



April 26, 2016

Andrew Phillips
Project Manager
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
400 High Point Drive, Suite 600
Cocoa, Florida 32926

Re: Extension of Comment Period and Request for Public Hearing for U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Permit Application No: SAJ-2012-01564 (SP-AWP)

Dear Mr. Phillips:

We write on behalf of Citizens Against Rail Expansion in Florida (“CARE FL”), a coalition of concerned community leaders, organizations and neighbors in South Florida and the Treasure Coast that is opposed to the proposed All Aboard Florida/Brightline (hereafter “AAF”) passenger rail project and related increases in freight rail traffic. CARE FL considers the AAF proposal—which includes 32 new passenger trains per day and related increases to the number and length of existing freight trains—a serious threat to the safety and quality of life of citizens in our communities.

On April 11, 2016, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (“USACE”) issued a public notice concerning permit application number SAJ-2012-01564 (SP-AWP). The referenced permit pertains to the construction of AAF, and the public notice states that all comments must be submitted in writing within 21 days from the date the notice was issued, which is May 2, 2016.

CARE FL formally requests that the USACE extend the public comment period for permit application number SAJ-2012-01564 (SP-AWP) for an additional 30 days. CARE FL believes that genuine fairness requires sufficient time for concerned citizens to review and comment on the permit application, and the current 21-day time period precludes our volunteer, citizen-based organization from effectively participating in this important permitting process.

CARE FL has researched and submitted substantive comments in response to the Federal Railroad Administration’s (“FRA’s”) Draft Environmental Impact Statement (“DEIS”) and its Final Environmental Impact Statement (“FEIS”) pertaining to the AAF project. In addition, CARE FL has been an active participant with the U.S. Coast Guard with respect to the impacts AAF will have on maritime navigability in our communities.

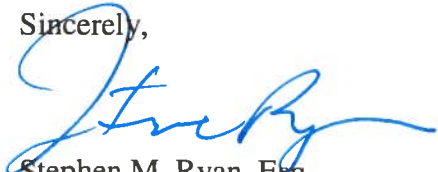
All of these endeavors have required our citizens group to engage reliable subject matter experts to research and assist with CARE FL's comprehensive responses to these agencies, and we would like the opportunity to employ the same resources with respect to SAJ-2012-01564 (SP-AWP).

Again, in order to effectively comment on the AAF permit application, CARE FL respectfully requests this 30-day extension—a request we understand has also been made by Martin County, Indian River County, U.S. Congressman Bill Posey (FL-08), and other concerned citizens. The USACE has worked with AAF for months on this issue, and we respectfully ask that our communities be afforded more than a meager 21 days to respond to this important permit application.

Further, CARE FL also requests that the USACE hold a public hearing in accordance with 33 CFR Section 327.4, to address the concerns that our organization—and many others—raised in our comments to the DEIS and FEIS. More than 15,400 comments were submitted during the DEIS comment period, and almost two-thirds of those comments were in opposition to AAF. Many such comments directly addressed issues that must be considered in the USACE's permit review, including wetlands, water bodies, and threatened and endangered species. CARE FL believes these circumstances warrant a public discussion in an open forum.

CARE FL sincerely hopes you will give your full consideration to its request to extend the comment period and hold a public hearing on SAJ-2012-02564 (SP-AWP). Should you have any questions, do not hesitate to contact me directly at sryan@mwe.com or 202.756.8333.

Sincerely,



Stephen M. Ryan, Esq.
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Washington, DC 20001

cc: Mr. Brent Hanlon, CARE FL
Congressman William Posey, 8th District-FL
Michael Durham, Esq., Martin County Attorney
Dylan Reingold, Esq., Indian River County Attorney