

September 6, 2016

H E1-25759

Phillis Johnson-Ball
Deputy Director
Office of Environmental Analysis
Surface Transportation Board
395 E Street, SW
Washington, DC 20423-0001

Re: Palmetto Railways, Camp Hall Rail Project

Dear Ms. Johnson-Ball:

The purpose of this letter is to make our introduction to you and your Office, briefly describe Palmetto Railways' proposed project, and open a line of communication that Palmetto Railways hopes will facilitate and foster an effective working relationship between Palmetto Railways, the OEA, and the United States Army Corps of Engineers, Charleston District (Corps).

Palmetto Railways is an instrumentality of the State of South Carolina and is a Division of the South Carolina Department of Commerce. Established in 1969, Palmetto Railways' purpose is to promote the economic viability of South Carolina by providing safe, efficient and cost-effective rail solutions to facilitate the movement of freight and to support economic development efforts. Palmetto Railways provides technical assistance and consulting services in railroad matters to state, local and municipal governments in South Carolina, in addition to operating three railroad subdivisions.

The proposed new industrial rail line is located entirely within Berkeley County, South Carolina, and will connect the Camp Hall Commerce Park to existing railroad right-of-way, near the Santee Cooper Cross Generating Station. Palmetto Railways proposes to construct, own and operate the rail line. Palmetto Railways is currently in the process of gathering information for the proposed rail project; therefore, neither the preferred rail route nor the environmental impact of the project has been determined, and a formal permit application is still in the process of development. However, a proposed project study area has been identified and is being studied by Palmetto Railways in order to determine the best route for the rail line. Initial information and resources regarding this project are available at: <http://www.palmettorailwayscamphallrail.com>.

The purpose of this letter is to request that Surface Transportation Board's Office of Environmental Analysis initiate the environmental review process for the Camp Hall Rail Project in conjunction with the Corps, as co-lead agencies, as required under the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969, as amended (42 U.S.C.A. §§ 4321 *et seq.*) (NEPA). Please consider this letter Palmetto Railways' notice under 49 C.F.R. § 1105.10 of its intent to file an application with OEA. Palmetto Railways looks forward to working with OEA through the NEPA process to evaluate the potential environmental impacts of the proposed project.

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Thank you for your time and assistance. Please advise of any additional information that you need at this time.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jeffrey McWhorter". The signature is stylized with a large initial "J" and a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Jeffrey McWhorter
President and CEO