

209892



SARASOTA COUNTY
"Dedicated to Quality Service"

BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

1660 Ringling Boulevard
Sarasota, Florida 34236
Telephone 941-861-5344
Fax 941-861-5987

January 13, 2004

Mr. Vernon A. Williams
Secretary
Surface Transportation Board
1925 K Street, N.W., Room 711
Washington, DC 20423

AB-400-3x

Dear Mr. Williams:

Attached is the application fee of \$150.00 for Sarasota County Government, a political subdivision of the State of Florida to become the Trails Manager. In accordance with your internal policies, Sarasota County is asking for a return of the enclosed application fee.

Respectfully submitted,

Jon Thaxton, Chair
Board of County Commissioners
On Behalf of Sarasota County

FILED

JAN 20 2004

attachments

FILING FEE WAIVED



Paul H. Mercier, District 1 • David R. Mills, District 2 • Shannon Staub, District 3 • Nora Patterson, District 4 • Jon Thaxton, District 5
pmercier@co.sarasota.fl.us dsmills@co.sarasota.fl.us sstaub@co.sarasota.fl.us npatters@co.sarasota.fl.us jthaxton@co.sarasota.fl.us



SARASOTA COUNTY
"Dedicated to Quality Service"

BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

1660 Ringling Boulevard
Sarasota, Florida 34236
Telephone 941-861-5344
Fax 941-861-5987

January 13, 2004

Mr. Vernon A. Williams
Secretary
Surface Transportation Board
1925 K Street, NW, Room 711
Washington, DC 20423

Re: Seminole Gulf/CSX- Abandonment-Sarasota, Florida, STB Docket No. AB-400 (Sub-No. 3X)

Dear Mr. Williams:

This comment should be treated as a protest or a petition for reconsideration in the above-captioned proceeding. This comment is filed on behalf of Sarasota County, Florida, which is a government agency interested in transportation, natural resources, conservation and recreation, which is hereafter referred to as 'Commenter'.

While not taking a position on the merits of this abandonment, Commenter requests issuance of a Public Use Condition as well as a Certificate or Notice of Interim Trail Use rather than an outright abandonment authorization between a point approximately 1.14 miles south of State Road 72 (Clarke Road) at milepost SW 892 and Center Road in Venice, Florida at milepost 904.4.

A. Public Use Condition

Commenter requests the STB to find that this property is suitable for other public use, specifically trail use, and to place the following conditions on the abandonment:

1. An order prohibiting the carrier from disposing of the corridor, other than the tracks, ties and signal equipment, except of public use on reasonable terms. The justification for this condition is that the corridor would make an excellent recreational trail and conversion of the property to trail use is in accordance with local plans. The corridor connects several public parks and publicly owned land, including Oscar Sherer State Park. In addition, the corridor provides important wildlife habitat and greenspace and its preservation, as a recreational trail is consistent with that end. The time period sought is 180 days from the effective date of the abandonment authorization. Commenter needs this much time because we have not had an opportunity to assemble or to review title information, environmental information or commence negotiations with the carrier.

Mr. Vernon A. Williams
Seminole Gulf/CSX – Abandonment- Sarasota, Florida

January 13, 2004
Page 2

2. An order barring removal or destruction of potential trail related structures such as bridges, trestles, culverts and tunnels. The justification for this condition is that these structures have considerable value for recreational trail purposes. The time period requested is 180 days from the effective date of the abandonment authorization for the same reason as indicated above.

B. Interim Trail Use

The railroad right-of-way in this proceeding is suitable for rail banking. In addition to the public use conditions sought above, Commenter also makes the following request:

STATEMENT OF WILLINGNESS TO ASSUME FINANCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

In order to establish interim trail use and rail banking under section 8(d) of the National Trails System Act, 16 U.S.C. §1247(d), and 49 C.F.R. §1152.29, Sarasota County is willing to assume full responsibility for management of, for any legal liability arising out of the transfer or use of (unless the user is immune from liability, in which case it need only indemnify the railroad against any potential liability), and for the payment of any and all taxes that may be levied or assessed against the right-of-way owned by Seminole Gulf Railroad Company and operated by CSX Railroad Company.

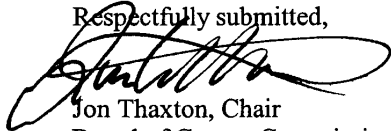
The property, known as the Mid-County Railroad Trail Greenway extends from railroad milepost SW 904.4 near downtown Venice to railroad milepost SW 892 near Clark Road, a distance of 12.43 miles in Sarasota County, Florida. The right-of-way is part of a line of railroad proposed for abandonment in STB Docket No. AB-400 (Sub-No. 3X).

A map and aerial depicting the right-of-way is attached.

Sarasota County acknowledges that use of the right-of-way is subject to the user's continuing to meet its responsibilities described above and subject to possible future reconstruction and reactivation of the right-of-way for rail service.

By my signature below, I certify service upon Seminole Gulf Railway, L.P. and CSX Transportation, Inc. by U.S. Mail, postage prepaid, first class, this day of 2003.

Respectfully submitted,



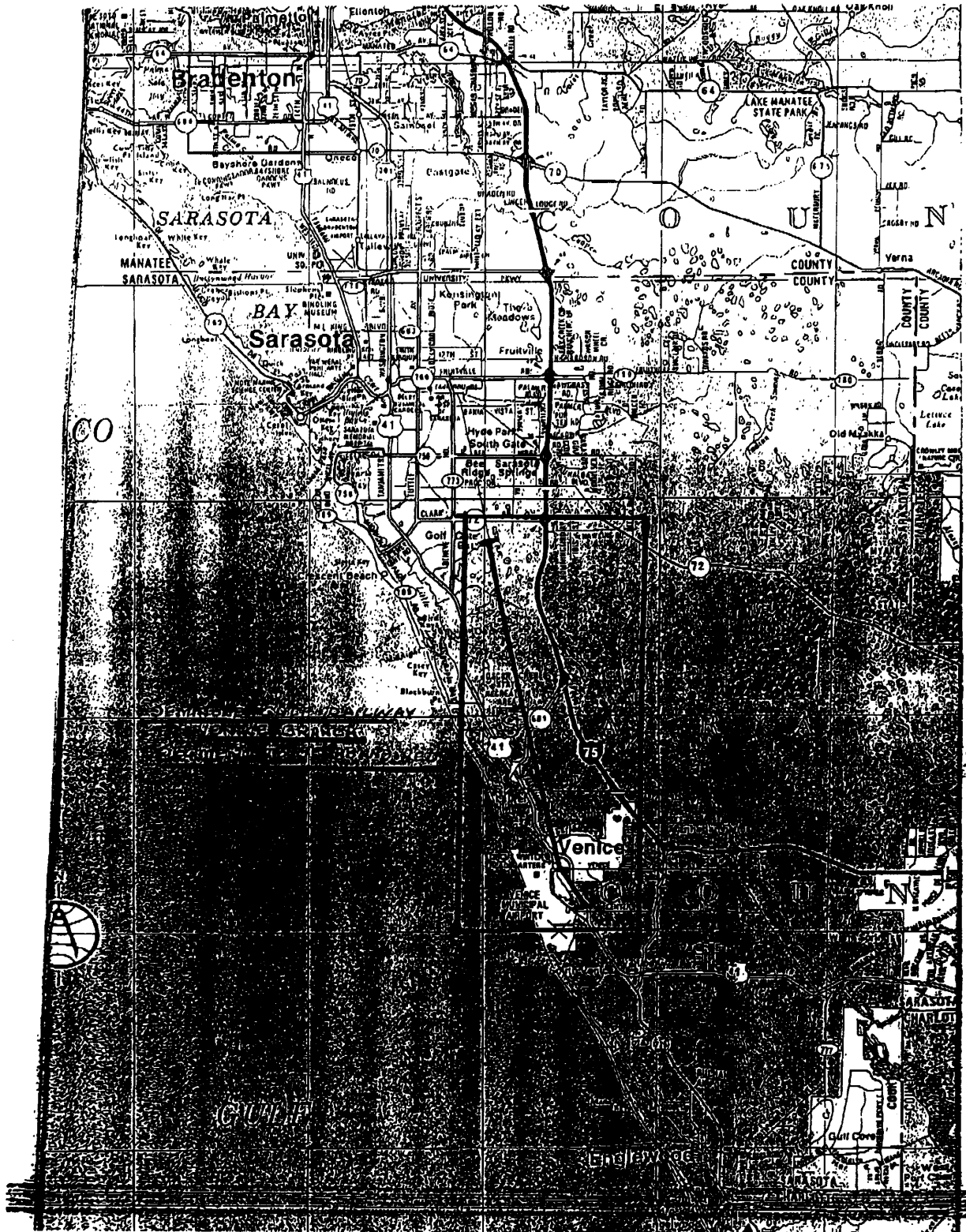
Jon Thaxton, Chair
Board of County Commissioners
on Behalf of Sarasota County

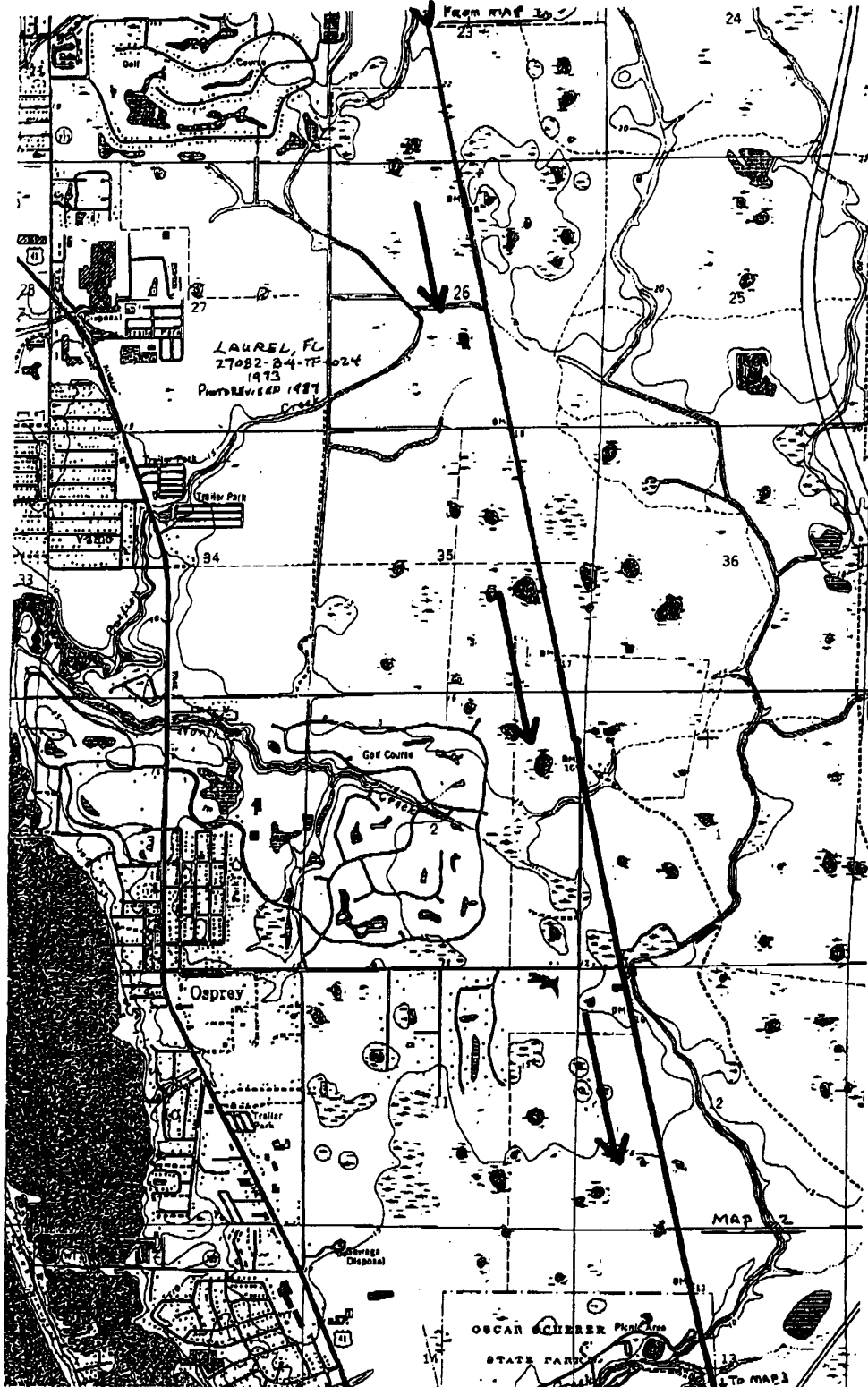
attachments

Attachment

Copy of map of corridor as submitted with
the application for abandonment.

STB Docket No AB-400 (Sub-No. 3X)







340 000 FEET

Published by the Geological Survey

IOAA, and Florida Geodetic Survey

metric methods from aerial photographs

field checked 1973

via map dated 1943

s compiled from USC&GS Chart 857 SC (1973)

ended for navigational purposes

-1 grid ticks: Florida coordinate

use Mercator

towns Mercator grid ticks,

7 North American Datum

with American Datum 1983

meters south and

dashed corner ticks

22 selected fence and field lines where

topographic. This information is unchecked

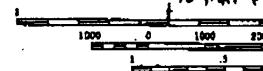


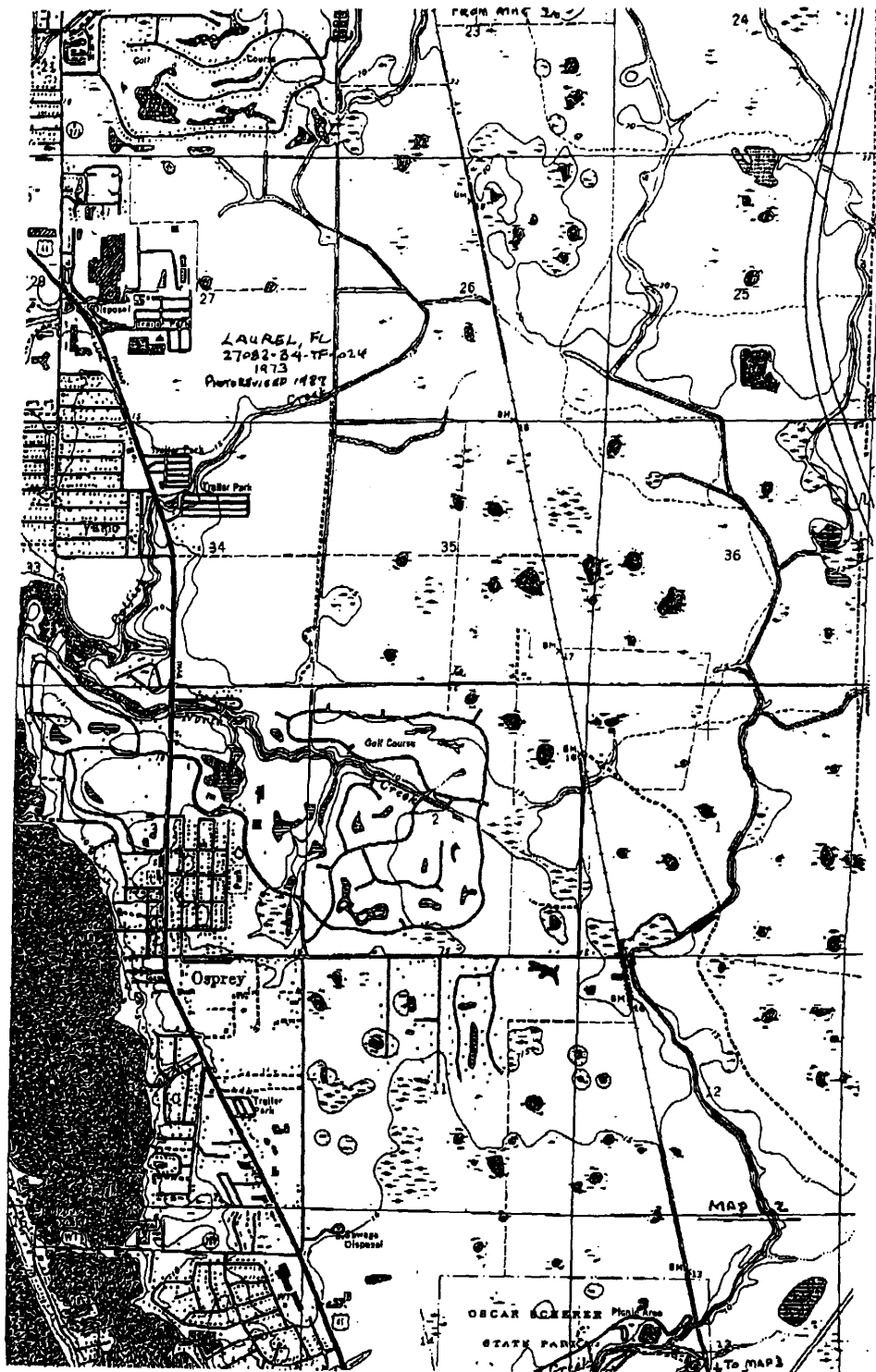
LAUREL, FL

27°02' - 24°02' N

1973

Photorevised 1987

UTM GRID AND 1987 MAGNETIC NORTH
DECLINATION AT CENTER OF SHEETRed tint indicates area in which only
landmark buildings are shownThere may be private inholdings within the boundaries of
the National or State reservations shown on this mapCONTO
NATIONAL GEO
DEPTH CURVES AND SOUNDING
THE RELATIONSHIP
SHORELINE SHOWN HEREIN
THE MEAN RANGETHIS MAP COMPLES WI
FOR SALE 8"
DENVER, COLORADO
A FOLDER DESCRIBING TOPOGRAPH



Attachment

Aerial of corridor.

STB Docket No AB-400 (Sub-No. 3X)

Railroad Corridor

PUBLIC WORKS MOBILITY
TRANSPORTATION PLANNING



— County Owned Portion of Railroad Corridor

FIGURE 1

Railroad Corridor - Vamo Area

PUBLIC WORKS MOBILITY
TRANSPORTATION PLANNING



Corridor Under Consideration for Purchase ⊗ Crossing **FIGURE 1**

Railroad Corridor - Osprey Area

PUBLIC WORKS MOBILITY
TRANSPORTATION PLANNING



Corridor Under Consideration for Purchase ⊗ Crossing

FIGURE 2

Railroad Corridor - Nokomis/Venice

PUBLIC WORKS MOBILITY
TRANSPORTATION PLANNING



Corridor Under Consideration for Purchase ⊗ Crossing

FIGURE 3