



Sunflower Rail-Trails Conservancy, Inc.
PO Box 442043
Lawrence, Kansas 66044
620-255-9418
info@kansastrails.org

June 5, 2020

Hon. Jim Daily
Hon. Charles McKinney
Hon. Howard Wideman
Clark County Commission
913 Highland
Ashland, KS 67831

Gentlemen:

We are in receipt of your correspondence dated May 13, 2020. Due to the lack of support by Clark County officials and the general public for a recreational trail which has the potential to become an outstanding public asset, we are relinquishing the railbanking for that portion of the Short Grass Prairie Trail lying in Clark County. This process could take several months due to a backlog at the Surface Transportation Board. The railroad will then have the option of railbanking it with another entity or letting it revert to adjacent landowners. If the latter occurs, the remaining railroad bridges and all real estate taxes levied will be the responsibility of the adjacent landowners.

Very few Kansas counties require that the trail manager establish an escrow account (bonds are not obtainable in Kansas). For example, Allen County does not require an escrow account and its road department essentially built our Southwind Rail Trail stretching between Iola and Humboldt. It should also be noted that SRTC does in fact hold liability insurance for the entire trail and certificates of insurance are routinely provided to the Clark County Clerk.

In conclusion, we regret that the people of Clark County will be denied this public asset which would have been a 30-mile linear park containing 360 acres. Once a rail corridor loses its railbanking status, the corridor is gone forever.

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Richard Stein".

Richard Stein
President

cc: Linda Lanterman, KDWP Director of Parks, Pratt Office
Allison Kuhns, Clark County Attorney