



Florida Department of Environmental Protection

Marjory Stoneman Douglas Building
3900 Commonwealth Boulevard
Tallahassee, Florida 32399-3000

Charlie Crist
Governor

Jeff Kottkamp
Lt. Governor

Michael W. Sole
Secretary

June 25, 2007

Honorable Vernon Williams, Secretary
United States Surface Transportation Board
395 E Street, SW
Washington, D.C. 20423-001

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ENTERED
Office of Proceedings
JUL - 2 2007
Part of
Public Record



Re: Docket Number AB-347 (Sub-No. 3 X) Florida West Coast Railroad Abandonment and Discontinuance of Services-Proposed Abandonment of the segment of rail in Alachua and Gilchrist Counties, Florida.

Dear Secretary Williams:

FILING FEE WAIVED

Please accept these comments as a petition for reconsideration in the referenced proceeding. This comment is filed on behalf of the State of Florida Department of Environmental Protection, Office of Greenways and Trails, which is a tax-exempt state agency whose mission is to establish a statewide system of greenways and trails for recreation, conservation and alternative transportation and which is hereinafter referred to as "Commenter".

While not taking a position on the merits of this abandonment, Commenter requests issuance of a Notice of Interim Trail Use rather than an outright abandonment authorization between Milepost 734.0 near Trenton, Gilchrist County, Florida and Milepost 721.0 near Newberry, Alachua County, Florida. The Surface Transportation Board granted the issuance of Public Use Condition on June 14, 2004. The railroad right-of-way in this proceeding is suitable for rail banking. The justification for this condition is that the corridor in question connects to the existing Nature Coast State Trail, a 32-mile non-motorized multi-use trail managed by the Commenter. The corridor is the natural continuation of this recreational trail, which currently terminates in Trenton, Florida.

STATEMENT OF WILLINGNESS TO ASSUME FINANCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

In order to establish interim trail use and rail banking under section 8(d) of the National Trails System Act, 16 U.S.C. § 1247 (d) and 49 C.F.R. § 1152.29, the Commenter is willing to assume full responsibility for management of and for any legal liability arising out of the transfer or use of the transferred right-of-way to the full extent permitted under the laws governing the State of Florida's sovereign immunity.

Vernon A. Williams

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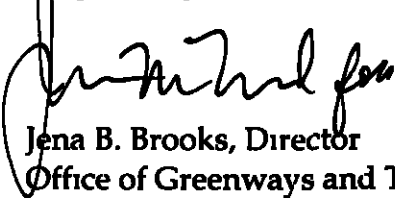
The property, known as the Florida West Coast Railroad, extends from milepost 734.0 near Trenton, Gilchrist County, Florida and Milepost 721.0 near Newberry, Alachua County, Florida; a distance of approximately 13 miles. The right-of-way is a line of railroad proposed for abandonment in STB Docket Number AB-347 (Sub-No. 3 X).

A map depicting the right-of-way is attached.

The Commenter acknowledges that use of the right-of-way is subject to the users continuing to meet its responsibilities described about and subject to possible future reconstruction and reactivation of the right-of-way for rail service.

By my signature below, I certify service of a copy of this statement upon Florida West Coast Railroad Company this 25th day of June 2007.

Respectfully submitted,



Jena B. Brooks, Director
Office of Greenways and Trails

/rt

Cc: Gary Heiser, Assistant General Counsel, Florida Department of Environmental
Protection

David Anderson, Attorney for West Coast Railroad

Rita McAndrews-Giblin, Attorney for CSX Transportation (landowner)

Pete Fodor, Attorney for The Trust for Public Land

FLORIDA WEST COAST RAILROAD

