

Railroads in America

- General Information
- Surveyors BIG Questions
- Resources

Railroads in General

- **Interstate Commerce Commission (ICC)**
- **Surface Transportation Board (STB)**
- **Governed by Multiple Governmental Acts**
 - **Staggers Act of 1983, railroad deregulation**

Interstate Commerce Commission (ICC)

- **Regulatory Body Created in 1887**
- **President Grover Cleveland**
- **Initially Regulate Railroads and Later Trucking**
- **Moving Goods Across America**
- **Dissolved in 1995 and Transferred Functions to the Surface Transportation Board**

Surface Transportation Board (STB)

- Administratively under the DOT
- Functionally Independent from the DOT
- Regulates Rates, Service, Mergers, Line Sales, Construction and Line Abandonment
- Board consist of Three Member Appointed by the President for Five Year Terms
- <http://www.stb.dot.gov/>

Staggers Act of 1983

- **President Jimmy Carter**
- **Deregulated Railroads**
- **Allowed for Competition between Railroads**
- **Free Market Economics for Shippers**

U. S. Railroads

- **Common Carrier Freight Service**
- **Approx. 650 distinct companies**
- **150,000 Miles of Standard Gage Track**

Railroad Classification

- **Class I: Average annual operating revenues above \$256.5M**
- **Class II: Average annual operating revenues between \$20.5M and \$256.5M**
- **Class III: Average annual operating revenues less than \$20.5M**
 - **Note: Class I railroads, as defined here, account for more than 91% of the total freight revenues and 71% of the total track mileage operated**

Railroads Move Freight

For Every Full Train Moving Cargo,
Approximately 250 Tractor Trailer
Rigs are removed from the Highways





CSX Transportation, Inc.

East of Mississippi River

Corporate Office is Located in
Jacksonville, Florida

www.csx.com

Norfolk Southern Railroad

East of Mississippi River

Corporate Office Located in
Norfolk, Virginia

www.nscorp.com

Genesee & Wyoming

Shortline Railroad

Corporate Office Located in
Darien, Connecticut

<http://www.gwrr.com/>

Amtrak

Regulated by the Federal
Government, owns no Main Line
Track

Speaking with the Railroad

- The Great Location, Location, Location?
 - State, County and nearest city and/or town
 - Nearest crossing at grade with DOT crossing number
 - Section, Township and Range if applicable
 - Latitude and Longitude
 - If you have a val map, val and sheet number, milepost and railroad stationing

Surveyors Big Question Number 1

Right-of-Way vs. Corridor

- State Judges have Differing Opinions
- Some Judges have ruled Right-of-Way Defines an Easement
- Some Judges have ruled Right-of-Way Defines a Fee Simple or Fee with Reversionary Action

Surveyors Big Question Number 2

**If The Tracks Are Gone, That
Constitutes Abandonment,
Correct?**

Define Abandonment

- Public Definition vs. STB Definition
- Railroad Definition vs. Public Conception
- STB approval may not be required for sidings or industrial spurs and some branch lines

Railroad Abandonment

- Main Line Track must have STB Approval
- ICC/STB Dockets for Abandonment (AB- & FD-prefixes)
- 1996 to Present information on STB web site
- 1975-1996 information at the ICC/STB Library in Washington D.C.
- 1873-1975 information filed with the National Archives

Surveyors Big Question Number 3

Where is the Center Line of the Corridor?

Down the Center of the Track, Right?

Railroad Corridor

- Valuation Map and Land Schedules
- Deeds
- The Four Corners Rule, i.e. Read the Deed
- Typical deed description.....“50 feet both sides of the center line of track to be established on the ground by the railroad engineer”

Railroad Valuation Maps

Mandated by the ICC in 1914,
commonly referred to as ‘Val Maps’

BUT

Different Railroads did Things
Differently

Surveyors Big Question Number 4

Where/How Do I get a
Valuation Map?

Several Options for Maps

- National Archives but Hard to Track down the Map you Want
- County Surveyor but Probably Not up to Date
- Host Railroad, Typically for a Fee \$

FYI - Louisville & Nashville R.R.

2 Sets of Maps

1 Showing the Limits of the Corridor

1 Showing the Grantors Names, etc.

Due Diligence

Look for Evidence, Evidence,
Evidence, Monumentation and make
sure you feel comfortable with your
Due Diligence

REMEMBER

It's not the responsibility of the
surveyor to determine ownership,
location only.

Resources

Websites

- **CSX System Map**

<http://csx.com/index.cfm/about-csx/system-map/>

- **CSX Valuation Maps**

<http://csx.com/index.cfm/customers/non-freight-services/propertyreal-estate/property-maps>

Websites Continue

- www.arena.org American Railway Engineering & Maintenance Association
- www.archives.gov National Archives
- www.do-you.com Private research firm
- www.ipogo.net 10 chord spiral calculator
- www.aar.org Association of American Railroads
- www.railamerica.com owner of 30 shortline railroads
- www.stb.dot.gov Surface Transportation Board

Websites Continue

- Dept. of Engineering Professional Development, Univ. of Wisconsin

<http://epdweb.engr.wisc.edu>

- Railroad Names Database

<http://www.railroadiana.org/pgRRNames.php>

- Wikipedia

Safely Survey, Go Home to Your FAMILY

- No Survey and No Client is worth not see your family again.