

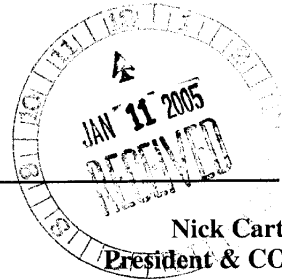
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January 10, 2005

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Nick Carter
President & COO
ncarter@wpplp.com

Via DHL Express (A/B #33824716612)

Surface Transportation Board
Office of The Secretary
1925 K Street N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20423

-212-982
-212-983

Re: Docket Nos. AB-875X and AB-876X
36.08 miles of rail line between Milepost 0.05 at Dawkins
And the end of track at Milepost 36.13 near Evanston (Kentucky)

Honorable Secretary:

This letter will express our concern with the intended abandonment of rail service referenced above.

We are the owner of a substantial amount of coal reserves located near, and historically served by, facilities at the Evanston end of this line. While those reserves and facilities are not currently being mined and operated, and coal is consequently not being shipped over this line, we believe these reserves will be mined and so shipped at some point in the future and that the abandonment of the line will impair these assets. With no rail service the only viable way to move this coal commodity to market is by truck, thus raising issues of public safety.

We respectfully request that you (1) defer for a period of two years the removal of this line in order to allow us to attempt to facilitate coal production and shipments and (2) take these matters into consideration in making your determination relative to the abandonment.

Sincerely,
NRP (Operating) LLC

Nick Carter
President & COO

NC/g

Cys (via overnight): Thomas J. Litwiller, Esq. - Fletcher & Sippel LLC
W. Denny Stanhagen - Consol Energy
John C. Smith, Jr. - Appalachian Fuels, LLC