

Docket No. AB 180X

I Eric Schwartzentruber a director of the Railway Historical Society of Northern New York and a citizen of Lowville, New York am very much in favor of keeping the rails of the Lowville and Beaver River Railroad and the rails of the Lowville Industrial Track to Carthage in place for three reasons.

1. Our climate is changing and it is now imperative that we as mankind take steps to prevent our biosphere from becoming any warmer. One of the easiest ways to do this is to reduce the use of highways and airplanes using railroads for our primary means of hauling freight and passengers where practical, especially in locations where railroads already exist. In the town of Lowville are two business (Kraft and Qubica AMF Bowling) that are located along what had been the New York Cental right-of-way. It is my concern that if our Federal or State governments would require these businesses to lower their energy and pollution footprints we might be removing their most cost effective way to do so (transporting raw material in, finished product out) by removing all of the rails along the right-of-way. Will the businesses stay in Lowville if they can't meet these requirements?
2. Operating a trolley or Hi-rail van on the Lowville and Beaver River Railroad as a tourist or sightseeing operation would not only keep the rails in place but also provide a new source of revenue for Lewis County. If I were independently wealthy I would be pursuing this with my own resources. The ten miles between Lowville and Croghan are very picturesque, crossing The Black River, Black Creek, Crystal Creek, the Beaver River via a short spur, as well as passing through farmland, forest, and small villages.
3. To prevent even more deaths and injuries that the First Responders of Lewis County have to constantly deal with involving ATVs and snowmobiles.

It is my assumption that the STB has been keeping a tally on this. I cannot think of another sport or occupation where these types of statistics are considered acceptable. These ATV's and snowmobiles create more pollution and energy usage that aren't necessary. Many of the operators of these devices are found to be transporting and using illegal substances when their wreck sites are being investigated. A segment of the Lowville and Beaver River Railroad borders the property of the Beaver River School which I believe is supposed to be a drug-free zone. The use of these devices also cause erosion and water pollution. Many landowners along the designated trails complain of trespassing and fear being sued when these crashes occur. On the public trail running between Lyons Falls and Burdick's Crossing (along the former NYC right-of-way) I found an ATV side trail while hiking last summer. On the Salmon River Road is a single lane bridge crossing the Mad River. Instead of using the bridge many ATVers run their machines through the water even though there is hardly any traffic on the road. If a logger crossed a waterway like that with logging equipment he would probably be fined.

Sincerely,

Eric Schwartzentruber

Both parties on this docket have been served copies of this letter as of August 16th and 19th, 2023.