

*Keith Goodwin* - Commissioner Dist. 1

*Kevin Karney* - Commissioner Dist. 2

*Jim Baldwin* - Commissioner Dist. 3

*Michael L. Nicklos* - County Attorney

*Jean Hinkle* - County Administrator



**Office of the Commissioners**

**236277**

June 16, 2014

**ENTERED  
Office of Proceedings  
July 3, 2014  
Part of  
Public Record**

Ms. Cynthia T. Brown  
Chief, Section of Administration  
Office of Proceedings  
Surface Transportation Board  
395 E. Street, SW  
Washington, DC 20423

Re: AB603\_3(X):V & S Railway, LLC -Abandonment

Dear Ms. Brown,

It has come to our attention that the V & S Railway has applied to abandon the railroad tracks from Eads, Colorado east to Towner, Colorado. They apparently have also applied for a discontinuance of service on the line from NA Junction east to Eads, Colorado. This, no doubt, is in preparation for their next application for abandonment. Their overall plan being to abandon and scrap the entire 122 mile route, running through the Colorado counties of Pueblo, Crowley, Otero and Kiowa.

Although Otero County supports Crowley, Kiowa and Pueblo Counties preferring that another railroad obtain what is now owned by V & S, we certainly understand that the profitability of this section of track depends heavily on commerce originating from other areas. If the track has to be abandoned and scrapped, so be it. However, it is our understanding that V & S has not been a good neighbor in past abandonments and we are very concerned they will scrap the tracks and all of the other saleable materials. As such, we too feel compelled to file the following list of requirements that need to be met prior to V & S abandoning and salvaging the line.

- There are nearly 100 railroad crossings that are currently falling apart due to lack of maintenance. These all need to be repaired now, as they are critical to the normal transportation flow. Once the tracks are removed, these crossings need to be reconstructed to match the existing road surfaces on both sides.



- V & S needs to survey the entire 122 mile corridor and provide plats to the counties being affected. Further, many section markers and bench marks are currently fixed on the rail line. These must be moved and reset to provide survey points for the future.
- Documentation regarding leases to towns and businesses must be provided to each of the counties.
- All structures of a historic nature must be preserved.
- All records regarding the railroad should be handed over to the impacted counties.
- We strongly request that V & S Railroad be required to post a surety bond sufficient to cover any costs associated with their performance or lack thereof.

Thank you in advance for assisting Kiowa County as the abandonment process proceeds, and in helping the counties of Pueblo, Crowley and Otero, when V & S determines it is our turn to face this very unpleasant demise of a piece of our history.

Sincerely,

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Keith Goodwin, Chairman

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Kevin K. Karney

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Jim Baldwin

CC: Senator Michael Bennet  
Senator Mark Udall  
Congressman Cory Gardner  
Kiowa County Commissioners  
Pueblo County Commissioners  
Crowley County Commissioners  
Bill Thiebaut, CDOT Comm. Region 2

July 3, 2014

CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE  
Docket Number: AB603-3X

I certify that I served a copy of the forgoing Formal Filing Letter by email to the following offices on June 17, 2014:

Senator Michael Bennet – [Dwight\\_Gardner@bennet.senate.gov](mailto:Dwight_Gardner@bennet.senate.gov)

Senator Mark Udall - [Gloria\\_Gutierrez@MarkUdall.senate.gov](mailto:Gloria_Gutierrez@MarkUdall.senate.gov)

Congressman Cory Gardner - [Doris.Morgan@mail.house.gov](mailto:Doris.Morgan@mail.house.gov)

Kiowa County Commissioners – [kiowaco100@gmail.com](mailto:kiowaco100@gmail.com)

Pueblo County Commissioners –

Commissioner Hart - [hart@co.pueblo.co.us](mailto:hart@co.pueblo.co.us)

Commissioner McFadyen – [mcfadyen@co.pueblo.co.us](mailto:mcfadyen@co.pueblo.co.us)

Commissioner Pace – [pace@co.pueblo.co.us](mailto:pace@co.pueblo.co.us)

Crowley County Commissioners –

Tobe Allumbaugh - [tobe@crowleycounty.net](mailto:tobe@crowleycounty.net)

Gary Gibson - [ggibson@crowleycounty.net](mailto:ggibson@crowleycounty.net)

Frank Grant - [fgrant@crowleycounty.net](mailto:fgrant@crowleycounty.net)

Bill Thiebaut, CDOT Comm. Region 2 - [billthiebaut@hotmail.com](mailto:billthiebaut@hotmail.com)

I certify that on June 17, 2014 I served a copy of the forgoing Formal Filing Letter by First Class Mail to the office of:

Ms. Cynthia T. Brown  
Chief, Section of Administration  
Office of Proceedings  
Surface Transportation Board  
395 E. Street, SW  
Washington, DC 20423

I certify that on July 3, 2014 I served a copy of the forgoing Formal Filing Letter by First Class Mail to the offices of:

Fritz R. Kahn  
1919 M Street NW  
7<sup>th</sup> Floor  
Washington DC

Roger D. Nelson  
PO Box 460022  
Glendale, CO 80246

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Jean Hinkle, Otero County Administrator