



U.S. Department
of Transportation

1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE
Washington, DC 20590

**Federal Railroad
Administration**

OCT 31 2013

Ms. Ginny Jones
Bureau of Historic Preservation
Division of Historical Resources
Florida Department of State
500 South Bronough Street
Tallahassee, FL 32399

RE: Cultural Resources Assessment Report (CRAR) of the All Aboard Florida (AAF)
Passenger Rail Project (Project) from Orlando to West Palm Beach
Orange, Brevard, Indian River, St. Lucie, Martin, and Palm Beach Counties

Dear Ms. Jones:

The Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) is completing an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for the above-referenced project to be undertaken by All Aboard Florida (AAF). AAF is pursuing funding for this Project through FRA's Railroad Rehabilitation & Improvement Financing (RRIF) Program. The Project proposes implementing a privately owned, operated, and maintained intercity passenger rail service that will connect downtown Miami, Florida to downtown West Palm Beach, Florida with one stop in downtown Fort Lauderdale, Florida with continuing service to Orlando, Florida. To accommodate this, the Project proposes improvements to existing rail line within the existing Florida East Coast (FEC) Railway Corridor Main Line right of way (ROW); addition of new or modified rail within the existing FEC Railway Corridor Main Line ROW; construction of new rail line along the SR 528 transportation corridor; construction of new passenger rail stations in Miami, Fort Lauderdale, West Palm Beach, and Orlando; upgrades to numerous bridges, highway crossings, and pedestrian crossings; addition of new track signal controls at key intersections; and construction of a new vehicle maintenance facility (VMF) near the Orlando station terminus.

The Cultural Resources Assessment Report (CRAR) project area extends from Orlando to West Palm Beach via Cocoa Beach. The following segments are part of the current documentation: the Airport Rail Alignment and Vehicle Maintenance Facility (VMF), the East-West Corridor from Cocoa to Orlando, and the North-South Corridor from West Palm Beach to Cocoa Beach. An East-West Corridor of approximately 40 miles from Cocoa to Orlando, Florida, generally parallel to the existing State Road 528 (SR 528 or Beachline Expressway), extends the service to the Orlando International Airport (MCO), where the new VMF will be constructed. An extension of the North-South Corridor includes approximately 128.5 miles of rail improvements between West Palm Beach and Cocoa, Florida, within an existing, active freight rail ROW. Figure 1 in the CRAR document illustrates the Project Location.

For the purposes of evaluation, AAF, in coordination with SHPO and FRA, developed appropriate Areas of Potential Effect (APE) for the necessary corridor improvements. Appendices D, E, and F within the CRAR document show the locations of the cultural resources identified within the APEs.

Airport Rail Alignment and VMF

A review of previous surveys and an updated search of the Florida Master Site File (FMSF) data identified one previously recorded archaeological site within the archaeological resources APE established for the Airport Rail Alignment and VMF. South Terminal Northeast (8OR8277) is located within the Airport Rail Alignment in Orange County and is a low-density precolumbian lithic scatter consisting of two lithic waste flakes. The SHPO previously determined this site ineligible for listing in the National Register in 1998.

The previous surveys also included the entirety of the historic APE for the Airport Rail Alignment and VMF. An updated desktop survey resulted in the identification of no new historic resources located within the APE for the Airport Rail Alignment and VMF.

East-West Corridor

No previously recorded or newly recorded archaeological sites were identified within the archaeological APE for the East-West Corridor as a result of the current survey. Access to a portion of the East-West Corridor located within one private landowner's property was not possible during the current survey. Once access is coordinated, a supplemental addendum report will be completed to document the results of pedestrian survey and subsurface testing within this portion of the East-West Corridor.

The historic resources survey for the AAF Railway East-West Corridor resulted in the identification of nine historic resources within the APE. Of the identified historic resources, six were previously recorded (8BR1735, 8BR1736, 8OR9851, 8BD1870, 8BD2697, and 8OR9850) and three are newly recorded (8BR3066, 8BR3067, and 8BR3068). All of the previously recorded historic resources, with the exception of the National Register-eligible Florida East Coast Railroad (8BR1870), were determined ineligible for inclusion in the National Register by the SHPO. The three newly recorded historic buildings identified within the project APE are considered ineligible for listing in the National Register either individually or as part of a district.

North-South FEC Railway Corridor

Due to its ongoing use as an active freight line with frequent train traffic, subsurface archaeological testing was not feasible within the FEC ROW for reasons of safety.

Five previously recorded archaeological sites were identified within the archaeological APE for the North-South FEC Railway Corridor Main Line. One archaeological site (8IR846) was identified within the Indian River County segment of the APE; one site (8MT1287) was identified within the Martin County segment of the APE; and three previously recorded sites (8SL41, 8SL1136, and 8SL1772) were identified within the St. Lucie County segment of the APE. While none of these five previously recorded archaeological sites are National Register-listed, and none have been previously determined by the SHPO to be National Register-eligible, 8MT1287 and 8SL41 were evaluated by the initial FMSF recorder as potentially National Register-eligible. No previously recorded archaeological sites were identified within the Brevard or Palm Beach county segments of the North-South FEC Railway Corridor Archaeological APE.

Approximately 2.2 miles of the North-South FEC Railway Corridor Archaeological APE within Palm Beach County are located within the Coastal Zone and Loxahatchee River archaeological zones described in the *Prehistoric Resources in Palm Beach County: A Preliminary Predictive Study*.

The FEC Railway (8BR1870/8IR1497/8IR1518/8SL3014/8MT1391/8MT1450/8PB12102) was previously determined by SHPO to be eligible for listing in the National Register as a linear historic district.

Thirteen historic railway bridges were identified within the North-South FEC Railway Corridor Main Line ROW APE (8BR3058, 8BR3059, 8BR3060, 8BR3061, 8BR3062/8IR1569, 8SL3191, 8SL3192, 8MT1623, 8MT1382, 8MT1624, 8MT1625, 8MT1626, and 8PB16041). With the exception of 8SL3192, which is non-contributing, each identified bridge is considered a contributing resource within the National Register-eligible FEC Railway linear historic district. Four of these bridges (8BR3058, 8BR3062/8IR1569, 8MT1382, and 8PB16041) are also considered individually eligible for listing in the National Register.

A total of 60 significant historic resources were identified adjacent to the North-South FEC Railway Corridor Main Line ROW within the project limits during the Reconnaissance Survey. These resources include 12 in Brevard County, 12 in Indian River County, 23 in St. Lucie County, 10 in Martin County, and three in Palm Beach County.

Along the North-South FEC Railway Corridor Main Line, three at-grade crossings are located adjacent to one National Register-eligible historic district in Brevard County, Union Cypress Saw Mill Historic District (8BR2173); four at-grade crossings are located within a considered National Register-eligible historic district in St. Lucie County, Edgar Town Historic District (8SL2801); and two at-grade crossings are located within and adjacent to the considered National Register-eligible Kelsey City Layout (8PB13340) in Palm Beach County.

FRA has evaluated the Project and the report pursuant to the regulations adopted by the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation (36 CFR 800). FRA seeks the concurrence of your office with the findings pursuant to 36 CFR 800.5 (c)(1). Please respond within thirty days of your receipt of this letter. FRA may consider your lack of response as concurrence with the above finding, as provided in 36 CFR 800.5(c)(1).

In the event your office disagrees with this finding, please notify us via email, and overnight or private delivery service to ensure timely receipt of your communications.

If you have questions or wish to discuss this project further, please contact me at Mary.hassell@dot.gov or telephone: 202-493-1310.

Sincerely,



Mary D. Hassell, CEP
Team Lead, Environment and Systems Planning Division

Enclosure

cc: Margarita Martinez Miguez, Florida East Coast Industries, Inc.
Lisa Standley, VHB
Angelique Bochnak, AMEC