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April 11, 2024

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

ENTERED
Office of Proceedings
April 12, 2024
Part of
Public Record

RE: Docket AB-180X
Lowville & Beaver River Railroad Company
Abandonment Exemption
Reply to Verified Supplement and Amendment to Notice of Exemption

RE: Docket AB-768X
Mohawk, Adirondack & Northern RR Corp
Abandonment Exemption
Reply to Verified Supplement and Amendment to Notice of Exemption

Dear Ms. Brown,

This letter is to call attention to an inaccuracy in the Verified Supplement and Amendment to Notice of Exemption filed on April 4, 2024. (AB-180X)

Before pointing out the inaccuracy, it must be said that lack of a response by an agency must not be interpreted as support of the railroad's position.

Under "Section 3. Land Use, II **"Based on consultation with the U.S. Soil Conservation Services, state the effect of the proposed action on any prime agricultural land,"**" the filing reiterates the incorrect assertion that "The subject lines are not adjacent to any prime agricultural land."

This statement is incorrect as the links to the maps from the recent (2022) **Lewis County Agricultural and Farmland Protection Plan** make abundantly clear. (applies to both docket AB-180X and docket AB-768X) 3 of the 4 Lewis County Towns have Prime farmland, located where the railroad runs through the Prime farmland or runs adjacent to the Prime farmland.

In addition to the Prime farmland, all four Towns have large areas of another high-quality soil called "Farmland Soils of statewide importance" where the railroad runs through the soil area or adjacent to it.

Another important soil, "Prime Soil if Drained", also has several areas where the railroad runs through or is adjacent to it.

In addition to the valuable farmland that the railroad adjoins, is a long stretch of New York State (NYS) Regulated Wetlands that extends from just north of the Village of Lowville to the New Bremen town line.

Turning the railroad into an All-Terrain Vehicle (ATV) and snowmobile trail would be a major detriment to both the Prime and other top-level farmland, as well as the NYS Regulated Wetlands.

Both ATVs and Snowmobiles are notorious for leaving designated trails and trespassing. Both types of motorized recreation can damage crops and ATVs do tremendous damage to soil and fields.

The wetlands would be at tremendous risk as ATV riders see wet areas as a place to play in the mud.

These problems would exacerbate the problem of already inadequate law enforcement pertaining to motorized recreation.

Again, the assertion that the "Subject lines are not adjacent to any prime farmland" is incorrect and this proposed action will likely lead to trespass and damage to farmland and also wetlands.

Please see the links attached below with the maps showing the farmland designations and railroad locations. Enlarge to better view the railroad locations.

[Town-of-Lowville-Agricultural-Enhancement-Plan.pdf \(lewiscountyny.gov\)](#)

[Town-of-New-Bremen-Agricultural-Enhancement-Plan.pdf \(lewiscountyny.gov\)](#)

[Town-of-Croghan-Agricultural-Enhancement-Plan.pdf \(lewiscountyny.gov\)](#)

[Town-of-Denmark-Agricultural-Enhancement-Plan.pdf \(lewiscountyny.gov\)](#)

Sincerely,

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Cc: All Parties