

Landowners Concerned About Durham-to-Roxboro Rail Trail May Be Eligible For Compensation From the Federal Government

DURHAM, NC, UNITED STATES, February 12, 2025 /EINPresswire.com/ -- A proposal to transform 18 miles of inactive railroad corridor within Durham County is getting local attention. The [Durham-to-Roxboro Rail Trail](#) is a planned trail to connect Durham to Roxboro all along the inactive Norfolk Southern railroad corridor.

Although it has been reported that final plans are not expected to be completed until October, landowners have already voiced concerns over having the trail adjacent to their properties. Landowners recently interviewed by CBS 17 shared concerns of crime, noise, pollution, and general loss of privacy just a few feet from their home.

Landowners may be eligible for monetary compensation from the federal government when the rail is authorized to become a trail. In September 2023, Norfolk Southern wrote a letter to trail advocates, partners and supporters expressing their willingness to sell the rail corridor to the State of North Carolina for trail use. Norfolk Southern referenced the use of the [National Trails System Act \("Trails Act"\)](#) as part of an agreement selling the railroad corridor land for a rail-trail. The Trails Act permits the conversion of abandoned railroad corridors into nature and hiking trails, which simultaneously preserves the corridors for future use. The practice is known as railbanking and prevents the land within the abandoned railroad corridor from reverting to the adjoining landowners. It grants the trail sponsor a new recreational trail easement, thereby blocking the rights of landowners to reclaim the property within the corridor.

When railroad companies such as Norfolk Southern utilize the Trails Act in rail-trail conversions it provides a potential legal action for the landowners directly adjacent to the railroad to seek

The logo for Stewart Wald & Smith LLC, featuring the words "stewart", "wald &", and "smith" in a dark blue serif font, with the ampersand "&" in a gold color. "LLC" is written in a smaller, dark blue sans-serif font to the right of "smith".

Rails to Trails Law Firm - Stewart, Wald & Smith

compensation. It is important to consider the ramifications of a rail-trail conversion, especially to those who own land directly adjacent to a rail-trail. Landowners with valid takings claims have a claim for the value of the land in the adjacent railroad right-of-way for which they are unable to reclaim due to the government action allowing trail use. In addition, landowners can seek damages stemming from concerns such as those recently shared by landowners in the CBS 17 report – increase chance of theft, trespassing, loss of privacy, etc.

[Stewart, Wald & Smith](#), LLC ("SWS"), a leading Rails-to-Trails law firm that has successfully represented hundreds of North Carolina landowners in prior Rails-to-Trails cases, has been reaching out to landowners in recent months regarding the proposed rail-trail. Their goal is to inform landowners of their rights under the Fifth Amendment of the United States Constitution in the event of a rail-trail conversion along their property.

Jacqueline Tebbe

Stewart Wald and Smith, LLC

+1 314-720-0220

[email us here](#)

Visit us on social media:

[Facebook](#)

[X](#)

[LinkedIn](#)

[Instagram](#)

[YouTube](#)

This press release can be viewed online at: <https://www.einpresswire.com/article/785454285>

EIN Presswire's priority is source transparency. We do not allow opaque clients, and our editors try to be careful about weeding out false and misleading content. As a user, if you see something we have missed, please do bring it to our attention. Your help is welcome. EIN Presswire, Everyone's Internet News Presswire™, tries to define some of the boundaries that are reasonable in today's world. Please see our Editorial Guidelines for more information.

© 1995-2025 Newsmatics Inc. All Right Reserved.