

# **All Aboard Florida Project Status Update**

TREASURE COAST REGIONAL PLANNING COUNCIL

APRIL 2014

# Southeast Florida Rail Network & Proposed “All Aboard Florida” Route



# All Aboard Florida (AAF) Proposal

Applicant: Florida East Coast Industries (FECI)

Project Proposal: Operation of high-speed express intercity passenger rail service on Florida East Coast (FEC) Rail Corridor & SR 528

Station Locations: Miami, Fort Lauderdale, West Palm Beach, Orlando (235-mile route)

Service Frequency: 16 hourly trains in each direction (6 AM – 9 PM)

Project Timeframe: Construction (2014)  
Initial Service (2016)

Permit Activity: Pending Environmental Impact Statement (EIS)



# AAF Project History

ACTION	TIMEFRAME
<b>FECI: Announced “All Aboard Florida” Project</b>	<b>March 2012</b>
<b>FECI/AAF: Submittal of “RRIF” Loan Application* to Federal Railroad Administration (FRA)</b>	<b>2012</b>
<b>FECI/AAF: Submittal of EA Documentation (Southern “Initial” Segment)</b>	<b>October 2012</b>
<b>FECI/AAF: Received EA Approval (Southern Segment)</b> <i>(West Palm Beach/Miami - track improvements &amp; sidings; station platforms; grade crossings)</i>	<b>January 2013</b>
<b>FRA: Conducted EIS “Scoping Meetings” (Northern Segment)</b> <i>(West Palm Beach/Orlando - track improvements; Miami/Orlando – bridges, stations, grade crossings)</i>	<b>May 2013</b>

RRIF = Railroad Rehabilitation and Improvement Financing Program (under FRA)  
EA = Environmental Assessment; EIS = Environmental Impact Statement

# Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) Approval Process by FRA

ACTION	TIMEFRAME
FRA Publication of “Draft EIS” & Public Workshops	May/June 2014 <i>(per FRA estimate)</i>
FRA Public Comment Period	45 days <i>Council &amp; others have requested 90 days; extension requires FRA approval</i>
FRA Publication of “Final EIS”	TBD
FRA Public Comment Period	30 days <i>FRA has discretion to extend</i>
FRA Issuance of “Record of Decision”	TBD

# Minimum Considerations of an EIS

14. Contents of an Environmental Impact Statement (n): Analysis should be focused on areas of significant impact: beneficial and adverse; direct, indirect, and cumulative; and both long and short-term. There should be evidence of consultation with appropriate Federal, State and local officials. At a minimum, the following areas should be considered in the environmental analysis ...

1. Air quality.
2. Water quality
3. Noise and vibration.
4. Solid waste disposal.
5. Natural ecological systems.
6. Wetlands.
7. Endangered species.
8. Flood hazard evaluation & floodplain management.
9. Coastal zone management.
10. Production & consumption of energy.
11. Use of natural resources other than energy, such as water, minerals, or timber.
12. Aesthetic environment & scenic resources.
13. Transportation.
14. Elderly & handicapped.
15. Land use.
16. Socioeconomic environment.
17. Public health.
18. Public safety.
19. Recreation areas & opportunities
20. Environmental Justice.
21. Sites of historical, archeological, architectural, or cultural significance.
22. Construction impacts.

# Council's Involvement in Project

Since AAF project announcement in March 2012, Council has participated in:

Public Hearings	35
Public Workshops	23
Briefings with Elected Officials	53
Other (Neighborhood & Town Hall Meetings)	8

Council's role has been to deliver and information to/from all interested parties in advance of the EIS.

# TCRPC Action on AAF (3/21/2014)

## (1) Request FRA Address Key Issues in EIS

- Passenger Rail Stations
- Grade Crossings & Quiet Zones
- Bridge & Marine Navigation Conflicts
- Access to Broadband Capacity
- Freight Rationalization
- Land Use & Transportation
- Tri-Rail Coastal Link Access Negotiations
- Wildlife Impacts

## (2) Extend Public Comment Period to 90 Days

## (3) Request FRA “EIS Workshop” in Region for Local Governments & Agencies



# Passenger Rail Stations

- Advance Amtrak/FEC Corridor Service
- Add AAF Stops in Treasure Coast
  - Stations - Stuart, Fort Pierce & Vero Beach

# Grade Crossings & Quiet Zones

- Quiet Zone Funding (FECCI, FDOT, TIGER Grants)
- Pedestrian Pathways at all Grade Crossings
- Consistent, Predictable & Reasonable FECCI Grade Crossing Fee Schedule



# Bridge & Marine Navigation Conflicts

- Reduce Impacts to Bridges
  - Synchronize trains to reduce # of closures
  - Establish limits on maximum bridge closure time
- Modernize Bridge Mechanisms & Structures
  - Establish limits on maximum bridge closure time
- Improve Safety – On-Site Bridge Tender & Add 2<sup>nd</sup> (western) Police Boat & Dock in Tequesta



St. Lucie River FEC RR Bridge



Loxahatchee River FEC RR Bridge

## Access to Broadband Capacity

- Discounted Broadband Access Rate for Public & Not-for-Profit Institutions
  - Local Governments, Agencies, Educational Users, Hospitals & BioTech/BioMed Users



## Freight Rationalization

- Balance Rail Activity on Rail Network
  - Freight & passenger on both FEC & CSX rail corridors
- Create Future Rail Demand Model (passenger & freight; CSX & FEC)



## Land Use & Transportation Impacts

- Impacts in Historic Downtowns
  - Downtown parking, landscaping, transportation
- Impacts to Property Values
- Impacts to Traffic & Emergency Response



## Other Issues

- Impacts on Wildlife & Listed Species
- Benefit/Cost Analysis
- Extend Public Comment Period to 90 Days

# FRA Safety Report (4/8/2014)



U.S. Department of Transportation  
Federal Railroad Administration

Office of Safety RRS-23  
Highway Rail Crossing and Trespasser Program Division

## ON-SITE ENGINEERING FIELD REPORT - Part 1

### — All Aboard Florida —

- Focus of Report: West Palm Beach north to Cocoa
- Trespassing is an “epidemic” along the corridor
- AAF should install pedestrian gates for sidewalks
- AAF should follow “sealed corridor” guidelines:
  - 41 crossings = four-quadrant gates
  - 7 crossings = 100-foot medians
  - 6 crossings = three-quadrant gates
  - 23 crossings = private or recommended closure

# AAF “Clearinghouse” on TCRPC Website

- Establish Central Location for Project-Related Documents & Reports

- EA & EIS Documents
- Agency Reports
- Local Government Comments

TREASURE COAST REGIONAL  
PLANNING COUNCIL  
[www.tcrpc.org](http://www.tcrpc.org)

- Project Status & Timeline

- Project-Related Contact Information

- Federal Railroad Administration
- US Department of Transportation
- U.S. Coast Guard
- U.S. Fish & Wildlife
- U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
- Environmental Protection Agency
- Congressional Delegation
- Florida Department of Transportation
- Water Management Districts
- MPOs, TPOs
- Local Governments in the Region
- Legislative Delegation

# TCRPC: Recent Public Comments Received

- Congressional Delegation:

- Congressman Patrick Murphy
- Congresswoman Lois Frankel
- Congressman Bill Posey

- Local Governments:

- City of Fort Pierce
- Indian River County
- Town of Jupiter
- Town of St. Lucie Village
- City of Sebastian
- City of Stuart

*All comments from local governments, agencies & elected officials included in TCRPC agenda packages at [www.tcrpc.org](http://www.tcrpc.org).*



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