

Stewart, Wald & McCulley recovers \$4.5 Million from the government on behalf of landowners along the Atlanta BeltLine.

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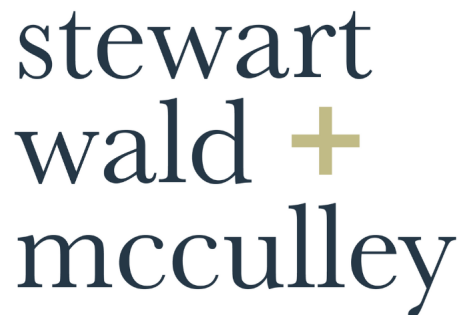
/EINPresswire.com/ -- [Stewart, Wald & McCulley](#), a Missouri law firm specializing in Rails-to-Trails litigation has recovered \$4.5 Million from the federal government on behalf of twenty-one landowners as a result of the [Atlanta BeltLine](#) conversion in Atlanta, Georgia.

The landowners own land along a 4.4-mile stretch of abandoned railway

from the I-75/85 underpass to Glenwood Avenue, just north of Beulah Heights University. This portion of the abandoned railway was converted to create the [Southside Trail segment](#) of the Atlanta BeltLine. The Atlanta BeltLine is a 22-mile recreational trail loop that connects neighborhoods around the City of Atlanta.

In the late 1800's and early 1900's the Atlanta and West Point Railroad was granted an easement to establish rail service along portions of this 4.4 miles of railway. This line was most recently owned by CSX Transportation, who had the same easement rights for railroad purposes when the line was converted to a recreational trail.

On January 3, 2018, Atlanta Beltline Inc. officially requested to use the defunct railroad corridor for the extension of the Atlanta BeltLine recreational trail. The Surface Transportation Board approved the project under the National Trails System Act ("Trails Act") and issued a Notice of Interim Trail Use on February 6, 2018. The Trails Act permits the conversion of abandoned railroad corridors into nature and hiking trails, which simultaneously preserves the right of way for possible future railroad use, a federal process known as railbanking. The process prevents the land burdened by the railroad easement from reverting to the adjoining landowners, and gives the trail sponsor a new easement, thereby blocking the rights of the landowners to regain their property within the corridor.

The logo for Stewart, Wald & McCulley, featuring the words "stewart", "wald", and "mcculley" in a dark blue, lowercase, serif font. A gold plus sign is positioned between "wald" and "mcculley".

Stewart, Wald & McCulley

Stewart, Wald & McCulley filed this lawsuit, *Brittain v. United States*, Case No. 18-342, in the United States Court of Federal Claims on March 6, 2018. After four years of litigation, the landowners reached a settlement with the federal government. As of April 2022, twenty-one landowners have received settlement payments.

Following their success, Stewart, Wald & McCulley has filed a subsequent lawsuit bringing Trails Act claims for an additional two landowners who were not part of the 2018 litigation. Attorney Michael J. Smith states “Adjacent landowners to the Southside Trail portion of the Atlanta BeltLine who have not obtained representation are encouraged to contact Stewart, Wald & McCulley to pursue their claims. We have identified numerous parcels along the trail whose owners could potentially be due compensation under the Trails Act.”

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