

E1 - 20903



Re: FD 35852: EIS Scoping for Proposed Rail Extension, Brevard County, FL

Kyle Baker - NOAA Federal

to:

David.Navecky

01/23/2015 08:25 AM

Cc:

Rachel Sweeney - NOAA Federal, Kelly Shotts - NOAA Federal

Hide Details

From: Kyle Baker - NOAA Federal <kyle.baker@noaa.gov>

To: David.Navecky@stb.dot.gov

Cc: Rachel Sweeney - NOAA Federal <rachel.sweeney@noaa.gov>, Kelly Shotts - NOAA Federal <kelly.shotts@noaa.gov>

History: This message has been forwarded.

Hi Dave. Thanks for contacting us regarding the Rail Line Extension Project at Canaveral. I see we are a bit past the comment deadline, but please accept my initial comments on the project. It would appear there may be some effects to listed species from the project, particularly the section of rail over the Banana River. Section 7 consultation under the Endangered Species should be requested with us since the project "may affect" listed species. ESA-listed species in the project area include loggerhead, green, and Kemp's ridley sea turtles, and smalltooth sawfish. Some possible impacts include those associated with construction (dredging, rip rap placement, pile driving, anchoring, work boats, turbidity, and habitat loss such as sea grass and mangroves). I do not have enough information to know if rail operation or routine maintenance will have any impacts to these species, but they should also be considered for any potential impacts.

I recommend a Biological Assessment be prepared and submitted with a request for consultation. Information on ESA listed species can be found on our website here:

http://sero.nmfs.noaa.gov/protected_resources/index.html.

Instructions regarding submitting ESA consultation requests are found here:

http://sero.nmfs.noaa.gov/protected_resources/section_7/index.html.

Please contact me any questions you may have.

Thank you.

Kyle Baker
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Protected Resources Division
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On Fri, Jan 16, 2015 at 10:25 AM, <David.Navecky@stb.dot.gov> wrote:

Kyle -

In late October 2014, the Surface Transportation Board's Office of Environmental Analysis (OEA) issued a Notice of Intent (NOI) to prepare an environmental impact statement (EIS) for the proposed Port Canaveral Rail Extension (PCRE) project. The PCRE project would include approximately 11 miles of new rail line to Port Canaveral (Port) in Brevard County, Florida and approximately 17 miles of existing rail line at the National Aeronautics and Space Administration's John F. Kennedy Space Center (KSC) to make a connection with a main line of the Florida East Coast Railway. The proposed PCRE would provide the Port with direct access to freight rail service. As proposed by the Port, the new rail line would begin near the Port's North Cargo Area, extend west across the Banana River, enter KSC on Merritt Island south of Kars Park, and then turn north through KSC grounds where it would connect with KSC's existing rail line.

We recently heard from Shane Guan with the NMFS, Office of Protected Resources in Silver Spring, MD. He informed us that they only address incidental takes under the Marine Mammal Protection Act and that we should contact you regarding Section 7 consultations under the Endangered Species Act and Essential Fish Habitat (EFH). Accordingly, attached is the original scoping package that was sent to our mailing list of federal, state and local agencies on October 27, 2014. Although the scoping comment period formally ended December 19, 2014, we'd welcome any comments you folks might have about the potential issues and the scope of the EIS. I apologize for the oversight.

Please let me know if you have any questions.

Thanks for your time,

Dave

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(See attached file: PCRE Agency Scoping Package.pdf)