

Dj Merrill
Topsham
LD 29

I am a bit disappointed that LD29 as written does not capture all of the recommendations made by the Lower Road Rail Use Advisory Council. I attended the public meetings of the Council, and the recommendation was to create an interim MULTI-USE trail, which would include ATVs, snowmobiles, horses, bikes, cross-country skis, and walkers (including with dogs). LD29 only mentions "interim bicycle and pedestrian trail", which is incorrect.

I am commenting to ask that you MODIFY LD29 to "replace the track with an interim multi-use trail, including the use of ATVs, snowmobiles, horses, bikes, cross-country skis, and walkers (including with dogs), surfaced with pavement or stone dust on the existing trail bed".

I am a landowner in Topsham that has supported a multi-use trail on my property for the past 17 years that is part of the Topsham Trail System maintained by the Topsham Trail Riders. We have many people using the trail, including all of the motorized and non-motorized use cases mentioned above, and I personally use it for walking my dog. In the winter, I volunteer my time to snow groom the trails so that it remains usable for snowmobiles, walkers, and skiers. It is a great resource for the local community, and if we (taxpayers of the State of Maine) are going to spend money to convert the old rail road tracks to a trail, it would be a waste to limit this use to only bikes and walkers. Extending the use to include ATVs, snowmobiles, horses, and skiing would allow more of our community to realize the benefits of this great resource.

Please modify LD29 to indicate that we want a true multi-use trail, and not one that is limited in scope to just biking and walking.