

SURFACE TRANSPORTATION BOARD
OFFICE OF ENVIRONMENTAL ANALYSIS

FINAL ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

ENVIRONMENTAL RECOMMENDATIONS IN DOCKET NO. AB 400 (Sub-No. 6X)

December 1, 2017

ABANDONMENT TYPE

The time for comments on the Environmental Assessment (EA) has expired in this:

(X) Notice of Exemption () Petition for Exemption () Regulated Abandonment

() **NO NEW COMMENTS WERE RECEIVED**

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OEA served an Environmental Assessment (EA) for this proceeding on November 9, 2017, for public review and comment. In the EA, OEA recommended two environmental conditions and concluded that the proposed action would not significantly impact the quality of the human environment.

OEA received two comments after issuance of the EA. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service confirmed receipt of the EA and stated that it had no comments. The Florida State Historic Preservation Officer (SHPO) requested that a professional archaeologist or historic preservation specialist should survey the previously unsurveyed portions of the Seaboard Air Line found within the proposed project area and provide documentation to the SHPO's office for review. OEA's review under Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act, § 306108 is ongoing. No change to the initially recommended condition is required to address these comments.

Conclusions

The EA comment period has ended. Accordingly, OEA recommends that the following conditions previously recommended in the EA should be imposed upon any decision granting abandonment authority:

- 1. Seminole Gulf Railway, L.P. (SGLR) shall retain its interest in and take no steps to alter the historic integrity of all historic properties including sites, buildings, structures, and objects within the project right-of-way (the Area of Potential Effect) that are eligible for listing or listed in the National Register of Historic Places until the Section 106 process of the National Historic Preservation Act, 54 USC § 306108, has been completed. SGLR shall report back to the Office of Environmental Analysis (OEA) regarding any consultations with the Florida State Historic Preservation Officer (SHPO), appropriate federally recognized tribes, and the public. SGLR may not file its consummation notice or initiate any salvage activities related to abandonment (including removal of tracks and ties) until the Section 106 process has been completed and the Board has removed this condition.**
- 2. Prior to commencement of any salvage activities, SGLR shall consult with the**

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) to address potential impacts to Florida scrub jays (*Aphelocoma coerulescens*) or eastern indigo snakes (*Drymarchon corais couperi*) that may be present in the rail right-of-way. SGLR shall follow the reasonable recommendations of USFWS to prevent impacts to members of those species that may occur during any salvage of the right-of-way.

If the above conditions are imposed, OEA believes that the proposed action will not significantly affect the quality of the human environment.

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