

3 December 06

LVRT MP VAST
26 VAST Lane
Barre VT 05641



Dear VAST:

I have owned 33 acres of land in East Hardwick since 1987. Nearly 900 feet of the property abuts the Lamaille Valley Railroad. I emphatically support the proposed conversion of the roadbed into a multi-use recreation trail.

I lived in the mountains of southwestern Virginia in the 1970s and witnessed the transformation of the Virginia Creeper Railroad into such a trail. It has been grandly successful there. Though the change was not welcomed by everyone, locals have embraced it as their own--they use the trail themselves, the traditional landscape has been preserved, and their economy has received a gratifying boost. Such opportunities for outdoor recreation attract tourists for the right reasons. Well-managed, the LVRT can reap similar benefits.

Although I am categorically opposed to opening the trail to ATV use, I nonetheless appreciate some of the other concerns I've heard. I'm unconvinced of the need to use herbicides. Snow machine noise, particularly at night for those who live nearby, is a legitimate worry, and I'm skeptical about the enforcement of speed limits. That said, users of snow machines have crossed my property for years; their behavior has much improved--been exemplary, even--since VAST began active oversight of the trails.

In sum, in spite of some lingering concerns, I trust that VAST and the citizens of various communities can come to a reasonable consensus in managing the use of the LVRT. Thank you for taking landowners' views into consideration.

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