

Southampton Landowners Bring Suit in Federal Court

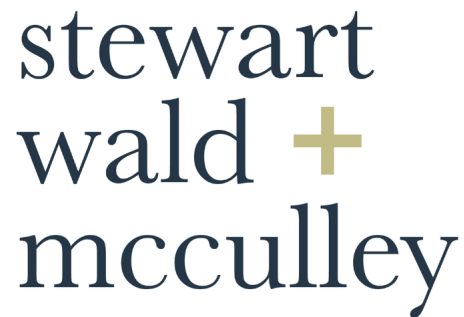
SOUTHAMPTON, MASSACHUSETTS, UNITED STATES, January 9, 2023 /EINPresswire.com/ -- [Stewart Wald & McCulley](#) ("SWM"), the nation's leading and only fully dedicated Rails-to-Trails litigation law firm, has filed a lawsuit on behalf of landowners in Hampshire County, Massachusetts against the federal government. The suit was filed in the United States Court of Federal Claims as a result of the rail-trail conversion. The firm will be adding more landowners to the lawsuit in the

following weeks. SWM currently represents numerous landowners in Southampton, and their federal lawsuit is captioned: Kristen Biancuzzo, et al., v. United States, Case No. 22-1857L.

In Biancuzzo, landowners own land adjacent to a 4.25-mile stretch of abandoned railway in Southampton, Massachusetts. The Hampden and Hampshire Railroad Company began construction of the rail line in the 1850's. The Pioneer Valley Railroad Co., the latest owner of the railway, sold the corridor to the town of Southampton last month. On December 16, 2022, the United States Surface Transportation Board gave its approval to convert the abandoned rail line to a recreational trail. The above-referenced suit was filed on December 19, 2022.

Although the trail will not be completed for some time, landowners are entitled to just compensation now, since it is the federal government's authorization of trail use that gives rise to landowners' takings claims. The Daily Hampshire Gazette reports that the trail will connect with the Manhan Rail Trail in Easthampton. The Gazette further reports that once the design process begins, the town will reach out to those living adjacent to the railroad line for their input. The news article can be found [here](#).

This is not the first case that Stewart, Wald & McCulley has brought on behalf of Massachusetts landowners. In *Capreal v. United States*, Case No. 09-186L, Stewart, Wald & McCulley attorneys recovered \$3,300,000 on behalf of landowners along a 10.8-mile trail. That case, like the current suit, only seeks compensation from the federal government. The railroad and the entities

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".

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sponsoring the trail are not involved.

Stewart, Wald & McCulley thoroughly investigates the railroad corridor and identifies the original conveyance deeds to the original founding railroad. Those conveyances are paramount to the basis of the lawsuit. The key component to any rails-to-trails takings claim focuses on how landowners originally conveyed land to the railroad company at the time of the railroad's construction. If you have received correspondence from Stewart, Wald & McCulley, yet have not engaged with a law firm, consider contacting them for an evaluation of your case.

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