



Stop I-3 Coalition Newsletter

January, 2008

From the Director

Stop I-3 Coalition has been busy these past few months as you will read in this newsletter, from an Interstate 3 rerouting proposal through South Carolina, to Tennessee and North Carolina DOT environmental studies of Corridor K, to bringing on new, exciting people and supporting organizations.

The Georgia Department of Transportation Board of Directors meetings that I attended in December were lively, to say the least.

The presentation on rail studies was postponed while Governor Sonny Perdue held a closed-door session with the board over grave department-wide, management concerns that new Commissioner Gena Abraham had raised. The board of directors continue to scrounge for more funds for their existing transportation priorities, while Interstate 3 continues to be a road that they can't afford.

I was blessed with a crisp day to hike in the Cherokee National Forest in southeast Tennessee, along the area proposed for destruction for Corridor K, with members of the American Hiking Society, the Benton MacKaye Trail Association, the Chattanooga Hiking Club, and a reporter from the *Chattanooga Times Free Press*. (See [CTFP 1/15/08](#).) As we enjoyed the quiet solitude of the area, listening to the birds and wind -- not onrushing 18-wheelers— we found some irony in the fact that the Benton MacKaye Trail Association had to jump through multiple hoops with the U.S. Forest Service to create the trail through the area, and assess the various impacts of three-foot-wide trail on delicate ecosystems, and its ensuing realignments. Compare that to the potential impact of a major truck thoroughfare through the same region. In meeting with staff from the Regional Planning Organization of the Southeast Tennessee Development District and Wilbur Smith and Associates consultants, they emphasized that this was one of only many route possibilities as we all were urged to "think outside the box."



In North Carolina, as part of the State Transportation Improvement Program, public comments were registered into the record in opposition to Corridor K from several Stop I-3 Coalition representatives. North Carolina Department of Transportation board member Conrad Burrell, who represents the westernmost counties of the state, expressed concern about decades-old expectations people had of the Corridor K being "completed," despite other road improvements that have been made since the road was proposed in 1965. ([Read more in the Corridor K article below.](#))

Stop I-3 Coalition also refocused on South Carolina with renewed zest, as Rep. Paul Broun's proposal to limit the study of Interstate 3 to a corridor up to Greenville simmers on a low boil. Upstate Forever is our [newest supporting organization](#), with their board passing a resolution just last week opposing I-3. We are pleased to have another organization advocating for the protection of special places on board. Conversations and meetings continue with them and other organizations focused on the Augusta to Greenville area—including the

Chattooga Conservancy, Sierra Clubs, etc.

Coming up...

The Stop I-3 Coalition will be meeting with the [Savannah River Sierra Club](#) in **Augusta on Tuesday, March 18th at 6:30pm**. We will be sharing our vision of sustainable transportation, explaining the details behind Interstate 3, and discussing how to continue to raise awareness and support for stopping I-3 in the Augusta area. If you are in the area, I hope you will join us. Please let your Augustan friends and colleagues know about this opportunity to learn more about I-3 and the work of the Coalition.

We will also be hosting our winter Stop I-3 Coalition **supporting organization conference call** in early February. This is an opportunity for supporting organizations to better understand how recent transportation developments affect them and to collaborate on solutions. If you are a member of a local, regional, or national organization concerned about historic preservation, rural and small town economic development, landscape conservation, or environmental preservation, that is not already a supporting organization of the Stop I-3 Coalition, this would be a great time to introduce your organization to the Coalition.



The Coalition represents people and organizations with different passions, but the same goal. Read on for more details about how the Stop I-3 Coalition is working right now to preserve and protect the unique heritage and environment of Southern Appalachia and nearby Piedmont communities by promoting sustainable transportation practices. The caliber of individuals involved and the collective work being accomplished is outstanding. We will be asking for your help in the near future with letting elected officials and highway agencies know about your concern regarding disastrous roads that are a waste of money. Stand ready, the studies are coming.

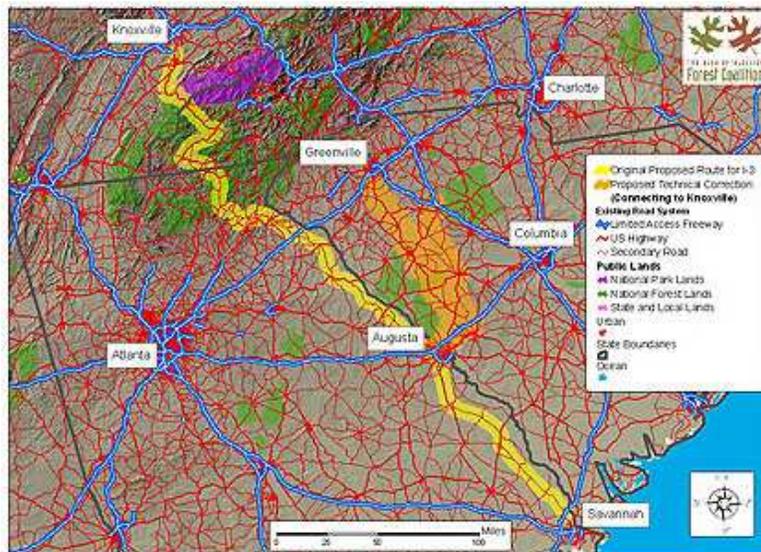
— Holly Demuth, executive director, Stop I-3 Coalition

Broun's I-3 route proposal: move it to South Carolina

Georgia's Rep. Paul Broun, R-10, has been working to introduce legislative language in Washington that would reroute the Interstate 3 from Savannah to Augusta to Knoxville -- **via the Greenville or Clinton, South Carolina, area, instead of directly through the mountains of north Georgia**. The idea, billed as a technical correction that would be part of a larger group of corrections to the Transportation Act of 2005 ([SAFETEA-LU](#)), has gotten a lot of attention, as you can see by the many [newspaper articles](#) posted on our website. Some newspapers incorrectly attributed the concept to the Stop I-3 Coalition. Most of the articles, though, captured the complex issues at stake as the Coalition continues to advocate for sustainable transportation needs in the Southern Appalachians and nearby Piedmont.

The Coalition's position on this is clear— we do not support such a move. Broun's technical correction does not safeguard the Southern Appalachian Mountains from a ruinous, and unnecessary, highway. Many of our partner organizations in South Carolina also oppose it. (See [1/15 Anderson Independent-Mail article](#).)

I-3 Routing Proposals Proposed Technical Correction and Original Proposed Route



(Click on image for a larger view)

The Stop I-3 Coalition has one overriding objective: To stop Interstate 3, under that name or any other name, and to do so by killing it and not by foisting it off on others. We are reaching out to those sister organizations in South Carolina to make them aware of the issues related to the road proposals and to encourage them to join our effort to stop this wasteful effort.

The Federal Highway Administration in Washington, which has responsibility for executing the study, apparently has it on hold until the technical correction issue is resolved. We continue to work to stop the study before it starts, while also preparing to affect it, if it were to begin.

The case against I-3 is simple. Its justifications—connecting Ft. Gordon and Ft. Stewart to Knoxville, economic development for the mountains, and a memorial for the 3rd Infantry Division—are bogus.

When Army units travel, they fly and they move their heavy equipment that does not fly by rail and by sea. The intent of the new road is to move traffic **through** the mountains, not **to** them. This road will devastate our tourist and retirement based economy. People come to the mountains to get away from traffic not enjoy more of it. Can we not be more creative in thinking of a way to honor the sacrifices of our military than a multi-billion dollar, unneeded, wasteful and destructive road? And finally, the environmental damage to our mountains will be beyond description. In brief, this road would be a pork-barrel boondoggle for the road construction lobbies and industries.

In summary, the I-3 project is still alive but possibly changing. We need to marshal our forces, stay alert and on top of things and be prepared to counter proponents moves wherever we find them.

—Charley Kraus, Stop I-3 Coalition board director
and Holly Demuth, executive director, Stop I-3 Coalition

Corridor K update

Road-building efforts continue apace in the North Carolina and Tennessee mountains — which literally would pave the way for Interstate 3 in the most technically challenging, environmentally sensitive, and exorbitantly expensive portion of the original route. Momentum ignited in 2007 and continues to build for this 1965 relic of the [Appalachian Development Highway System](#): Corridor K.

Momentum is also building to ensure that environmental, historical, and community interests are valued and preserved.





The Stop I-3 Coalition has been organizing groups and individuals in the affected areas to help build awareness around Corridor K and its potentially disastrous implications. Our message is clear: building a high speed four lane highway in these sensitive areas will do lasting damage to our precious watersheds, forests, wildlife, and the natural beauty of the mountains, including protected areas, wilderness areas, and critical bear and bird habitat. Historic treasures and rural ways of life will be destroyed and forever altered. Construction of a through highway, be it Corridor K or Interstate 3 would leave the mountains with poorer air quality, polluted streams, and noisy truck traffic. The enormous funding requirements would divert funds from maintaining existing roads and bridges and making them safer.

Fervent proponents of Corridor K have voiced the need to take these interests under consideration. Our challenge is to hold them to that, and to elevate these concerns to not only be considered, but of primary importance. It is then that the true, long term needs of the communities and land will be met.

Stop I-3 Coalition, along with its supporting organizations, will be at the table in both states, demanding rigorous decision-making processes, including thorough environmental impact statements and full public involvement. We will ensure that robust public input informs that decision making process. Stay abreast of the issues by checking our [Corridor K section](#) of our website. We will also let you know who to contact and when, sending you action alerts, as the two state transportation agencies and various interest groups continue their processes and prodding. If you want to become more involved with this particular project of the Stop I-3 Coalition, please contact our volunteer coordinator, [M.J. Bridges](#).

The NCDOT is putting the finishing touches on a Draft Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement for two of the three sections on the North Carolina side, to be released this spring with a formal public comment period to follow. These studies were done without looking at the bigger picture of the entire Tennessee /North Carolina Corridor, not even considering the third portion of the road in North Carolina, which according to previous studies would require massive tunneling through the Snowbird Mountains.

In Tennessee, the Southeast Tennessee Development District continues to encourage "outside-the-box" thinking with respect to a road that would provide an east-west shipping corridor for Chattanooga, an economic boom for the rural counties it would slice through, **and** increased recreational and heritage tourism, **all** in an environmentally sound manner. That is a tall order to fill as the Tennessee Department of Transportation begins the process of requesting letters of interest from design and environmental management firms for the improvement of US 64 either through or around the Ocoee Gorge to Ducktown.

These goals are accentuated in an economic needs study conducted by consultants Wilbur Smith and Associates, financed by the Southeastern Industrial Development Association (SEIDA), a group of electric power distributors from Tennessee, North Carolina and Georgia. The consultants hosted multiple meetings over the summer to review the results, which advanced a case for the economic need for expanding road access between Chattanooga and Asheville. Stop I-3 Coalition board members, supporting organizations, and supporters attended multiples of these meetings.

The final report will be released in the next few weeks. You will be able to access it through a link will be posted on the Stop I-3 Coalition website. Preliminary report drafts have not been persuasive and have not included the economic impact of the environmental devastation on the area. For example, how much would it cost to purify polluted water or sequester carbon for Chattanooga's fragile air quality, services that the Cherokee National Forest currently offers for free? If this east-west corridor was effective in increasing access to markets, and therefore increasing diesel truck traffic in the Chattanooga area, how would the costs associated with decreased quality affect the broader economic picture? (i.e. non attainment status: federal fines, loss of federal highway funds)

The Stop I-3 Coalition initially became concerned about Corridor K because of its impact on the I-3 proposal, in that it overlays part of the potential I-3 routing and thus suffers from all the same negatives that we see for I-3. The issues of need, economic benefit, environmental and scenic damage to our mountains are all the same.

We continue our involvement as an organization advocating for sustainable transportation in the Southern Appalachians and nearby Piedmont, bringing together people and groups of diverse interests dedicated to ensuring we have a transportation infrastructure that is in balance with the unique environmental and cultural assets of the region.

—Holly Demuth, executive director, Stop I-3 Coalition



Many Thanks, All Donors

On behalf of all the Stop I-3 Board of Directors, Coalition member organizations, and our supporters, we offer a special thanks to all of you who contributed to our organization since we started this effort. You are our lifeblood! It's folks like you who take responsibility for your environment and communities who help make the world in general, and the Southern Appalachians and nearby Piedmont in particular, a better place to live. Thanks for standing up for the unique character of our region.

If you're not already, we would love for you to get even more involved by donating your time and skills as well as supporting Stop I-3 financially. If you have time even a small amount of time, we can use your skills! Please contact our volunteer coordinator, M. J. Bridges at 706-508-3711, and let us know that you would like to help. Thanks for your dedication and generosity.

—Ted Doll, vice-chair, Stop I-3 Coalition

Businesses:

Individuals (continued):

Individuals (continued):

Babbling Brook Cabins
Go! Production Inc
Goldhagen Art Glass
Granite & Marble Tops & Tiles
Baker Place Originals
Simply Homegrown Farmer's Market
Kingwood Golf Club & Resort
Lee Johnson Gallery
Old Sautee Store
Skip Bartlett Photography
Sunny Side Studio
Tekakwitha, American Indian Tribal Arts
Tiger Mountain Vineyarda

Foundations:

Lyndhurst Foundation
Sapelo Foundation

Supporting Organizations:

Georgia Council, Trout Unlimited
NRDC
Rabun Chapter, Trout Unlimited
Towns County Homeowners Assoc

Individuals:

Adams, Allison
Adams, Brenda
Aderhold, Tom
Balsler, Mark
Balthazar, Robert & Norma
Bartlett, Harry & Lucy
Bartlett, Lisa
Bartlett, Lucy
Belew, Susan
Bertelson, Leonard & Nancy
Bishop, James
Bolding, Bob
Bowen, Alma
Brinson, Margaret
Brook, Arthur
Buchanan, Jim
Calhoun, Emily
Carien, Marilyn
Carmichael, Steve
Coger, Chloe
Cullifer, Carol
Davant, Reynolds
Dixon, Roger
Doll, Ted & Lynda
Drake, Mollie
Dunkle, Marie
Durham, Robert & Cynthia
Ezzard, Martha

Fail, Joseph Meta Thompson
Fain, Karen
Fain, Michael & Karen
Fisher, Richard & Judith
Foster, Charles & Edna
Freedland, Martin
Gatins, Joe & Frances
Gerken, Austin
Gray, Kendall
Groft, Keely
Groft, Keely & Jamie
Grove, Judy
Hatcher, Robert & Margaret
Hawkins, Charles
Heard, John
Heckel, Ginny
Heckel, Todd
Hemmerich, Hugo
Hendry, James & Donis
Hicks, Keith & Kathryn
Hinderliter, David & Carolyn
Hood, IV, William
Humphlett, Mary & William
Hunt, Andrew
Irwin, Hugh
James-Chung, Hillery
Johnston, Eugenia
Jones, Leslie
Kendrick, Cynthia
Kenyon, Bill and Tallulah
Kidd, Gregory
King, Jr, Edward Lewis
Kirkley, Dorothy
Kraus, Charles and Ann
Lawless, Mignon
Line, Mary & Robin
Lombard, Oly
Lowe, Roy
Lyndon, Sandy
Manning, Thomas
Martin, Carolyn
Martin, Daniel
Martin, Lucinda
Massell, Steve & Krista
McAuliffe, Paul Donna Stroud-McAuliffe
McCain, Stephen
McCann, Marie
McDowell, Edward
McGinness, Shelley
McPhail, Ray
McWilliams, Robert & Brenda
Meadors, Helen
Melton, Eston & Peggy
Metzgar, Dick

Milikin, David & Elizabeth
Miller, Phyllis
Oliver, William
O'Sullivan, John
Otis, Gail
Otis, George
Owenby, Jr., Ermine
Patton, Phillip
Peckham, Mary Ann
Pelphrey, James
Pepper, Cora
Price-Williams, Tim
Quinlan, Lilit
Ramsey, Ramsey
Ranson, William
Retter, Candy & Frank
Rhodes, Denny
Rinker, Jack
Rodeghiero, M H
Rolland, Anthony
Ruddock, Fred
Ruf, Joe
Salazar, Ronald
Samples, Jr., Charles Lamar
Shirely, Nancy
Singley, Elizabeth
Smith, Carter & Laura
Sousa, Judy & Anthony
Stack, Leckie
Stevens, Jeff
Strangia, Robert
Suich, Ann
Suzuki, Howard & Tetsuko
Tenney, James
Tompkins, Darryl
Trimble, Grace
Turner, Noel & LaJean
Vaughn, Judith
Verges, Leonard & Lisa
Vines, William
Warren, Jr, Edus & Harriet
Wehunt, Terry
Weimann, P.L.
Welden, David & Janie
Wells, Eric
Wilkie, Lorraine & Scott
Williams, Elizabeth
Williams, George & Harriet
Williams, Sam
Wilson, Robert
Wimmersberger, Marjorie
Wise, Stancil
Zicker, Robert

Stop I-3 website update

Stop I-3 Coalition's website is a great resource for I-3 related information. New postings since our last newsletter went out:

- [STOP I-3 Coalition's expanded mission and goals](#). While continuing to organize in opposition to I-3, we are now monitoring Corridor K and researching sensible transportation options for our region, including rail;
- [Information page on Corridor K](#) (Chattanooga to Ashville) with impact maps, articles re survey, hearings, Tennessee Department of Transportation (TDOT) environmental study;
- [New South Carolina Supporting Group](#): Upstate Forever;
- STOP I-3 Coalition press release [reaffirming our board's position opposing I-3](#) in response to Rep. Paul Broun's suggested "technical correction;"
- [News articles since September '07](#) from papers in Georgia, North Carolina, South Carolina and Tennessee covering issues of nuclear waste transport, GADOT disarray, needs for infrastructure



repair, Rep. Broun's considered technical correction route and responses to it;

- Improved links to [legislative information](#) and maps;
- News and photos of our [October party in Tiger, Georgia](#)...and
- **COMING SOON:** video courtesy of George Sloan, which he produced for his Channel 4 show, "Art in the Mountains."



—Lilith Quinlan, Stop I-3 Coalition board director

Welcome, Grace Trimble

The Coalition welcomes a new member of the board of directors, Grace M. Trimble, senior communications coordinator for the Atlanta Regional Commission. Grace, an Atlanta resident with long experience in environmental and transportation issues, will be a key member of the board.

Plus, she and her husband have a second home in Rabun County, Georgia, right in the middle of the mountains we are all trying to protect.

So Many Ways You Can Help

You can make a bigger difference—volunteer!!!

If you've wanted to share your time and expertise to help keep bad road proposals from coming to fruition like I-3 and Corridor K, now it's the time to jump in. We now have a volunteer coordinator, M.J. Bridges, who will help plug in your particular interests and skills where they are most needed. Look over the Stop I-3 Coalition [list of volunteer needs](#) or contact [M.J. directly](#), 706.508.3711.

Below are some specific needs we need right now!

- **Monitoring news sources for transportation articles**
Do you regularly read or listen to a particular news source? We have a section on our website devoted to I-3, Corridor K, and transportation related news and need help identifying those articles.
- **Entering data**
We gather information about new supporters at tabling events who want to be kept abreast of Stop I-3 news. Their information is entered into our database by very special dedicated volunteers who are discreet, detail oriented, and comfortable with computers.
- **Rail Task Force**
If you are knowledgeable about or interested in the rail system, specifically in the Southern Appalachians, the Stop I-3 Coalition can use your help. In order to better understand how rail fits into a sustainable transportation system for our mountains, the coalition is forming a task force to research rail (both freight and passenger). We want to know what groups are actively promoting freight and passenger rail in the region, and what, if any, proposals are there for expanding rail capacity in the region. This is a short-term project to gather information to enable the coalition to speak and act knowledgeably about rail as part of the sustainable transportation solution for the Southern Appalachians and nearby Piedmont.



The Stop I-3 Coalition is thrilled to have M.J. assisting with volunteer coordination. M.J. reports that she is "excited to be working with the Stop I-3 Coalition. I want to help preserve the beauty and integrity of the land in order for my children's children to enjoy it—after all that is part of all of our legacies—what we leave for the future generations to enjoy." In the past, she worked on U.S. Senator Paul Coverdell's Operation Drug Free Georgia, as well as for a local newspaper covering everything from kindergarten registration to state and local politics. Currently, in addition to coordinating volunteers for the Stop I-3 Coalition, she focuses her attention on her photography business, serving as the Deputy Commander of Cadets and Public Affairs officer of the Civil Air Patrol of Jackson County, Georgia, and raising her children. Shoot M.J. an [email](#) or give her a call today, 706.508.3711, and see how you fit into the Stop I-3 Coalition.

Burma Shave matters



The Stop I-3 Coalition reminds you that we still have some great Burma Shave Sign sets available for your yard or pasture fence and yard signs (16" x 24") with our name and web address to place in your yard to show your support of stopping I-3. For more information or to order your signs call Sandy Lyndon at 706.754.0046 or email her at sandy@bbinc.org

Send the money!

Stop I-3 Coalition is a lean, low-budget enterprise—always has been—whose success has largely depended on the hard work of willing volunteers who pitched in to further the cause.

Meeting our goals, both short- and long-term, also means that we are going to have to raise a bit more cold, hard cash. That's a fact.

Please support the Stop I-3 Coalition by donating today [online](#) or mail checks or money orders (made out to Stop I-3 Coalition) to:

Stop I-3 Coalition
1074 Arbor Drive
Lakemont, Georgia 30552

Stop I-3 Coalition is a 501 (c) 3 corporation whose contributions are tax-exempt to the extent permitted by law.

