

PRESERVE AMERICA'S RAILBANKED CORRIDORS

Congress Should Not Pass H.R. 4924 The Rails to Trails Landowner Rights Act

Preserve the Corridor. Honor Its History. Protect America's Future Options.

A Congressional White Paper and Policy Package

Prepared by

Eva Bratschi

Lieutenant Colonel, U.S. Army (Retired)

K-12 and Adult Educator, M.Ed.

Fitness and Wellness Mentor

The Bratschi Principle of Stewardship

An American Philosophy for the Future

Track I - Congressional & Federal Policy

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CONGRESSIONAL COVER LETTER

August 2026

Dear Member of Congress:

I respectfully submit the enclosed white paper, Preserve America's Railbanked Corridors, concerning H.R. 4924, the Rails to Trails Landowner Rights Act. I urge Congress not to pass H.R. 4924 and instead preserve the core federal railbanking framework established under the National Trails System Act.

The property-rights concerns raised by the bill deserve serious treatment. Clear notice, lawful compensation, responsible maintenance, privacy, safety, and accountability should be addressed through targeted reforms. Those concerns, however, do not require Congress to weaken a mechanism whose central purpose is to preserve continuous transportation corridors for possible future rail service.

Recent experience in western North Carolina after Hurricane Helene demonstrates the importance of corridor continuity. Rail infrastructure can be washed out, bridges can be destroyed, and track can be rebuilt. What is far harder to reconstruct is a continuous right-of-way after it has been fragmented by incompatible development and multiple ownership interests.

This paper asks Congress to view railbanked corridors through a wider stewardship lens: transportation resilience, national defense, emergency logistics, mass population movement, cultural history, recreation, and future technologies. It also proposes a National Rail Corridor Heritage Interpretation requirement so that federally supported railbanked corridors preserve the histories of immigrants, migrants, Indigenous communities, railroad laborers, military movements, industries, and local communities that helped shape the United States.

The ACT Principle presented in this paper - Accept what has been inherited; Cultivate for redesignation, restoration, and resilience; Traject with built-in opportunities - is part of my developing work, The Bratschi Principle of Stewardship: An American Philosophy for the Future, Volume I. The manuscript is in preparation and is identified transparently as such. The factual, legal, historical, emergency-management, and national-defense claims in this submission rely independently on the authorities listed in the endnotes and evidentiary appendix. Manuscript in preparation, 2026.

I ask you to oppose H.R. 4924 and support a more durable approach: improve railbanking where reform is warranted, but preserve the corridors and the choices they leave to future Americans.

Respectfully,

Eva Bratschi
Lieutenant Colonel, U.S. Army (Retired)
K-12 and Adult Educator, M.Ed.
Fitness and Wellness Mentor

TWO-PAGE EXECUTIVE BRIEF

Requested Congressional Action

DO NOT PASS H.R. 4924. Preserve federal railbanking and reform specific deficiencies without making corridor preservation impracticable.

Why This Matters

H.R. 4924 would amend 16 U.S.C. § 1247 and impose new conditions on interim trail use, including signed approval from each affected property owner within 30 days, compensation and financial-assurance requirements, perpetual maintenance obligations until rail returns, a public portal, a 90-day notice-and-comment period, easement-width review, and a cost-benefit analysis. The bill was introduced on August 8, 2025 and referred to the House Committee on Natural Resources.

Current federal law states a national policy of preserving established railroad rights-of-way for future reactivation of rail service and protecting rail transportation corridors. Railbanking allows interim trail use without treating the corridor as abandoned for railroad purposes when restoration or reconstruction remains possible.

Four Reasons to Preserve the Framework

- **Disaster resilience:** After Hurricane Helene, Norfolk Southern rebuilt 128 locations totaling more than 13 miles between Newport, Tennessee, and Asheville. In April 2026, the final Old Fort-Swannanoa segment reopened after extensive reconstruction. The infrastructure was devastated; the corridor remained recoverable.
- **National defense:** FRA identifies STRACNET as a network of military routes important to national defense. Strategic rail capacity exists because mobilization needs must be available before a crisis begins.
- **Population movement and humanitarian logistics:** FEMA planning contemplates large-scale population movement, evacuation, influxes, transitory populations, and resettlement. A resilient corridor can support outward movement of people and inward movement of food, water, personnel, equipment, and reconstruction materials.
- **Historical stewardship:** Railroad corridors carry the histories of the people who built and used them. NPS documents more than 12,000 Chinese immigrant laborers in the transcontinental railroad story and notes that many individual contributions were omitted from surviving records.

The Policy Alternative

Congress can protect landowners without sacrificing corridor continuity. Improve notice. Provide lawful compensation processes. Enforce maintenance and safety. Require transparency. But do not create a structure in which preservation of a continuous corridor becomes functionally impossible.

EXECUTIVE BRIEF - LEGISLATIVE RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Do not pass H.R. 4924.
2. Preserve the core railbanking framework under 16 U.S.C. § 1247(d).
3. Address landowner notice, compensation, maintenance, privacy, safety, liability, and accountability through targeted reforms.
4. Require transportation-resilience analysis before permanent loss of strategically significant corridors.
5. Require appropriate national-defense consultation where a corridor could affect military installations, strategic ports, defense industries, STRACNET, or nationally significant infrastructure.
6. Include evacuation, disaster response, humanitarian logistics, large-scale population movement, and resettlement in long-range corridor analysis.
7. Recognize corridors as two-way emergency assets: populations may move out while resources and responders move in.
8. Establish federal guidance favoring reversible trail construction where technically and economically practicable.
9. Preserve corridor width and engineering records needed for potential future reactivation or rail-with-trail use.
10. Establish a National Rail Corridor Heritage Interpretation requirement for federally supported railbanked trail projects.
11. Require qualified historical assessment and corridor-specific markers addressing relevant immigrant, migrant, Indigenous, African American, labor, military, industrial, agricultural, and community histories.
12. Establish a presumption against permanently surrendering strategically significant continuous corridors when reasonable interim uses can preserve them.

Preservation leaves future generations a choice. Permanent fragmentation removes that choice.

ACT Principle

ACCEPT what has been inherited. CULTIVATE for redesignation, restoration, and resilience. TRAJECT with built-in opportunities.

The Bratschi Principle of Stewardship: An American Philosophy for the Future, Volume I is an unpublished manuscript in preparation, 2026. The framework is the author's policy lens; the factual record in this package is independently sourced. Manuscript in preparation, 2026.

FULL CONGRESSIONAL WHITE PAPER

Preserve America's Railbanked Corridors

Congress Should Not Pass H.R. 4924, the Rails to Trails Landowner Rights Act

I. Congress Created Railbanking for a Reason

Congress created the modern federal railbanking framework in 1983 to prevent the permanent fragmentation of railroad rights-of-way when active rail service ceased. Current law expressly places interim trail use within a national policy of preserving established railroad rights-of-way for future reactivation of rail service and protecting rail transportation corridors.

The core insight remains sound: a railroad can stop operating without requiring the nation to surrender the continuous transportation geography underneath it. A railbanked corridor is therefore not simply an abandoned railroad converted to recreation. It is a transportation option held in reserve while serving another public purpose.

Previous Congresses could not possess perfect knowledge of America's future. Neither does this Congress. Their enduring insight was that once nationally significant corridors and rights-of-way disappear, future Americans may not be able to recreate them. This Congress should build upon that legislative inheritance rather than diminish it.

The legislative progression is important: S. 827 / Public Law 90-543 (1968) established the National Trails System; later amendments expanded its historical mission; Public Law 98-11 (1983) added the modern railbanking policy; and H.R. 4924 now asks the 119th Congress to alter that inherited framework.

The National Trails System Act Amendments of 1983 were enacted as Public Law 98-11 on March 28, 1983. Section 208 added the railbanking provision now codified at 16 U.S.C. § 1247(d). Congress thereby established federal policy favoring preservation of railroad rights-of-way for potential future rail service while allowing qualifying corridors to serve as interim trails.

1983 - Congress Establishes the Modern Railbanking Principle

Congress later expanded the National Trails System's historic-preservation mission, including National Historic Trails. This evolution matters because it demonstrates that federal trail policy came to recognize trails not only as recreational pathways, but also as places through which American movement, settlement, culture, and history can be preserved and interpreted.

1978 - Congress Expands the Historical Mission

The National Trails System Act was enacted through S. 827 of the 90th Congress and signed into law on October 2, 1968, as Public Law 90-543, 82 Stat. 919. A related House measure, H.R. 4865, was part of the legislative process, but S. 827 was the measure ultimately enacted. The original Act established a national system of trails and designated the Appalachian and Pacific Crest National Scenic Trails as its initial national scenic trails.

1968 - Congress Establishes the National Trails System

The federal policy at issue in H.R. 4924 developed through decades of congressional action concerning trails, historic resources, transportation corridors, recreation, and preservation of national assets.

II. The Legislative Inheritance Congress Is Being Asked to Alter

III. H.R. 4924 Moves America in the Wrong Direction

H.R. 4924 would amend Section 8 of the National Trails System Act. Among other requirements, the introduced text would require notice to affected owners and local governments; signed approval from each affected property owner within 30 days after intervention in an abandonment proceeding; compensation and financial assurances; continued maintenance responsibilities; a public online portal; at least a 90-day public notice-and-comment period; review of easement width; and a cost-benefit analysis. It would also require periodic review of rails-to-trails corridors and establish an advisory committee on maintenance requirements.

The concerns behind several of these provisions merit serious treatment. Property owners deserve meaningful notice. Constitutionally required compensation must be respected. Trail sponsors should maintain corridors responsibly. Privacy, safety, agricultural operations, liability, and local effects deserve consideration. But Congress can address those matters without creating a framework in which preservation of a continuous transportation corridor becomes impracticable.

Where notice is inadequate, improve notice. Where compensation is legally due, provide the appropriate process. Where maintenance is inadequate, impose accountability. Where privacy or safety issues exist, require mitigation. Improve railbanking. Do not disable it.

IV. Railways Helped Shape America

Railroads did more than move freight. They helped construct America's geography of opportunity. Rail transportation connected farms with markets, raw materials with factories, ports with inland communities, workers with employment, students with educational opportunity, military installations with the national transportation network, and families with places where they believed they could build better lives.

Railroads influenced where towns developed, where industries located, and how communities became connected. They helped shape America's multicultural spaces. Previous generations used transportation as a bridge from the circumstances they inherited toward opportunities they hoped their children and grandchildren would possess through education, industry, employment, commerce, agriculture, military service, family networks, cultural exchange, and economic mobility.

The history was not uniformly prosperous or just. Rail expansion intersected with Indigenous displacement, segregation, dangerous labor, discriminatory practices, environmental change, and exclusionary policy. Stewardship requires neither romanticizing nor erasing the past. We inherit the whole story.

V. Immigrants Helped Build the Railroad - and America Around It

The history of America's railroads is inseparable from immigration. The National Park Service documents that more than 12,000 Chinese immigrant laborers contributed to the transcontinental railroad and that by 1868 some 11,000 Chinese workers were employed in construction of the Pacific Railroad. They worked as graders, tracklayers, masons, blacksmith helpers, cooks, and in other essential roles, often under dangerous and unequal conditions.

Other immigrant and migrant communities also supplied labor to railroad construction, maintenance, operations, agriculture, mining, manufacturing, and the communities linked by rail. The rail system then became a pathway through which generations moved toward jobs, education, family networks, settlement, military service, and new communities.

Their contribution should not disappear when the tracks disappear. Preservation of the corridor creates an opportunity to preserve the human record attached to it.

VI. Preserve the Corridor's Human History

Congress should recognize significant railbanked corridors as potential heritage corridors as well as transportation corridors. A trail user should be able to learn who built the railroad, who traveled through the place, where people came from, what industries developed, what communities emerged, what hardships occurred, and how migration changed the region.

Historical interpretation should include, where supported by evidence, immigrant railroad labor; immigrant movement into American communities; the Great Migration; Indigenous history; railroad towns and depots; agricultural and industrial development; military transportation; labor history; passenger migration; and local community history.

The purpose is not to impose a simplified national narrative. It is to ensure that people can encounter the documented history where it happened.

VII. Establish a National Rail Corridor Heritage Interpretation Requirement

Federal law already contains marking and interpretation concepts within the National Trails System. National scenic and national historic trails may be marked under the statutory framework, and state and local trails may be designated and suitably marked with approval of the Secretary of the Interior. The existing railbanking provision, however, does not impose a comprehensive requirement that ordinary railbanked corridors research and interpret their immigration, migration, labor, Indigenous, military, industrial, and community histories.

Congress should close that gap for federally supported railbanked trail projects. A qualified historical assessment should identify historically significant locations. Marker placement should follow documented significance rather than arbitrary mileage intervals. Historians and, where appropriate, tribal governments, descendant communities, archives, museums, universities, cultural organizations, labor historians, military historians, railroad historians, and local communities should inform the work.

Physical markers should be supplemented where practical by digital archives, photographs, maps, oral histories, family histories, educational resources, and multilingual interpretation. The

result is a linear American classroom: recreation for the present, education connecting us to the past, and transportation preservation for the future.

VIII. The Asset Hardest to Rebuild Is the Continuous Corridor

Rails can be replaced. Ties can be replaced. Signals can be modernized. Bridges can be repaired. Rolling stock can be manufactured. But a continuous right-of-way can become extraordinarily difficult to reconstruct after it is divided among properties, crossed by permanent structures, incorporated into development, or otherwise fragmented.

Reconstruction may require land acquisition parcel by parcel. Costs may become prohibitive. Community conflicts may intensify. Development may render the original alignment physically unavailable. Preservation therefore has an asymmetric value: preservation leaves future generations a choice; permanent fragmentation removes that choice.

IX. Hurricane Helene: A Contemporary Warning

Hurricane Helene provides a recent example of why transportation continuity matters. In September 2024, flooding caused extraordinary damage to railroad infrastructure in western North Carolina. Norfolk Southern reported that, to restore freight service between Newport, Tennessee, and Asheville, engineering teams rebuilt 128 locations totaling more than 13 miles of track, used more than 160,000 tons of aggregate, and cleared more than 2,000 trees. Freight service returned to Asheville on May 20, 2025.

Restoration continued on the Old Fort-Swannanoa portion of the AS Line. On April 18, 2026, the first train traveled through the restored Old Fort section, reopening the final segment affected by Helene. Norfolk Southern reported 103 repair sites on that final 15-mile segment, more than 51,500 linear feet of steel piles, and approximately 140,000 tons of aggregate.

The key lesson is not that every inactive rail line will be needed after every disaster. It is that devastated infrastructure can be reconstructed when the transportation corridor remains. A lost corridor must first be recreated - if recreation is still possible at all.

X. National Defense Requires Transportation Options

Federal railroad policy already recognizes that certain rail routes possess strategic value beyond ordinary commercial use. FRA's 2026 Track and Structures Compliance Manual identifies the Strategic Rail Corridor Network, STRACNET, as a network of military routes important to national defense.

Military mobilization can require heavy equipment, engineering assets, fuel, supplies, repair parts, and other materiel to move between installations, industrial facilities, and strategic ports. Transportation planners cannot assemble continuous corridors after a crisis begins. The capability must exist beforehand.

Not every railbanked corridor will have defense significance. But before a strategically located corridor is permanently lost, Congress should require appropriate review of potential military connectivity, port access, defense-industrial connectivity, network redundancy, emergency

logistics, and alternative routing. Efficiency asks what America needs today. Resilience asks what America may regret eliminating tomorrow.

XI. Mass Migration and Large-Scale Population Movement

Transportation resilience must also account for large-scale population movement. FEMA maintains planning resources addressing large-scale population movement and resettlement, including influxes, evacuations, mobile and transitory populations, and resettlement.

Such movement can arise domestically from hurricanes, flooding, wildfire, earthquakes, infrastructure failure, or prolonged environmental disruption. It can also be influenced by international war, political instability, environmental catastrophe, food or water insecurity, security crises, or humanitarian disruption.

Questions concerning who may lawfully enter or remain in the United States are separate matters of immigration law and national policy. The infrastructure question is different: if large numbers of people must move safely within the United States, will sufficient transportation capacity and redundancy exist to move them? Future emergency planners cannot construct continuous corridors after the movement has already begun.

XII. The Two-Way Corridor

Emergency transportation moves in both directions. People may need to move out while food, water, medical supplies, emergency personnel, generators, fuel, communications equipment, temporary shelter, engineering equipment, construction materials, and recovery supplies move in.

Transportation resilience therefore means more than evacuation. It means sustaining logistical circulation during disruption. A preserved corridor may contribute to that network. A permanently fragmented corridor cannot.

XIII. Representatives and Leaders Know the Answer

Should a transportation corridor that took generations of labor, capital, engineering, public authority, immigrant contribution, and human effort to establish be permanently surrendered because conventional rail service is unnecessary during one relatively brief period of American history?

Our representatives and national leaders know the answer is no.

The greater challenge is ensuring that decisions made today reflect that knowledge - not only for Americans represented today, but for generations of Americans who will inherit the consequences of those decisions.

XIV. Trails Should Become Guardians of Corridors

This position is not anti-trail. Rail-trails can provide recreation, tourism, transportation, public-health, environmental, educational, and economic benefits. The trail can become the guardian of the transportation corridor between periods of transportation use.

America therefore need not choose simply between rail and trail. A better policy is: rail when rail is needed; trail when trail serves the community; both when engineering permits; preservation throughout.

XV. Build for Reversibility

Congress should establish federal guidance favoring reversible development within railbanked corridors where technically and economically practicable. Planners should evaluate modular or removable trail surfaces or platforms, protection of original grades, bridges, tunnels, culverts and drainage, utility placement that does not unnecessarily obstruct future transportation, preservation of corridor width, documentation of original alignments, and rail-with-trail configurations where appropriate.

The objective is not to make trails temporary or inferior. It is to make infrastructure adaptable. A well-designed trail can serve a community for generations while leaving another generation the ability to redesignate the corridor if circumstances require it.

XVI. The ACT Principle

The Bratschi Principle of Stewardship offers an intergenerational framework for evaluating inherited assets.

ACCEPT what has been inherited. We inherit America's land, infrastructure, multicultural spaces, policies, achievements, failures, history, and opportunities. We do not begin history; we receive it.

CULTIVATE for redesignation, restoration, and resilience. Use inherited assets intelligently. A railroad may become a trail. A trail may protect a transportation corridor. The corridor may simultaneously preserve history, provide recreation, and remain available for future transportation.

TRAJECT with built-in opportunities. Make decisions that deliberately leave future Americans reasonable choices. Some infrastructure decisions require more than an election-cycle, five-year, or twenty-year planning horizon. They require a century-to-millennia perspective.

XVII. Formal Recommendations to Congress

1. Do not pass H.R. 4924.
2. Preserve the core railbanking framework under 16 U.S.C. § 1247(d).
3. Address landowner notice, compensation, maintenance, privacy, safety, liability, and accountability through targeted reforms.
4. Require transportation-resilience analysis before permanent loss of strategically significant corridors.
5. Require appropriate national-defense consultation where a corridor could affect military installations, strategic ports, defense industries, STRACNET, or nationally significant infrastructure.

6. Include evacuation, disaster response, humanitarian logistics, large-scale population movement, and resettlement in long-range corridor analysis.
7. Recognize corridors as two-way emergency assets: populations may move out while resources and responders move in.
8. Establish federal guidance favoring reversible trail construction where technically and economically practicable.
9. Preserve corridor width and engineering records needed for potential future reactivation or rail-with-trail use.
10. Establish a National Rail Corridor Heritage Interpretation requirement for federally supported railbanked trail projects.
11. Require qualified historical assessment and corridor-specific markers addressing relevant immigrant, migrant, Indigenous, African American, labor, military, industrial, agricultural, and community histories.
12. Establish a presumption against permanently surrendering strategically significant continuous corridors when reasonable interim uses can preserve them.

XVIII. The Corridor as a Timeline of America

Imagine walking a rail-trail a generation from now. At one location, a marker tells the story of immigrants who helped build the railroad. Farther along, another explains the Indigenous community whose history preceded it. Another identifies a depot through which families arrived seeking opportunity. Another documents African American migration. Another describes an industrial community built around rail access. Another tells of soldiers and equipment transported during an American conflict.

A child continues walking or cycling along the same physical corridor. That child is traveling through American history. But underneath that history remains something equally important: an intact transportation corridor available to that child's future.

The past, present, and future occupy the same landscape. That is stewardship.

XIX. The Decision Before Congress

Congress cannot identify America's next war. It cannot predict its next environmental catastrophe. It cannot know where future Americans will need to evacuate. It cannot know how international political or environmental disruption may influence humanitarian population movement. It cannot know how America's population will redistribute over the next century. It cannot know what transportation technologies Americans will use in 2126 - or centuries beyond that.

But Congress can determine what choices remain available.

A continuous corridor - or the memory of one.

Do not pass H.R. 4924. Preserve railbanking. Protect legitimate property rights through targeted reforms. Preserve national transportation resilience. Honor the generations who built and traveled these corridors. Allow communities to enjoy them today. Teach future Americans the human history contained within them. Leave future generations deliberate opportunities to determine how these corridors should be used tomorrow.

Accept what has been inherited. Cultivate for redesignation, restoration, and resilience.

Traject with built-in opportunities.

For the future is not ours alone. It is yours and ours to protect and shape for a resilient nation of peoples who will call America home.

AUTHOR'S POLICY FRAMEWORK

Bratschi, Eva. The Bratschi Principle of Stewardship: An American Philosophy for the Future, Volume I. Manuscript in preparation, 2026.

The Bratschi Principle of Stewardship is an emerging intergenerational policy philosophy developed by the author. It proposes that decisions involving inherited national assets should be evaluated not solely according to immediate utility, but also according to the deliberate opportunities those decisions preserve for future generations.

Its ACT Principle - Accept what has been inherited; Cultivate for redesignation, restoration, and resilience; Traject with built-in opportunities - provides the analytical lens applied in this white paper. The framework encourages a century-to-millennia perspective when decisions concerning infrastructure, land, environmental resources, cultural heritage, and other durable assets may affect generations far beyond those presently participating in the decision.

Volume I is an unpublished manuscript in preparation as of 2026. The statutory, historical, transportation, national-security, emergency-management, and other factual claims in this white paper are independently supported by the authorities below.

SUPPORTING AUTHORITIES AND EVIDENCE

The authorities below are provided so congressional staff can verify the principal legal, historical, transportation-resilience, national-defense, emergency-planning, and cultural-history claims in this white paper. Electronic copies should retain the source links. A separate Supporting Documentation Binder Index is maintained with the project record for rapid production of underlying documents if requested.

1. H.R. 4924 - Rails to Trails Landowner Rights Act. U.S. Government Publishing Office (GovInfo). Introduced Aug. 8, 2025. Primary bill text. Supports the paper's description of the proposed changes to the railbanking process. [Official source](#)

2. 16 U.S.C. § 1247(d) - Interim use of railroad rights-of-way. U.S. House Office of the Law Revision Counsel. Current U.S. Code. Primary statutory authority for federal railbanking and preservation of established railroad rights-of-way for possible future rail service. [Official source](#)

3. S. 827, 90th Congress - National Trails System Act. Congress.gov / Library of Congress. Enacted Oct. 2, 1968 as Public Law 90-543, 82 Stat. 919. Establishes the original National Trails System Act and the legislative starting point for the federal trail framework. [Official source](#)

4. Public Law 98-11 - National Trails System Act Amendments of 1983. U.S. Government Publishing Office (GovInfo). Mar. 28, 1983, 97 Stat. 42. Primary enacted law containing the 1983 amendments; § 208 added the railbanking provision now codified at 16 U.S.C. § 1247(d). [Official source](#)

5. Surface Transportation Board - Trails Act / railbanking regulations. Surface Transportation Board. Federal regulatory framework. Supports the description of the STB's role in interim trail use and railbanking proceedings. [Official source](#)

6. Freight rail service returns to Asheville and western North Carolina. Norfolk Southern. May 20, 2025. Documents restoration of freight service after Hurricane Helene and reconstruction at 128 locations totaling more than 13 miles of track. [Official source](#)

7. Freight rail returns to Old Fort, a milestone in WNC's recovery. Norfolk Southern. Apr. 24, 2026. Documents return of trains to the Old Fort-Swannanoa segment, including the historic Old Fort Loops. [Official source](#)

8. Large-Scale Population Movement and Resettlement. Federal Emergency Management Agency. Current preparedness toolkit. Supports the paper's treatment of influxes, mobile/transitory populations, resettlement, and short- or long-term evacuation of large populations. [Official source](#)

9. 2009 Preliminary National Rail Plan - STRACNET discussion. Federal Railroad Administration / U.S. Department of Transportation. 2009. Federal source explaining that DOD and FRA established STRACNET to support mobilization and movement of personnel, equipment, and supplies during national emergencies or natural disasters. [Official source](#)

10. The Archeology of Chinese Laborers Who Connected the Country. National Park Service. Updated July 31, 2024. Documents the indispensable contribution of more than 12,000 Chinese immigrant laborers to the transcontinental railroad and the scarcity of first-person records. [Official source](#)

FOUNDATIONAL RECORD FOR QUICK REVIEW

1968: S. 827 became Public Law 90-543, establishing the National Trails System Act.

1983: Public Law 98-11 amended the Act; § 208 added the federal railbanking provision now codified at 16 U.S.C. § 1247(d).

Current law: § 1247(d) preserves established railroad rights-of-way for possible future rail reactivation while permitting qualifying interim trail use.

Current proposal: H.R. 4924 would add new conditions to the railbanking/interim-trail-use process. This white paper recommends that Congress not pass H.R. 4924 and instead address legitimate landowner concerns through targeted reforms.

SUBMISSION IDENTIFICATION

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