



P.O. Box 282
Morgantown
West Virginia
26507-0282

February 23, 2004

Mr. Vernon A. Williams
Secretary
Surface Transportation Board
1925 K. Street, NW, Room 711
Washington, DC 20423

Re: CSX-Abandonment-Preston County, West Virginia-
[STB Docket Number AB-55 sub 625X]

Dear Mr. Williams:

This comment is filed on behalf of the Monongahela River Trails Conservancy, a 501(c)3 non-profit organization, concerning the above-captioned proceeding. The Monongahela River Trails Conservancy is turning over to the Friends of the Cheat, a 501(c)3 organization, the petition request for this rail corridor to be rail-banked. The Monongahela River Trails Conservancy (MRTC) will no longer be an interested party in these negotiations.

MRTC supports the Friends of the Cheat efforts as the main stakeholder in the negotiation for this wild and scenic rail corridor to be established as a non-motorized trail. The corridor parallels the beautiful Cheat River and the West Virginia Cheat River By-way. The corridor would make an excellent recreational trail and conversion of the property to trail use is in accordance with local plans and endorsed by local and state government. In addition, the corridor provides important wildlife habitat and greenspace and its preservation as a recreational trail is consistent with that end.

Please let me know if you need further information. I can be reached at 293-2941 x 2414 or email- ebelling@wvu.edu.

Sincerely,
Mon River Trails Conservancy, Ltd.


Ella Belling
Executive Director

CC: Friends of the Cheat, Keith Pitzer
WV State Rail Authority, Bill Hill

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