



# Missouri Rock Island Trail, Inc.

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237421

January 9, 2015

Cynthia T. Brown  
Chief, Section of Administration  
Office of Proceedings  
Surface Transportation Board  
395 E Street, S.W.  
Washington, DC 20423-0001

ENTERED  
Office of Proceedings  
January 9, 2015  
Part of  
Public Record

Re: Missouri Central Railroad Company -Abandonment Exemption - Cass, Pettis, Benton, Morgan, Miller, Cole, Osage, Maries, Gasconade, and Franklin Counties, Missouri, STB Docket AB-1068 (Sub-No. 3X) and Central Midland Railway Company - Discontinuance of Service Exemption- Cass, Pettis, Benton, Morgan, Miller, Cole, Osage, Maries, Gasconade, and Franklin Counties, Missouri, STB DocketAB-1070 (Sub-No. 3X)

Dear Ms. Brown:

Missouri Rock Island Trail, Inc., (MORIT) is a consortium of rural cities, counties, businesses, and citizens with mission to develop a walking/cycling trail on the old Rock Island Corridor currently owned by Missouri Central Railroad.

We are writing to express our strong support for Missouri Department of Natural Resources and their efforts to secure an Interim Trail Use Authorization for the conversion of the corridor cited in the above referenced dockets under the National Trails System Act.

Over the past century, our Rock Island communities have both benefited and suffered with the boom and bust of railroad traffic through our region. There has been no rail traffic on the Rock Island corridor for more than 30 years. With the termination of rail traffic, the economic wellbeing of our communities has suffered greatly. Additionally the corridor in its current condition has become a negative eyesore which has attracted illegal dumping, noxious overgrowth of weeds and brush, as well as the continued deterioration of the track and ties.

While our communities and members would love to see rail traffic once again, we are all in agreement that is not currently feasible. However, we also believe that keeping the corridor intact for possible future transportation needs is critical not only for our communities, but also for the state of Missouri as well as our country. In the interim, a trail would be the best use of an unused asset.

A trail on the Rock Island Corridor has the potential to provide much needed economic development opportunities for our local communities, safe routes to local schools, and a sense of pride to communities that once thrived as railroad towns. Preserving the corridor through interim trail use would conserve the rural

Missouri landscape as well as provide opportunities for recreation and healthy living in a part of our state in which few now exist.

We request to be made a party of record in this proceeding. By my signature below, I certify service upon the following parties of record by deposit in U.S. Mail, postage pre-paid first class, on the date of this letter:

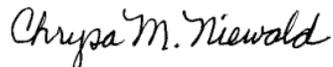
Sandra L. Brown (for MCRR)  
Thompson Hine Llp  
1919 M Street, Suite 700  
Washington, DC 20036

Mary Moulton Bryan  
Department Of Natural Resources  
P. O. Box 176  
Jefferson City, MO 65102

Blake Hurst  
Missouri Farm Bureau Federation  
P.O. Box 658  
Jefferson City, MO 65102

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,



Chrysa M. Niewald  
President

Missouri Rock Island Trail, Inc.