


Landowners File Suit in Federal Court on Legacy Parks Rail-Trail Project in South Knoxville

KNOXVILLE, TN, UNITED STATES, April 3, 2025 /EINPresswire.com/ -- Stewart, Wald & Smith, LLC ("SWS"), the nation's leading and only fully dedicated Rails-to-Trails law firm in the nation, has filed suit on behalf of landowners in Knox County, Tennessee against the federal government. This lawsuit was filed in the United States Court of Federal Claims because of the conversion of the Knoxville & Holston River Railroad Company, Inc. corridor into the planned Legacy Parks Rail-Trail. The federal lawsuit captioned: Donald Roach, et. al. v. United States, Case No. 25-576, was filed on April 2, 2025.

The landowners named in the suit own land adjacent to the 3.8-mile-long rail line in South Knoxville, Tennessee. The city of Knoxville plans to partner with the Legacy Parks Foundation to create the rail-trail along this railroad corridor. On March 28, 2025, the United States Transportation Board ("STB") gave its approval to convert the abandoned rail line to a recreational trail. The trail is planned to run along the railroad corridor from Chapman Highway to Ijams Nature Center.


Stewart, Wald & Smith have been meeting with landowners who adjoin the railroad corridor to discuss the rail-trail plans and implications on their property rights since late 2024. The [National Trails System Act \("Trails Act"\)](#) permits the conversion of abandoned railroad corridors into nature and hiking trails, which simultaneously preserves the railroad right of way for future use. This practice is known as "railbanking". Railbanking prevents the land within the railroad corridor to revert to the adjoining landowners. It grants the trail sponsor a new easement, thereby blocking the rights of landowners to reclaim the land within the railroad corridor.

Stewart, Wald & Smith will be holding additional informational meetings for interested




DO YOU OWN LAND NEAR THE RAILROAD LINE?

Steven M. Wald & Michael J. Smith from the Rails-to-Trails Law Firm Stewart, Wald & Smith, LC will be hosting **free informational meetings** on April 16 & April 17, 2025 to discuss the potential for compensation for landowners along the future Legacy Trail in Knox County, Tennessee.



Steven M. Wald




Michael J. Smith

Meetings are free and open to the public.

Join Us Wednesday, April 16, 2025
5:30 p.m.
&
Thursday, April 17, 2025
9:00 a.m.

Hampton Inn & Suites Knoxville-Downtown
Rocky Top Boardroom
618 W. Main Street
Knoxville, TN 37902



Stewart, Wald & Smith, LLC - 314-720-0220 - www.swslegal.com

Meeting Information for April 2025 in Knox TN

landowners on Wednesday, April 16, 2025 at 5:30 p.m. & Thursday, April 17, 2025 at 9:00 a.m. at Hampton Inn & Suites, Knoxville- Downtown, Rocky Top Boardroom, 618 W Main St., Knoxville, TN 37902.

SWS is neutral to the trail. "This lawsuit seeks to obtain compensation for landowners for having their land taken, which is their right under the 5th Amendment of the United States Constitution. It has nothing to do with trying to stop the trail," said attorney Michael J. Smith.

Stewart, Wald & Smith believes there are over 100 potential claimants who are not yet represented.

About Stewart, Wald & Smith: Stewart, Wald & Smith is a leading law firm in rails-to-trails litigation. The firm ensures the rights of landowners are protected in the complex taking of land in rail-trail conversions across the country. For more information, visit www.swslegal.com.



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