

Stewart, Wald & McCulley recovers \$142,600 from the federal government on behalf of 2 landowners in Yelm, Washington

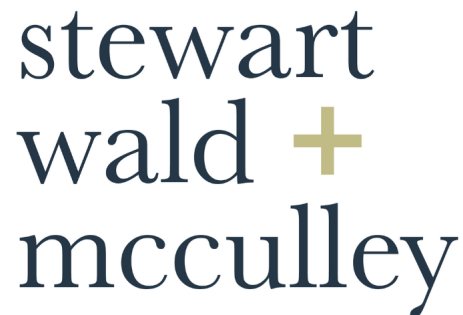
YELM, WASHINGTON, UNITED STATES, May 16, 2022 /EINPresswire.com/ -- [Stewart, Wald & McCulley](#), a Missouri litigation law firm specializing in [Rails-to-Trails litigation](#), has recovered \$142,600 from the federal government on behalf of 2 landowners as a result of the [Yelm-Tenino Trail](#) conversion in the City of Yelm, Thurston County, Washington.

The landowners own land along a 4.57-mile stretch of abandoned railway

spanning from the City of Yelm to the City of Roy. The railway is a continuation of the Yelm-Tenino Trail, a rail-trail managed by Thurston County, that currently spans 14 miles from Crowder Rd. and Park Ave. in Tenino to Yelm. In the late 1860's, the Northern Pacific Railway Company was granted a railroad easement to establish rail service in Yelm and Roy. The line was most recently operated by the City of Yelm, who filed a petition to abandon the line in May 2020 with the intention to extend the Yelm-Tenino Trail.

On May 5, 2020, the City of Yelm officially requested to use the defunct railroad corridor for a 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 July 8, 2020. 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.

Stewart, Wald & McCulley filed this lawsuit, *Fetterly v. United States*, Case No. 20-869, in the United States Court of Federal Claims on July 16, 2020. In November 2020, the lawsuit was amended to add an additional landowner. A settlement was eventually reached, and the two landowners received their compensation from the federal government in April 2022.

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

Because of their success, Stewart, Wald & McCulley has filed a subsequent lawsuit bringing additional Trails Act claims for another seventeen landowners who were not part of the 2020 litigation. Attorney Michael J. Smith states "Adjacent landowners to the Yelm-Tenino Trail between the City of Yelm and the City of Roy 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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