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September 23, 2003
Office of Proceedings

SEP 23 2003
Part of
Public Record

The Honorable Vernon A. Williams
Secretary
Surface Transportation Board
1925 K Street, NW
Washington DC 20423

Re: *Paducah & Louisville Railway, Inc. -- Abandonment*
In Hopkins County, KY
Docket No. AB-468 (Sub-No. 6X),

Dear Secretary Williams:

Pursuant to the Board's exemption procedures for abandonment of rail lines and distribution of environmental reports (49 C.F.R. § 1105.7 and § 1152.50), enclosed are an original and eleven (11) copies of comments from the United States Department of the Interior ("DOI") relating to the environmental report in the above-captioned proceeding.

Please acknowledge receipt and filing of these comments by date stamping the enclosed eleventh copy and returning it to the courier to return to me. Color copies of the color map supplied by DOI with its comments have been included.

Sincerely,



Christine J. Sommer

Enclosures



United States Department of the Interior

FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE
3761 GEORGETOWN ROAD
FRANKFORT, KY 40601

September 16, 2003



Ms. Christine Sommer
Baker & Miller
915 15th Street, N.W.
Washington D.C. 20005-2318

Subject: FWS #03-2539; Proposed abandonment by Paducah & Louisville Railway, Inc.,
Hopkins County, Kentucky

Dear Ms. Sommer:

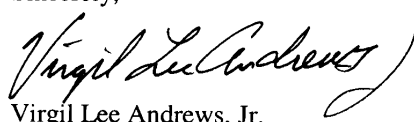
Thank you for your correspondence of August 14, 2003, regarding the 4.81 miles of proposed railway abandonment in Hopkins County, Kentucky, as shown on the attachments to your correspondence. Fish and Wildlife Service (Service) personnel have reviewed the information submitted, and we offer the following comments.

Information available to the Service indicates that wetlands exist in the vicinity of the proposed project. Attached is a copy of a portion of the Dawson Springs quadrangle with the referenced wetlands highlighted. This information is provided for your convenience. Our identification of these wetlands has been made in the absence of a field inspection and does not constitute a wetlands delineation under Section 404 of the Clean Water Act. If ground-disturbing actions are proposed, the Corps of Engineers, Louisville District, should be contacted regarding the presence of regulatory wetlands and the requirements of wetlands protection statutes.

Endangered species locality records available to the Service do not indicate that federally listed species occur within the impact area of the proposed abandonment. We note, however, that collection records available to the Service may not be all-inclusive. Our database is a compilation of collection records made available by various individuals and resource agencies. This information is seldom based on comprehensive surveys of all potential habitat and thus does not necessarily provide conclusive evidence that protected species are present or absent at a specific locality. However, based on the best information available at this time, we believe that the requirements of Section 7 of the Endangered Species Act of 1973, as amended, are fulfilled. Obligations under Section 7 of the Act must be reconsidered if (1) new information reveals impacts of the proposed action that may affect listed species or critical habitat in a manner not previously considered, (2) the proposed action is subsequently modified to include activities which were not considered during this consultation, or (3) new species are listed or critical habitat designated that might be affected by the proposed action.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on this proposed action. If you have any questions regarding the information we provided, please contact Mindi Brady at (502) 695-0468 (ext. 229).

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Virgil Lee Andrews, Jr." in a cursive script. The signature is written over the printed name and title.

Virgil Lee Andrews, Jr.
Field Supervisor

