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May 2, 2016

District Engineer
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
Cocoa Permits Section
400 High Point Drive, Suite 600
Cocoa, FL 32926

Attn: Andrew W. Phillips, Project Manager

Re: All Aboard Florida - SAJ-2012-01564 (SP-AWP)

Dear Mr. Phillips:

As you know, our firm represents The Guardians of Martin County, Inc., which was established, *inter alia*, to educate and advocate for protection and preservation of wetlands, surface waters, wildlife, marine life, native vegetation, rivers, and estuaries throughout the Treasure Coast.

The Guardians has been reviewing and commenting on various aspects of the All Aboard Florida project since its inception. Thousands of pages of records related to the project have been reviewed, including documents obtained through formal Freedom of Information Act requests when information was not available through routine channels.

The Guardians' Citizens Against The Train website has generated more than 750 letters from individual members of the public requesting that the Corps conduct a public hearing before approving any permit(s) for the AAF project.

The 21-day period for the Corps to accept public comments ends today. However, hundreds of pages of updated documents regarding Corps permit-related issues have recently been obtained by The Guardians and other interested citizens. Review of the new information has commenced, and The Guardians is pleased that AAF finally has provided some of the detail that was previously requested by the Corps regarding potential impacts to wetlands and protected species if the rail project is permitted to move forward as designed. But due to the volume of new information and the manner in which it has been presented, The Guardians has been unable to finalize its review to the extent necessary to make meaningful comments.

Mr. Phillips, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
May 2, 2016
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The Guardians joins the Boards of County Commissioners of Martin County and Indian River County, U.S. Rep. Bill Posey and other interested citizens in requesting an additional 30 days to review the new information and to submit comments to the Corps. The Guardians also joins local government agencies, private citizens and organizations in requesting that the Corps conduct a public hearing on the proposed project before considering issuance of any permit(s).

A significant number of area residents and members of The Guardians utilize local waterways and live, work, and recreate in the project vicinity. Boaters, anglers, birdwatchers, and others who rely on the Corps to carry out its responsibilities with respect to environmental protection have first-hand information to present to the Corps. A public hearing will allow citizens from Treasure Coast communities who will be directly and severely impacted by the project to pose questions, make comments, and express concerns relating to the work the Corps is being asked to permit.

The Corps is charged with ensuring that wetland impacts are avoided and minimized before mitigation is considered. Additional time is needed for The Guardians and other interested citizens to evaluate the extent to which the avoidance and minimization requirements have been met.

If the Corps is unwilling to grant an extension of the public comment period, please consider this letter an objection to issuance of any Corps permit(s) for the project based upon the failure of the applicant to meet the 404(b)(1) Guidelines of the Clean Water Act, provisions of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), and other federal requirements related to protection of wetlands and protected species.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

LITTMAN, SHERLOCK & HEIMS, P.A.



Virginia P. Sherlock

VPS/nol

cc: Board of Directors, The Guardians of Martin County, Inc.
Board of County Commissioners of Martin County
Michael D. Durham, Esq., Martin County Attorney