



OFFICE OF THE COUNTY MAYOR

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Office of Proceedings

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Secretary
Surface Transportation Board
395 E Street SW
Washington, DC 20423-0001

332025



**Re: CSX Transportation Abandonment of the Athens Branch in McMinn County, Tennessee,
(STB Docket No. AB-55/Sub No. 694X)**

Dear Secretary:

I am writing on behalf of McMinn County, Tennessee to request another 180 day extension of the deadline for negotiations with CSX Transportation, Inc. ("CSXT"), regarding the Notice of Interim Trail Use in the above captioned proceeding with respect to the 6.4 mile portion of the line ("the Athens Branch") that extends northwest from near Englewood to Athens. (between 0KW327.0 and 0KW333.4 including both spurs located after 0KW 332). Pursuant to the September 26, 2011 decision ("the Decision") of the Surface Transportation Board ("the Board"), an agreement for interim trail use/rail banking expires September 1, 2012 ("Negotiating Deadline").

The City of Athens has hired a consulting environmental engineer to provide the soils test required by the railroad. In addition the county is in the process of completing a project cost estimate. We expect to be able to continue negotiations.

The County respectfully requests an extension to February 29, 2013 (180 calendar days for the Negotiating Deadline). According to CSX rules, the buyers will be conducting environmental testing (see above). Design engineering based on those findings will occur after its completion. CSX Transportation has acknowledged that it concurs with this request and will file a letter of concurrence once it receives a copy of this letter.

In addition, the County respectfully requests a waiver of the Boards filing fees in accordance with 49 CFR 1002.2(e)(1).

Respectfully submitted,

John M. Gentry
McMinn County Mayor

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**SURFACE
TRANSPORTATION BOARD**

cc: Bruce McMahon
Elizabeth Steel

