

November 7, 2010

U.S. Surface Transportation Board, Office of Proceedings
395 E Street, S.W., Washington, DC 20423-0001
Attn: Cynthia Brown, Chief, Section of Administration
Re: GNP Rly, Inc. Petition to Vacate NITU or Abandonment
STB Docket AB-6 (Sub 463X and 465X; BNSF Railway Abandonment Exemption in King Co., WA)

Dear Boardmembers:

I am the founder of Eastside Rail Now!, a grassroots organization that was established at the start of 2007 to promote the preservation and effective utilization of the "Woodinville Subdivision" (the former BNSF rail line that runs from Snohomish in the north to Renton in the south, with a branch line from Woodinville to Redmond). I was trained as an economist and have dealt with transportation, technology and environmental issues in the U.S. and abroad for many years.

I urge that GNP Rly, Inc.'s "Petition to Vacate Notice of Interim Trail Use or Abandonment" be accepted for the following reasons:

- 1) Eastside Rail Now! has conducted numerous public meetings during the last few years. It has been found that there is strong majority support both by local business and the general public for retaining and enhancing rail service in the region in order to support economic development, to provide an economical alternative to our increasingly congested roads, and to help protect our environment.
- 2) The Woodinville Subdivision clearly has potential for a substantial volume of local freight business, and some local industries are expressing a strong desire to ship/receive by rail. Moreover, such demand is likely to continue to grow as a consequence of what many experts believe is an inevitable soaring of oil prices as supplies continue to dwindle and world-wide demand continues to grow (i.e., "peak oil"). The Woodinville subdivision also has a tremendous potential for commuter rail service, as it roughly parallels the most congested freeway in the entire Pacific Northwest and passes through or near most major destinations on the rapidly growing Eastside, including near downtown Bellevue, which has the second largest urban core in Washington State.
- 3) The Woodinville Subdivision also is of immense strategic value not only locally but also to the entire Pacific Northwest. It is the sole remaining north-south rail line west of the Cascades, other than BNSF's vulnerable main line through downtown Seattle. Among that line's potential problems is that it utilizes a century-old tunnel under downtown Seattle which is on or near a major earthquake fault and thus could be shut down for a prolonged period in the event of a large earthquake or other disaster. The long coastal section north of downtown Seattle could also face a prolonged shutdown due to nearby earthquake faults. It is shoehorned in between Puget Sound and unstable cliffs, which frequently suffer mud slides and closures for many days at a time. Moreover, rising sea levels and increasingly violent storms predicted by many scientists to accompany global warming could severely affect the reliability of that line.

The Puget Sound region needs this vital rail corridor for freight, passenger and emergency purposes. There are no other options.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,



Paul Zimmer
Eastside Rail Now!
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CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE

I hereby certify that I caused to be served a copy of the foregoing letter of support from EASTSIDE RAIL NOW! upon the following persons on November 10, 2010:

By First Class Mail:

Party Of Record: Rails-To-Rails Trails Conservancy
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By: James H. M. Savage, Esq.
Of Counsel

Dated: November 10, 2010
Attorneys for GNP Rly, Inc.