



CONSOL ENERGY

January 12, 2005

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

213/22
CNX Land Resources Inc.
1800 Washington Road
Pittsburgh, PA 15241-1421

phone: 412/831-4510
fax: 412/831-4975
e-mail: dennystanhagen@consolenergy.com

WILLIAM D. STANHAGEN
President

213/23
RE: Dockets Nos. AB-875X and AB-876X
36.08 Miles of Rail Between Milepost 0.05 at Dawkins
and the End of Track at Milepost 36.13 Near Evanston (Kentucky)

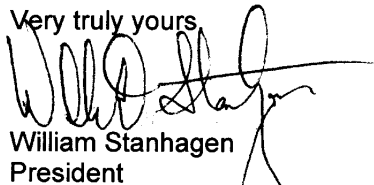
Honorable Secretary:

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

CONSOL of Kentucky Inc. is a lessee of substantial coal reserves located near Evanston, Kentucky that has been historically served by this rail line. These reserves are leased from Western Pocahontas Properties L.P., which is managed by NRP (Operating) LLC of Huntington, West Virginia. While these reserves are not being mined at present, we believe that the reserves will be mined and so shipped in the future. The abandonment of the line will have a material effect on the ability to develop and bring to market this resource. In the absence of rail service, this coal commodity will, by necessity, have to be transported via truck, which also leads to public safety issues.

Hence, CONSOL of Kentucky Inc. respectfully requests that you defer the removal of this rail line for a least a two-year period to enable us to attempt to facilitate coal production and shipments. Please consider these matters during your deliberations relative to the abandonment of this rail line.

Very truly yours,


William Stanhagen
President

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Office of Proceedings

JAN 2 2005

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Public Record

cc: Nick Carter – NRP (Operating) LLC
S. P. Skeen – CONSOL Energy Inc.
John C. Smith – Appalachian Fuels