

Steven Ingalls  
Stetson  
LD 29

I support a rail and trail combined use concept, but I do not support tearing up the rails, as once they are gone, they are gone forever, and any argument to the contrary is disingenuous. I would also like to hear what Maine Switching Services, a Maine based company, has for ideas to begin reusing this line for both freight and excursion passenger use, at least as far north as Burnham. At Burnham junction it could then tie in with the Belfast & Moosehead Lake line that is currently used for excursion passenger use from Unity to Belfast. Excursions that tie in with say a State House/Blaine House tour in Augusta, as an example, and a continuation of excursion service further north to Waterville for dining, entertainment and access to Thomas and Colby colleges are just a few ideas. An active line from Brunswick to Waterville could also open up access to excursions further north to Bangor and Orono for dining, entertainment and access to UMaine Orono. And for those who might try to dismiss the idea of excursion and/or passenger rail to central and northern Maine due to population count, according to the 2020 US Census data, Penobscot County is the third most populated county in Maine, behind only York and Cumberland counties. And if you combine the population count of Penobscot and Kennebec counties, which the rail line from Brunswick, Augusta, Waterville, Pittsfield, Bangor and Orono could service, those two counties combined represent the second largest population count in Maine, behind only Cumberland county. Let's not be short sighted or single minded in our decisions, as this corridor can add benefits that extend beyond just those that a trail only option can offer.