



## Fact Sheet

- Overview:
  - The Sunset Limited Line was a passenger rail service from New Orleans to Jacksonville for many years until Hurricane Katrina damaged extensive portions of the rail in 2005 ending the service. Now, Amtrak and the [Southern Rail Commission](#) are resuming this route and have secured several stops. Live Oak is not (yet) one of them.
  - The City of Live Oak would like Amtrak and the Southern Rail Commission to consider making Live Oak an “East of NOLA Route” stop.
- Location/History:
  - The City of Live Oak owes its very existence and namesake to the expansion of the railroad in the 1800s with Live Oak’s train depot located by a large live oak tree, and henceforth, the railroad has been the backbone of the community providing sustained opportunities for growth and commerce.
  - Live Oak’s remodeled rail station is centrally located in a safe, well-lit area of downtown across from the Fire Station and Chamber of Commerce with an adjacent four-acre parcel available for expansion.
  - Live Oak is geographically located 80 miles midway between Tallahassee and Jacksonville and is served by two interstate highways, three state highways, two regional airports and two international airports.
  - Live Oak is in the center of the North Florida Business Diamond (Tallahassee, Valdosta, Jacksonville and Gainesville) and is a hub for art, music and ecotourism.
  - The Spirit of the Suwannee Music Park hosts more than 600,000 guests annually. In a recent survey taken by the music park, an overwhelming number of participants said they would be interested in traveling via rail service to Live Oak.
  - Live Oak thrives on eco-tourism with tourists visiting to experience hiking, biking, canoeing, hunting, fishing, camping and more on the community’s rivers, springs and trails.
- Economic Impact:
  - Southern Railroad Commission officials estimated the Sunset Limited Line would cost about \$5.48 million annually to run, but the projected 138,300 yearly passengers using the proposed Live Oak station could generate between \$12.25 and \$12.72 million in revenue.
  - The rail service would not only create revenue, but jobs. With eight major annual music festivals, Live Oak’s Spirit of the Suwannee Music Park generates 540 jobs, almost \$2.9 million in disposable income for the county and \$11.5 million for the state.
  - An Amtrak stop would bring more visitors traveling to and from the Orlando area.
  - The Live Oak station would serve a population over 120,000 and hundreds of communities in South Georgia and North Florida.
  - In 2015, 55 percent of visitors to the region paid for accommodations when they traveled to the area. The average length of stay for visitors to the region was more than three nights.
    - This number would only increase with an additional transportation method to enter the city.
- Gulf Coast Working Group Activities, Progress and Updates:
  - [GCWG](#) (consisting of local governments, state departments of transportation, planning commissions, railroads, etc. and chaired by the Federal Railroad Administration) met in person in various cities across the Gulf Coast to assess existing rail infrastructure,

ridership data for Amtrak services in the region and previously proposed restoration alternatives.

- Based on Amtrak studies, GCWG has adopted two previously proposed restoration alternatives that would offer a daily overnight long-distance train operating between New Orleans and Orlando that would serve as an extension of the Chicago—New Orleans line.
  - This alternative also proposes a daily state-supported train operating round trip between New Orleans and Mobile.
- GCWG is evaluating the restoration of improved intercity passenger rail serve between New Orleans and Orlando and will submit a report to Congress.
- To finalize the report, the GCWG is...
  - Determining physical infrastructure necessary to support daily passenger services.
  - Developing an order-of-magnitude capital cost estimate based on identified infrastructure requirements.
  - Identifying potential sources for federal, state and local funding.
  - Identifying potential benefits and challenges to restoring intercity passenger rail transportation in the region.
- FRA will submit the report in 2016.
- [Get On Board:](#)
  - The website, [www.allaboardliveoak.com](http://www.allaboardliveoak.com), and the [Facebook](#) page are resources for history, campaign information, updates, news and the petition.
  - Over 700 [petition](#) signatures have been gathered so far and the number is growing.
  - The All Aboard Live Oak team encourages supporters to sign the online petition; download and print the brochure from the website to hand out at events and stores; download and print the postcard (pledge cards) to sign and hand out at events and stores; and like/follow the Facebook, [Instagram](#) and [Twitter](#) pages to follow the campaign.