed Route Map

Figure B-Palmetto Railways Alternatives Analysis Map

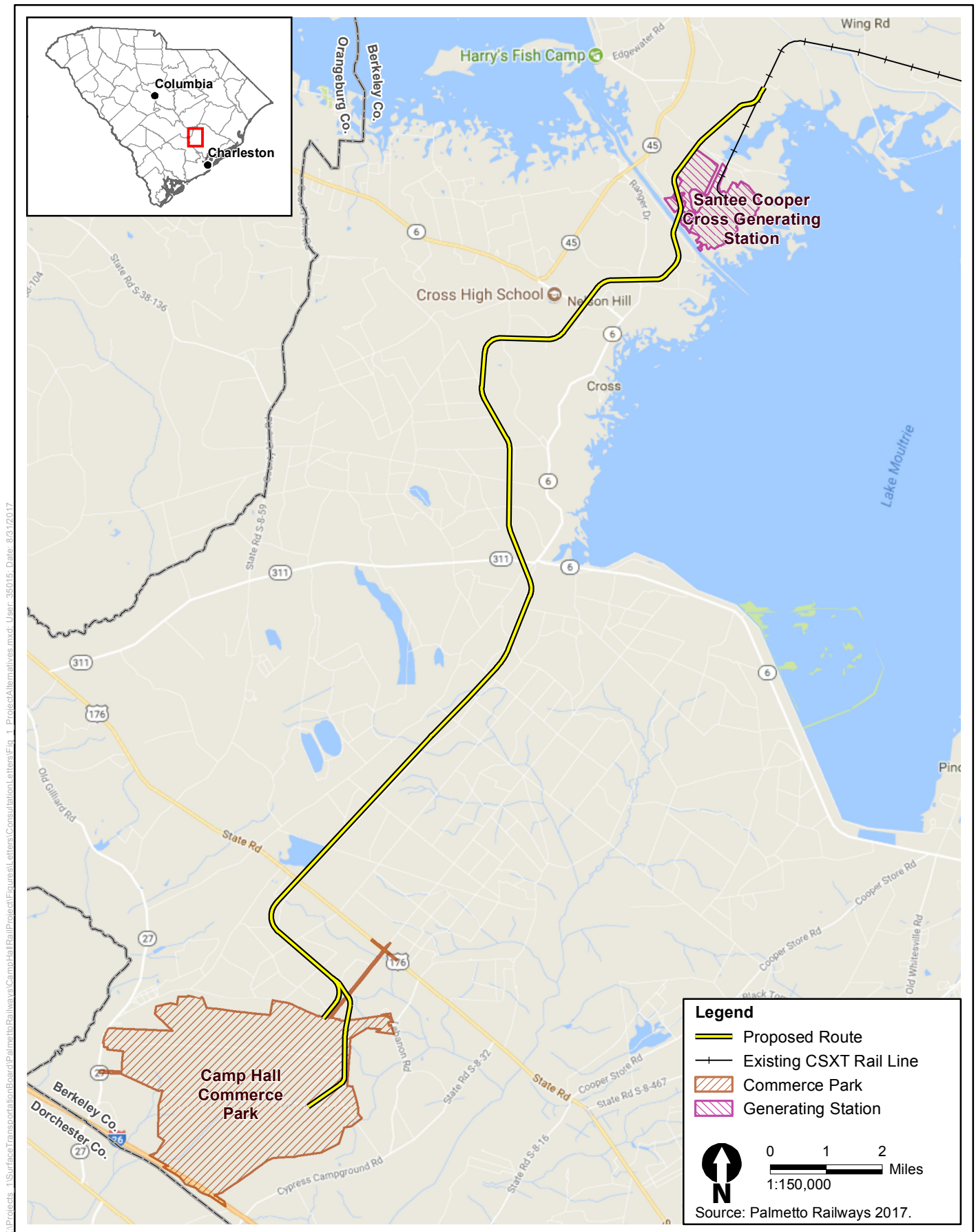


Figure A
Palmetto Railways Proposed Route



Figure B
Palmetto Railways Alternatives Analysis Map



SURFACE TRANSPORTATION BOARD
Washington, DC 20423

Office of Environmental Analysis

September 8, 2017

South Carolina Department of Parks Recreation and Tourism
Duane Parrish
Director
1205 Pendleton St
Columbia, SC 29201

RE: STB Finance Docket No. 36095, Palmetto Railways—Construction and Operation Exemption—In Berkeley County, South Carolina; Preliminary Consultation

Dear Mr. Parrish:

On August 3, 2017 the Palmetto Railways (Palmetto or Applicant) filed a petition with the Surface Transportation Board (Board), pursuant to 49 U.S.C. § 10502 for authority to construct and operate a 22.7-mile new rail line in Berkeley County, South Carolina. The Surface Transportation Board's (Board) Office of Environmental Analysis (OEA) and the United States Army Corps of Engineers (Corps), Charleston District, are beginning the environmental review of the proposed rail line construction project in compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act and related laws and regulations.

The purpose of this letter is to advise you of the proposed rail line project, request information from your agency on the resources under your jurisdiction that could be affected by the proposed project, and identify permits and approvals that could be required of the Applicant.

Project Background

The proposed rail line would be a short-line rail track that begins at a new connection to the A-Line of CSX Transportation (CSXT) (through the CSXT Cross Subdivision connection), and ends within the Camp Hall Commerce Park, an industrial park currently under development in Ridgville and near Interstate 26. The connection to CSXT would occur on the Santee Cooper property adjacent to its Cross Generating Station, and would cross the Diversion Canal between Lake Marion and Lake Moultrie, running south-southwest. South of the Diversion Canal, the right-of-way traverses the unincorporated rural community of Cross. Beyond the Cross

community, the proposed line passes through a mix of commercial, residential and silvicultural properties before reaching the Camp Hall Commerce Park.

The area is primarily covered by forests, forested wetlands, and open water. The proposed rail line crosses US Highway 176, SC Highway 311, and Old Highway 6, 15 secondary roads and 21 minor forestry/agricultural roads. The entire line would be located within Berkeley County. See Figure A, which shows Palmetto Railways' proposed route in the "Cross Corridor" that Palmetto Railways developed as part of its Alternative Analysis and Figure B, which depicts the additional alternatives studied by Palmetto Railways.

The proposed project is intended to bring rail service to the industrial park, to support the area's infrastructure needs and to alleviate highway congestion involving large commercial trucks in the area.

Environmental Review Process

OEA and the Corps will work as joint-lead agencies to evaluate the potential environmental effects of the proposed project, including any reasonable and feasible alternatives to the proposed route pursuant to the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (NEPA), as amended (42 U.S.C. § 4321 et seq.), the Board's environmental rules at 49 C.F.R. § 1105, the Corps' permitting authority under Section 404(b)(1) of the Clean Water Act (40 CFR Part 230), and other applicable federal, and state laws.

This letter begins the process by which OEA and the Corps will assess the potential environmental effects, both positive and negative, that may be associated with the proposed rail line construction and operation. We appreciate your assistance in identifying whether any resources of concern to your agency may be affected by the proposed project and welcome information on any additional issues or concerns that you consider appropriate.

To assist in your review of the proposed project, please review the additional information filed by the Applicant in support of its proposal. This information may be found on the Board and Corps' Project website at www.CampHallRailNEPA.com.

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Surface Transportation Board
Docket No. FD 36095
c/o ICF
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Fairfax, VA 22031

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Director
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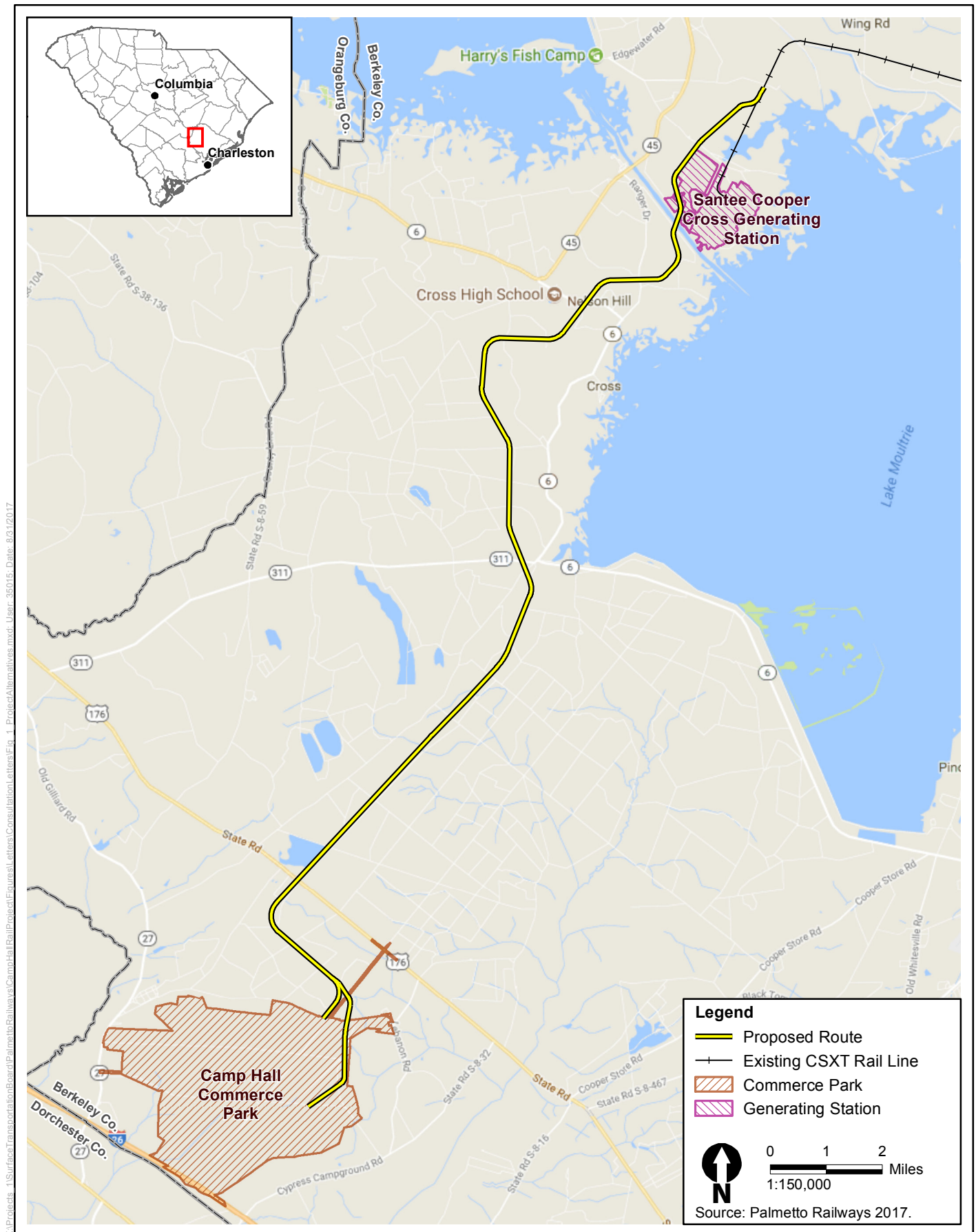


Figure A
Palmetto Railways Proposed Route



Figure B
Palmetto Railways Alternatives Analysis Map



SURFACE TRANSPORTATION BOARD
Washington, DC 20423

Office of Environmental Analysis

September 8, 2017

South Carolina Department of Transportation
Jae Maddox P.E.
Project Manager
PO Box 191
Columbia, SC 29202

RE: STB Finance Docket No. 36095, Palmetto Railways—Construction and Operation Exemption—In Berkeley County, South Carolina; Preliminary Consultation

Dear Mr. Maddox:

On August 3, 2017 the Palmetto Railways (Palmetto or Applicant) filed a petition with the Surface Transportation Board (Board), pursuant to 49 U.S.C. § 10502 for authority to construct and operate a 22.7-mile new rail line in Berkeley County, South Carolina. The Surface Transportation Board's (Board) Office of Environmental Analysis (OEA) and the United States Army Corps of Engineers (Corps), Charleston District, are beginning the environmental review of the proposed rail line construction project in compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act and related laws and regulations.

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Surface Transportation Board
Docket No. FD 36095
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Fairfax, VA 22031

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Victoria Rutson
Director
Office of Environmental Analysis

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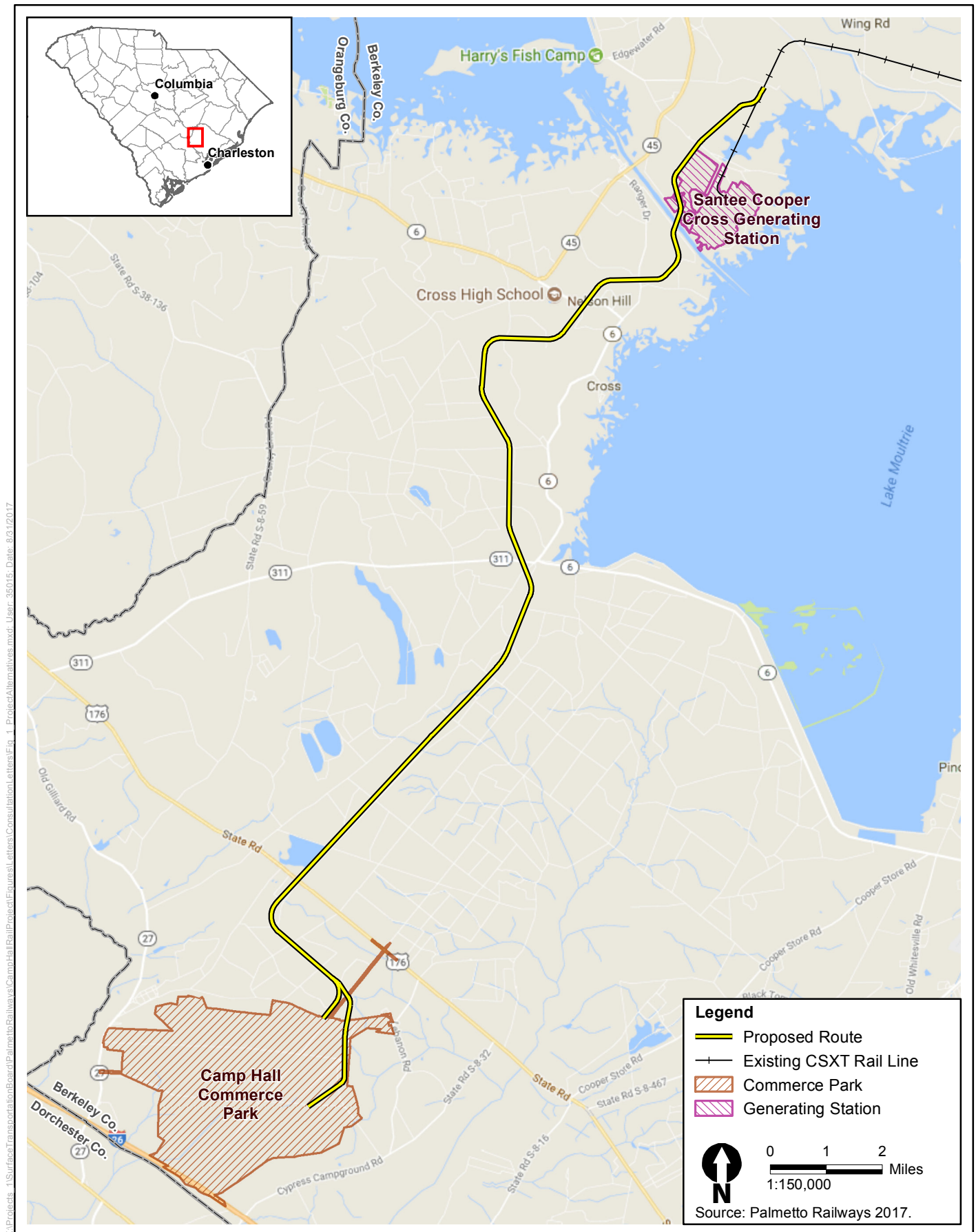


Figure A
Palmetto Railways Proposed Route



Figure B
Palmetto Railways Alternatives Analysis Map



SURFACE TRANSPORTATION BOARD
Washington, DC 20423

Office of Environmental Analysis

September 8, 2017

South Carolina Department of Transportation
Christy Hall P.E.
Secretary
PO Box 191
Columbia, SC 29201

RE: STB Finance Docket No. 36095, Palmetto Railways—Construction and Operation Exemption—In Berkeley County, South Carolina; Preliminary Consultation

Dear Ms. Hall:

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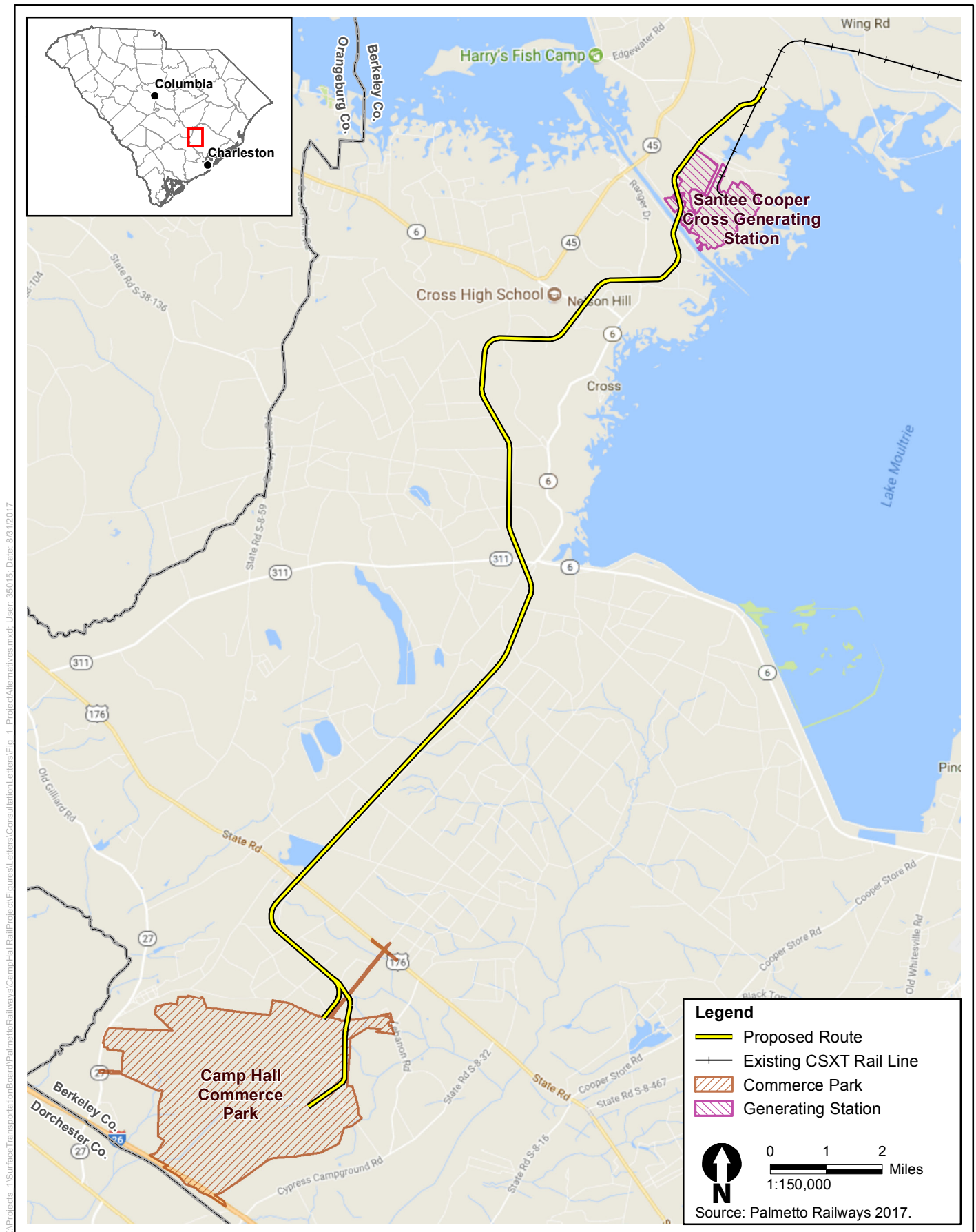


Figure A
Palmetto Railways Proposed Route





SURFACE TRANSPORTATION BOARD
Washington, DC 20423

Office of Environmental Analysis

September 8, 2017

South Carolina Forestry Commission
Herb Nicholson
Environmental Program Manager
PO Box 21707
Columbia, SC 29221

RE: STB Finance Docket No. 36095, Palmetto Railways—Construction and Operation Exemption—In Berkeley County, South Carolina; Preliminary Consultation

Dear Mr. Nicholson:

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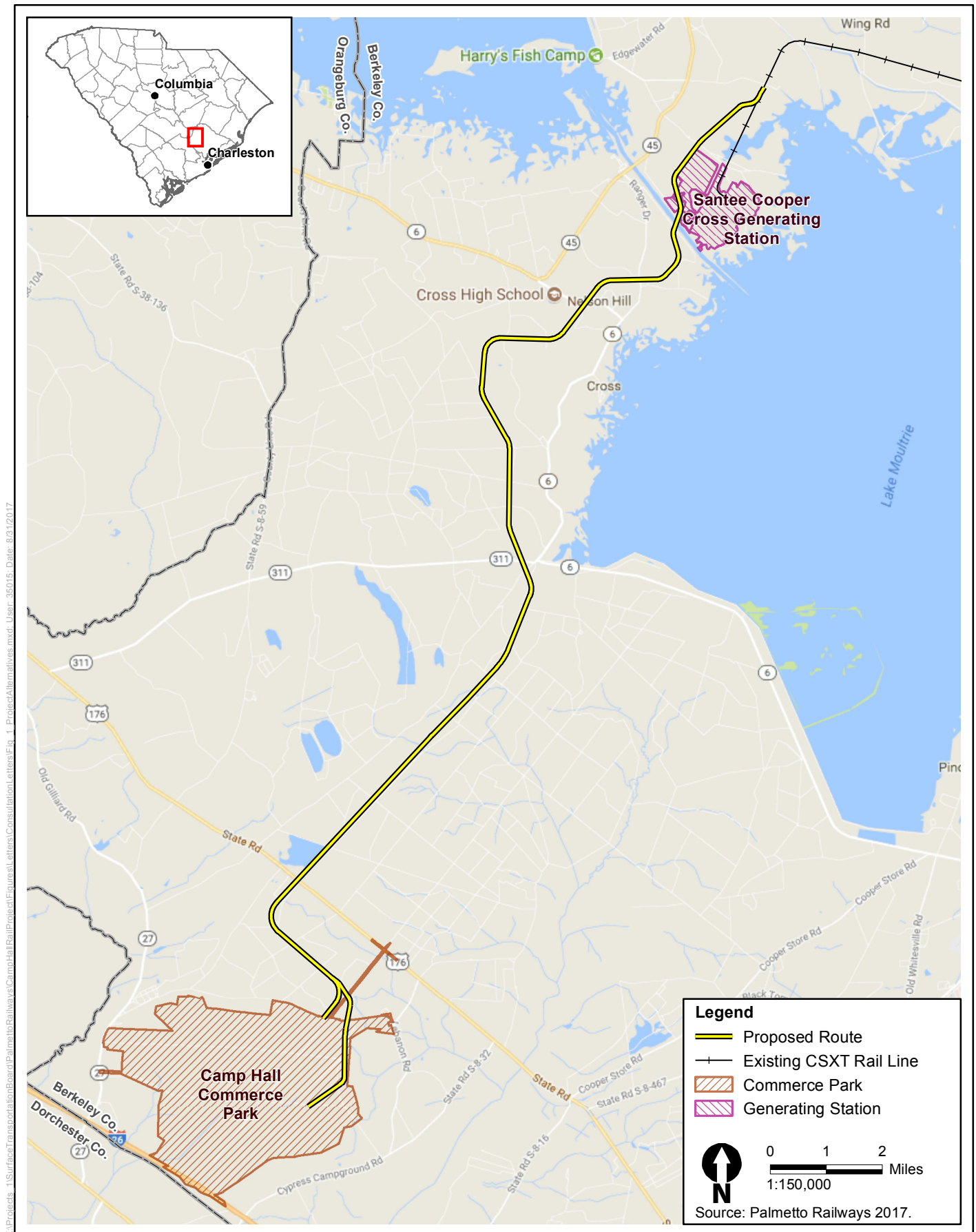


Figure A
Palmetto Railways Proposed Route



Figure B

Palmetto Railways Alternatives Analysis Map



SURFACE TRANSPORTATION BOARD
Washington, DC 20423

Office of Environmental Analysis

September 8, 2017

South Carolina Human Affairs Commission
Raymond Buxton
Commissioner
PO Box 4490
Columbia, SC 29240

RE: STB Finance Docket No. 36095, Palmetto Railways—Construction and Operation Exemption—In Berkeley County, South Carolina; Preliminary Consultation

Dear Mr. Buxton:

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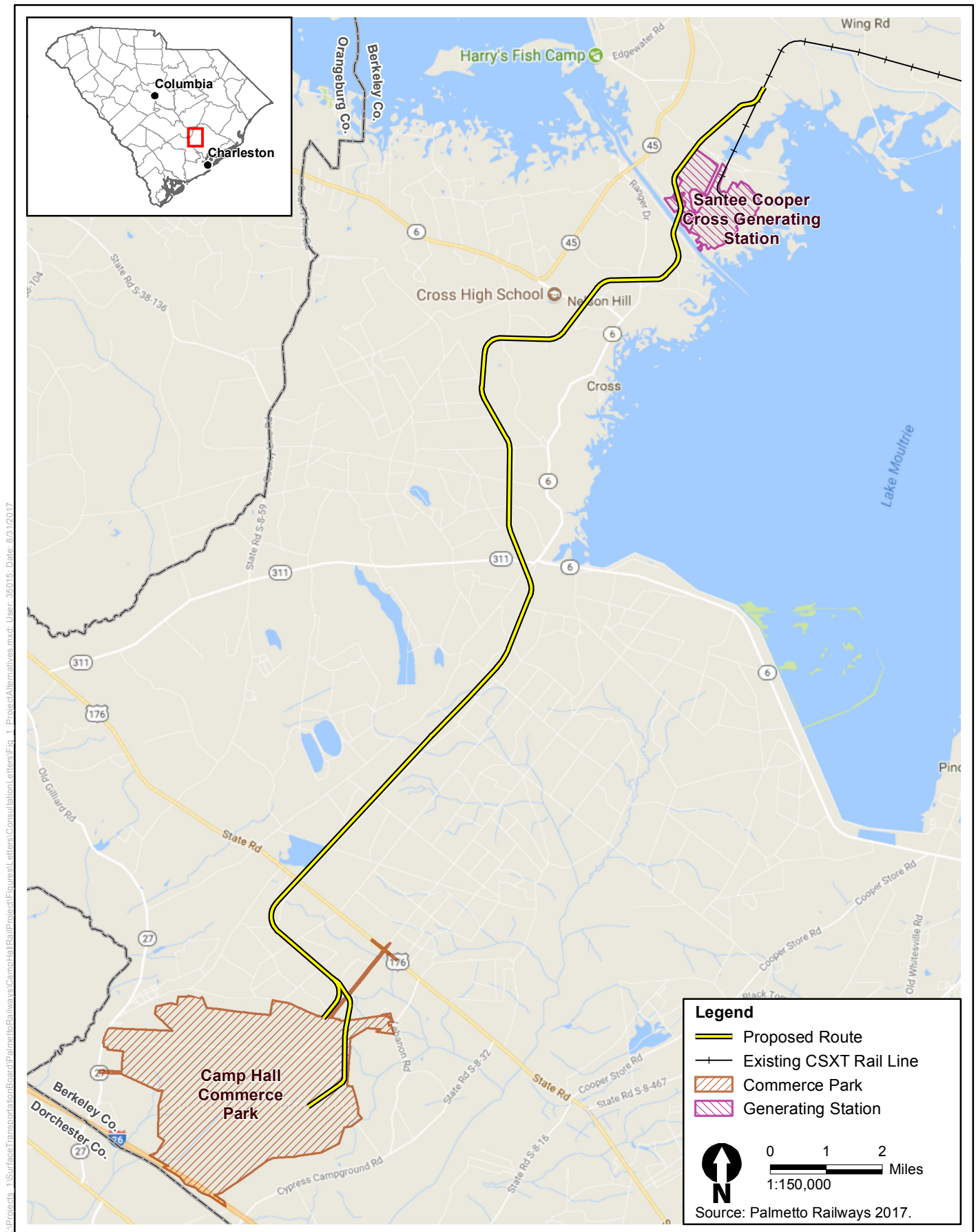


Figure A
Palmetto Railways Proposed Route



Figure B
Palmetto Railways Alternatives Analysis Map



SURFACE TRANSPORTATION BOARD
Washington, DC 20423

Office of Environmental Analysis

September 8, 2017

USC / SC Institute of Archaeology & Anthropology
Jonathan Leader
State Archaeologist
1321 Pendleton St
Columbia, SC 29208

RE: STB Finance Docket No. 36095, Palmetto Railways—Construction and Operation Exemption—In Berkeley County, South Carolina; Preliminary Consultation

Dear Mr. Leader:

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The proposed project is intended to bring rail service to the industrial park, to support the area's infrastructure needs and to alleviate highway congestion involving large commercial trucks in the area.

Environmental Review Process

OEA and the Corps will work as joint-lead agencies to evaluate the potential environmental effects of the proposed project, including any reasonable and feasible alternatives to the proposed route pursuant to the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (NEPA), as amended (42 U.S.C. § 4321 et seq.), the Board's environmental rules at 49 C.F.R. § 1105, the Corps' permitting authority under Section 404(b)(1) of the Clean Water Act (40 CFR Part 230), and other applicable federal, and state laws.

This letter begins the process by which OEA and the Corps will assess the potential environmental effects, both positive and negative, that may be associated with the proposed rail line construction and operation. We appreciate your assistance in identifying whether any resources of concern to your agency may be affected by the proposed project and welcome information on any additional issues or concerns that you consider appropriate.

To assist in your review of the proposed project, please review the additional information filed by the Applicant in support of its proposal. This information may be found on the Board and Corps' Project website at www.CampHallRailNEPA.com.

Request for Comments

We would like to hear from you regarding whether any resources under your jurisdiction could be affected by the proposed project, and whether this proposal would require permitting or approval requirements from your agency. We request your response by **October 8, 2017**, so that we may be able to schedule any meetings, site visits, or surveys; conduct necessary follow-up activities; and incorporate your response into the scope of study, as appropriate.

Please send your written comments to Diana Wood, OEA's Project Manager for the environmental analysis, by email at Diana.Wood@stb.gov, or by mail to:

Ms. Diana Wood
Surface Transportation Board
Docket No. FD 36095
c/o ICF
9300 Lee Highway
Fairfax, VA 22031

You may also submit comments electronically through the Board's Web site at www.stb.gov by clicking on the "E-Filing" quick link on the right-hand side of the home page and then selecting "Environmental Comments." Brief comments may be typed within the comment field provided, or alternatively, you may attach comments as Microsoft Word or Adobe Acrobat files.

We look forward to your participation in the environmental review process. If you have any questions or would like to arrange a call, please feel free to contact Diana Wood by phone at 202-245-0302 or by email at Diana.Wood@stb.gov or the Corps' project manager, Courtney Stevens by phone at 843-329-8027 or by email at Courtney.M.Stevens@usace.army.mil.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Victoria Rutson". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "V" and a stylized "R".

Victoria Rutson
Director
Office of Environmental Analysis

Enclosures:

Figure A-Proposed Route Map

Figure B-Palmetto Railways Alternatives Analysis Map

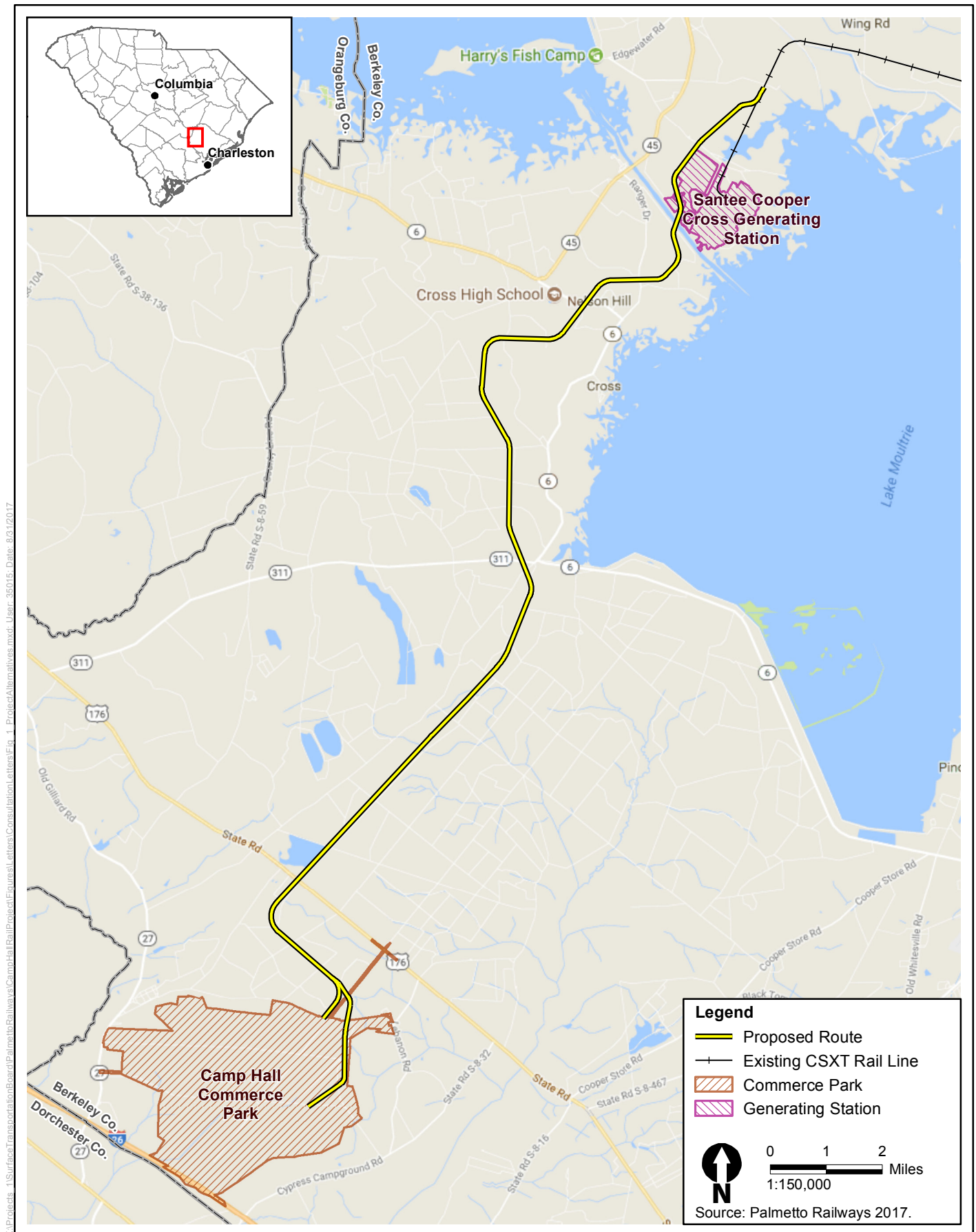


Figure A
Palmetto Railways Proposed Route





SURFACE TRANSPORTATION BOARD
Washington, DC 20423
Office of Environmental Analysis

September 8, 2017

South Carolina Department of Archives & History
Elizabeth Johnson
Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer
8301 Parklane Rd
Columbia, SC 29223

RE: STB Finance Docket No. 36095, Palmetto Railways—Construction and Operation Exemption—In Berkeley County, South Carolina; Preliminary Consultation

Dear Ms. Johnson:

On August 3, 2017 the Palmetto Railways (Palmetto or Applicant) filed a petition with the Surface Transportation Board (Board), pursuant to 49 U.S.C. § 10502 for authority to construct and operate a 22.7-mile new rail line in Berkeley County, South Carolina. The Surface Transportation Board's (Board) Office of Environmental Analysis (OEA) and the United States Army Corps of Engineers (Corps), Charleston District, are beginning the environmental review of the proposed rail line construction project in compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act and related laws and regulations.

The purpose of this letter is to initiate consultation with the State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) regarding the proposed Area of Potential Effects (APE) for cultural resources for the proposed rail line project, request information from your agency on the resources under your jurisdiction that could be affected by the proposed project, and identify permits and approvals that could be required of the Applicant. The Board is aware that Palmetto Railways has been in contact with your agency and has submitted a Phase I Cultural Resources Survey of the proposed corridor along the preferred route on July 28, 2017.

Project Background

The proposed rail line would be a short-line rail track that begins at a new connection to the A-Line of CSX Transportation (CSXT) (through the CSXT Cross Subdivision connection), and ends within the Camp Hall Commerce Park, an industrial park currently under development in Ridgeville and near Interstate 26. The connection to CSXT would occur on the Santee Cooper property adjacent to its Cross Generating Station, and would cross the Diversion Canal between Lake Marion and Lake Moultrie, running south-southwest. South of the Diversion Canal, the

right-of-way traverses the unincorporated rural community of Cross. Beyond the Cross community, the proposed line passes through a mix of commercial, residential and silvicultural properties before reaching the Camp Hall Commerce Park.

The area is primarily covered by forests, forested wetlands, and open water. The proposed rail line crosses US Highway 176, SC Highway 311, and Old Highway 6, 15 secondary roads and 21 minor forestry/agricultural roads. The entire line would be located within Berkeley County. See Figure A, which shows Palmetto Railways' proposed route in the "Cross Corridor" that Palmetto Railways developed as part of its Alternatives Analysis and Figure B, which depicts the additional alternatives studied by Palmetto Railways.

The proposed project is intended to bring rail service to the Camp Hall industrial park, to support the area's infrastructure needs and to alleviate highway congestion involving large commercial trucks in the area.

Environmental Review Process

OEA and the Corps will work as joint-lead agencies to evaluate the potential environmental effects of the proposed project, including any reasonable and feasible alternatives to the proposed route pursuant to the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (NEPA), as amended (42 U.S.C. § 4321 et seq.), the Board's environmental rules at 49 C.F.R. § 1105, the Corps' permitting authority under Section 404(b)(1) of the Clean Water Act (40 CFR Part 230), and other applicable federal, and state laws.

This letter begins the process by which OEA and the Corps will assess the potential environmental effects, both positive and negative, that may be associated with the proposed rail line construction and operation. The proposed APE for cultural resources, including archaeological and built resources as well as historic and cultural landscapes, encompasses all areas that could be directly or indirectly affected by the Project. Direct effects include areas that could be affected by the maximum extent of project-related horizontal and vertical ground disturbances and physical changes to architectural resources. Indirect effects include visual effects or effects caused by noise or vibration. In the Phase I Cultural Resources Survey submitted on July 28, 2017, the direct effects APE was defined as the 200-foot project corridor along the proposed route and the indirect effects APE added a zone of a half-mile from the centerline of the proposed corridor. As joint-lead federal agencies under NEPA, the Board and the Corps request SHPO concurrence pursuant to 36 § C.F.R. 800.4 in the determination of the APE. We appreciate your assistance in identifying the APE and whether any resources of concern to your agency may be affected by the proposed project. We welcome information on any additional issues or concerns that you consider appropriate.

To assist in your review of the proposed project, please review the additional information filed by the Applicant in support of its proposal. This information may be found on the Board's and Corps' Project website at www.CampHallRailNEPA.com.

Request for Comments

We would like to hear from you regarding APE concurrence, whether this proposal would require permitting should additional fieldwork be needed, or any other requirements from your agency. We request your response by **October 8, 2017**, so that we may be able to schedule any meetings, site visits, or surveys; conduct necessary follow-up activities; and incorporate your response into the scope of study, as appropriate.

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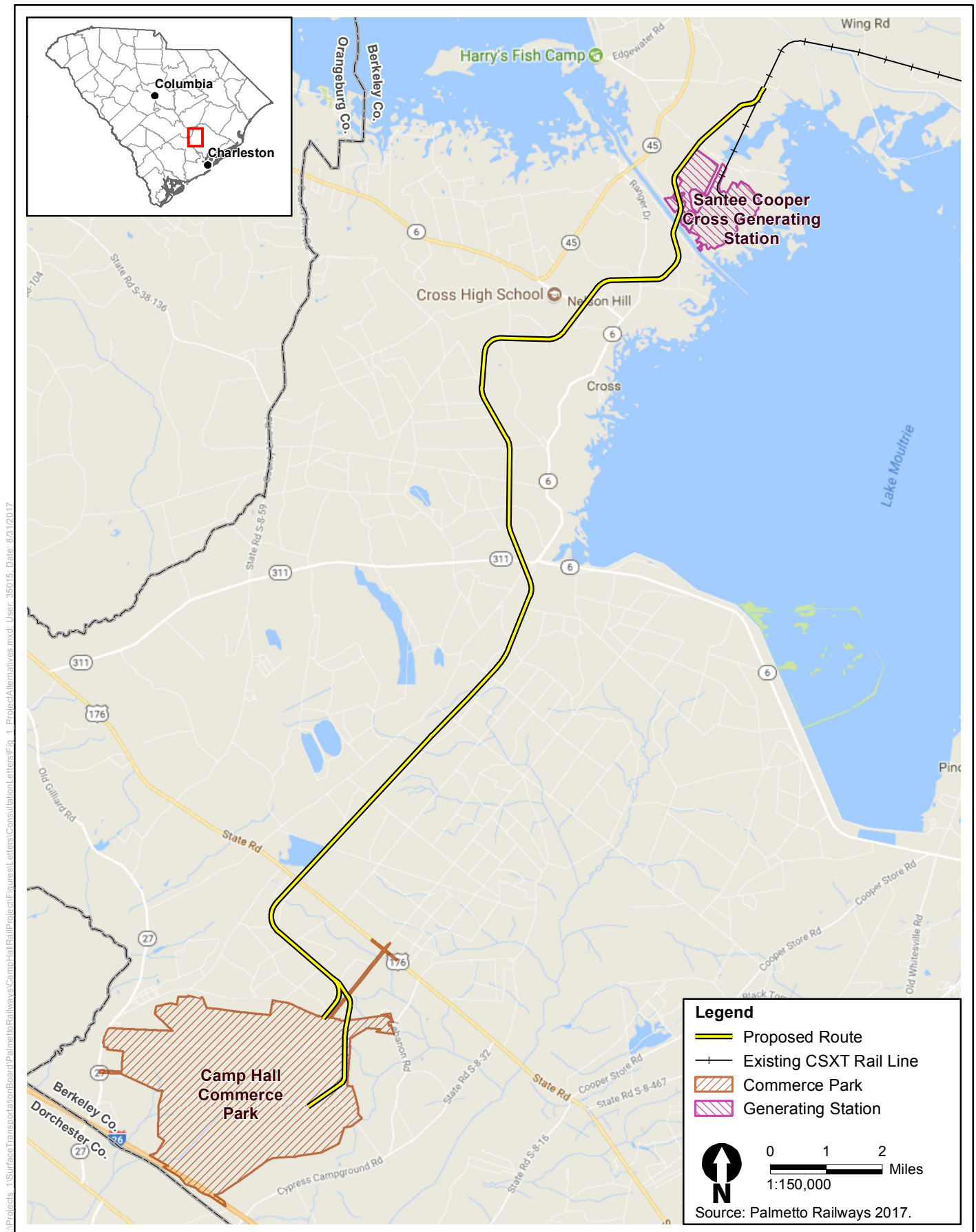


Figure A
Palmetto Railways Proposed Route



Figure B

Palmetto Railways Alternatives Analysis Map



SURFACE TRANSPORTATION BOARD
Washington, DC 20423
Office of Environmental Analysis

September 8, 2017

State Historic Preservation Office
Eric Emerson
Director
8301 Parklane Rd
Columbia, SC 29223

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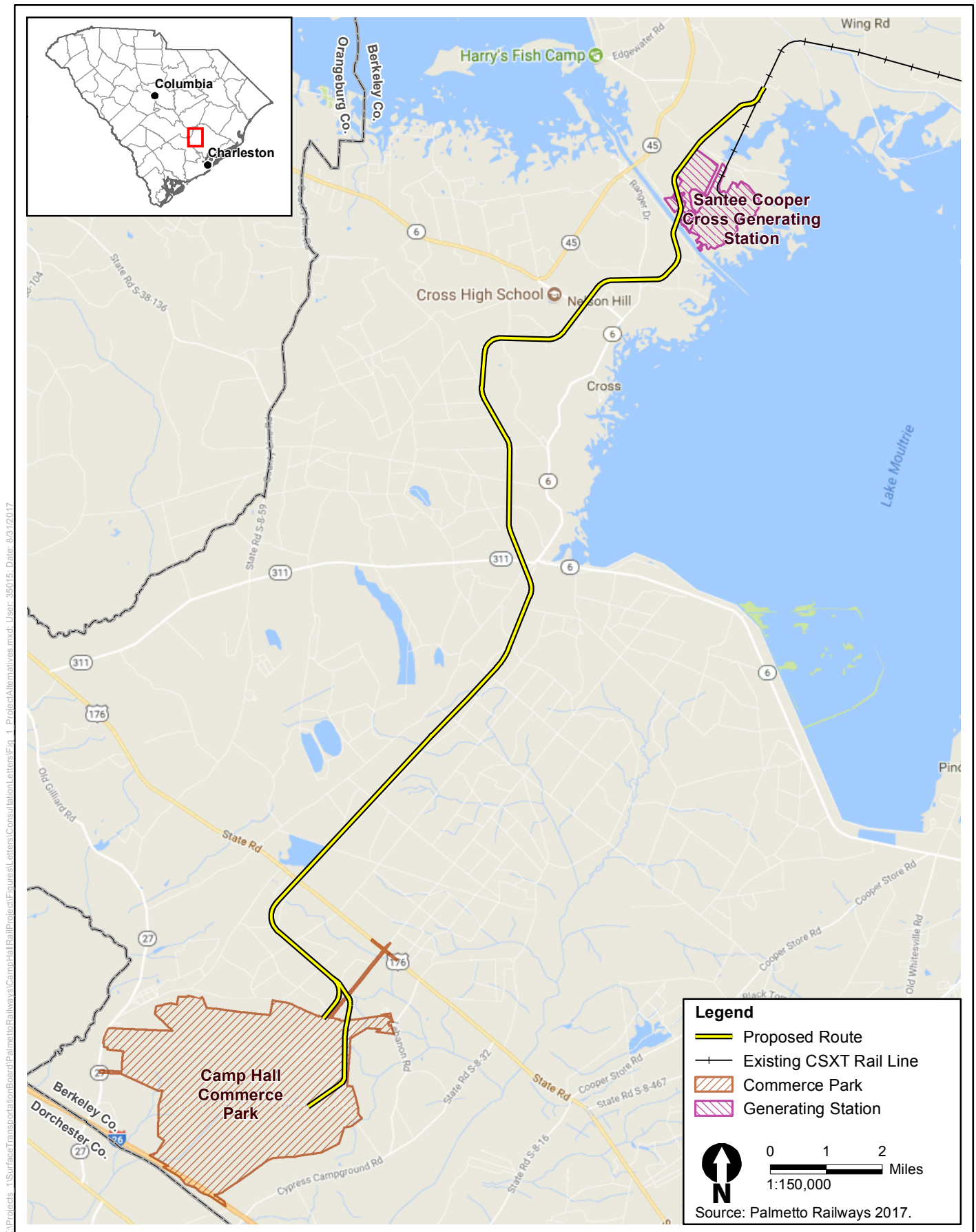


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