

EI-17931
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Preserving America's Heritage

November 24, 2008

The Honorable Charles D. Nottingham
Chairman
Surface Transportation Board
1925 K Street, N.W.
Washington, DC 20423

Ref: *Proposed Alaska Railroad Corporation construction and operation of rail line
STB Finance Docket No. 34658
Between North Pole and Delta Junction, Alaska*

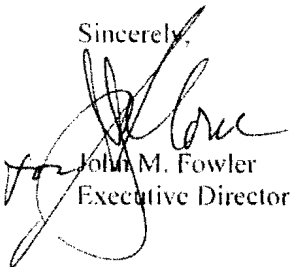
Dear Mr. Nottingham:

In response to a notification by the Surface Transportation Board (STB), the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation (ACHP) will participate in consultation to develop a programmatic agreement for the proposed rail line between North Pole and Delta Junction, Alaska. Our decision to participate in this consultation is based on the *Criteria for Council Involvement in Reviewing Individual Section 106 Cases*, contained within our regulations. The criteria are met for this undertaking because it may present important questions of policy or interpretation. Our decision to enter participation is also in response to recent legislation, the Federal Railroad Safety Improvement Act (Public Law 110-432), which directs the ACHP to work with the Secretary of Transportation, the Alaska State Historic Preservation Officer (SHPO), and the Alaska Railroad Corporation to expedite historic preservation reviews for safety-related projects, a directive to which this undertaking relates.

Section 800.6(a)(1)(iii) of our regulations requires that we notify you, as the head of the agency, of our decision to participate in consultation. By copy of this letter, we are also notifying Victoria Rutson, Chief, Section of Environmental Analysis, of this decision.

Our participation in this consultation will be handled by Blythe Semmer, who can be reached at (202) 606-8552 or via email at bsemmer@achp.gov. We look forward to working with your agency and other consulting parties to develop a programmatic agreement.

Sincerely,



John M. Fowler
Executive Director

ADVISORY COUNCIL ON HISTORIC PRESERVATION

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