



BLACKSTONE VALLEY

TOURISM COUNCIL

248316

August 07, 2019

STB Docket FD 36326
Surface Transportation Board
395 E Street SW
Washington DC 20423

ENTERED
Office of Proceedings
August 13, 2019
Part of
Public Record



Peter Denton, Attorney for Brookfield Asset Management Inc
330 Connecticut Ave NW
Washington DC 20036-1795

Regarding: FD 36326 BROOKFIELD ASSET MANAGEMENT INC. — CONTROL EXEMPTION — GENESEE & WYOMING INC.

To whom it may concern:

In regard to the Genesee and Wyoming Railroad Company, which owns the Providence and Worcester Railroad lines, being acquired by Brookfield Asset Management, my organization will take the privilege to offer the following comments.

I would like to bring to the attention of Brookfield Asset Management that the Blackstone Valley is the birthplace of the American Industrial Revolution. It is the birthplace of economic freedom in our country and the first region to suffer de-industrialization. The people of the Blackstone Valley have worked hard over the past 30 years to bring back the Valley to a healthier economic and environmental condition.

The Blackstone Valley bikeway project, the Blackstone River and Canal, the Blackstone Valley National Heritage Corridor, our land and air environment and our Blackstone River National Historical Park are all impacted by the rail lines under consideration for purchase. We look for a good partner to work with to continue to improve the lives of the people that reside in the Valley of the Blackstone River, which flows between Worcester, Massachusetts, and Providence, Rhode Island.

The nonprofit Blackstone Valley Tourism Council operates the Blackstone River Scenic Railway program. It has done so in partnership with the Providence and Worcester Railroad for more than 30 years. This year the Scenic Railway program will carry more than 23,000 people on the Blackstone Valley rail lines. Most passengers will be visiting families, enjoying *The Polar Express Train Ride*.

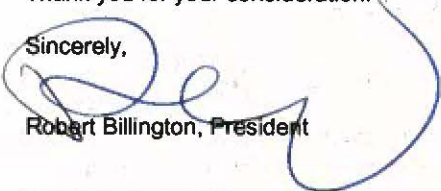
We are hopeful the Brookfield Asset Management company will want to continue the excursion service along the Providence and Worcester Railroad lines. The Blackstone Valley Tourism Council is the largest user of the excursion equipment and if these passenger cars are sold or abandoned, the economic effects for the Valley would be devastating. Not only would the Tourism Council suffer drastic economic consequences, but the City of Woonsocket and the many businesses that rely on *The Polar Express Train Ride* customers would as well.

We look forward to working with Brookfield Asset Management Inc. as partners in positive sustainable development in the Blackstone River Valley of Rhode Island and Massachusetts.

I certify that I have served copies of this letter in this proceeding to Peter Denton, attorney for Brookfield Asset Management Inc.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,


Robert Billington, President