

#E1-25915



DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
CHARLESTON DISTRICT, CORPS OF ENGINEERS
69-A Hagood Avenue
CHARLESTON, SOUTH CAROLINA 29403-5107

REPLY TO
ATTENTION OF

APR 19 2017

Regulatory Division

Ms. Victoria Rutson
Director
Office of Environmental Analysis,
Surface Transportation Board
395 E Street, SW Room 1110
Washington, DC 20423

COPY

Re: Palmetto Railways - Camp Hall Rail Project, Joint Lead Agency Acceptance
Berkeley County, South Carolina

Dear Ms. Rutson:

This letter is in reference to the Surface Transportation Board's (Board) Office of Environmental Analysis (OEA) letter, dated March 10, 2017, requesting for the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Charleston District (Corps) to participate as a joint lead agency in the preparation of the environmental documentation under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) for the Palmetto Railways' Camp Hall rail project (SAC# 2016-01395). As recognized in the OEA's letter, the Council on Environmental Quality's (CEQ) NEPA regulations allow for federal agencies to act as joint lead agencies in the preparation of NEPA documentation. Please accept this letter as the Corps' formal acceptance of the OEA's invitation for the Corps to act as a joint lead agency in the preparation of the environmental documentation under NEPA for the Palmetto Railways' Camp Hall rail project.

Because there may be differences in perspective between the Corps and the OEA with regard to NEPA documentation, we support a flexible, cooperative approach in creating a "merged" NEPA document for the proposed project that will address the requirements of both the OEA and Corps. At this early stage in the NEPA process, it is paramount that the OEA and the Corps continue to meet and collaborate to understand each other's respective missions and statutory requirements, define the merged process, and resolve any outstanding issues at the earliest possible time.

In closing, we appreciate the OEA's invitation for the Corps to act as a joint lead agency in the preparation of the environmental documentation under NEPA for the Palmetto Railways' Camp Hall rail project, and we look forward to our continued collaboration with the OEA on this

project. If you have any questions concerning this matter, please contact Ivan Fannin at (843) 329-8134 or Ivan.Fannin@usace.army.mil, or Robin Coller-Socha at (843) 329-8167 or Robin.C.Socha@usace.army.mil.

FOR THE DISTRICT ENGINEER:

Sincerely,

Travis G. Hughes
Chief, Regulatory Division

Copy furnished:

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