

TOWN OF WEST TURIN

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Office of Proceedings
November 16, 2023
Part of
Public Record

November 2, 2023

Ms. Cynthia T. Brown, Chief Section of Administration
Surface Transportation Board: Office of Proceedings
395 E Street SW
Room 1034
Washington, DC 20423-0001

RE: Mohawk Adirondack & Northern RR Corp – Docket No. AB 768
Lowville & Beaver River Railroad Company – Docket No. AB 180

Dear Ms. Brown,

I write on behalf of the Town of West Turin to encourage the Surface Transportation Board (STB) to comply with the request of the above railroad companies to abandon the identified rail lines. Lewis County has the Town of West Turin's support in the proposed acquisition of the lines for the intended public use for rail-trail recreational activities.

The acquisition of these rail corridors has the potential to improve the lives of Lewis County residents, businesses, and visitors in so many ways. The health, well-being, and safety of our residents, from toddlers to adults can be positively impacted by having safe walking, biking, running, cross-country skiing, snowmobiling, and ATV riding on safe trails. It not only provides the benefits of fresh air and exercise, but Lewis County has the capability of interconnecting between towns and villages, including West Carthage and Carthage in neighboring Jefferson County.

Lewis County is a premier tour destination in the North Country for recreational activities. The acquisition and development of rail corridors for multi-use trails will not only serve to improve the draw of visitors to invest their time and money in Lewis County; with more people building second homes here to enjoy with friends and family who want the ability to recreate all year long in a variety of ways. Businesses will undoubtedly grow, and new businesses will also be created in response to planned public trails and parks.

These rail lines have been inactive and out of use for decades. Lewis County does not have the industries and manufacturing centers to justify maintaining these rail corridors for perhaps some use decades from now. The cost to bring the lines back for rail use would be much greater than the investment Lewis County is making to acquire and convert the corridors for

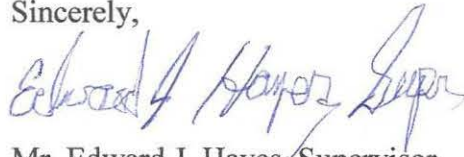
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public recreational use. If the rail companies thought future rail was a viable option, they would have done more to maintain the lines for such use.

Numerous annual Lewis County surveys have indicated the overwhelming majority of Lewis County residents are in favor of Lewis County acquiring the rail corridors for multi-use recreational purposes. The Lewis County Board of Legislators has the financial ability to make this forward-looking investment in our community.

The Town of West Turin urges the STB to certify the abandonment of these rail lines so that Lewis County can finalize its acquisition and begin the development of the multi-use, public recreational trails.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Edward J. Hayes, Supervisor".

Mr. Edward J. Hayes, Supervisor
Town of West Turin
5438 Kessler Rd
Boonville, NY 13309

CC: Parties of Record