

ATLANTA, BIRMINGHAM & COAST RAILROAD

APPENDIX A



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APPENDIX A

Atlanta, Birmingham & Coast (ABC)

System Property Information Form
ABC

ABC Mainline
MAIN

Tifton & Northeastern
TFNE

Tifton & Thomasville
TFTH

Brunswick & Birmingham
BRBH

ATLANTA, BIRMINGHAM & COAST RAILROAD (ABC)

The railroad enterprise that eventually evolved, by way of a 1926 reorganization, into the Atlanta, Birmingham & Coast Railroad (ABC) was originally begun, in its earliest incarnation, as the Waycross Air Line Railroad in late 1887. Through a sequence of mergers, acquisitions and ongoing expansion, a railroad system was ultimately developed to connect Georgia's Atlantic coast with, as its name indicated, separate major terminal destinations in Atlanta and Birmingham.

Today, most of the former ABC rail routes, and the entirety of its former main trunk line from Nicholls to Manchester, remain in use as an important part of CSX Transportation's rail network through Georgia. The east end of the former ABC no longer extends directly to Brunswick, but its original line between Nicholls and Waycross is active, and still enables passage of trains to and from Brunswick by way of one of CSX's other lines that runs eastward from Waycross. All but the southernmost section (from Coolidge to Thomasville) of the ABC's Thomasville branch line has been either abandoned or is inactive.

WAYCROSS AIR LINE RAILROAD AND THE ATLANTIC & BIRMINGHAM RAILWAY

The Waycross Air Line was chartered October 24, 1887, and the first 25 miles of railroad, from Waycross to Sessoms (a junction just east of Nicholls),

Other Names: Atlanta, Birmingham & Atlantic

NR Recommendation: Eligible

Period of Significance: 1887-1946

Physical Status: Mixed (Active, Abandoned, some sections adapted for use as rail-trails, and some segments repurposed as power line easements)

Current Owner: CSX Transportation

Predecessors: Waycross Air Line; Atlantic & Birmingham; Brunswick & Birmingham; Atlanta, Birmingham & Atlantic

Successors: Atlantic Coast Line; Seaboard Coast Line; CSX Transportation

Mainline and Main Fork Lines: Waycross to Birmingham, Alabama via Nicholls, Douglas, Fitzgerald, Cordele, Montezuma, Talbotton, and Manchester, with a main branch from Manchester to Atlanta via Woodbury, Senoia, and Union City, and a second main branch from Brunswick to Nicholls via Offerman

Branch (Feeder) Lines: Fitzgerald to Thomasville via Tifton

opened in 1890. The line was extended to Nicholls in 1897, to Douglas in 1900, and to Fitzgerald in 1901. In November of 1901, the company's charter was then amended to authorize an extension to Birmingham and to change the name to Atlantic & Birmingham Railroad, to better express the greater ambitions of this growing railroad enterprise.

The first section of line under the enlarged charter powers of the Atlantic & Birmingham Railroad was completed between Fitzgerald and Cordele on May 25, 1902. The 31 miles from Cordele to Montezuma was put into operation in March 1903, and surveys were being undertaken from Montezuma to Birmingham in that same year (as reported in the 1903 and 1905 editions of *Poor's Manual of Railroads*).

In 1903, the Atlanta & Birmingham Railroad purchased both the Tifton & Northeastern Railroad and the Tifton, Thomasville & Gulf Railway. Chartered in 1891, the Tifton & Northeastern Railroad finally completed its 25-mile long line from Tifton northeasterly to Fitzgerald in 1896. The

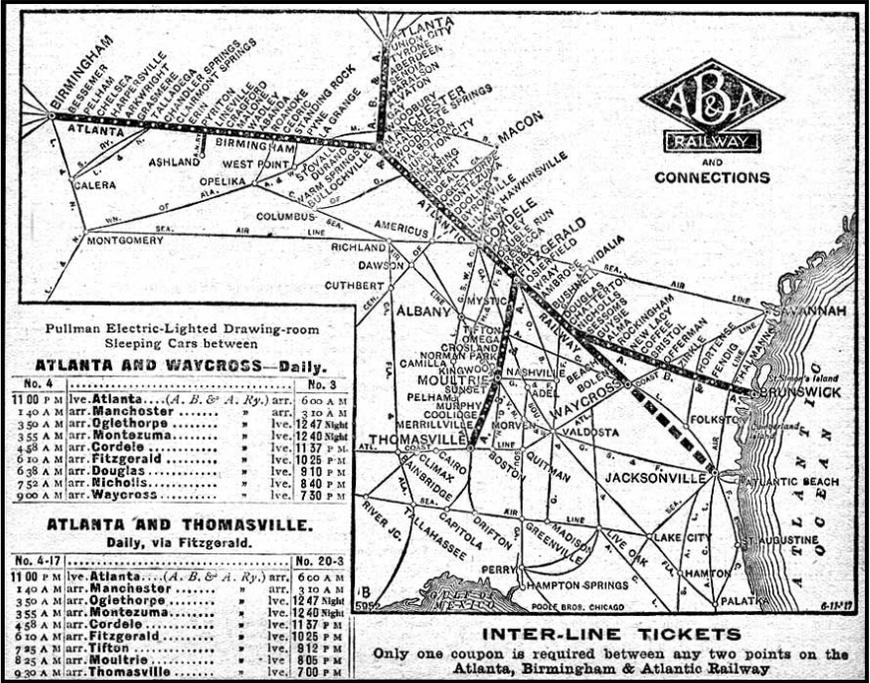


AB&A depot at Fitzgerald, Ben Hill County

company's president was H. H. Tift of Tifton. The Tifton, Thomasville & Gulf Railway, chartered in 1897, built its line from Tifton to Thomasville in 1900. These two lines were merged into the parent company, which was then renamed the Atlantic & Birmingham Railway. The following year, the Atlantic & Birmingham would also obtain the Brunswick & Birmingham Railway; both railways already provided service to Nicholls, and so were able to connect there.

BRUNSWICK & BIRMINGHAM RAILWAY

Chartered in December of 1900, the Brunswick & Birmingham Railway (B&B) built a 42-mile line between Brunswick and Offerman in 1901-02. The B&B operated five locomotives, ten passenger cars, and over a hundred other cars, most of which were leased. In order to extend its reach from Offerman, the B&B then purchased the Offerman & Western Railroad in



AB&A System Map, Official Guide of the Railways, April 1918.

1902. The Offerman & Western had been chartered in 1899 and had opened its 35-mile line between Offerman and Nicholls in the early spring of 1900. It had three locomotives, ten freight cars, two passenger coaches, and two baggage cars.

The following year, in 1903, the B&B built a connecting line from Bushnell to Ocilla and had completed a western extension from Irwinville to the Alapaha River at Crystal Lake.

Also in 1903, the B&B bought the Ocilla & Irwinville Railroad. The Ocilla & Irwinville Railroad was a 10-mile line from Ocilla to Irwinville built in 1900 or earlier as the Ocilla & Worth Railroad. The Ocilla & Worth's predecessor may have been the Mystic & Ocilla Railroad, which was established in the same general time period. In its December 2, 1899 issue, *Railway World* included this note: "The Mystic and Ocilla Railroad has been completed between

WAYCROSS AIR LINE RAILROAD.					
B. A. DENMARK, President,		Wm. B. STILLWELL, Vice-Prest.,		Savannah, Ga.	
L. JOHNSON, Superintendent, Waycross, Ga.					
	No. 1	Mis	December 2, 1895.	Mis	No. 2
			[LEAVE]	[ARRIVE]	
	† 2 00 P.M.	0	.....Waycross ¹	30	9 00 A.M.
	2 30 "	6	.....Waltertown.....	24	7 40 "
	3 30 "	11	.....Elsie.....	19	7 10 "
	4 00 "	15	.....Boleu.....	15	6 40 "
	4 30 "	20	.....Beach.....	10	6 10 "
	5 30 "	25	.....Sessoms.....	5	5 30 "
	6 00 P.M.	30	.....Nicholls.....	0	† 5 00 A.M.
			[ARRIVE]	[LEAVE]	

† Daily, except Sunday. ‡ Telegraph stations. Central time.
CONNECTIONS.—¹ With Savannah, Florida & Western Ry. and Brunswick & Western R.R.

1895 Waycross Air Line timetable

Mystic and Ocilla and a regular schedule put on.”

The owners of the Ocilla & Worth had planned to connect Ocilla, in Irwin County, with the Georgia Southern & Florida Railroad at Worth, a few miles north of Ashburn. Sometime around

1900, the Ocilla & Worth was reorganized as the Ocilla & Irwinville Railroad, in seeming recognition of its failure to reach its originally intended destination. The railroad had one locomotive, one passenger car, and 46 freight cars.

In 1907, the Fitzgerald, Ocilla, & Broxton Railroad (FO&B) was formed to take over part of the former Ocilla & Valdosta Railroad. Sometime afterwards, the Ocilla & Irwinville line, owned since March of 1903 by the Brunswick & Birmingham, was leased to the FO&B.

In 1911, the FO&B then sub-leased the line, along with the tracks between Ocilla and Fitzgerald, to the Ocilla Southern Railroad. The Ocilla Southern was in the process of assembling a railroad from Alapaha to Rochelle and needed an Ocilla-Fitzgerald link as part of its plan. The Ocilla-Irwinville line remained as a lightly used branch line until it was finally abandoned by all involved parties, in 1915-16.

ATLANTA, BIRMINGHAM & ATLANTIC RAILROAD

Although the Brunswick & Birmingham Railway managed to progress as far west as the Alapaha River, operating lines from Brunswick to Nicholls and from Bushnell to the river at Crystal Lake, it remained far short of



AB&C bridge over old SR 96, Junction City, Talbot County

Birmingham. The company entered receivership in 1904 and, in March of the same year, was purchased by the Atlantic & Birmingham Railway (A&B). This purchase gave the acquiring railroad an important connection to the port at Brunswick, thereby giving legitimacy to the ‘Atlantic’ descriptor as a component of the company’s name. With this takeover, the combined A&B now comprised a 340-mile system with constituent routes from Brunswick to Montezuma, Waycross to Nicholls, Fitzgerald to Thomasville, and Bushnell (just west of Douglas) to Crystal Lake.

In 1905, the Atlanta, Birmingham & Atlantic Railroad (AB&A) was organized to buy the Atlantic & Birmingham Railway and to expand its system to service its first two namesake destinations. In April of 1906, the AB&A officially consolidated the A&B and began construction of a 260-mile extension from its terminus at Montezuma to Birmingham, as well as of a 77-mile branch from Warm Springs to Atlanta. (The Atlanta branch was ultimately built from Manchester instead of Warm Springs.)



Lilly, Dooly County



Cordele, Crisp County

Montezuma to Talbotton was built in 1906, and Talbotton to LaGrange was completed in January of 1907. The railroad reached Birmingham in the summer of 1908. After 1909, the AB&A was nicknamed the Bee Line, emphasizing its direct route between Birmingham and the Atlantic coast. Also, the prominent “B” in the company logo may have inspired the name.

Much of the Alabama portion of the line was built on the roadbed of the unfinished Macon & Birmingham Railway. The Macon & Birmingham had managed to complete a rail connection between Macon and LaGrange, by way of Thomaston, but could not obtain the funds to continue on to Birmingham. As it turned out, the AB&A was only slightly more successful; it reached the Magic City, but the revenues from doing so were not enough to keep the line operating in the black. A year later, the company entered receivership. Continuing financial problems resulted in a reorganization in 1915 (with a new name, the Atlanta, Birmingham & Atlantic Railway) and foreclosure in 1922.

Despite its perpetual shortage of funds, the railroad maintained most of its operations. The only abandonment, in 1916-17, was of the short, former B&B branch from Ocilla to the Alapaha River at Crystal Lake. The 1923 edition of *Poor's Manual of Railroads* reported that the AB&A had 81 locomotives, 60 passenger cars, and 2700 freight cars.

ATLANTA, BIRMINGHAM & COAST RAILROAD

The Atlanta, Birmingham & Atlantic Railway was reorganized in 1926 and renamed the Atlanta, Birmingham & Coast Railroad. The railroad was now simply nicknamed the ABC. It was controlled by the Atlantic Coast Line (ACL), which had acquired a majority of its stock.

Two decades later, in 1946, the ACL purchased the company entirely and absorbed it into its own operations as the Atlantic Coast Line's western division. The AB&C added over 600 miles of track to ACL's system and gave it the benefit of new routes to Atlanta and Birmingham.

The ACL headquarters were moved from Wilmington, North Carolina to Jacksonville, Florida in 1961. The ACL then merged with the Seaboard Air Line Railroad in 1967, nearly a decade after merger talks were announced, to form the Seaboard Coast Line. In 1980, the Seaboard Coast Line merged with the Chessie System (originally the Chesapeake & Ohio) to create CSX Corporation. Between the initial merger in 1980 and 1987, all of the accumulated railroad lines and divisions brought together by the new CSX holding company were consolidated into a unified operational entity called CSX Transportation. A short-lived (1983-1986), intermediate step in this complicated process of integration was referred to as the Seaboard System Railroad, which included the rail resources of the former ABC.

System Locations:

ABC MAINLINE AND MAIN FORK LINES

At its fullest extent, before abandonments began to diminish the system's area of coverage, the ABC featured a split or forked mainline at both its eastern and western ends. Although it utilized a unified, main trunk line for the middle section of its traverse from northwest to southeast Georgia, there were two separate terminal destinations at each end: Brunswick and Waycross to the southeast; Atlanta and Birmingham to the north and west. The junction point for the two main branch lines from the east was in Bacon County at Sessoms, between Alma and Nicholls, and Manchester was the point of divergence for the separate lines to Atlanta and Birmingham. On its general southeast to northwest alignment between Sessoms and Manchester, the main trunk line passed through Douglas, Fitzgerald, Cordele, Montezuma/Oglethorpe, and Talbotton, amongst other towns. From Manchester, it continued to the northwest through Warm Springs and LaGrange, thereafter crossing into Alabama at the Evansville community in far western Troup County.

The main branch to Atlanta follows a general south-to-north course, running through Woodbury, Senoia, and up to Union City before entering Atlanta through its southwestern and western edges.

The main branch line from Brunswick to Alma, originally developed by the Brunswick & Birmingham and its predecessor, the Offerman & Western, was abandoned in 1953, but the other mainline and main branches to Atlanta, Birmingham, and Waycross are all active and in heavy use by CSX Transportation.

MAIN FORK LINE TO ATLANTIC COAST

Acquired by the ABC's immediate predecessor, the Atlantic & Birmingham/Atlanta, Birmingham & Atlantic Railway in 1904-05, as described above, the major component of this important contributor to the overall ABC system was its mainline from the Atlantic coast port of Brunswick. It passed through Hortense and Offerman en route to Nicholls, where it connected with the AB&A main trunk line to the northwest, as well as to the former



Chatterton, Coffee County

Waycross Air Line branch from Nicholls south to Waycross.

Prior to its sale and the amalgamation of its Brunswick-to-Nicholls section into the greater AB&A (later ABC) system, the Brunswick & Birmingham also owned and operated, for a short period of time, its own subsidiaries, which it had acquired as part of its named goal of creating a through route to Birmingham. As part of the aim to continue its westward momentum, it intended to use the former Ocilla & Irwinville Railroad as part of its course.

THOMASVILLE BRANCH LINE

The Thomasville branch line was purchased as a complete, fully-fledged route between Fitzgerald, on the Atlantic & Birmingham's main trunk line, and Thomasville, on the Atlantic Coast Line's former Savannah, Florida & Western mainline. However, until the Atlantic & Birmingham bought the two lines and officially conjoined them, this connected route

was actually an ensemble of two separate short-line railroad companies, which had constructed their projects independent of each other. The Tifton & Northeastern Railroad was started and finished first, and as is imparted by the sequence of its name, it was an endeavor of Tifton business interests, who built it northward from Tifton to its destination of Fitzgerald. Along the way, it passed through the communities of Pinetta and Mystic.

Also helmed by Tifton citizens was the Tifton, Thomasville & Gulf Railway, which was built southward from Tifton immediately after the completion of the Tifton & Northeastern, thereby taking advantage of the new connectivity to the north. Its corridor was routed through Omega and Norman Park along the way to Moultrie, continuing on from Moultrie through Coolidge to Thomasville.

Abandonments

The **Fitzgerald-to-Tifton** branch line that was initially developed as the Tifton & Northeastern Railroad was abandoned by the ACL in 1960. Most of the southern remainder of the AB&C branch that was originally comprised of both the Tifton & Northeastern and the Tifton, Thomasville & Gulf Railway was later abandoned in 1990 by CSX, all the way down to Coolidge in Thomas County. The section from Thomasville north to Coolidge remains active and in service.

Ocilla-Irwinville (orig. part of Ocilla & Irwinville, then Fitzgerald, Ocilla & Broxton): abandoned 1915-16.

Bushnell-Ocilla(orig. part of Brunswick & Birmingham): abandoned 1916-17.

Brunswick-Alma (orig. part of Brunswick & Birmingham): abandoned 1953.

Fitzgerald-Moultrie (part of both the Tifton & Northeastern and Tifton, Thomasville & Gulf): branch line abandoned 1960.

Alma-Sessoms (orig. part of Brunswick & Birmingham): abandoned 1986

Moultrie-Coolidge (part of former Tifton, Thomasville & Gulf): branch line abandoned 1990.

SYSTEM DESCRIPTION

The former ABC, including the original route of its progenitor, the Waycross Air Line, has become the longest and thus principal piece of CSX's main through-route from Jacksonville, Florida to Atlanta and points beyond, and thus from the south Atlantic coast to the nation's interior. As such, numerous sections of the ABC trunk line now feature double-tracked segments, and much of its length now utilizes concrete rail ties, to better withstand the heavy traffic volume.

The path of the ABC crosses diagonally across the heart of the state, extending from the southeastern corner of Georgia to the west central and northwest central areas of the state. Yet, the majority of its miles of length traverses the state's lower half, as it stays below Macon's latitude until it finally reaches Manchester. Except for its entrance into Atlanta, most of the trackage proceeds through primarily rural corridors, wending through many square miles of forests and cultivated fields.



Haywood, Ware County



AB&A ad in The Southern Merchant, May 11, 1908

gently undulating quality. After crossing the Flint River, the geography gradually becomes more rolling, and Manchester and Warm Springs are located near the base of Pine Mountain.

Since the ABC bypassed Macon, then the rail hub of middle Georgia, its rail yards were historically of a comparatively small scale and footprint, and were located in relatively small cities and towns, such as Fitzgerald, Oglethorpe, and Manchester. Notably, the ABC constituted the last major railroad to enter the Atlanta market, in 1908. Its yard in Atlanta was on the west side of downtown and was also of a generally smaller size than the competing railroads that were already established there. Since the ABC is now fully integrated into the CSX system, trains that use the ABC tracks into cities such as Waycross and Atlanta are now mostly linked to and routed through other larger rail yards that were acquired as part of other CSX consolidations.

The ABC system did not require the construction of many significant bridges, in part because it stayed south and west of the Ocmulgee/Altamaha River basin. It still crosses the Flint, but as it flows between Montezuma and Oglethorpe, the river was and is not navigable to most commercial

At its southeastern end, noticeably between Waycross and Nicholls, the ABC railbed crosses miles of mostly level interior coastal plain; much of this mostly undeveloped landscape is covered by extensive swathes of pine plantations. Then, as it moves to the northwest and into the Piedmont and Fall Line areas, the terrain gains a more

boat traffic, and it is now spanned by a simple deck girder bridge, resting on a series of mostly modern pier sets of formed concrete. Due to the damming of the Chattahoochee River, a series of three low, non-original and non-historic spans, similar to that in place over the Flint, now bridge the multiple fingers of West Point Lake, near the state line with Alabama.

DETERMINATION OF NATIONAL REGISTER ELIGIBILITY

The Atlanta, Birmingham & Coast Railroad system, including acquisitions and subsidiaries, was evaluated in total for eligibility for listing in the National Register using the National Register Criteria for Evaluation, as outlined in 36 CFR Part 60.4.

The ABC was evaluated under Criterion A and appears to possess a state level of significance in the areas of Transportation and Commerce. The trains of the ABC traveled diagonally across the heart of the southern half of the state of Georgia, thereby connecting the middle and western areas of the state to the Atlantic coast in southeast Georgia and northern Florida. Of course, as described explicitly by its very name, it also connected these same coastal ports in Brunswick and Jacksonville to the then booming inland metropolises of Atlanta and Birmingham. Last, through its new alignment between Montezuma and Birmingham and connection to Atlanta via Manchester, the ABC provided important linkages between Georgia and Alabama markets, and beyond.

In addition, the ABC and its acquired branch lines facilitated the growth of exports of agricultural products from all parts of Georgia, including not only lumber and pine products such as naval stores, but also cotton, fruits, and vegetables, including the Georgia produce staples of peaches, watermelons, peanuts, and pecans. It created and operated a faster, more efficient means for farmers, lumber companies, and other enterprises along the line, as well as those linked to Atlanta by other connecting lines in the north part of the state, to ship their products to other important railroad hub cities such as Birmingham and Waycross, or on to the Atlantic coast ports of Brunswick and Jacksonville. Conversely, it allowed the easy importation of goods into Georgia and beyond from these same port cities.



Douglas, Coffee County

Due in part to its position of geographic and logistical importance, and its corresponding commercial usefulness, most of the former ABC main line is still in heavy use today.

In the areas of Exploration/Settlement and Community Planning and Development under Criterion A, the ABC main trunk line and its branches led to the development of numerous cities, towns, and even smaller settlements in southeast, south central Georgia, and even west central Georgia, for much of its path was plotted through an area of Georgia that was still sparsely settled at the end of the nineteenth century and beginning of the twentieth. Cities such as Alma, Nicholls, Rebecca, and Manchester were either entirely or largely the outgrowth of station stops on the ABC or its predecessors, and the linear layouts of their downtown commercial centers, which emerged alongside and faced the rail corridor, reflects the critical influence of the railroad's course on local settlement and community planning, at specific locations.

However, since almost all sections of the eventual ABC system were developed at a comparatively late stage within the greater context of the history of other major rail systems in Georgia, it could be argued that the ABC played an even greater role in stimulating and sustaining the growth of existing towns, although many of these towns were still in relative infancy. The cities of Douglas and Fitzgerald, for example, had already been founded and settled, but they only truly began to thrive and grow into local and regional commercial centers with the arrival of the ABC and the business activity that it generated. Due to the impetus that the ABC provided, the railroad presents a local level of significance in the areas of Exploration/Settlement and Community Planning and Development.

The ABC holds no known associations with individuals whose specific contributions to history can be identified with or documented through this railroad property. Therefore, the rail system is not eligible for inclusion in the National Register under Criterion B.

The ABC also has been evaluated under Criterion C and has been determined eligible for the National Register based on its significance in the areas of Engineering and Architecture. The trackage for the ABC main trunk line between Sessoms (Nicholls) and Manchester is still fully intact and in constant use, as are its three main branches to Atlanta, Birmingham, and Waycross. The railbeds of these lines are thereby representative of the state of railroad design, including alignment, grading, and construction at the turn of the twentieth century. Much or even most of the original rail infrastructure of rails, ties, trestles, and bridges may have been replaced over the years, in the course of regular operational and safety upgrades, repairs, and improvements. Although these general modifications may diminish the integrity and significance of the railroad's parts and components as physical artifacts, they in no way lessen the significance or integrity presented by the retained route alignments of these lines. The essential linear quality and continuity of the majority of the ABC's historic length has been mostly preserved. In the area of Engineering, the railroad thus remains a good and generally intact example of early-twentieth-century rail construction in Georgia, giving it significance at a statewide level.



Also, more than a half-dozen rail depots along the main trunk line are still extant and positioned either on or very nearby their original sites, adjacent to the rail line. This intact collection includes the ABC depot buildings in Alma, Fitzgerald, Lilly, Oglethorpe,

Ideal, and Manchester, as well as the depot in Tifton, along the former corridor of the branch line to Thomasville. A couple of other original ABC depots are still extant, only they do not exist at their original locations. The present Andersonville depot, sited close beside Norfolk Southern's still active Central of Georgia/Southwestern Railroad mainline, was moved from its original service as the ABC depot at Mauk, in nearby Taylor County. Montezuma's ABC depot was moved, for similar tourism-oriented reasons, to the Georgia Agrirama (Georgia Museum of Agriculture) site in Tifton during the 1970s.

This complement of extant depots is noteworthy in that all of the wood-framed examples (excluding brick depots at Fitzgerald and Manchester) display the repeated motifs of the company's distinctive template plans, which were recycled for most of its stations along the route, with some minor variations in size and details. Developed by the AB&A in the first decade of the 20th century, and implemented as the main trunk line was being extended westward, the ABC's standardized designs featured architectural elements that were highly functional and utilitarian, but were nevertheless artful in their application, in keeping with the ideals of the then burgeoning Arts and Crafts stylistic movement. The typical hallmarks of these single-story depots are corner turrets that project above the surrounding roof hips, applications of wood shingle siding or wood paneling, eave overhangs that are notably wide and low, even for rail depots, and large or even oversized, curving wood brackets that support the eaves. These remaining depots together allow the greater railroad system with which they were historically affiliated to present a state level of significance in the area of architecture,



Montezuma, Macon County

for these are good, representative examples of railroad station and railroad building architecture in Georgia from the first decades of the twentieth century.

There are no indications that any of the rail corridors of the ABC main trunk line or any of its active or abandoned former branch lines is likely to yield information on important research questions in history or prehistory. Likewise, the ABC rail system overall does not appear to have the potential to be the principal source of important information. Therefore, there was no basis for evaluating the property under Criterion D.

Because the ABC system remains substantially intact, it retains integrity in the areas of location, setting, design, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association; see attached System Feature Inventory Forms for further analyses of integrity. Therefore, the former Atlantic, Birmingham & Coast Railroad system is considered eligible for listing in the National Register



Map of ABC&A, *Railway Age Gazette*, Nov. 24, 1916.

The Atlanta, Birmingham & Coast Railroad system is eligible overall for the National Register under Criterion A, for its historic significance in the areas of Commerce, Community Planning & Development, Exploration/Settlement, and Transportation, and under Criterion C, in the areas of Architecture and Engineering. Its period of significance is 1887 to 1946, including and spanning the time from the initial development of its earliest predecessor company, the Waycross Air Line, through to its full absorption into the Atlantic Coast Line system.

PROPOSED NATIONAL REGISTER BOUNDARIES

For the following component lines of the Atlanta, Birmingham & Coast Railroad system that are intact, and have sufficient significance and integrity to be eligible for the National Register of Historic Places, the proposed National Register boundaries for listing correspond to the current and historic railroad corridor rights-of-way of all eligible and contributing sections.

Within Georgia, these sections consist, in part, of the full lengths of the ABC main trunk line from Sessoms/Nicholls west to Manchester, and the three main branch lines in service, including the original Waycross Air Line branch from Waycross north to Sessoms and the two branches that diverge at Manchester, with one extending north to Atlanta, and the other continuing to the northwest beyond LaGrange and ultimately on to

of Historic Places, for the reasons described above. Even though one of its original main branches has been abandoned, and most of another of its second tier branches has also been abandoned, reducing the area of service from the former ultimate extent of the railroad system, the

Birmingham, Alabama. Although now abandoned, the branch at the east end of the main trunk line, stretching from Sessoms/Nicholls to Brunswick, has also been determined to contribute to the ABC system's National Register eligibility; its proposed boundaries correspond to the rights-of-way bounds of its original rail corridor, which derive from its genesis as parts of the Brunswick & Birmingham Railway and the Offerman & Western Railroad. Last, the southern half of the ABC's Thomasville branch division, spanning the distance from Tifton to Thomasville, has been determined to be contributing to the National Register eligibility of the ABC system. The line is abandoned from Tifton to south of Moultrie, but still active from Coolidge south to Thomasville. Its proposed boundaries correspond to the rights-of-way bounds of its original rail corridor, which was initially developed as the Tifton, Thomasville & Gulf Railway.

At any locations along each of the corridors where there are intact depots located outside of rail rights-of-way, the proposed boundary projects from the rail right-of-way to include the depot's footprint, as well as any intact platforms or docks, and any intact sidings or rail yards.

CONTRIBUTING FEATURES

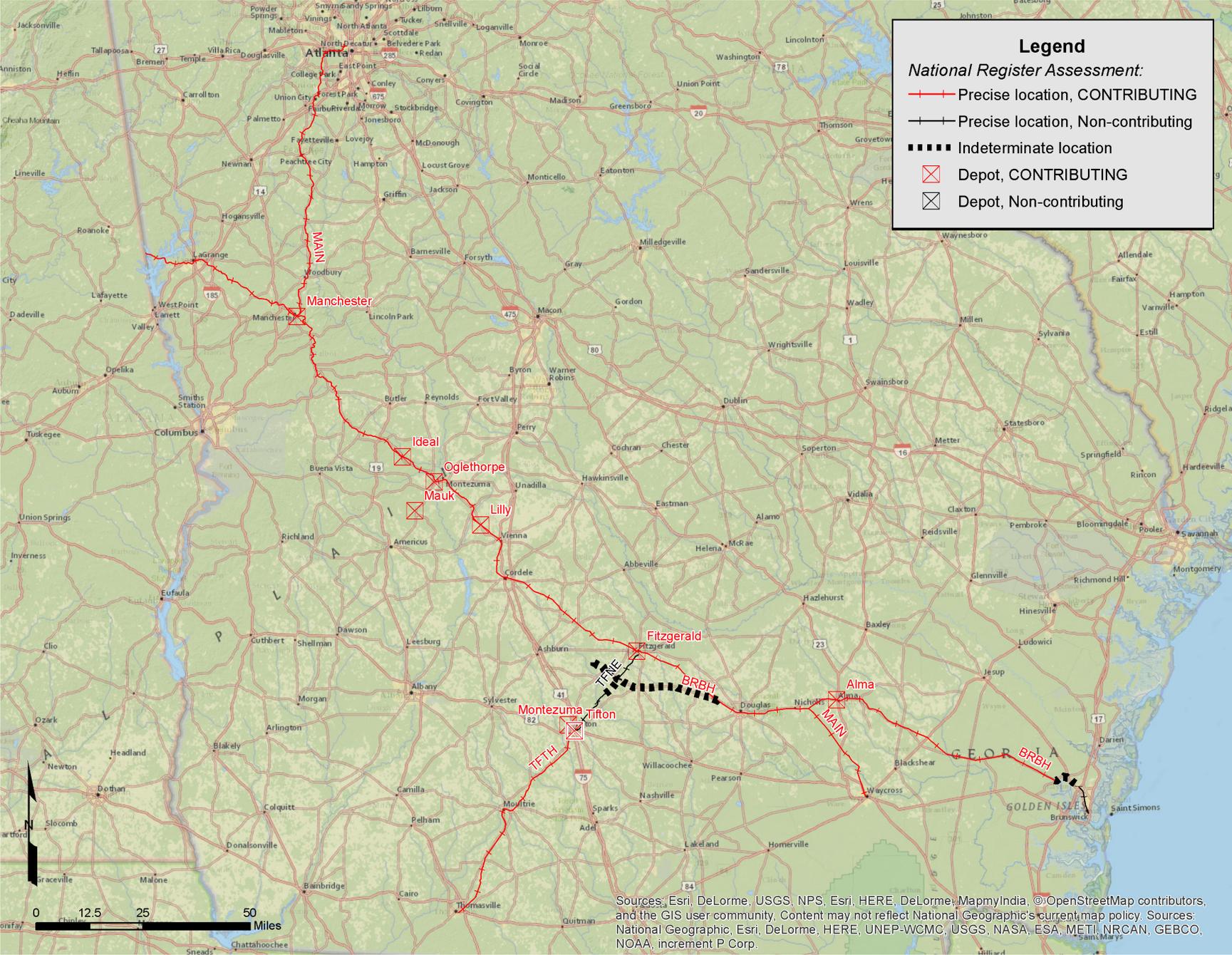
ABC main trunk line; ABC main branches from Manchester to Atlanta and from Manchester to the Georgia-Alabama state line; ABC main branch from Nicholls to Waycross; ABC main branch from Nicholls to Brunswick; southern half of the ABC's former Thomasville Branch Line, consisting of the length of the former Tifton, Thomasville & Gulf Railway (see attached System Feature Inventory Forms).

NON-CONTRIBUTING FEATURES

The northern half of the ABC's former Thomasville Branch Line, consisting of the length of the former Tifton & Northeastern Railroad, which connected Fitzgerald and Tifton (see attached System Feature Inventory Forms).

PREPARED BY

Steve Storey, David Ray, Matt McDaniel, Erin Murphy, George Rounds, and Chris Mroczka



ATLANTA, BIRMINGHAM & COAST MAINLINE (MAIN)

Other names: Atlanta, Birmingham & Atlantic

Historic System: Atlanta, Birmingham & Coast (ABC)

NR Evaluation: Eligible

Physical Status: Mixed (Active, Abandoned, and Repurposed segments)

Current owner: CSX Transportation

Predecessors: Atlanta, Birmingham & Atlantic; Atlantic & Birmingham; Brunswick & Birmingham; Waycross Air Line; Tifton & Northeastern; Tifton, Thomasville & Gulf

Location: Waycross, Ware County, to Manchester, Meriwether County, with main line branches to Atlanta, and to Birmingham, Alabama, by way of LaGrange, Troup County



ATLANTA, BIRMINGHAM & COAST (ABC)
System Feature Inventory Form

DEVELOPMENTAL HISTORY

Waycross Air Line Railroad and the Atlantic & Birmingham Railway

The first section of the Atlanta, Birmingham & Coast mainline (MAIN) was first chartered on October 24, 1887 as the Waycross Air Line. Its first 25 miles of railroad, from Waycross to Sessoms (just east of Nicholls), opened in 1890. The line was extended to Nicholls by the end of 1895, to Douglas by the end of 1899, and to Fitzgerald in 1901. In November of 1901, the company's charter was then amended and its name changed to Atlantic & Birmingham Railroad, later converted to Railway.

The first section of line under the enlarged charter powers was completed between Fitzgerald and Cordele on May 25, 1902. Thirty-one additional miles from Cordele to Montezuma were put into operation in March, 1903, and surveys were being undertaken from Montezuma to Birmingham in that same year (as reported in the 1903 Poor's Manual of Railroads).

In 1904, the Atlanta & Birmingham obtained the Brunswick & Birmingham Railway. Both lines already provided service to Nicholls, and so were able to connect there.

Atlanta, Birmingham & Atlantic Railroad

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The ACL then merged with the Seaboard Air Line Railroad in 1967, to form the Seaboard Coast Line. In 1980, the Seaboard Coast Line merged with the Chessie System (originally the Chesapeake & Ohio) to create CSX Corporation. Between the initial merger in 1980 and 1987, all of the accumulated railroad lines and divisions brought together by the new CSX holding company were consolidated into a unified operational entity called CSX Transportation. CSX still owns and operates the former ABC mainline.

DESCRIPTION

The main trunk line of the former ABC (MAIN) is now a vital part of CSX operations in Georgia, Florida, and Alabama. It constitutes the longest component of the CSX route from Florida, and the port of Jacksonville, with the major markets of Atlanta, Birmingham, and all areas of the interior of the country beyond. As such, the line carries a high volume of intermodal containers, usually double-stacked on cars, and also transports many piggybacked truck trailers. These containers are often offloaded at distribution centers in the greater metropolitan areas around Atlanta and Birmingham, or at so-called "inland ports" like the expansive one in Cordele, alongside Interstate 75. At this intermodal facility, the containers are offloaded onto waiting tractor-trailer rigs for further distribution by way of the interstate and local highways.

Due to the high daily traffic volume, there are numerous segments of double-tracking along the mainline route. Also, CSX has installed concrete ties along much of the length of the mainline, to help the tracks better cope with the heavy weights of the long trains and thereby extend longevity of the line's infrastructure.

The MAIN cuts a gently curving swath across south central Georgia, running diagonally from Waycross over to Manchester, which is due west of Macon, near the Alabama line. At Manchester, the mainline forks into

two major, mainline branches. The Atlanta branch line continues essentially due north, and enters Atlanta through its western edges. The Birmingham branch line continues to the northwest in to Alabama, crossing the state line just above West Point Lake.

Along its length through Georgia, the MAIN features two unusual, two-story masonry depots. Each was built at a major junction point for the railroad. The Fitzgerald depot was at the connection between the Mainline and the ABC's Thomasville Branch Line, while Manchester was the meeting point for the Atlanta and Birmingham branches. Accordingly, both were designed to be large enough to house railroad offices. Both were built by the AB&A or ABC, and although the one in Manchester was built in 1937, 30 years after the Fitzgerald example, they both appear to display the same basic form, massing, and scale, the same red clay tile roofs, and they may even share common plan elements.

However, the Fitzgerald depot is constructed of stucco-finished poured concrete, and is much more highly embellished, with applied Spanish Eclectic Revival details over the windows and in the gable faces, and a prominent, Mission-style parapet atop the front wall of the one-story cafeteria wing. As befits a depot built during the Great Depression, the Manchester depot is much more restrained, and nearly devoid of ornament. Most of its aesthetic character comes from its brick bearing walls and tile roof.

As described in the ABC system's Property Information Form, the main trunk line also still retains a number of other original, single-story wood frame depots along its course. The collection includes the ABC depot buildings in Lilly, Oglethorpe, and Ideal. A couple of other original MAIN depots are still extant, only they do not exist at their original locations. The present Andersonville depot, sited close beside Norfolk Southern's still active Central of Georgia/Southwestern Railroad mainline, was moved from its original service as the ABC depot at Mauk, in nearby Taylor County. Montezuma's ABC depot was moved, for similar tourism-oriented reasons, to the Georgia Agrirama (Georgia Museum of Agriculture) site in Tifton during the 1970s.

This complement of extant depots is noteworthy in that all of the wood-framed examples (excluding brick depots at Fitzgerald and Manchester) display the repeated motifs of the company's distinctive template plans, which were recycled for most of its stations along the route, with some minor variations in size and details. Developed by the AB&A in the first decade of the twentieth century, and implemented as the main trunk line was being extended westward, the ABC's standardized designs featured architectural elements that were highly functional and utilitarian, but were nevertheless artful in their application, in keeping with the ideals of the then burgeoning Arts and Crafts and Craftsman stylistic movements. The typical hallmarks of these single-story depots are corner turrets that project above the surrounding roof hips, applications of wood shingle siding or wood paneling, eave overhangs that are notably wide and low, even for rail depots, and large or even oversized, curving wood brackets that support the eaves.

NATIONAL REGISTER CONTRIBUTING STATUS

The ABC's main trunk line (MAIN) is a component of the ABC system; the ABC system is considered eligible for the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion A in the areas of Commerce, Community Planning and Development, Exploration/Settlement, and Transportation, and under Criterion C in the areas of Architecture and Engineering. The MAIN and its three major branches were together evaluated for potential contributions to the historic significance and potential National Register eligibility of the ABC system.

The MAIN contributes to the National Register eligibility of the ABC system under Criterion A for its significance in the areas of Commerce, Community Planning and Development, Exploration/Settlement, and Transportation. The trains on the ABC's mainline traveled diagonally across nearly the full width of the southern half of the state of Georgia, thereby connecting the middle and western parts of the state, south and west of Macon, to the Atlantic coast of southern Georgia, at Brunswick, and at Jacksonville, in northern Florida. Due in part to its position of geographic and logistical importance, and its corresponding commercial usefulness, the MAIN is still in heavy use today.

In the areas of Commerce and Transportation, the MAIN facilitated the growth of exports of agricultural products from all parts of Georgia, including not only lumber and pine products such as naval stores, but also cotton, fruits, and vegetables, including peaches, watermelons, peanuts, and pecans. It created and operated a faster, more efficient means for farmers, lumber companies, and other enterprises along the line or along south Georgia's feeder lines, as well as those linked to Atlanta by other connecting lines in the north part of the state, to ship their products to the Atlantic coast ports. Conversely, it allowed the easy importation of goods into Georgia, northern Alabama, and beyond.

In the areas of Community Planning and Development and Exploration/Settlement, the MAIN stimulated the growth of existing towns and the settlement of new towns in south Georgia and west Georgia. Much of it was built into and through an area of Georgia that was still sparsely settled at the end of the nineteenth century. The ABC served as an even greater and more notable impetus behind the creation of entirely new cities, towns, and communities along the main line, correlating with the placement of rail stops and stations. Many municipalities or communities that exist along the MAIN rail corridor today, such as Rebecca, Lilly, Ideal, and Mauk, were founded and settled as a result of the construction of the railroad. The railroad's critical role in the origination of many of these communities may be easily observed and recognized by the rail corridor's placement at or near the center of many of the community's commercial and residential districts. If a community along this rail corridor was not a previously existing county seat, and the railbed runs through the heart of town, the community was likely initiated by the coming of the MAIN.

The MAIN has also been determined to contribute to the ABC system's eligibility because of its significance in the areas of Engineering and Architecture. The MAIN's railbed is still intact and in constant use. The roadbed of this main trunk line and its three main branches is thereby representative of the state of railroad design and engineering, including alignment, grading, and construction, during the last decade of the nineteenth century and the first decade of the twentieth century. Most if not all of the original rail infrastructure of rails, ties, trestles, and bridges

may have been replaced over the years, in the course of regular operational and safety upgrades, repairs, and improvements. Although these general modifications may diminish the integrity and significance of the railroad's parts and components as physical artifacts, they in no way lessen the significance or integrity presented by the MAIN's retained route alignment.

Also, the remaining depots in Fitzgerald, Lilly, Oglethorpe, Ideal, and Manchester, as well as the relocated but otherwise intact Mauk depot in Andersonville and the Montezuma depot at the Georgia Agrirama, together allow the ABC's mainline, and the greater ABC system, to present both a state and local level of significance in the area of Architecture. These are good, representative examples of railroad station and railroad building architecture in Georgia from the first decades of the twentieth century. These depots along the MAIN are also illustrative of the various layouts and applied stylistic traits that were utilized by the AB&A and ABC in their depot construction. They also display the company's clear interest in and concern with the aesthetic appeal of their buildings, for these depots are all more highly styled than would be typically found in small towns and communities of the period.

EVALUATION OF INTEGRITY

The MAIN has been determined to possess integrity in the areas of location, setting, design, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association. The railroad has not been relocated, and its alignment remains substantially unchanged since its construction; therefore, the resource retains integrity of location and setting. As the alignment and roadbed, including cuts and grades, remains intact, and other materials have been upgraded to enable continued operation of the line, the resource also substantially retains integrity of design, materials, and workmanship. The railroad also retains integrity of feeling and association as it conveys its physical characteristics as a historic railroad line. This high degree of integrity in all areas is benefited by the retention of five of the railroad's original depots at their original locations next to the railbed, as well as two more that have been moved away from the alignment.

PROPOSED NATIONAL REGISTER BOUNDARY

For the MAIN, inclusive of the ABC's intact and active main trunk line and three main branches, the proposed National Register boundary corresponds to the current and historic railroad corridor rights-of-way of the line's entirety. These corridor rights-of-way extend the full length of the MAIN within Georgia, westward from downtown Waycross all the way to the Alabama state line at the Evansville community, and also from Manchester northward to the west side of downtown Atlanta.

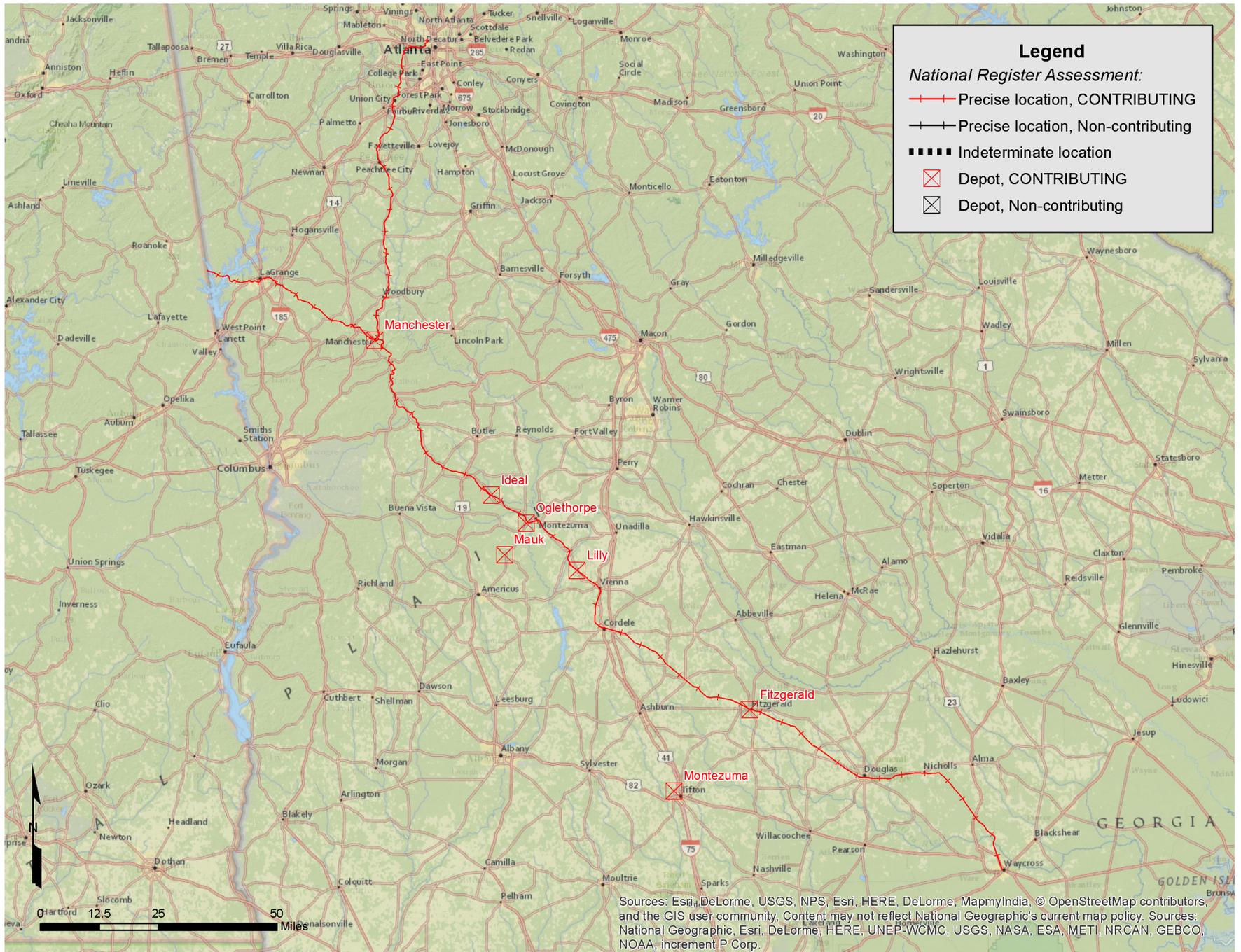
The proposed boundary contains all National Register qualifying characteristics and features of the resource and consists of the railroad corridor's fully intact, unbroken alignment, which includes the railbed; level crossings; bridges and trestles; and other elements of the rail resource, including cuts and built-up grades.

At any locations where there are intact depots now located outside the rail rights-of-way, but immediately adjacent to them, the proposed boundary projects from the rail right-of-way to include each depot's footprint, as well as any intact platforms or docks, any affiliated structures such as water cisterns or coaling towers, and any intact sidings or rail yards.

Additional contributing but discontinuous elements include the relocated Mauk depot in Andersonville and the relocated Montezuma depot at the Georgia Agrirama in Tifton; the proposed boundary includes these buildings' footprints.

PREPARED BY

Steve Storey, David Ray, and Matt McDaniel



MAIN: Resource Location Map



MAIN: Kettle Creek, Ware County



MAIN: Jamestown, Ware County



MAIN: Nicholls, Coffee County



MAIN: Chatterton, Coffee County



MAIN: Douglas, Coffee County



MAIN: Osierfield, Irwin County



MAIN: Fitzgerald, Ben Hill County



MAIN: Westwood, Ben Hill County



MAIN: Rebecca, Turner County



MAIN: Cordele, Crisp County



MAIN: Vienna, Dooly County



MAIN: Lilly, Dooly County



MAIN: Lilly depot, Dooly County



MAIN: Montezuma, Macon County



MAIN: Ideal depot, Macon County



MAIN: Southland, Taylor County



MAIN: Talbotton, Talbot County



MAIN: Big Lazar Creek, Talbot County



MAIN: Woodland, Talbot County



MAIN: Manchester yard, Meriwether County



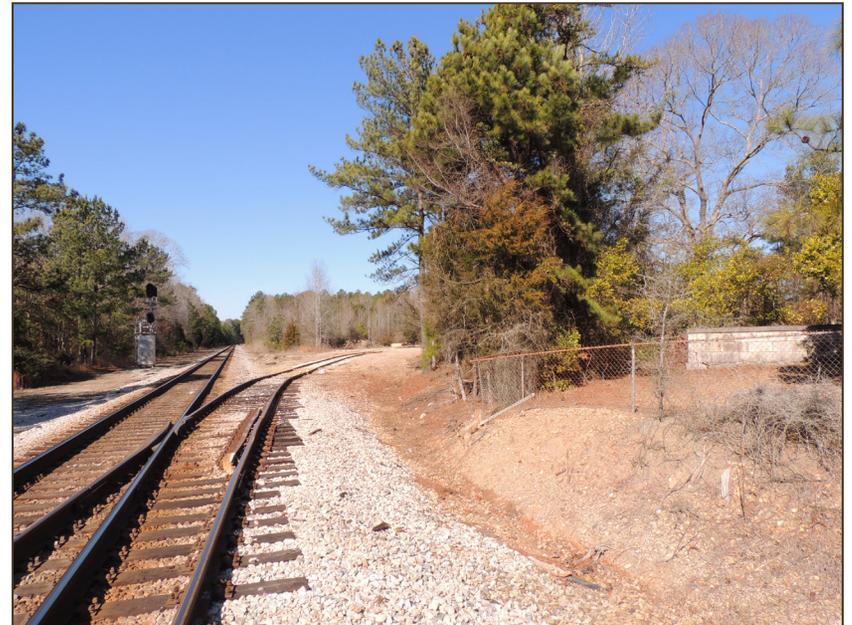
MAIN: Manchester depot, Meriwether County



MAIN: Warm Springs, Meriwether County



MAIN: Durand, Meriwether County



MAIN: Knott, Troup County



MAIN: South Bernard Street, LaGrange



MAIN: Obliterated alignment at US 27/SR 1, Troup County



MAIN: Chattahoochee River/West Point Lake, Troup County



MAIN: Atlanta branch line at Pigeon Creek, Meriwether County



MAIN: Dromedary Street at Woodbury Yard



MAIN: Edman, Meriwether County



MAIN: Gay, Meriwether County



MAIN: Haralson, Coweta County



MAIN: Wisdom Road, Peachtree City



MAIN: Interstate 85, Fulton County



MAIN: Union Street, Union City



MAIN: AWP crossing, Stonewall vicinity, Fulton County



MAIN: Fairfield Place, Atlanta



MAIN: West Lake Avenue, Atlanta



MAIN: Chappell Road, Atlanta



MAIN: Mayson Turner Road, Atlanta



MAIN: North Avenue, Atlanta



MAIN: Joseph Lowry Boulevard, Atlanta



MAIN: Hollowell Parkway, Atlanta (part of Atlanta BeltLine trail project)



MAIN: Jett Street, Atlanta

TIFTON & NORTHEASTERN (TFNE)

Other names: Gulf Line Railway

Historic System: Georgia Southern & Florida Railroad

NR Evaluation: Not eligible/Non-contributing

Physical Status: Abandoned and dismantled

Current owner: N/A

Predecessors: N/A

Location: Worth (Turner County) to Hawkinsville, via Pitts and Pineview



ATLANTA, BIRMINGHAM & COAST (ABC)
System Feature Inventory Form

DEVELOPMENTAL HISTORY

Chartered in 1891 by business interests in Tifton, the Tifton & Northeastern Railroad finally completed its 25-mile line from Tifton northeasterly to Fitzgerald in the summer of 1896. Fitzgerald was then a brand-new town, and was only incorporated on December 2, 1896. As its name suggests, construction of the Tifton & Northeastern (TFNE) began from Tifton, where the company's offices and shops were located. The company's president was H. H. Tift of Tifton.

Tifton had long been served by the antebellum Brunswick & Albany/Brunswick & Western mainline (later part of the Atlantic Coast Line system) and had become a notable crossing with the recent arrival, in 1889, of the Georgia Southern & Florida mainline from Macon to Valdosta. Thus, the TFNE would originally have served as a feeder branch from Tift and Irwin counties to the two major mainlines at the Tifton railroad hub.

When the TFNE was first chartered, Fitzgerald did not exist and, in fact, had not even been envisioned. Although the TFNE was years away from being fully built, a Rand McNally map of Georgia in 1892 depicts the line continuing north to Swan, the small community that was later to be supplanted by the development of Fitzgerald. A company schedule posted on March 27, 1896, reports that the last five miles of the northern end of the

line remained unfinished, and that horse-drawn carriages were available to cover the leftover distance between the new railroad and the new city.

The completion of the TFNE into Fitzgerald in mid-1896 was coincident to the arrival from the north of the Seaboard Air Line's subsidiary, the Abbeville & Waycross Railroad. Originally incorporated as an independent railroad in 1889, the Abbeville & Waycross endeavored, as its name suggests, to establish itself as a bridge line between the Savannah, Americus & Montgomery's east-west mainline in Abbeville, and the aforementioned Brunswick & Albany/Brunswick & Western mainline, which passed through both Tifton and Waycross on its journey between its namesake eastern and western termini.

However, it was only completed southward approximately 18 miles to the small community of Lulaville by 1896, when it was purchased by the Georgia & Alabama Railway, also the new owner of the Savannah, Americus & Montgomery. The Georgia & Alabama, a directly controlled subsidiary of the Seaboard Air Line (SAL), then immediately set about continuing the former Abbeville & Waycross south to Fitzgerald. It made rapid progress and, upon finishing the first extension, kept on building, proceeding an additional nine miles from Fitzgerald to Ocilla.

Nevertheless, the 1896 completion of the two lines from Tifton and from Abbeville was apparently serendipitous, at least in terms of the acquisition of rights-of-way for a north-south aligned rail corridor through the new town. Both the TFNE line and the SAL branch line to Ocilla ran beside each other, and may well have even used shared track for a distance, both passing along the east side of downtown Fitzgerald.

Like Tifton and Abbeville before it, Fitzgerald was finally reached by its own east-west oriented mainline, the Atlantic & Birmingham Railroad, in 1901. Within two years, the Atlantic & Birmingham took the initiative to purchase not only the TFNE but also its newer counterpart to the south of Tifton, then called the Tifton, Thomasville & Gulf Railway. The operations and management of the two lines were then integrated and the combination was reborn as a lengthy branch line of the Atlantic & Birmingham, stretching southwesterly through Tifton and Moultrie to a southern terminus at Thomasville. At Thomasville, the new branch offered connection to the east-west aligned Savannah, Florida & Western (SF&W) mainline, which had just been amalgamated into the Atlantic Coast Line (ACL) system.

Interestingly, after the Atlantic & Birmingham's corporate successor, the Atlanta, Birmingham & Atlantic/Atlanta, Birmingham & Coast, was itself also ultimately taken over by the ACL in 1946, the role of the ABC's Thomasville branch line evolved once again. With its new status as a component within the greater ACL system, it now was able to serve as a north-south bridge line between the ACL's current roster of three major, east-west oriented mainlines through this region of south Georgia: the former ABC to the north, the former SF&W to the south, and the former Brunswick & Western in the middle.

For 14 more years, the ACL continued operating the former TFNE's component sections of the Fitzgerald-to-Thomasville branch, or bridge line, before abandoning the length of the line between Fitzgerald and Moultrie in 1960.

DESCRIPTION

At its maximum length, this single-line railroad corridor ran on a general northeast-southwest alignment from Fitzgerald to Tifton, passing en route through the town of Mystic, and through the communities or station stops of Pinetta and Harding.

As described above, the rail corridor tied into the ABC main trunk line, as well as the SAL's Abbeville & Waycross branch line, along the eastern edge of downtown Fitzgerald. It ran parallel and just east of South Meade Street and then along the eastern edge of the city's Blue-Gray Park, but it then diverged from the SAL branch at the point where the separate one-way pairs of US 129 now reunite. The shared section of ABC/SAL tracks once used by both railroads is still active and in use, as part of a short, CSX operated spur line. The TFNE then crossed diagonally across the city's southern edge, entering/leaving Fitzgerald at its southwest corner. The length of Fort Sumter Road, an unpaved access road running alongside the western edge of Fitzgerald Municipal Airport, now uses the former rail right-of-way.

Southwest of here, more traces of the TFNE railroad grade can be found throughout the length of its former rail corridor. The corridor is clearly visible in Mystic south of SR 32/Mystic Highway, running through the middle of town as a grassy corridor between the parallel paths of Irwin County Roads 126 and 114.

The TFNE corridor entered/exited the northeast corner of Tifton, crossing diagonally across the east side of downtown to connect to the north end of the former Tifton, Thomasville & Gulf. A short section of the TFNE's western interchange into the ACL's former Brunswick & Western mainline is still intact and in limited use; it ties into the east-west line on the north side of SR 520/East 5th Street, at its intersection with the East 2nd Street extension. The former TFNE tracks still serve a plant along the south side of Ferry Lake Road. Across Ferry Lake Road, the unpaved surface of O'Quinn Road now utilizes the former TFNE right-of-way.

Just as evidence of the extant roadbed and rail corridor can be routinely located, more routine are instances of the disturbance and/or eradication of the railbed. The near level or gently rolling terrain through which the former railroad passed is still rural, but it is heavily cultivated, for row crops, for orchards of pecan trees, or for pine plantations. In many such cases, the preparation for planting, or the repeated plowing of agricultural fields, has erased all remains of the railbed; it has been reverted to the ground level of the surrounding landscape.

The result of these factors is that there are now numerous gaps in the continuity of the TFNE rail corridor. Certainly, traces are not hard to discover, but the entirety of the former alignment is now separated into many non-contiguous sections. On balance, the TFNE railbed no longer clearly and readily convey its former standing as an uninterrupted railroad corridor.

NATIONAL REGISTER CONTRIBUTING STATUS

The Tifton & Northeastern Railroad line (TFNE), which was owned and operated by the ABC and its predecessor, the Atlanta, Birmingham & Atlantic, for the majority of its history of service, is therefore a component of the ABC system. The ABC system is considered eligible for the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion A in the areas of Commerce, Community Planning and Development, Exploration/Settlement, and Transportation, and under Criterion C in the areas of Architecture and Engineering. The TFNE was evaluated for its potential contributions to the historic significance and National Register eligibility of the ABC system.

The TFNE was evaluated under Criterion A; due to its status as a section of the ABC's Thomasville Branch Line, the TFNE does have the potential to contribute to the significance of its parent ABC system. For a duration of more than half a century (1903-1960), the Thomasville Branch Line played a prominent role in the ABC system's historic significance in the areas of Commerce and Transportation. It benefited the region south of the ABC's main trunk line, including Ben Hill, Irwin, Tift, and other counties, in all four of these areas, by giving shippers and passengers located along the

route many additional outlets and points of connection to other mainlines, and thus contributing to the prosperity of the south central Georgia region. It first helped sustain the success and ongoing growth of the Atlantic & Birmingham Railroad, by opening up new markets to the fledgling rail network. After the AB&A's expansion to Atlanta and Birmingham, it helped maintain the usefulness of the much enlarged ABC system, by feeding traffic and customers to the main trunk line at Fitzgerald. For all these reasons, it achieved significance in the area of Transportation, for being not only an important, long-serving part of the ABC system, but also of the interconnected web of railroads that provided thorough coverage of south Georgia.

Moreover, the TFNE holds potential significance in its own right, for its own impacts during its short period of operation as a stand-alone, short-line railroad company. The local significance of these contributions apply not only to the aforementioned areas of Commerce and Transportation, but also in the realm of Exploration/Settlement and Community Planning and Development. As one of two short line railroads to reach Fitzgerald in its first year of incorporation, it helped sustain the rapid settlement and growth of this new city, although it did not necessarily affect its planning or development. However, the small town of Mystic in Irwin County does still show a trace of the TFNE's once crucial role in its community planning and development, by way of its few remaining historic commercial buildings that stand along a wide, empty rail right-of-way.

The TFNE was also evaluated for its potential to contribute to the significance of the ABC system under Criterion C. However, because the TFNE's rail corridor has been broken and interrupted at numerous places along its course since its abandonment in 1960 and the subsequent removal of its tracks, ties, and ballast, it no longer able to contribute in the area of Engineering. Although the railbed is in place and evident in the landscape at certain specific points along its path, the essential linearity of the TFNE is no longer fully intact or visible. As a consequence, the TFNE no longer readily presents its historically-significant design characteristics, and does not represent a good example of a rural, short-line railroad from the end of the 19th century, or of a component branch line from the early 20th

century. Also, since no former TFNE or ABC depots are still extant at the former station stops between Fitzgerald and Tifton, the TFNE no longer contributes to the ABC system's significance in the area of Architecture.

As described above, the former TFNE rail corridor has the potential to present significance under Criterion A in the areas of Commerce, Transportation, Exploration/Settlement, and Community Planning and Development, but its current, largely disturbed physical condition and disrupted, disjointed state do not allow it to convey this significance, as the line now lacks sufficient integrity, as is described above and hereafter. Due to its diminished integrity, the TFNE does not contribute to the ABC system's eligibility for listing in the National Register of Historic Places.

EVALUATION OF INTEGRITY

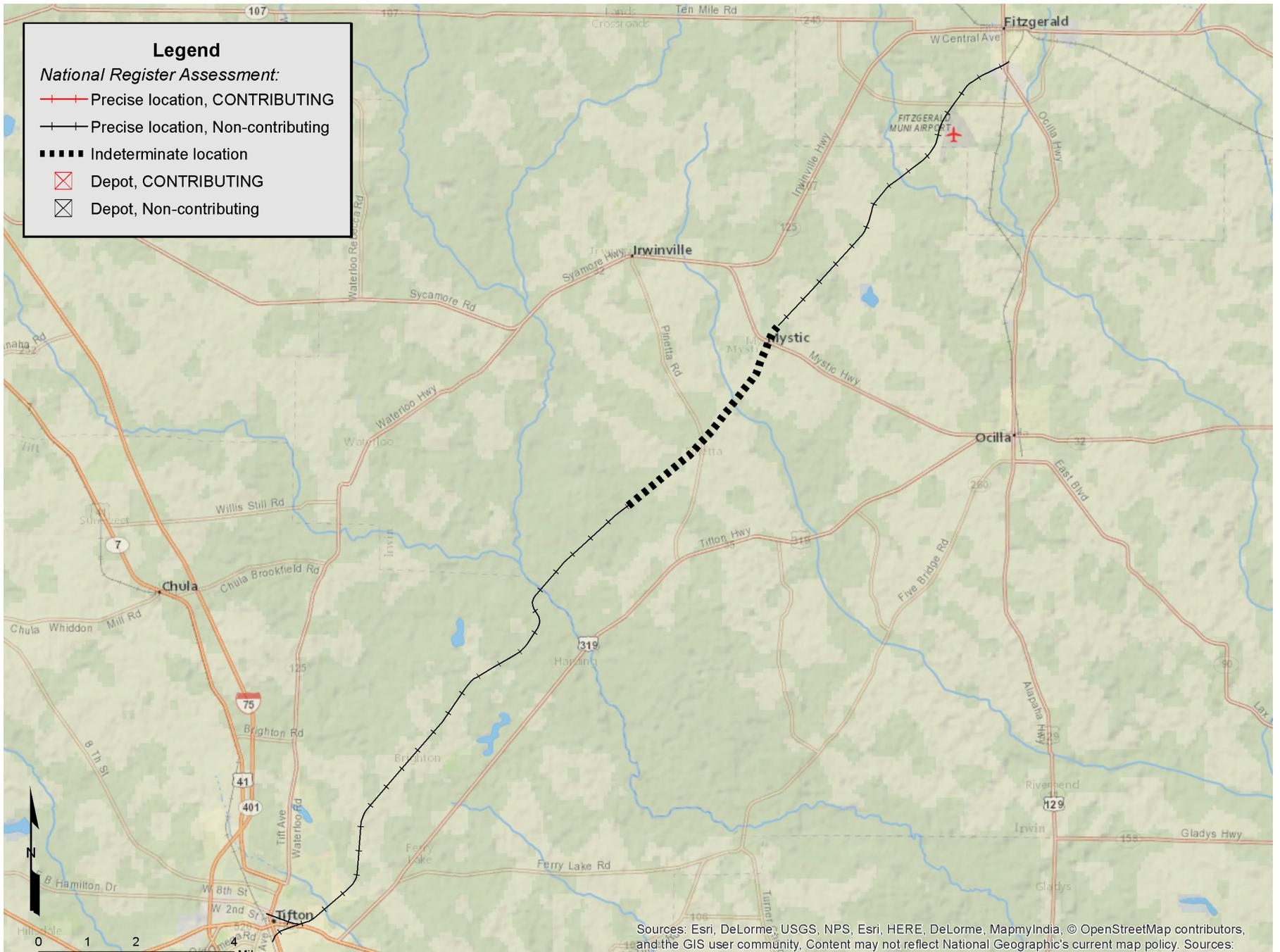
A ground-level field survey of the area of the former rail corridor was conducted, as was a review of available historic and current aerial imagery. In the vicinity of the abandoned right-of-way that was accessible to the surveyors, little remaining evidence of the railroad's former railbed or infrastructure, such as raised embankments, cuts, trestles, or bridges, was found, and it appears that no depots, warehouses, or platforms are in existence. Accordingly, it has been determined that the TFNE no longer retains integrity in the areas of location, setting, design, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association.

PROPOSED NATIONAL REGISTER BOUNDARY

Not applicable

PREPARED BY

Steve Storey, David Ray, and Matt McDaniel



TFNE: Resource Location Map



TFNE: Wye to ABC mainline, Fitzgerald



TFNE: Central Avenue crossing, Fitzgerald



TFNE: At Blue-Gray Park, Fitzgerald



TFNE: Fort Sumter Road at Municipal Airport, Fitzgerald



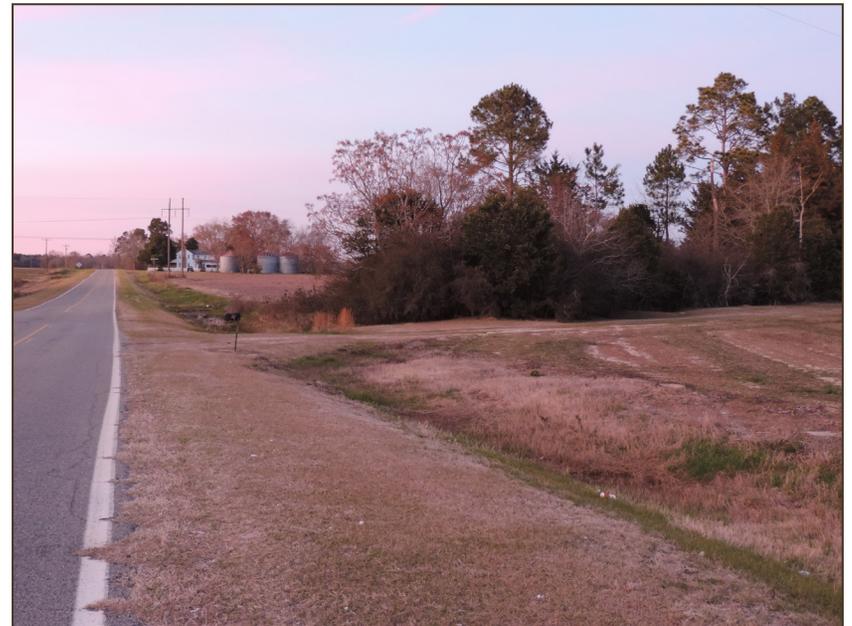
TFNE: Railbed at Laurel Road crossing, Mystic



TFNE: SR 32 at railbed, Mystic



TFNE: Railbed at CR 114, Mystic



TFNE: Crossing at Pinetta Road, Pinetta



TFNE: Ponderosa Road (railbed), Pinetta



TFNE: Crossing at East Second Street, Tifton

TIFTON, THOMASVILLE & GULF (TFTH)

Other names: N/A

Historic System: Atlanta, Birmingham & Coast (ABC)

NR Evaluation: Eligible/Contributing

Physical Status: Mixed (Active, Abandoned, Rail-Trail segments)

Current owner: CSX Transportation

Predecessors: N/A

Location: From its junction point with the former Atlantic Coast Line/Savannah, Florida & Western mainline at Thomasville, the line runs on a general track to the northeast, passing through Coolidge, Moultrie, Norman Park, and Omega, en route to Tifton, and a connection there with the southern end of the former Tifton & Northeastern Railroad.



ATLANTA, BIRMINGHAM & COAST (ABC)
System Feature Inventory Form

DEVELOPMENTAL HISTORY

Chartered in 1897 by business interests in Tifton, the Tifton, Thomasville & Gulf Railway constructed its line south to Thomasville in 1900. Tifton had long been served by the antebellum Brunswick & Albany/Brunswick & Western mainline (later part of the Atlantic Coast Line system) and had become a notable crossing with the recent arrival, in 1889, of the Georgia Southern & Florida mainline from Macon to Valdosta. Thomasville was also served by an antebellum railroad, the former Atlantic & Gulf Railroad. This mainline, stretching across the full width of the bottom of the state, was called the Savannah, Florida & Western at the time of the TFTH construction, but was soon to be acquired in 1902 by the Atlantic Coast Line (ACL). Soon after its completion, therefore, the TFTH became a de facto bridge line between the ACL's east-west mainlines in Tifton and Thomasville. Thomasville and Moultrie were or would soon be served by a host of other railroads, giving the TFTH an assortment of possible connection and transfer points.

Even so, as an enterprise born in Tifton, the TFTH already had a connector line in the other new railroad previously developed in Tifton, the Tifton & Northeastern (TFNE). The partnership between the two short-line railroads was solidified in 1903 by their common and concurrent acquisition by the Atlantic & Birmingham Railroad. The operations and management of the two lines were then integrated and the combination was reborn as a lengthy

branch line of the Atlantic & Birmingham, stretching northeasterly from Thomasville through Moultrie to a northern terminus at Fitzgerald.

Interestingly, after the Atlantic & Birmingham's corporate successor, the Atlanta, Birmingham & Atlantic/Atlanta, Birmingham & Coast, was itself also ultimately taken over by the ACL in 1946, the role of the ABC's Thomasville branch line evolved once again. With its new status as a component within the greater ACL system, it now was able to serve as a north-south bridge line between the ACL's current roster of three major, east-west oriented mainlines through this region of south Georgia: the former ABC to the north, the former SF&W to the south, and the former Brunswick & Western in the middle.

For 14 more years, the ACL continued operating the full length of the former Tifton, Thomasville & Gulf Railway's component sections of the Fitzgerald-to-Thomasville branch, or bridge line, before abandoning the length of the line between Tifton and Moultrie in 1960 (at the same time of abandonment as the entire TFNE). The northern segment of the Thomasville-Moultrie section, consisting of the line north of Coolidge, was abandoned in 1990. The last remainder of the former TFTH, from Coolidge south to Thomasville, is still in active but light operational use by CSX.

DESCRIPTION

At its maximum length, the TFTH ran on a general northeast-southwest alignment from Tifton to Thomasville, passing en route through Omega, the Crosland community, Norman Park, Moultrie, Coolidge, and the small communities of Merrillville and Dillon.

The northern end of the TFTH rail corridor connected to the former TFNE, as well as the ACL's Brunswick & Western mainline, along the eastern edge of downtown Tifton. The TFTH then crossed diagonally across the city's southern half, entering/leaving Tifton at its southwest corner. The line's sole remaining depot stands south of downtown, along South Main Street/US 41 near its intersection with East 9th Street. The single-story wood-frame depot shares the pattern details and hallmarks of the Atlanta, Birmingham & Atlantic's other remaining examples of its company planned depots on the ABC's main trunk line: hipped roof with wide eaves and a protruding corner turret, large, curvilinear wood brackets, and a red clay tile roof. The tracks that once served the depot are no longer in place, but the curving path of East 9th Street essentially follows the course of the railbed through the southeast corner of town.

Southwest of here, an original segment of track is still in use as an industrial spur line, running out past and beneath Interstate 75, which still bridges over the line. Below West Golden Road, the remainder of the distance to Coolidge is abandoned. For almost the entire way, the rail corridor roughly parallels the route of US 319/SR 35, sometimes close alongside the highway right-of-way, and other times at a distance; except for its course through Moultrie, it always stays on the east (or south) side of US 319, along the northbound lanes.

In Omega, the former rail right-of-way passes through the south side of town, passing along the narrow corridor between Georgia Avenue and Railroad Street. Through downtown Norman Park, parts of the former bed run just along the west side of Railroad Street and, although overgrown with trees, sections of the bed's raised embankment are easily identifiable. At the north end of town, it appears that the roadbed of North Railroad Street has utilized the former rail right-of-way. South of Norman Park,

the bed either follows closely alongside or has again been repurposed as the right-of-way for the unpaved surface of R. L. Norman Road, but its continuity is preserved. Thereafter, the remnants of the bed veer away to the east from the highway through woods and fields, until an active section of it reappears on the east side of Moultrie. This brief section, which crosses Industrial Drive, now serves as an industrial spur.

Westward into downtown, the former TFTH route resumes abandonment; its route through this area, which it historically shared with the Georgia & Florida Railway's Moultrie Branch, has been cut through and disturbed by the US 319 East Bypass. It then curves around the north side of downtown, with the railbed mostly intact and uninterrupted, but its tracks removed. On the west side of downtown, at 1st Avenue, the northern trailhead of Moultrie's Tom White Linear Park begins the city's adaptive reuse of the former TFTH route through the west side of downtown. This asphalt paved rail-trail continues all the way south to Airport Drive at the Moultrie Municipal Airport.

From the airport south to Coolidge, the abandoned corridor passes through fields and forests, and generally stays close to the east side of US 319, branching away from the highway and into dense woods between Coolidge and Thomasville. The active line enters/exits the east side of Thomasville and, in its course, crosses a low wood trestle over Thomasville's Cherokee Lake (Park). The TFTH joins CSX's former ACL mainline at a vee-shaped junction on the east side of downtown.

Although long sections comprising the majority of the TFTH's former route between Tifton and Thomasville are now abandoned, evidence of the extant roadbed and rail corridor can be routinely located. Most of the alignment is discernable on current aerial imagery as a continuous corridor, and only minimal lengths are indeterminate. Certainly, there are areas where it appears that active cultivation, and the associated plowing of agricultural fields, has erased the remains of the railbed.

Yet, taking into account the still active section of the line at the south end, the long, intact length through Moultrie that has been maintained as a rail-trail, and the preserved sections of bed along Railroad Street in Omega

and Norman Park, a large percentage of the bed is still readily witnessed as an intact, connected linear feature. In concert with the ease of locating traces of the abandoned sections in between the aforementioned places, both at ground level and on aerial imagery, it can be said that, on balance, the former Tifton, Thomasville & Gulf corridor is visible and present in its surrounding landscape, and thus readily conveys its former standing as an uninterrupted railroad corridor.

NATIONAL REGISTER CONTRIBUTING STATUS

The Tifton, Thomasville & Gulf Railway (TFTH), which was owned and operated by the ABC and its predecessor, the Atlanta, Birmingham & Atlantic, for the majority of its history of service, is therefore a component of the ABC system. The ABC system is considered eligible for the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion A in the areas of Commerce, Community Planning and Development, Exploration/Settlement, and Transportation, and under Criterion C in the areas of Architecture and Engineering. The TFTH was evaluated for its potential contributions to the historic significance and National Register eligibility of the ABC system.

The TFTH was evaluated under Criterion A; due to its status as a section of the ABC's Thomasville Branch Line, the TFTH does contribute to the significance of its parent ABC system. For a duration of more than half a century (1903-1960), the Thomasville Branch Line played a prominent role in the ABC system's overall state and local levels of significance in the areas of Commerce and Transportation. It benefitted the region south of the ABC's main trunk line, including Tift, Colquitt, Thomas, and other counties, in all four of these areas, by giving shippers and passengers located along the route many additional outlets and points of connection to other mainlines, and thus contributing to the prosperity of the south central Georgia region. It first helped sustain the success and ongoing growth of the Atlantic & Birmingham Railroad by opening up new markets to the fledgling rail network. After the AB&A's expansion to Atlanta and Birmingham, it helped maintain the usefulness of the much enlarged ABC system, by feeding traffic and customers to the main trunk line at Fitzgerald. For all these reasons, it achieved significance in the area of

Transportation, for being not only an important, long-serving part of the ABC system, but also of the interconnected web of railroads that provided thorough coverage of south Georgia.

Moreover, the TFTH holds significance in its own right, for its own impacts during its short period of operation as a stand-alone, short-line railroad company. The local significance of these contributions apply not only to the aforementioned areas of Commerce and Transportation, but also in the realm of Exploration/Settlement and Community Planning and Development. The small station towns and communities such as Omega, Crosland, and Merrillville all reflect the impetus that the railroad was to their original founding. Their small commercial districts face the railroad right-of-way, displaying its critical importance to not only their founding and settlement, but to their earliest efforts at community planning and development.

The TFTH was also evaluated for its potential to contribute to the significance of the ABC system under Criterion C, in the areas of Engineering and Architecture. Although a substantial portion of the railroad's rails and ties were removed at some point following the line's stages of abandonment in 1960 and 1990, its alignment remains largely intact, and is physically represented by the intact form of the railroad's remnant sections of built up railbed and rail embankments. Most of the railbed is physically and visually present in the landscape and still conveys its historically significant design characteristics. In part due to the maintained rural nature of the landscape of much of this region of south Georgia, the essential linear quality and continuity of the TFTH has been mostly preserved, either as undisturbed rail embankments, repurposed roadways or rail-trails, or even still as active sections of railroad, whether branches or spur lines. The railroad thus remains a good and generally intact example of turn of the 20th-century rail engineering and construction within the level to gently rolling topography and rural landscape of south central Georgia.

Moreover, the railroad's extant Tifton depot is not only a constituent example of one of the ABC's remaining complement of single-story, wood-frame, template plan depots, it is also a good, largely unaltered, and thus

intact example of one of the wide variety of types and styles of architecture that were applied to depots throughout the state.

As described above, the former Tifton, Thomasville & Gulf Railway corridor is able to contribute to the significance of the ABC system, and thus its National Register eligibility, under Criterion A in the areas of Commerce, Transportation, Exploration/Settlement, and Community Planning and Development, and under Criterion C in the areas of Engineering and Architecture. The TFTH corridor is still able to represent a good example of a rural, short-line railroad from the end of the 19th century, or of a component branch line from the early 20th century.

EVALUATION OF INTEGRITY

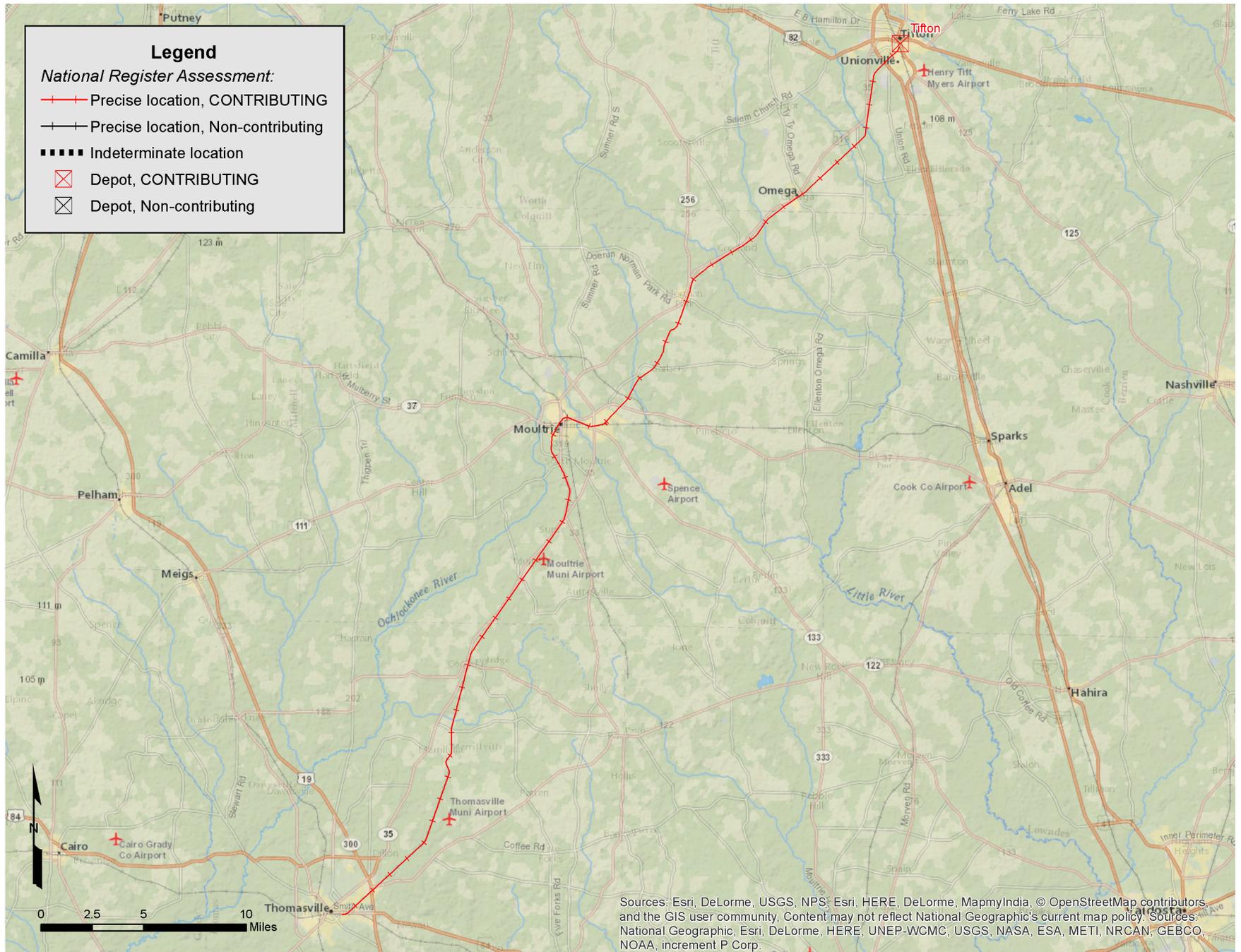
The TFTH has been determined to possess a high level of integrity in the areas of location, setting, feeling, and association, and to retain a fair degree of integrity in the areas of design, materials, and workmanship. The railroad has not been relocated, and its alignment remains substantially unchanged since its construction; therefore, the resource retains integrity of location and setting. As most of the alignment and roadbed, including cuts and grades, remains intact, despite the abandonment of much of its length and the subsequent removal of rails and ties, the resource also maintains a substantive level of integrity of design, materials, and workmanship. The railroad also retains integrity of feeling and association, as it conveys its physical characteristics as a historic railroad line.

PROPOSED NATIONAL REGISTER BOUNDARY

The proposed National Register boundary for the TFTH corresponds to the railroad’s historic rights-of-way, and includes various sections that are now repurposed as roadway alignment and rail-trails. This proposed boundary contains all National Register-qualifying characteristics and features of the resource and includes the railroad’s former alignment, consisting of the railbed and other elements of the rail resource, such as any extant cuts and built-up grades. The proposed boundary also projects out from the rail right-of-way to include the railroad’s depot in Tifton; it stands alongside South Main Street/US 41, adjacent to the former rail right-of-way.

PREPARED BY

Steve Storey, David Ray, and Matt McDaniel



TFTH: Resource Location Map



TFTH: Crossing at SR 520, Tifton



TFTH: SR 520 at TFNE-ACL junction, Tifton



TFTH: Main Street/US 41/SR 7 and Tifton depot



TFTH: Intact railbed, Norman Park vicinity, Colquitt County



TFTH: Norman Park



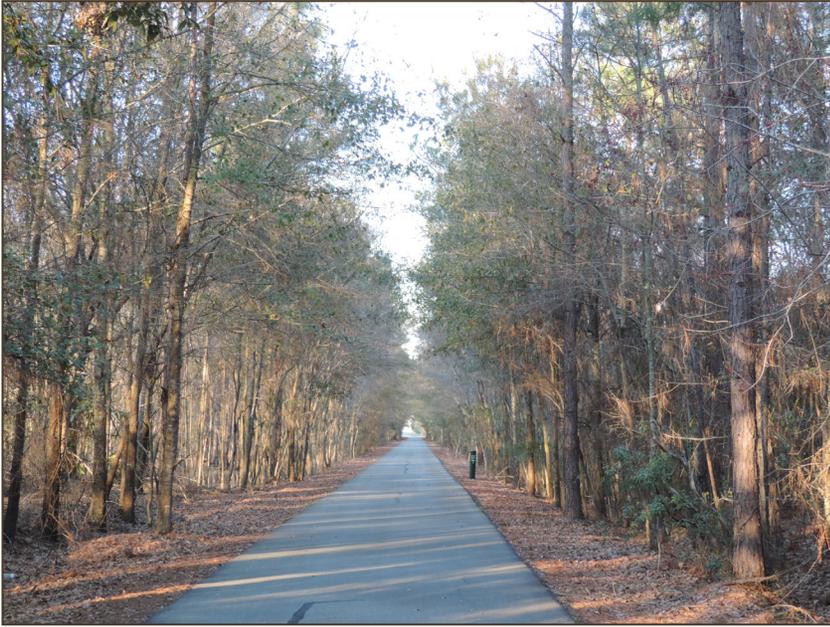
TFTH: Cool Springs crossing, Barbers, Colquitt County



TFTH: Railbed at First Avenue, Moultrie



TFTH: Railbed at Central Avenue, Moultrie



TFTH: Railbed, Municipal Airport vicinity, Moultrie



TFTH: Airport Drive, Moultrie



TFTH: Airport Drive, Moultrie



TFTH: SR 188 crossing, Coolidge



TFTH: Verbena Avenue crossing, Coolidge



TFTH: Merrillville, Thomas County



TFTH: Dillon, Thomas County



TFTH: Smith Avenue/US 84/SR 38 crossing, Thomasville

BRUNSWICK & BIRMINGHAM (BRBH)

Other names: N/A

Historic System: Atlanta, Birmingham & Coast (ABC)

NR Evaluation: Eligible/Contributing

Physical Status: Abandoned and dismantled

Current owner: N/A

Predecessors: Offerman & Western; Ocilla & Irwinville; Ocilla & Worth; Mystic & Ocilla; Ocilla & Valdosta; Fitzgerald, Ocilla & Broxton

Location: Sessoms (Nicholls vicinity), Bacon County, to Brunswick, Glynn County



ATLANTA, BIRMINGHAM & COAST (ABC)
System Feature Inventory Form

DEVELOPMENTAL HISTORY

Chartered in December of 1900, the Brunswick & Birmingham Railway (BRBH) built a 42-mile line from Brunswick westward to Offerman in 1901-02. The BRBH operated five locomotives, ten passenger cars, and over a hundred other cars, most of which were leased. In order to extend its reach from Offerman, the BRBH then purchased the Offerman & Western Railroad in 1902. The Offerman & Western was a similarly new enterprise, operating three locomotives, ten freight cars, two passenger coaches, and two baggage cars. It had been chartered in 1899 and had opened its 35-mile line from Offerman westward to Nicholls in the early spring of 1900. At Nicholls, the Offerman & Western could offer a transfer point to the Atlantic & Birmingham Railroad, formerly the Waycross Air Line, and thus westward transportation to Douglas, Fitzgerald, and Cordele.

The following year, in 1903, the BRBH built a connecting line from Bushnell to Ocilla and had completed a western extension from Irwinville to the Alapaha River at Crystal Lake. Since the BRBH's connection to Ocilla departed from the Bushnell community just west of Douglas, the BRBH would always have had to make use of trackage rights over the Atlantic & Birmingham main line from Nicholls through Douglas to Bushnell.

In furtherance of its goal to continue pushing westward towards Birmingham, the BRBH also bought the Ocilla & Irwinville Railroad in 1903. This short line was valued as the connector between the BRBH's own two newly-constructed but discontinuous projects. Covering the ten miles from Ocilla to Irwinville, it was initiated in 1900 or earlier as the Ocilla & Worth Railroad. The Ocilla & Worth's own predecessor may have been the Mystic & Ocilla Railroad, which was established in the same general time period. In its December 1899 issue, *Railway World* included this note: "The Mystic and Ocilla Railroad has been completed between Mystic and Ocilla and a regular schedule put on."

The owners of the Ocilla & Worth had planned to connect Ocilla, in Irwin County, with the Georgia Southern & Florida Railroad mainline at Worth, a few miles north of Ashburn. Sometime around 1900, the Ocilla & Worth was reorganized as the Ocilla & Irwinville Railroad, in seeming recognition of its failure to reach its originally intended destination. The railroad had one locomotive, one passenger car, and 46 freight cars.

Although the BRBH had managed to progress as far west as the Alapaha River, operating lines from Brunswick to Nicholls and from Bushnell to the river at Crystal Lake, it remained far short of Birmingham. The company entered receivership in 1904 and, in March of the same year, was purchased by the Atlantic & Birmingham Railway (A&B).

Since the A&B's intended route to the same ultimate destination of Birmingham was already significantly farther along towards implementation, it no longer needed the BRBH's branch from Bushnell through Ocilla, Mystic, and Irwinville. It was leased or sold to the Ocilla & Valdosta Railroad, which had been chartered in 1903 and was soon, by the end of 1905, to open a new 24-mile line from Broxton to Ocilla, by way of Osierfield. The Ocilla & Valdosta then amalgamated the Ocilla & Irwinville and the Broxton, Hazlehurst & Savannah Railroad, which it had also leased in 1905. It thereby created a 64-mile through route from Irwinville to Hazlehurst. Yet, these transactions had put it into financial distress.

In 1907, the Fitzgerald, Ocilla, & Broxton Railroad (FO&B) was formed to take over part of the former Ocilla & Valdosta Railroad. Sometime afterwards, the Ocilla & Irwinville line was leased by the A&B to the FO&B.

In 1911, the FO&B then sub-leased the line, along with its own tracks between Ocilla and Fitzgerald, to the Ocilla Southern Railroad. The Ocilla Southern was in the process of assembling a railroad from Alapaha to Rochelle and needed an Ocilla-Fitzgerald link as part of its plan. The Ocilla-Irwinville line remained as a lightly used branch line until it was finally abandoned by all involved parties, in 1915-16.

The main route of the former Brunswick & Birmingham, including the original Offerman & Western section, was a critical component of the A&B and its later successors, the Atlanta, Birmingham & Atlantic and the Atlanta, Birmingham & Coast (ABC). It enabled the system to provide service to the third terminal destination advertised in its name, the Atlantic coast at Brunswick.

However, when the ABC was fully acquired by the Atlantic Coast Line (ACL) in 1946, the section east from Nicholls to Brunswick was somewhat duplicated by the ACL's own mainline from Waycross to Brunswick. Near their eastern ends, the two lines almost came together, running almost side by side at the Anguilla community near their respective crossings of the Buffalo River. Moreover, the ABC's own former Waycross Air Line enabled easy connection between Nicholls and Waycross. Considered surplus to needs, the former B&B was abandoned between Brunswick and Alma in

1953. The last remnant section, thereafter used as short, dead end spur between Nicholls/Sessoms and Alma, stayed in service for three more decades, until its 1986 abandonment.

DESCRIPTION

At its maximum length, the BRBH's mainline railroad corridor ran on a general southeast-northwest alignment from Brunswick to Nicholls; at Offerman, it crossed the ACL's Savannah, Florida & Western mainline, which heads south to Waycross, and is still in heavy use by CSX.

The more recently abandoned section between Sessoms and Alma has had its tracks removed, but it is still clearly visible on current aerial imagery, and passes mostly through large tracts of forest; some parts of its right-of-way are now used as unpaved access roads. Its east-west oriented approach into Alma from its crossing of SR 32 at the Guysie community is maintained as a cleared trail. In downtown Alma, the single-story, wood-frame depot still stands in its original location, just west of North Dixon Street/SR 4. A combination passenger and freight depot, the depot now appears much more plainly styled than the remaining collection of other wood-framed ABC depots. For instance, it does not display any curvilinear brackets, one of the hallmarks of the AB&A/ABC depot plans. This may indicate that it was constructed by the BRBH prior to ABC ownership, although it is also possible that some details were removed when the depot's present vinyl siding was applied.

Across Dixon Street from the depot, to the east, a wide right-of-way marks the rail line's former route through the heart of Alma's commercial district, the buildings of which line both sides. In this area, the former BRBH right-of-way has been adapted as a public park, with trees, benches, and a band-shell. The remainder of Alma's former rail corridor remains open all the way through the east side of town, running all the way along the south side of 11th Street. The next community on the eastern outskirts of Alma is Rockingham, and the railbed passes through this village as the repurposed right-of-way of the unpaved surface of Starling Road/Rockingham Road.

From a point just east of Rockingham, at the crossing of Tenmile Creek, the BRBH railbed meets a major power transmission easement that converges from the northwest. Thereafter, the power transmission line joins the former rail line, for the high-tension, steel power poles and lines are run along the former rail corridor, which is kept cleared and open. This arrangement continues uninterrupted all the way along the former rail route, eastward into the Brobston community, on the northern edges of Brunswick. It intersects another transmission line there and ends, just east of Buffalo Creek and just south of SR 32/SR 99/Harrell Highway. The timber bents and pilings of the former BRBH trestle over Buffalo Creek are still in place and faintly visible from Harrell Highway. East and south of this point, other sections of the bed in north Brunswick have also been adapted as roadways. McKenzie Road, coming into the Brobston community from the west and there intersecting US 341, uses the former railbed, and Willow Road shares or parallels the alignment of the eastern end of the BRBH, just west of Interstate 95 in the Parkwood neighborhood.

On the contrary, no evidence of the BRBH's secondary, Bushnell to Crystal Lake branch, was located, either during the ground-level field survey, or by a review of historic and current maps and aerial imagery.

NATIONAL REGISTER CONTRIBUTING STATUS

The Brunswick & Birmingham Railway (BRBH), which was owned and operated by the ABC and its predecessor, the Atlanta, Birmingham & Atlantic, for the majority of its history of service, is therefore a component of the ABC system. The ABC system is considered eligible for the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion A in the areas of Commerce, Community Planning and Development, Exploration/Settlement, and Transportation, and under Criterion C in the areas of Architecture and Engineering. The BRBH was evaluated for its potential contributions to the historic significance and National Register eligibility of the ABC system.

Due to its status as the ABC's main branch line to Georgia's Atlantic coast port at Brunswick, the BRBH was evaluated under Criterion A, and has been determined to contribute to the significance of its parent ABC system.

For a duration of half a century (1904-1953), the Brunswick branch line played a prominent role in the ABC system's overall state and local levels of significance in the area of Commerce. It benefitted almost the entire state of Georgia, but certainly the middle part of the state, for it delivered products and passengers to and from the Brunswick coast and all the way to LaGrange and Atlanta. Companies and citizens of Birmingham and the surrounding areas of northern Alabama even benefitted from the efficiency of trade and travel that the BRBH section of the ABC system facilitated. For all these reasons, it also achieved significance in the area of Transportation, for being not only an important, long-serving part of the ABC system, but also of the interconnected web of railroads that provided thorough coverage of Georgia and Alabama.

Moreover, the BRBH holds significance in its own right, for its own impacts during its short period of operation as a stand-alone railroad company. The local significance of these contributions apply not only to the aforementioned areas of Commerce and Transportation, but also in the realm of Exploration/Settlement and Community Planning and Development. The small station towns and communities such as Rockingham, New Lacy, Mershon, Bristol, and others, as well as the Bacon County seat of Alma, all reflect the impetus that the railroad was to their original founding. Their small commercial or residential districts generally face the railroad right-of-way, displaying its critical importance to not only their founding and settlement, but to their earliest efforts at community planning and development.

The BRBH was also evaluated for its potential to contribute to the ABC system's significance under Criterion C in the areas of Engineering and Architecture. Although a substantial portion of the railroad's rails and ties were removed at some point following the line's stages of abandonment in 1953 and 1960, its alignment remains largely intact, and is physically represented by the intact form of the railroad's remnant sections of built up railbed and rail embankments, or in this case by its long maintained right-of-way clearing. Most of the railbed is physically and visually present in the landscape and still conveys its historically significant design characteristics. Due primarily to the ongoing, uninterrupted, and adapted use of the railroad's right-of-way for a power transmission easement, the essential

linear quality and continuity of the BRBH has been mostly preserved. The railroad thus remains a good and generally intact example of turn of the twentieth-century rail engineering and construction within the level or nearly level topography and rural landscape of southeastern Georgia.

As it retains its original form and massing, the railroad's extant Alma depot is a good, largely unaltered, and thus intact example of one of the wide variety of types and styles of architecture that were applied to depots throughout the state.

As described above, most of the original route of the BRBH corridor, including the former Offerman & Western Railroad, but excluding the former Ocilla & Irwinville Railroad line of the Crystal Lake branch, is able to contribute to the significance of the ABC system, and thus its National Register eligibility, under Criterion A in the areas of Commerce, Transportation, Exploration/Settlement, and Community Planning and Development, and under Criterion C in the areas of Engineering and Architecture. The BRBH corridor is still able to represent a good example of a major branch railroad line from the early twentieth century.

EVALUATION OF INTEGRITY

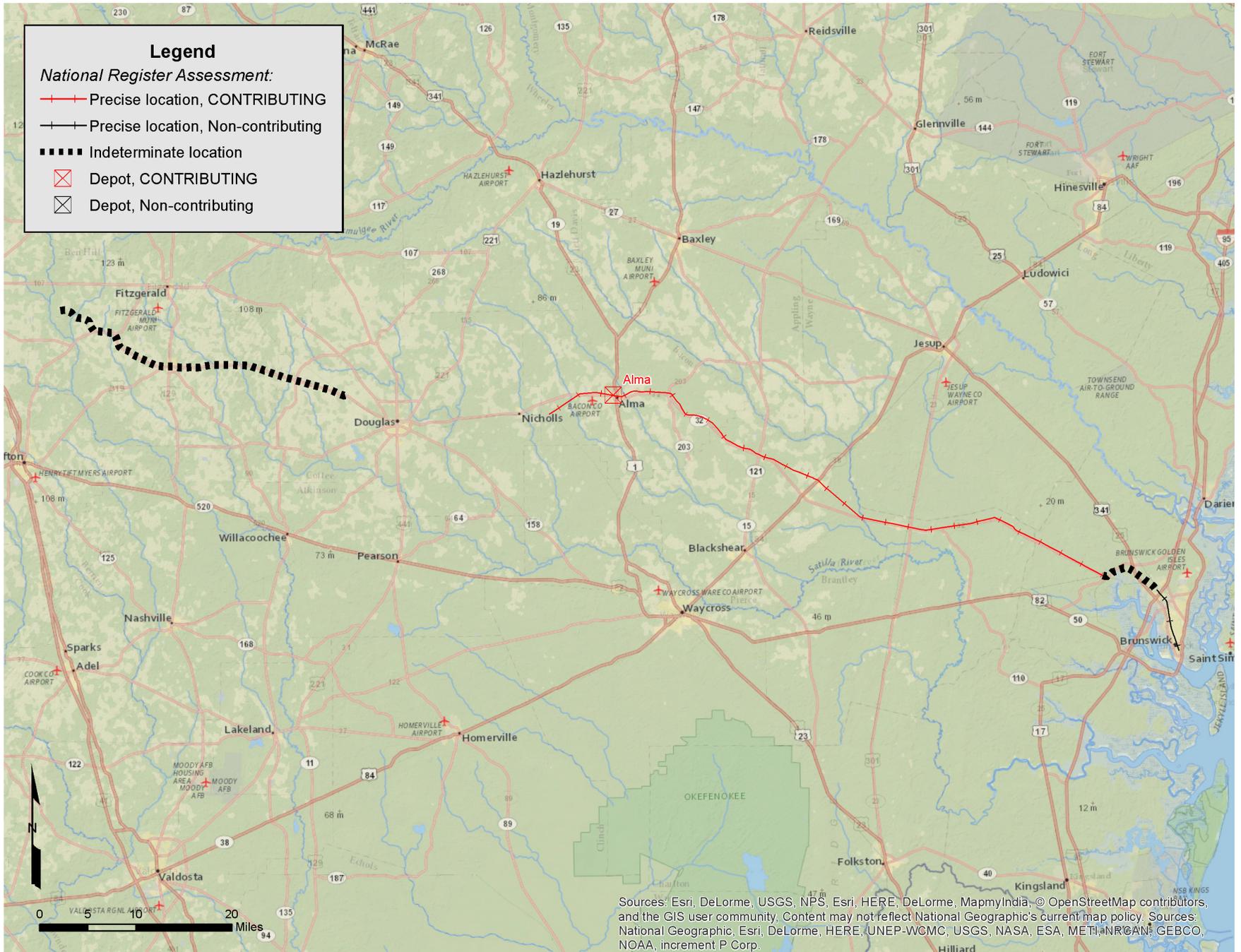
The BRBH has been determined to possess a high level of integrity in the areas of location, setting, feeling, and association, and to retain a fair degree of integrity in the areas of design, materials, and workmanship. The railroad has not been relocated, and its alignment remains substantially unchanged since its construction; therefore, the resource retains integrity of location and setting. As most of the alignment and roadbed, including cuts and grades, remains intact, despite the abandonment of much of its length and the subsequent removal of rails and ties, the resource also maintains a substantive level of integrity of design, materials, and workmanship. The railroad also retains integrity of feeling and association, as it conveys its physical characteristics as a historic railroad line.

PROPOSED NATIONAL REGISTER BOUNDARY

The proposed National Register boundary for the former Brunswick & Birmingham Railway corresponds to the railroad's historic rights-of-way, and includes any sections that are now part of a major power transmission line corridor, as well as segments that are part of unpaved roadway alignments and rights-of-way, such as Starling Road/Rockingham Road in Rockingham. This proposed boundary contains all National Register qualifying characteristics and features of the resource and includes the railroad's former alignment, consisting of the railbed and other elements of the rail resource, such as any extant cuts and built-up grades. The proposed boundary also projects out from the rail right-of-way to include the railroad's depot in Alma; it stands alongside, but perpendicular to, North Dixon Street/SR 4, adjacent to the former rail right-of-way. Non-contributing features include the Bushnell to Crystal Lake branch line that could not be identified in the field or aerial photography; segments that have been incorporated into paved roadways, such as along McKenzie Road and Willow Road in Brunswick; and segments that have been obliterated due to modern development in Brunswick.

PREPARED BY

Steve Storey, David Ray, Matt McDaniel, Erin Murphy, George Rounds, and Chris Mroczka



BRBH: Resource Location Map



BRBH: SR 32 crossing, Guysie, Bacon County



BRBH: Dixon Road, Alma



BRBH: Alma depot



BRBH: 11th Street, Alma



BRBH: Starling Road, Rockingham, Bacon County



BRBH: Railbed, Coffee, Bacon County



BRBH: Railbed, Pershon, Pierce County



BRBH: Railbed, Bristol, Pierce County



BRBH: SR 15/121, Bristol, Pierce County



BRBH: Railbed at Birmingham Avenue, Offerman, Pierce County



BRBH: Railbed at US 84/SR 38, Offerman



BRBH: ACL mainline crossing, Offerman