

# Tennessee's Short-Line Railroads

## Programs Policies and Perspectives

### EXECUTIVE SUMMARY AND PROJECT SYNOPSIS

Tennessee's roughly 20 short-line railroads continue to be a visible component within the state's broader freight environment. The research has two purposes. The first is to explore program alternatives and future funding in support of short-line program expansion. The second is to more fully document the state's network of short-line railroads through a variety of Geographic Information System (GIS) applications. This work is being performed by a study team that includes faculty and staff from the University of Tennessee and the University of Memphis.

Specific project tasks include:

1. Program Summary – The study team will carefully describe Tennessee's short-line railroads; its short-line program, including past program funding; and alternatives for future short-line program content and structure. This material will also include a comparison of short-line railroads and short-line support activities in other states, as well as a general discussion of how short-line railroad function in a more general freight environment.
2. Financing and Alternatives – The study will provide information describing alternative sources of short-line funding support that will include federal sources, private sector sources, and a review of state funding mechanisms used in other states.
3. GIS Network Preparation - The goal of the GIS aspects of this program is to enhance the ability to build, use, and disseminate spatially accurate and complete short-line railroad data (mileposts and centerlines) for decision making and managing resources. The resulting dataset will incorporate aspects of dynamic segmentation to allow multiple sets of attributes to be associated with any portion of a point or linear feature.
4. Network Attribute Development - In addition to track centerlines and mile posts, the Grantee will use a variety of methods to identify the locations of other major network attributes, including, highway grade crossing, connecting trackage with other short-line or Class I railroads, passing sidings, yard trackage, bridges and other major structures. The Grantee will incorporate information describing these attributes into the base GIS short-line coverage.

## **PROJECT STATUS**

Currently, all necessary work has been completed, the GIS products, as described above have been delivered to TDOT for inspection, and the final study document is under review. All study tasks are to be complete by September 30, 2016.

## **CONTACT INFORMATION**

For additional information regarding this project, contact

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