HPP PROJECT DESCRIPTION

PROJECT NUMBER:
00113

PROJECT TITLE:
The Effects of Railroad Tariffs on the Coal Mining Industry in Alabama.

PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR:
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PROJECT OBJECTIVE:
Determine if Alabama coal mining companies are at a competitive disadvantage because of unfavorable rail tariffs in the southeast.

MODAL ORIENTATION OF PROJECT:
Railroads.

PROJECT ABSTRACT:
This one-year project will utilize an undergraduate and graduate student to collect and analyze information to determine if rail tariffs for coal transportation are equitable across the United States. In particular, this project will focus on the southeast and its regional markets, comparing its coal freight tariffs to other areas of the United States. Assistance will be solicited from Alabama coal mining companies, FERC reports, and other DOE publications.
PROJECT TASK DESCRIPTIONS:
1) Select students
2) Prepare work outline and task schedule
3) Collect and analyze data
4) Prepare final report
5) Present technology transfer session

MILESTONES AND DATES:
a) Phase I (Aug 1, 2000-Jan 1, 2001): Select student workers, prepare work plan, and collect data
b) Phase II (Jun 1, 2001 – Dec 31, 2001): Data analysis and filling of areas with incomplete records.
c) Jun 2001: Final report completed
d) Jul 2001: Technology transfer session

TOTAL BUDGET:
One-year project: other (HPP) $49,392; total budget $103,080.

STUDENT INVOLVEMENT:
This project will utilize one undergraduate and one graduate student. The graduate student will write a thesis and a peer-reviewed paper for presentation at a technical conference.

RELATIONSHIP TO OTHER RESEARCH PROJECTS:
This project is the initial rail transportation effort of UTCA, and is not directly related to other transportation projects at UTCA.

TECHNOLOGY TRANSFER ACTIVITIES:
The results of this project will be provided to the sponsors in the form of a final report. In addition, a seminar will be conducted to acquaint the user community with the results and recommendations.

POTENTIAL BENEFITS OF THE PROJECT:
• Create a rail tariff database.
• Bring rail-related research into the UTCA
• Determine if Alabama coal operators are being disadvantaged by rail tariffs.
• Improve the competitiveness of Alabama coal operators in regional markets.

TRB KEYWORDS:
Rail transportation, bulk commodities, tariffs, coal.