

**From:** [Brian Peoples](#)  
**To:** [Regional Transportation Commission](#)  
**Subject:** Fw: Progressive Rail proposal to store oil tanker railcars in Watsonville - oppose  
**Date:** Tuesday, January 10, 2023 2:55:02 PM

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Please include this as our statement for RTC Meeting dated Jan 12th.

Brian Peoples  
Trail Now

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**From:** Brian Peoples  
**Sent:** Sunday, January 8, 2023 12:52 PM  
**To:** Felipe.hernandez@santacruzcounty.us <Felipe.hernandez@santacruzcounty.us>; ari.parker@cityofwatsonville.org <ari.parker@cityofwatsonville.org>; citycouncil@cityofwatsonville.org <citycouncil@cityofwatsonville.org>; eduardo.montesino@cityofwatsonville.org <eduardo.montesino@cityofwatsonville.org>  
**Cc:** 'jimmy.dutra@cityofwatsonville.org' <jimmy.dutra@cityofwatsonville.org>; Guy Preston <gpreston@sccrtc.org>; Manu Koenig <manu.koenig@santacruzcounty.us>; Bruce McPherson <Bruce.McPherson@santacruzcounty.us>; thekristenbrown@gmail.com <thekristenbrown@gmail.com>; rlj12@comcast.net <rlj12@comcast.net>; Robertpquinn@gmail.com <Robertpquinn@gmail.com>; Zach Friend <BDS022@co.santa-cruz.ca.us>; Shebreh Kalantari-Johnson <shebreh4santacruz@gmail.com>; City Council <citycouncil@cityofsantacruz.com>; openup@cats.ucsc.edu <openup@cats.ucsc.edu>; Justin.cummings@santacruzcounty.us <Justin.cummings@santacruzcounty.us>; apedersen@ci.capitola.ca.us <apedersen@ci.capitola.ca.us>  
**Subject:** Progressive Rail proposal to store oil tanker railcars in Watsonville - oppose

Supervisor Hernandez, Mayor Parker, RTC Commissioner Montesino, Watsonville City Council;

We oppose Progressive Rail (PGR) proposal to store up to 100 tanker railcars between milepost 3 (Lee Road) and 4 (Harkins Slough) on the Santa Cruz Branchline. We oppose PGR's request for many reasons, including that it will prevent the use of the Santa Cruz Branchline as a transportation resource, result in oil/grease contaminates from the railcars being released into the Harkins Slough wetland, and the Marathon Oil Company in Watsonville is a research facility and expanding to a major oil production facility should not justify the use of the publicly-owned transportation corridor to store Marathon Oil materials and waste products.

The fact is, this request is really being initiated by PGRs for their benefit. There is a surplus of oil tanker railcars due to the anticipated recession, and PGR is looking to store these oil tanker railcars for their benefit. Allowing an out-of-state company to use our local transportation corridor for storing their equipment is not in the best interest of Watsonville community. It would be like a company parking equipment on our roadways, blocking traffic. We need to open the transportation corridor from Watsonville to Santa Cruz to benefit the entire Watsonville community, not just a single railroad and oil company.

As an alternative, Trail Now is proposing to build a temporary trail from Watsonville to Santa Cruz Boardwalk along the Santa Cruz Branchline for a "Demonstration Trail". This demonstration trail

effort will allow Watsonville residence to use the corridor to travel to Santa Cruz – providing a transit solution very soon. Our proposal can be viewed at:

[Demonstration Trails Proposal — Trail NOW | Santa Cruz County Coastal Corridor](#)

Please consider opposing PGRs request to store oil tanker rail cars along the Santa Cruz Branchline and look to support our proposal to open the corridor as a transportation resource that benefits the entire Watsonville community.

Best regards,

Brian Peoples  
Trail Now

**From:** [Board Chair Friends of the Rail Trail](#)  
**To:** [thekristenbrown@gmail.com](mailto:thekristenbrown@gmail.com); [sbrown@cityofsantacruz.com](mailto:sbrown@cityofsantacruz.com); [Justin Cummings](#); [Jack Dilles](#); [zach.friend@santacruzcounty.us](mailto:zach.friend@santacruzcounty.us); [Renee Golder](#); [Felipe Hernandez](#); [gine.johnson@santacruzcounty.us](mailto:gine.johnson@santacruzcounty.us); [rli12@comcast.net](mailto:rli12@comcast.net); [Shebreh Kalantari-Johnson](#); [manu.koenig@santacruzcounty.us](mailto:manu.koenig@santacruzcounty.us); [Donna Lind](#); [Bruce McPherson](#); [eduardo.montesino@cityofwatsonville.org](mailto:eduardo.montesino@cityofwatsonville.org); [Larry Pageler](#); [ari.parker@cityofwatsonville.org](mailto:ari.parker@cityofwatsonville.org); [Alexander Pedersen](#); [Guy Preston](#); [rpquinn@pacbell.net](mailto:rpquinn@pacbell.net); [openup@ucsc.edu](mailto:openup@ucsc.edu); [Andy Schiffrin](#)  
**Cc:** [Regional Transportation Commission](#)  
**Subject:** Item #10: Support for Proposed Rail Car Storage on the Santa Cruz Branch Rail Line per the Administration Coordination and License Agreement with St. Paul and Pacific Railroad/Progressive Rail  
**Date:** Tuesday, January 10, 2023 3:56:51 PM  
**Attachments:** [FORT Comments Re Item 10 Jan.10.2023.pdf](#)

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Dear SCCRTC Commissioners, Alternates and Staff,

Please find the attached letter RE Item 10 of your January 12th RTC meeting agenda.

I hope everyone is staying dry as possible.

Thanks for everything you do,

Faina Segal

Faina Segal  
Board Chair  
Santa Cruz County Friends of the Rail & Trail  
P.O.Box 1652, Capitola, CA 95010-1652  
[www.railandtrail.org](http://www.railandtrail.org) and [coastconnect.org](http://coastconnect.org)  
Cell: [REDACTED]

**From:** [david van brink](#)  
**To:** [Regional Transportation Commission](#)  
**Subject:** Item 10, interim use of rail for storage, Please Approve!  
**Date:** Tuesday, January 10, 2023 1:59:37 PM

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Dear Esteemed Commissioners and Staff of the Santa Cruz County Regional Transportation Commission,

Please approve the staff recommendation for Item 10. Although the Santa Cruz Branch Rail Line is not presently available end-to-end, using even a part of it helps encourage upkeep and maintenance. I trust any such agreement to be structured in a win-win fashion for all involved.

Best regards -- David Van Brink, a resident of Santa Cruz County

\_\_\_\_\_  
david van brink / 

**From:** [REDACTED]  
**To:** [Regional Transportation Commission](#)  
**Subject:** Item 10  
**Date:** Tuesday, January 10, 2023 9:41:10 PM

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I urge you all to put the community first and vote against item 10. The rail corridor is not there to store old train cars and oil tankers that could potentially pollute our fragile environment. It goes against exactly what Progressive Rail promised they wouldn't do.

Do right by our community. Take the tracks out since they're unusable anyways and let us use the dirt path corridor until you figure out how to efficiently install a public transportation option. Why do you continue to work so hard and waste so many tax dollars to fight against common sense solutions?

-Nick Smith

**From:** [Contact Request Form](#)  
**To:** [Regional Transportation Commission](#)  
**Subject:** New submission from Contact Form  
**Date:** Tuesday, January 10, 2023 8:33:29 PM

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This Contact Request Form has been submitted by a member of the public to <http://scerte.org/contact-us/>.

<b>Name</b>
Frank Rimicci
<b>Email</b>
[REDACTED]
<b>Subject</b>
support rail car storage
<b>Your Message</b>
Dear Commissioners, Congratulations on the grants secured for design and construction of the rail trail. Please accept the proposal by Progressive rail to store bio-fuel railcars in south county. This is a good proposal due to the maintenance aspect and potential earnings as future demand for bio-fuels increases. This shows that rail transport is feasible, economical and environmentally considerate. Yours, Frank Rimicci Jr., Corralitos

**From:** [Ringler](#)  
**To:** [Regional Transportation Commission](#)  
**Subject:** Please accept rail car storage agreement, Item 10 on Jan. 12 RTC agenda  
**Date:** Tuesday, January 10, 2023 4:04:57 PM

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Dear Commissioners and Staff,

Please accept the proposal to permit short-term storage of biofuels tank cars on one mile of the branch line.

This arrangement is good for south county and good for our rail line.

Progressive rail will take over responsibility for maintenance and free the RTC of that expense.

The land is already developed for agriculture and not part of the wetlands.

Biofuels are good for the planet and we should support that industry.

There is no downside, please support South County businesses, please take the proposal from Progressive, Item 10, to a vote and approve it.

Sincerely,

Sarah Ringler



Watsonville, CA95076

**From:** [Paula Bradley](#)  
**To:** [Regional Transportation Commission](#)  
**Subject:** RTC meeting 1/12/23 - Item 10: Proposed Rail Car Storage - public comment  
**Date:** Wednesday, January 11, 2023 7:47:59 AM

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Please accept the proposal for the short-term rail car storage of biofuels on the Santa Cruz Branch Rail Line.

We should support the biofuel industry and allow this temporary rail car storage use of the rail line which is allowed with RTC approval by the ACL agreement. This is a mutually beneficial use of the rail line and it will generate income to the RTC for the rail line. Progressive Rail is required to perform the maintenance according to the agreement. The storage use will not impact the agricultural use in the area or the wetlands.

Please approve the proposed short term rail car storage

Thank you,  
Paula Bradley

Paula Bradley (she/her)  
P. O. Box 1146 Capitola CA 95010  
mobile [REDACTED]

**From:** [J Lighthill](#)  
**To:** [Regional Transportation Commission](#)  
**Subject:** Rail car storage on the SCBRL  
**Date:** Wednesday, January 11, 2023 8:43:14 AM

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Dear Commissioners,

“We have no plans for rail car storage.” Progressive Rail stated in their original proposal to the RTC commission (agenda, Jan 2018).

At the RTC meeting of June 2018, the commission approved a new contract with PGR. One commissioner assured those attending that although the previous rail operator was in default and had abandoned stored rail cars on the line, Progressive was ready to remove those cars and had no interest in rail car storage.

I urge you to deny Progressive Rail’s request for rail car storage, as it provides no service to the community.

Thanks for your consideration,

Johanna Lighthill

From: [Barry Scott](#)  
To: [Regional Transportation Commission; Guy Preston](#)  
Subject: SUPPORT Agenda Item 10: Legal Biofuels Rail Car Storage Proposal  
Date: Wednesday, January 11, 2023 8:11:05 AM

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Dear RTC Commissioners and staff,

Please approve the proposal to permit the use of Mile Post 3 to Mile Post 4 for a one-year term for the storage of rail cars used in the transport of liquid biofuels.

This one-mile section is not in sensitive wetlands and rail car storage is harmless and actually beneficial:

Use of the line for freight keeps the line in working condition and shifts responsibility for repair and maintenance from the RTC to the railroad.

This agreement represents an incremental approach to handing more and more of the responsibility for maintenance of the rail line to St. Paul and Pacific Railroad/Progressive Rail.

This benign use of the rail line benefits the transition to a more sustainable energy future, facilitating expanded use of renewable biofuels by permitting transport by energy-efficient rail, while taking trucks off our highways.

This agreement benefits local businesses in Watsonville and Big Trees Roaring Camp which operates freight services serving several Watsonville businesses.

This is good for businesses, for the clean energy economy, and Watsonville and we need to lead in these areas.

Please work incrementally; do not extend the agreement to extend tank car storage into the slough area at this time- approve use for this first mile.

Please move to take the discussion into a regular session for a vote before the public to approve the proposal without delay.

Thank you,

Barry Scott, Aptos homeowner and resident

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Barry Scott

Office: [REDACTED]

Mobile: [REDACTED]

**From:** [Tina Andreatta](#)  
**To:** [Regional Transportation Commission](#)  
**Subject:** Please accept the rail car storage agreement, Item 10 on the January 12 RTC agenda  
**Date:** Tuesday, January 10, 2023 12:53:45 PM

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Dear Commissioners and Staff,

Please accept the proposal to permit short-term storage of biofuels tank cars on one mile of the branch line.

This arrangement is good for south county and good for our rail line.

Progressive rail will take over responsibility for maintenance and free the RTC of that expense.

The land is already developed for agriculture and not part of the wetlands.

Biofuels are good for the planet and we should support that industry.

There is no downside, please support South County businesses, please take the proposal from Progressive, Item 10, to a vote and approve it.

Sincerely,

Tina Andreatta  
Aptos, CA 95003



January 10, 2023

Mr. Guy Preston  
Executive Director  
SCCRTC  
523 Pacific Avenue  
Santa Cruz, CA 95060

Dear Mr. Preston and Commissioners:

Roaring Camp would like to thank the staff and Commission for taking this opportunity to support the request from Progressive Rail for Storage In Transit rail cars on the Santa Cruz Branch Line. While we are aware of the sensitivities of the area that encompasses MP3-MP7, we feel as though the incremental approach suggested in Progressive Rail's letter is a positive direction that has long range benefits.

The opportunity to use the freight easement as defined in the ACL now lies in the hands of the staff and Commissioners. There have been several conflicting interpretations of the ACL, both internal and external, which has only created a stalemate. Pushing those interpretations further will only create more cost, strain relations and take up excess time that neither side has. The request for Storage In Transit is a positive step that could finally work for both sides. Allowing the railroad to accept maintenance responsibility for portions of the rail line in increments, while at the same time relieving the Santa Cruz County Regional Transportation Commission of the liability, has long term positive rewards. In addition, revenues for the SCCRTC should also increase over time.

We hope the staff and Commissioners see the importance of freight on the branch line and what an incredible asset it is to this county. We also hope the staff and Commission uses good faith when reviewing the request. We encourage a motion to approve Progressive Rail's request to use MP3-MP4 for Storage In Transit cars in 2023, while working with the SCCRTC to assess the repairs necessary in order to reach MP4-MP7 by 2024.

Best regards,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Melani Clark".

Melani Clark  
CEO  
Roaring Camp Railroads

**From:** [Jack Brown](#)  
**To:** [Regional Transportation Commission](#); [thekristenbrown@gmail.com](mailto:thekristenbrown@gmail.com); [manu.koenig@santacruzcounty.us](mailto:manu.koenig@santacruzcounty.us); [ari.parker@cityofwatsonville.org](mailto:ari.parker@cityofwatsonville.org); [sbrown@cityofsantacruz.com](mailto:sbrown@cityofsantacruz.com); [apedersen@ci.capitola.ca.us](mailto:apedersen@ci.capitola.ca.us); [eduardo.montesino@cityofwatsonville.org](mailto:eduardo.montesino@cityofwatsonville.org); [Felipe.hernandez@santacruzcounty.us](mailto:Felipe.hernandez@santacruzcounty.us); [Justin.cummings@santacruzcounty.us](mailto:Justin.cummings@santacruzcounty.us); [bruce.mcperson@santacruzcounty.us](mailto:bruce.mcperson@santacruzcounty.us); [zach.friend@santacruzcounty.us](mailto:zach.friend@santacruzcounty.us); [rj12@comcast.net](mailto:rj12@comcast.net); [openup@ucsc.edu](mailto:openup@ucsc.edu)  
**Subject:** Adamantly objecting to Progressive Rail's Request to Store Oil Cars on the Coastal Corridor  
**Date:** Friday, January 6, 2023 2:36:47 PM

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I am writing to note my extreme objection to Progressive Rail storing oil cars on our coastal corridor.

Have we not learned from our past mistakes with Iowa Pacific when 200 tanker cars were left on the tracks which they also abandoned when they left?

Our irresponsible rail operators are not community stewards. These cars are from the Marathon Oil's Martinez refinery and have NO value to our community.

Regardless of the agreement we currently have, we should not allow Progressive to store oil rail cars in our community. Especially with their failure to cooperate with maintaining the tracks up to MP7 where over \$50,000 in taxpayer funds were used to repair the tracks only to have them go into disrepair once again and Progressive stance of refusing to pay.

The request by Progressive to say they will look to consider maintenance to MP4 is not the commitment they need to make to maintain the rail line. If we are forced to allow Progressive to store cars based on the current agreement, then let's make them store them between MP 6 and 7 so they have to maintain the line. Nothing says we have to make MP 3 and 4 the designated spot, and Progressive needs to take responsibility for the rail line and pay their bills immediately, unlike Iowa Pacific who trampled all over our community and made the RTC look like fools.

In summary, please reject Progressive's request and if you feel you can't do that, then let them use the line between MP6 and 7 since they are supposed to maintain the corridor to that point anyway.

Respectfully,

Jack Brown  
Aptos Resident

**From:** [JOAN STEELE](#)  
**To:** [Regional Transportation Commission](#)  
**Subject:** Agenda 10  
**Date:** Saturday, January 7, 2023 7:50:30 AM

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Dear RTC,  
Please, please! reject agenda item#10 and do NOT allow Progressive to store oil rail cars on our railroad.  
Thank you,  
Joni and Dan Steele  
Capitola

Sent from my iPhone

**From:** [Rob Martin](#)  
**To:** [Regional Transportation Commission](#)  
**Subject:** Demonstration Coastal Trail  
**Date:** Saturday, January 7, 2023 1:35:16 PM  
**Attachments:** [Logo.png](#)

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To Whom it May Concern,

This email is to voice my support for the Trail Now Demonstration Trail proposal, as outlined here:



I am also opposed to the Progressive railcar storage proposal.

Thank you,  
Rob Martin  
[REDACTED]  
Aptos, CA 95003  
[REDACTED]

**From:** [Sandra Skees](#)  
**To:** [Regional Transportation Commission](#)  
**Subject:** Do Not Store Oil Tankers on our Tracks  
**Date:** Monday, January 9, 2023 7:31:31 PM

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It's come to my attention that Progressive has, or is likely, to request permission to store oil tank cars on our railway tracks. For safety and environmental concerns, I vehemently oppose this and strongly urge the RTC to never permit the storage of dangerous oil cars on any type of rail track or siding anywhere in Santa Cruz County.

Respectfully,

Sandy Skees  


**From:** [David Ross](#)  
**To:** [Regional Transportation Commission](#)  
**Date:** Sunday, January 8, 2023 3:17:48 PM

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Santa Cruz does not want railroad storage.

**From:** [Mary Talpas](#)  
**To:** [Regional Transportation Commission](#)  
**Subject:** NEVER STORE OIL TANKERS  
**Date:** Saturday, January 7, 2023 10:40:30 AM

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Hello

I am writing to demand that Santa Cruz County RTC NEVER even consider storing oil tankers in the Monterey Bay Sanctuary county of Santa Cruz. It's disgusting that this would even be considered!

Sincerely  
Mary Talpas  
Soquel, CA

Sent from my iPhone

**From:** [Jean Anderson](#)  
**To:** [Jean Anderson](#); [Regional Transportation Commission](#)  
**Subject:** No on storing train cars on our Santa Cruz Tracks  
**Date:** Friday, January 6, 2023 5:06:19 PM

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Hi  
Thank you for your work.  
No on storing train cars on our Santa Cruz Tracks.

Please do not let the Martinez fiasco happen again.

Thank you  
Jean

--

Jean Anderson CBCP CBCA IRCA PMP DSW  
Technical Project Manager: IT Resiliency,  
IT Disaster Recovery, Data Center, Business Continuity, AR/VR, AgTech  
LinkedIn: <http://www.linkedin.com/in/jeanandersonpmp>

**From:** [William Martin](#)  
**To:** [Regional Transportation Commission](#)  
**Subject:** PROGRESSIVE RR  
**Date:** Saturday, January 7, 2023 3:15:10 PM

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Didn't they already renege on a prior contract? They cannot be trusted.

**From:** [Katrina Rogers](#)  
**To:** [Regional Transportation Commission](#)  
**Subject:** Please reject Agenda Item #10  
**Date:** Saturday, January 7, 2023 12:20:14 PM

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I am writing to request that you reject Progressive's request to store oil tankers on the County's rail line.

If memory serves, the County was left holding the bag the last time a rail way company utilized our railways for storage.

While I understand that this is a different company, I do not support the storing of oil tankers on our coastal corridor.

Thanks,  
Katrina Rogers

**From:** [Joe Morici](#)  
**To:** [Regional Transportation Commission](#)  
**Subject:** Please reject agenda item #10  
**Date:** Sunday, January 8, 2023 5:08:13 PM

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To the RTC

Please do not allow progressive rail to store surplus rail cars in Santa Cruz county.

Regards,

Joe Morici

Real Estate Broker  
Please excuse the brevity  
Sent from my iPhone  
Mobile- [REDACTED]

**From:** [Liz](#)  
**To:** [Regional Transportation Commission](#)  
**Subject:** Please reject agenda item #10  
**Date:** Friday, January 6, 2023 3:33:46 PM

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Dear commissioners,

It has been brought to our attention that Progressive Rail is requesting that the county allows them to store oil tankers on our coastal corridor. They have no place in our county. Progressive has not held up its part in their contract in maintaining the rail lines - we should not be granting them any favors.

Please reject agenda item #10.

Thank you,

Elizabeth Ruggles  
SC County Resident

Sent from my iPhone

**From:** [Buzz Anderson](#)  
**To:** [Regional Transportation Commission](#)  
**Subject:** Progressive Rail Intentions  
**Date:** Monday, January 9, 2023 9:12:34 AM

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Esteemed Commissioners,

I attended the April 19th, 2018 RTC meeting in Scotts Valley when a spokesperson for Progressive Rail made a pitch for entering into a contract to conduct freight business on the Santa Cruz-Watsonville rail corridor. At the meeting the spokesperson said that Progressive Rail had no intention of storing rail cars on the branch line. He also said that Progressive would fulfill their obligations in maintaining the tracks and that they anticipated reviving a profitable freight business between Santa Cruz and Watsonville. These false statements help to convince the commission to sign one of the worst contracts in the history of Santa Cruz County. Other, more positive actions and scenarios, were ignored by the commission.

Currently, there is zero freight service between Santa Cruz and Watsonville, the corridor is falling more and more into disrepair and Progressive now wants to store 100 tanker cars in the Watsonville, Harkins Slough area. What say the commission now? Please protect our corridor and open it up for public use as soon as possible. By acting now you would be doing a great service to our community.

Sincerely,  
Frank Anderson. (Buzz)



**From:** [Ellen Martinez](#)  
**To:** [Regional Transportation Commission](#); [manu.koenig@santacruzcounty.us](mailto:manu.koenig@santacruzcounty.us); "[Zach Friend](#)"  
**Subject:** Progressive Rail Proposal to Store Oil Tanker Railcars on the Rail Corridor  
**Date:** Monday, January 9, 2023 2:10:18 PM

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Dear Elected Officials,

I am writing to express my objection to Progressive Rail storing oil tanker railcars on our coastal corridor. The coastal corridor was acquired over a decade ago as a transportation resource that is intended to connect Watsonville to Santa Cruz to Davenport. It is not a storage facility for railcars. Allowing this storage will prevent the use of the corridor as a transportation resource, and could very well result in oil/grease contaminates from the railcars being released into the Harkins Slough wetland. As an aside and as you know, Progressive Rail has not held up their financial commitments to our community, refusing to pay for maintenance of the rail line—so their request is absolutely ludicrous.

Please reject their request. Please do not allow Progressive Rail to store their tankers in our community.

Respectfully,  
Ellen Martinez  
Aptos Full-time Resident and Registered Voter



Virus-free [www.avast.com](http://www.avast.com)

**From:** [Heather Paul](#)  
**To:** [Regional Transportation Commission](#)  
**Subject:** Progressive Rail  
**Date:** Tuesday, January 10, 2023 8:57:52 AM

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To whom it may concern,

Please do not allow Progressive Rail to store oil tankers on the line running through our county. That was not part of the contract with them and is not in the best interest of our county.

Thank you,  
Heather Braga  
Aptos, CA

**From:** [REDACTED]  
**To:** [Regional Transportation Commission](#)  
**Subject:** Progressive Rail  
**Date:** Monday, January 9, 2023 9:22:11 AM

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I am opposed to using the Santa Cruz Branch Trail Line for oil tanker car storage by Progressive Rail. Storage of the cars will prevent the use of the Coastal Corridor as a transportation resource, result in oil/grease contaminates from the railcars being released into Harkins Slough and Progressive Rail has not lived up to there financial commitments to our community, refusing to pay for maintenance of the railine

Thank you, Michael Vickers  
Sant Cruz

**From:** [John Balawejder](#)  
**To:** [Regional Transportation Commission](#)  
**Subject:** Rail corridor plans  
**Date:** Saturday, January 7, 2023 2:17:21 PM

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I strongly oppose the Progressive Rail railcar storage proposal for the Harkins Slough and environs. The recovery and continuing health of this important water system has a strong potential to be adversely affected by the tars and oils that could easily seep into the soils and ultimately into the slough. Also, Progressive Rail has not shown itself to be capable of fulfilling its role as caretaker of the rail system. Secondly, how does this fit with the recent effort to find ( at least, temporarily ) a solution to the use of the entire rail corridor asap. 'Trail Now 'has offered to show 'demos' of a system, self financed, that would lead to a rapid construction of, and subsequent use of, the rail corridor, including not only for the railcar storage area but for the entire SC to Watsonville rail.

The use of the rail corridor has strong citizen support, though conflicted, as either a trail or trail with train, system. Now is not the time to divert from the will of the citizenry.

John Balawejder SC Supervisor district 2

**From:** [Jack Brown](#)  
**To:** [Regional Transportation Commission](#); [thekristenbrown@gmail.com](mailto:thekristenbrown@gmail.com); [manu.koenig@santacruzcounty.us](mailto:manu.koenig@santacruzcounty.us); [ari.parker@cityofwatsonville.org](mailto:ari.parker@cityofwatsonville.org); [sbrown@cityofsantacruz.com](mailto:sbrown@cityofsantacruz.com); [apedersen@ci.capitola.ca.us](mailto:apedersen@ci.capitola.ca.us); [eduardo.montesino@cityofwatsonville.org](mailto:eduardo.montesino@cityofwatsonville.org); [Felipe.hernandez@santacruzcounty.us](mailto:Felipe.hernandez@santacruzcounty.us); [Justin.cummings@santacruzcounty.us](mailto:Justin.cummings@santacruzcounty.us); [bruce.mcperson@santacruzcounty.us](mailto:bruce.mcperson@santacruzcounty.us); [zach.friend@santacruzcounty.us](mailto:zach.friend@santacruzcounty.us); [rj12@comcast.net](mailto:rj12@comcast.net); [openup@ucsc.edu](mailto:openup@ucsc.edu)  
**Subject:** Re: Adamantly objecting to Progressive Rail's Request to Store Oil Cars on the Coastal Corridor  
**Date:** Sunday, January 8, 2023 9:21:11 PM  
**Attachments:** [Screenshot\\_20230108-204402.png](#)

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Also, remember when Progressive Rail presented their freight plan and they noted they had no plans to store rail cars on the Corridor? I do. Anywhere reason to reject Progressive's request. In fact, Progressive has failed on all their freight plans they promised the RTC. Enough is enough.

Jack Brown  
Aptos, CA

On Fri, Jan 6, 2023, 2:36 PM Jack Brown <[jack.b.brown@gmail.com](mailto:jack.b.brown@gmail.com)> wrote:

I am writing to note my extreme objection to Progressive Rail storing oil cars on our coastal corridor.

Have we not learned from our past mistakes with Iowa Pacific when 200 tanker cars were left on the tracks which they also abandoned when they left?

Our irresponsible rail operators are not community stewards. These cars are from the Marathon Oil's Martinez refinery and have NO value to our community.

Regardless of the agreement we currently have, we should not allow Progressive to store oil rail cars in our community. Especially with their failure to cooperate with maintaining the tracks up to MP7 where over \$50,000 in taxpayer funds were used to repair the tracks only to have them go into disrepair once again and Progressive stance of refusing to pay.

The request by Progressive to say they will look to consider maintenance to MP4 is not the commitment they need to make to maintain the rail line. If we are forced to allow Progressive to store cars based on the current agreement, then let's make them store them between MP 6 and 7 so they have to maintain the line. Nothing says we have to make MP 3 and 4 the designated spot, and Progressive needs to take responsibility for the rail line and pay their bills immediately, unlike Iowa Pacific who trampled all over our community and made the RTC look like fools.

In summary, please reject Progressive's request and if you feel you can't do that, then let them use the line between MP6 and 7 since they are supposed to maintain the corridor to that point anyway.

Respectfully,

Jack Brown  
Aptos Resident

**From:** [Stephanie Gelman](#)  
**To:** [Regional Transportation Commission](#)  
**Subject:** Reject Agenda #10  
**Date:** Monday, January 9, 2023 12:27:25 AM

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To Whom it May Concern

Please reject agenda #10.

Thank you

Stephanie

Gelman

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<https://linktr.ee/StephanieGelman>

**From:** [Doug Huskey](#)  
**To:** [Regional Transportation Commission](#)  
**Subject:** Reject Progressive Oil tanker storage  
**Date:** Saturday, January 7, 2023 8:03:10 AM

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Dear RTC,

Please reject agenda item #10. We do not want to see Progressive Rail storage of oil tankers on our rail corridor.

Regards,  
Doug Huskey  
Santa Cruz

**From:** [Carmen Bryant](#)  
**To:** [Regional Transportation Commission](#)  
**Subject:** Storing Oil Tankers on the SC rail is a hard No!  
**Date:** Saturday, January 7, 2023 5:34:35 PM

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To the RTC:

It has come to my attention that Progressive has made a request to store oil tankers on the Santa Cruz rail line. I think this would be highly irresponsible and environmentally unsafe if this were to be approved. As a citizen of Santa Cruz county, I want to let you know that many of us do not think this is a good idea. It's a hard NO.

Please do not vote to approve storage of oil tankers in Santa Cruz county. As you can see, we are already at capacity with issues that will need to be taken care of after all of these storms this winter. The county has enough to deal with.

The possibility of oil leakage into our environment with the fragile ecosystem that we have, is a non-starter. And what an eyesore! This company has not actually done the work they were supposed to do on the rail lines as custodians, why should they be allowed to park their trash in our county? No thank you!

Respectfully ,  
Carmen Bryant, BS MBA  
Aptos

**From:** [REDACTED]  
**To:** [Regional Transportation Commission](#)  
**Subject:** Trail Now PLEASE  
**Date:** Saturday, January 7, 2023 1:40:11 PM

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I am writing to voice my opposition to Progressive's Proposal for using Rails for storage of tanker cars.

I also oppose Rail service on the existing oceanfront tracks as a potential financial disaster with rising oceans and grim oceanfront forecasts.

However, I DO SUPPORT the proposals for public trails along these pathways. As an avid e-biker (I sold my motor vehicle 2 years ago), I would greatly welcome using the existing pathways (versus dangerous roads) as a commuting path from Aptos to Santa Cruz. Therefore, I support Trail Now's initiative.

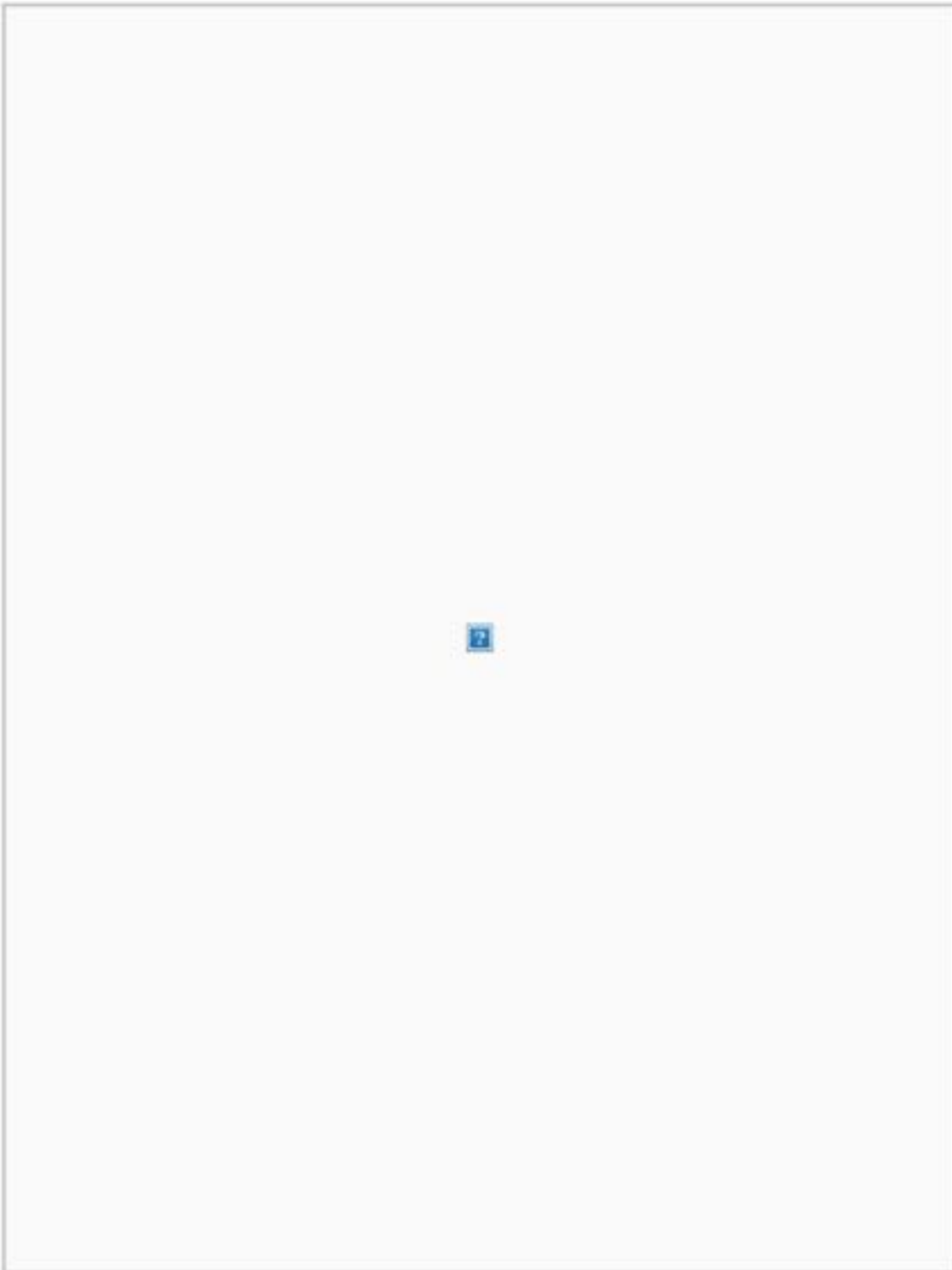
Let's give it a try! It has to be better than what we have used the tracks for over the last 20 years!

Sincerely,  
John Benza  
[REDACTED]  
Aptos, CA 95003  
[REDACTED]

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**From:** Trail Now [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Saturday, January 7, 2023 1:14 PM  
**To:** [REDACTED]  
**Subject:** [REDACTED]

[View this email in your browser](#)

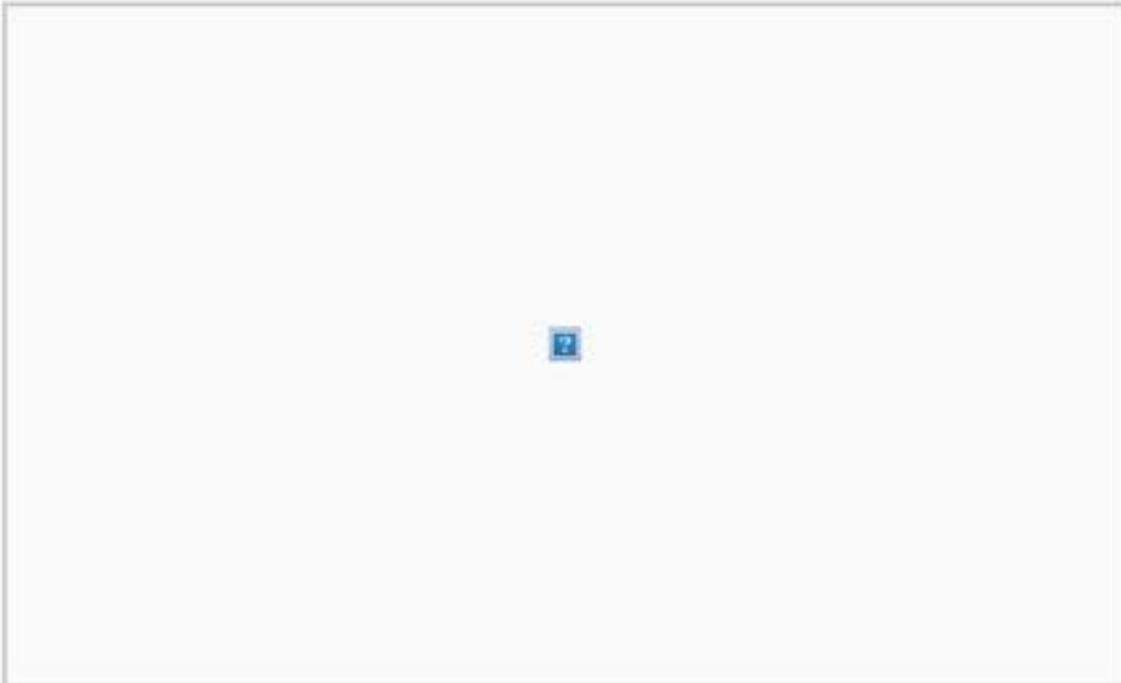


**STORMS AND TIDAL SURGE WAKE-UP CALL TO RTC?**

The photo above shows La Selva Beach cliffs being hit with tidal surge during the January 2023 storm. The question we need to ask is "will the major damage to Santa Cruz Coastline from the storms and tidal surge be a wake-up call to Santa Cruz County Regional Transportation Commission (RTC) that an electric train along the Santa Cruz Coastal Corridor will never be possible".

Unfortunately, we do not expect the RTC to shift gears anytime soon and they will continue to invest millions into a policy of "rail at any cost". The damage from the

storm and tidal surge shows that “rail at any cost” is more than the millions of tax dollars spent to justify an electric train along the coastal bluff but is also the loss opportunity to our community in opening the Coastal Trail in a timely and cost-effective manner for active transportation and preventing our community from finding alternative transit modes to automobile travel. A decade ago, former Santa Cruz County Supervisor/RTC Commission Ellen Pirie predicted train people would prevent the construction of the Coastal Trail because of their impractical belief that a train is possible operating 20 feet from the Pacific Ocean. Unfortunately for our community, her prediction has come true and the RTC policy of “rail at any cost” is preventing the construction of the Coastal Trail from Watsonville to Davenport.



**PROGRESSIVE RAIL PROPOSAL TO STORE 100 TANKER RAILCARS**

Progressive Rail is proposing to store up to 100 tanker railcars between milepost 3 (Lee Road) and 4 (Harkins Slough) on the Santa Cruz Branch Rail Line. We oppose allowing these tanker railcars to be stored because it will prevent the use of the Coastal Corridor as a transportation resource, result in oil/grease contaminates from the railcars being released into the Harkins Slough wetland and Progressive Rail has not held up to their financial commitments to our community, refusing to pay for maintenance of the railline.

As an alternative, we recommend the RTC partner with Trail Now and move forward with our proposed Demonstration Trail. As part of our proposal, we commit to perform maintenance along the Coastal Corridor from Watsonville (Lee Road) to Santa Cruz Boardwalk.

Please consider sending emails to [info@scrtc.org](mailto:info@scrtc.org) opposing Progressive Rail railcar storage proposal and support Trail Now Demonstration Trail proposal.

**PROPOSED "DEMONSTRATION TRAIL" FROM WATSONVILLE TO SANTA CRUZ BOARDWALK**

Trail Now is proposing to build a temporary trail from Watsonville to Santa Cruz Boardwalk along the Santa Cruz Coastal Corridor for a "Demonstration Trail". Our proposal can be viewed at: [Demonstration Trails Proposal — Trail NOW | Santa Cruz County Coastal Corridor](#)

**HELP SUPPORT TRAIL NOW**

Please consider donating to Trail Now at <https://www.trailnow.org/donate>.



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Trail Now - [REDACTED] - Aptos, CA 95003 - USA



**From:** Becky Steinbruner <[REDACTED]>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, January 10, 2023 10:37 PM  
**To:** Yesenia Parra <[yparra@sccrtc.org](mailto:yparra@sccrtc.org)>; Yesenia Parra <[infor@sccrtc.org](mailto:infor@sccrtc.org)>  
**Cc:** Guy Preston <[gpreston@sccrtc.org](mailto:gpreston@sccrtc.org)>; Luis Mendez <[lmendez@sccrtc.org](mailto:lmendez@sccrtc.org)>; Rudy Lopez <[rudy.lopez.sr@cityofwatsonville.org](mailto:rudy.lopez.sr@cityofwatsonville.org)>; Chris Walters <[chris.walters@fire.ca.gov](mailto:chris.walters@fire.ca.gov)>  
**Subject:** Public Comment re: January 12, 2023 RTC Regular Agenda Item #10 Consideration of Rail Car Storage for Bio-Fuel Production Plant in Martinez

Dear Regional Transportation Commissioners,  
RE: Item #10

*Consideration of Proposed Rail Car Storage on the Santa Cruz Branch Rail Line per the Administration Coordination and License Agreement with St. Paul and Pacific Railroad/Progressive Rail*

I am not able to attend the January 12, 2023 Commission meeting, but respectfully would like to register my opinion on the Item above.

Having read the Staff Report regarding this matter, I support the agreement for short-term storage of 50-100 rail cars/month between MP 3 and 4 that would rotate in storage and be filled with corn or soy oil to be used at the new bio-fuel plant in Martinez.

However, I respectfully request that the RTC first seek review of the plan by the local Fire Marshals for the area to ensure the public's safety is properly addressed.

Also, I wonder if there is an opportunity for St. Paul and Pacific Railroad/Progressive Rail representatives to potentially serve the same needs for the bio-fuel manufacturing facility in Watsonville? <https://pajaronian.com/new-biodiesel-plant-opens/>

Sincerely,  
Becky Steinbruner