

John Kumiski
Chuluota, FL 32766
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E1 - 20675
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Mr. Dave Navecky
Surface Transportation Board
395 E Street SW
Washington, DC 20423-0001

Attn: Environmental Filing, Docket No. FD 35852

Dear Mr. Navecky,

The Canaveral Port Authority wants to expand its operations and believes it needs a new rail line. An obvious first question is, is an expanded cargo operation at the Port in the best interests of the citizens of Brevard County and the state of Florida? Will Port expansion improve our quality of life in any way besides adding a few jobs?

The Banana River Lagoon has been horribly abused over the past 100 years or so. Numerous dredge and fill projects (including the original creation of the Port), "reclamation" of marsh lands, used as a dumping area for storm drains and drainage canals, docks, seawalls, etc., all have taken a toll on the water quality of the lagoon and the wild things that live there. Will the proposed project improve the health of the Banana River Lagoon in any way? Or will the dredge and fill construction of yet another causeway and a trestle bridge increase the sediment load, decrease the flow of water, and cause yet more loss of biodiversity?

The water problems in the lagoon the past several summers have been well documented. Algae blooms have caused massive die-off of seagrass beds. Pelican, fish, dolphin, and manatee deaths have all spiked because of this. Again, will the proposed project help the water quality of the lagoon in any way?

The Port Authority seems to think more is better. More in this case seems to be more noise, more pollution, more people, more congestion, more traffic, more crime, more problems. Wildlife loses out (it doesn't vote or make campaign contributions). Those of us who fish, hike, paddle, and bird watch at wild places keep getting more and more crowded together. No one is building any more wild places!

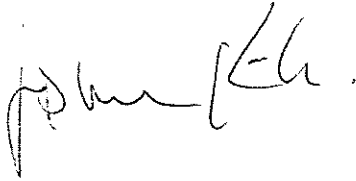
The lagoon in the area of the proposed rail causeway is a Federal manatee refuge. Building a causeway here would seem to be an incompatible use.

The west shoreline of the lagoon, near which eight noisy, smelly trains a week would pass, is heavily used by both wildlife and paddlers. Wildlife loses yet another place to live, and paddlers lose one of the few magnificent semi-wilderness experiences left in Florida. Someone makes a bunch of money, though, so it's OK.

I do not like the idea of expanded Port cargo operations. But if a rail line must be built, couldn't the already present causeway used by SR 528 be utilized? It would certainly lessen the environmental impact of the project.

Thank you for your consideration. I will be watching with keen interest as the process unfolds.

All the best-

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be "John K. H.", written in a cursive style.