April 2, 2010

Commonwealth of Kentucky

Transportation Cabinet

Attn: Karen Mynhier

I would like to make application to be a “consulting party” in respect to mitigation measures relating to proposed modifications to Route 773 southeast of Grayson, Kentucky. I would like to receive all available information, offer comments and consult with KYTC.

I have been working on Rails to Trails projects in the area of the proposed highway modifications for two years. We have been attempting to obtain funding for the re-decking of three old C&O Railroad trestle bridges in the Goodale-Leon area (about two miles from the EK RR bridges which are the subject of the Rt. 773 modification project). In 2009 we used a $50,000 grant to do trail surfacing and bridge re-decking engineering work. The re-decking work was put out for bid, but all bids exceeded our budget, so the work on the three bridges has not yet begun (as noted, the engineering drawings were completed).

The old C&O Train Depot in Olive Hill has already been re-developed as a trail head facility, and several miles of trails have been created in both the Olive Hill and the Grayson areas.

Our long term plan includes a trail linking the existing east-west, Leon to Hitchins Rail Trail with a spur trail paralleling Route 773 north into Grayson. Additional information may be found on our Carter County History/Genealogy web site: KYCARTER.COM. There is a link to our rails-to-trails project near the bottom of the first page.

A group of citizens is currently restoring the old high school in Hitchins as a railroad museum, community center and trail head facility. Eventually a branch library will be established in the old high school. A trail linking Grayson and Hitchins is essential to the viability of all other trails in that part of the county.

All of these projects have broad community support.

We are keenly aware of the need to preserve historic elements along our trails. We intend to preserve all of the remaining railroad bridges, tunnels and other facilities. We hope that a decision will be made to preserve the two EK RR bridges on Route 773.

Thank you for your consideration of my request.

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