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MELANIE B. YASBIN
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February 4, 2020

Ms. Victoria Rutson
Director, Office of Environmental Analysis
Surface Transportation Board
395 E Street S.W.
Washington, D.C. 20423

Re: **Docket No. AB-1294X, *Eighteen Thirty Group, LLC—Abandonment
Exemption—in Allegany County, MD***

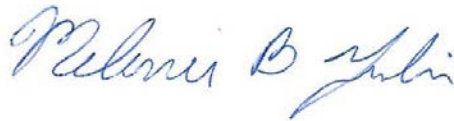
**Docket No. AB-1293X, *Georges Creek Railway—Discontinuance
Exemption—in Allegany County, MD***

Dear Ms. Rutson:

Enclosed please find a letter dated February 4, 2020, from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service finding “no effect” on the endangered, threatened, or candidate species in the project area.

Eighteen Thirty Group is efilng this letter. Thank you for your assistance. If you have any questions, please contact me.

Sincerely yours,



Melanie B. Yasbin

Attorney for Eighteen Thirty Group, LLC



United States Department of the Interior



FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE

Chesapeake Bay Field Office
177 Admiral Cochrane Drive
Annapolis, Maryland 21401
<http://www.fws.gov/chesapeakebay>

EI - 26827

February 4, 2020

The Law Offices of Louis E. Gitomer, LLC
600 Baltimore Ave., Suite 301
Towson, MD 21204

AB 1294X

RE: SLI 0462 STB Docket ~~XXXXX~~ Eighteen Thirty Group, LLC Abandonment Exemption in All

Dear Melanie Yasbin:

This responds to your letter, received, January 22, 2020, requesting information on the presence of species which are federally listed or proposed for listing as endangered or threatened within the vicinity of the above referenced project area. We have reviewed the information you enclosed and are providing comments in accordance with section 7 of the Endangered Species Act (87 Stat. 884, as amended; 16 U.S.C. 1531 *et seq.*).

This project as proposed will have “no effect” on the endangered, threatened, or candidate species listed on your IPaC species list because while the project is within the range of the species, it is unlikely that the species would occur within the project area that was submitted. Therefore, no Biological Assessment or further section 7 Consultation with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service is required. Should project plans change, or if additional information on the distribution of listed or proposed species becomes available, this determination may be reconsidered.

This response relates only to federally protected threatened or endangered species under our jurisdiction. For information on the presence of other rare species, you should contact Lori Byrne of the Maryland Wildlife and Heritage Division at (410) 260-8573.

An additional concern of the Service is wetlands protection. Federal and state partners of the Chesapeake Bay Program have adopted an interim goal of no overall net loss of the Chesapeake Bay’s remaining wetlands, and the long term goal of increasing the quality and quantity of the Chesapeake Bay’s wetlands resource base. Because of this policy and the functions and values wetlands perform, the Service recommends avoiding wetland impacts. All wetlands within the project area should be identified, and if construction in wetlands is proposed, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Baltimore District, should be contacted for permit requirements. They can be reached at (410) 962-3670.



We appreciate the opportunity to provide information relative to fish and wildlife issues, and thank you for your interests in these resources. If you have any questions or need further assistance, please contact Trevor Clark at (410) 573-4527.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "G. LaRouche". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, stylized "G" and "L".

Genevieve LaRouche
Supervisor