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December 5, 2006

VAST, LVRT MP, VAT,  
26 VAST Lane/Berlin,  
Barre, VT 05641

Subject: Lamoille Valley Rail Trail Plan

Dear Sir or Madam:

I support recreational trails for bicycles for several reasons and commend your effort to create such resources within our state. I do object to the use of herbicides for trail management, and urge your group to reexamine and revise this aspect of the plan to make the trail a healthy experience for all.

The trail can be constructed in such a way and with such materials that discourage weeds in the first place. Alternative methods can be used if weeds become a problem. A completely weed-free environment is neither necessary nor sustainable with consideration for neighbors and natural communities adjacent to the trail.

Significant portions of the trail will be close or adjacent to major streams. Herbicides do not stay where they are applied, but drift in the air, persist in the environment, move into soil and water, and contaminate water resources for humans and non-human life, leading to impacts on human and ecological health.

Landowners along the trail are likely to object to herbicide use adjacent to their properties for valid reasons, including adverse impacts to their own health, health of pets or livestock, and harm to gardens and landscaping.

What an excellent opportunity you have to promote a truly healthful and sustainable recreation project, one that can support tourism in rural northern areas of Vermont while reinforcing the healthy, sustainable image that Vermont represents to many! Investment should be made at the beginning into correctly forming the trail bed and surface to discourage weed formation, so that the trail can be advertised as a truly healthy recreational experience. I will neither personally use the trail nor recommend its use to others if chemicals are used to control weeds.

Spending a total of nearly \$67,000 dollars in years 2 and 5 on herbicide applications will discourage users who seek a healthful recreational experience. Those funds would be better spent on initial, careful installation of the bed and alternative means of controlling weeds when necessary.

Sincerely,

*Sylvia Knight*