

Mountain Division Rail Corridor Use Advisory Council

Meeting Minutes 2/10/22

1. Attendees:

Paul Schumacher, Nate Howard, Jack Sutton, Katie Haley, Dan Hester, David Kinsman, Paul Hunt, Theresa Egan, Dwight Warren, Colin Burch, Carolann Ouellette, and Zach Mosher. Ian Moon from HNTB attended as a presenter.

2. Presentation #1: Funding for Trails (Continued)

Paul Schumacher, from SMPDC gave a presentation on *Additional Funding Sources for Bike Trails*. Paul's presentation is available at

<https://www.maine.gov/mdot/ofps/ruac/mdrcc/meetings/>

3. Presentation #2: Preliminary Trail and Rail Cost Estimates

Ian Moon, Project Manager, HNTB gave a presentation on preliminary cost estimates for rail and trail improvements on the Mountain Division. A copy of Ian's presentation is available at <https://www.maine.gov/mdot/ofps/ruac/mdrcc/meetings/>

- *8 options in total*
- *Both Class 1 and Class 2 rail options. Class 1 = 10 mph, Class 2 = 25 mph*
- *2 options for removing rail and constructing a trail with and w/o pavement*
- *4 options for rail with trail*
- *Construction estimates were updated from 2007 report*

4. Discussion:

a. Schedule Next Meeting and Set Agenda

The next meeting was scheduled for March 10th, 2022 at 3:30 PM. Agenda to include Funding Possibilities for Rail and Crown of New England proposal.

b. Set date for Public Meeting

The public meeting was scheduled for March 31st at 6 PM.

5. General Public Comment

Kristine Kenney: Overall rail trail options are the least costly and most cost-effective options. Rail infrastructure does not include yards or stations.

Trail projects are not any more expensive than highway or bridge reconstruction projects.

Patricia Barber: Hiram Resident. President of Hiram Snowmobile Club. Read statement. Once rails are torn up trains are never coming back. Snowmobiles cannot coexist with walkers and



cross-country skiers. Status Quo is a great benefit for snowmobiles. It won't be another 30 years until train travel returns. Best option is to build Trail with Rail (where feasible) and leave tracks in place. Build sections of trail where you can.

Paul Drinan: If the corridor is railbanked, legal protections ensure the trains will come back. Trains don't return because population doesn't warrant train service or the financial and political will is not there. Only five miles of railbanked rail have been reinstated. It can happen but it is very rare.