



United States Department of the Interior

NATIONAL PARK SERVICE
Blackstone River Valley National Historical Park
670 Linwood Avenue
Whitinsville, MA 01588

IN REPLY REFER TO:

248363

FD 36326
Brookfield Asset Management

August 21, 2019

Chief, Section of Administration
Surface Transportation Board
395 E Street, SW
Washington, DC 20423-0001

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Office of Proceedings
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Part of
Public Record

Dear Chief, Section of Administration,

Blackstone River Valley National Historical Park was established by Congress in 2014 and encompasses specific areas in Massachusetts and Rhode Island. The park's purpose is to preserve, protect and interpret nationally-significant resources that exemplify the industrial heritage of the larger Blackstone River Valley. The park is contained within the John H. Chafee Blackstone River Valley National Heritage Corridor and works collaboratively with its management entity, Blackstone Heritage Corridor, Inc., in pursuit of our many unifying objectives and goals.

The Blackstone River Bikeway is a project that has been championed by the National Heritage Corridor, the Departments of Transportation in Massachusetts and Rhode Island, the Rhode Island Department of Environmental Management, and the Massachusetts Department of Conservation and Recreation. The Bikeway is a 48-mile route extending from Union Station in Worcester, Massachusetts to the Narragansett Bay in Providence, Rhode Island including both dedicated pathways and shared on-road segments. A segment of the bikeway passes through the Blackstone River State Park adjacent to the Ashton Village, one of the mill villages named in the park's legislation. Many existing and yet to be completed segments of the bikeway occur within or cross the right of way of the old Providence and Worcester Railway.

The National Park Service continues to work with the National Heritage Corridor, state and local agencies to advance the development of the Blackstone River Bikeway and other alternative transportation opportunities linking park's sites and districts and tying them to the greater valley. We recognize the value of the Blackstone River Bikeway as a vital connection between the national historical park and larger landscape that is so representative of the Rhode Island System of Manufacture throughout the Blackstone River Valley in Massachusetts and Rhode Island. We are hopeful that the new stewards of the rail lines that traverse the valley will honor the commitments of their predecessors and ensure that this cultural and recreational resource will continue to develop and be made available for valley residents and visitors alike.

Please do not hesitate to contact me at jennifer_smith@nps.gov or 401.595.8394 with any questions

Sincerely,
Jennifer Smith
Acting Superintendent

cc: all parties of record