

NEWS

OHIO RAIL DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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ORDC Seeks Input on Perry County Rail Line

(Columbus) – What can be done with a 14-mile rail line that may or may not have a use for hauling freight? That’s a question ORDC Commissioners will take up at their September 14th meeting in Columbus when they discuss the future of the state-owned “Glass Rock Line” that runs through a portion of Perry County.

The rail line has not seen rail traffic of any kind since 1994, after it had just been improved to continue the shipping of sand and gravel products from what was then the Central Silica facility at Glass Rock. The management of the company changed and the new managers decided it was more efficient to ship exclusively by truck. There are no other shippers on the line or any immediate prospects for new shippers. The line is considered “out of service”, but not abandoned. It is now largely overgrown with vegetation and small trees.

ORDC staff is asking Commissioners what options should be explored for the line’s future. Those may include:

- **Tourist Train Use:** The Buckeye Central Railroad has expressed interest in operating an excursion service.
- **Rail Motorcar Use:** The Bass Run Rail Riders has asked permission to use the line to operate their rail “speeder” cars, which are small cars once used by the railroads for track inspection and maintenance.

- Rails to Trails Use: Ohio Rails to Trails officials are very interested in working with local communities along the line to determine if a recreational rail trail would be appropriate.
- Continue the status quo and “rail bank” the line for possible future rail use.

Staff is also recommending that brush-cutting and other work be done in advance of any alternate uses of the line, as well as an appraisal of the track and right of way.

Public input on any future uses is welcome.

The next ORDC Commissioners meeting is Sept. 14th at 10:00 A-M in Room South B & C, on the 31st Floor of Riffe State Office Building, 77 South High Street in Columbus.

(The Ohio Rail Development Commission is an independent agency operating within the Ohio Department of Transportation. ORDC is responsible for economic development through the improvement and expansion of passenger and freight rail service, railroad grade crossing safety and rail travel & tourism issues. For more information about what ORDC does for Ohio, visit our website at <http://www.dot.state.oh.us/ohiorail/>)