

Good afternoon, my name is William Lord from Kennebunkport and also a board member of TrainRiders/NE. I stand in opposition to LD 404, 1450 and LD 207.

I wish to focus on the issues associated with the Mountain Division. A section that would be affected runs from Standish to the NH border at Fryeburg. The line then connects in NH to the successful Conway Scenic Railroad, then on to St. Johnsbury in Vermont. As you've heard, tearing up rails usually means that rail service will never be restored because of the high cost of relaying ballast, ties and rail.

The RUAC study failed to focus on a more reasonable solution in their cost estimate. In their analysis, they added upgrading the tracks in order to sustain freight service. That added substantially to the over cost of the project – an additional \$52 to \$60 million.

TrainRiders supports leaving the rail in place for possible future expansion and placing the trail, with appropriate distancing and fencing if needed, next to the track.

There is a successful example of this approach in Western Maryland – It's called the Western Maryland Scenic Railroad which runs steam and diesel trains from Cumberland to Frostburg. It has a paved trail next to the active tracks for its 16-mile-length, offering the best of all possible worlds to rail and trail users alike. Let's look at their setup.

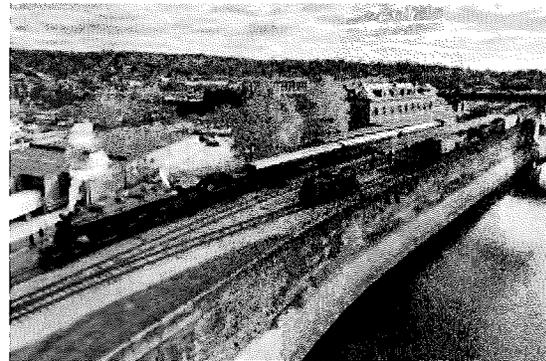


The original rail line, which hauled coal from western Maryland to Baltimore and other east coast population centers, is today a truncated Class 2 railroad allowing excursion trains to roll up to 30 mph from Cumberland to Frostburg, Maryland. A paved bicycle trail between Cumberland and Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, parallels the railroad. Cyclists can make reservations with the railroad to put their bikes on board for the climb up the mountain to Frostburg, then cycle back down to Cumberland.

In conversations with Wesley Heinz, the Executive Director of the railroad, their excursion trains usually run at 25mph or less. Fencing or barriers are at a minimum. They attract some

60,000 passengers a year, providing meals, murder mystery events, and special seasonal trips.

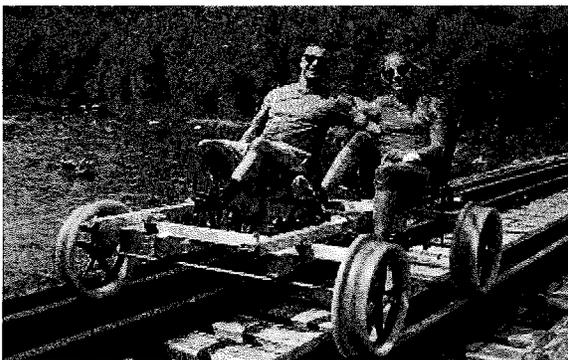
Here is a look at the relationship between the rails and the trail

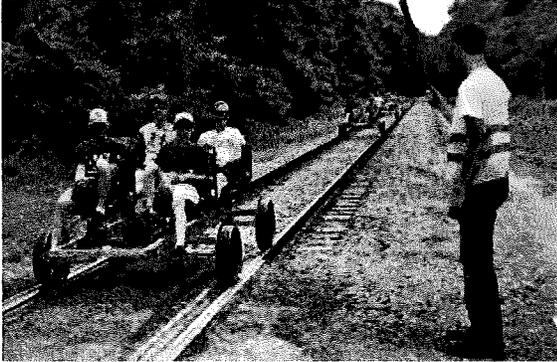


By the way, you may have recognized Westley Heinz's name. He was the executive director of the Maine Narrow Gauge Railroad & Museum in Portland.

But leaving the tracks in place on the Standish to Fryeburg section of the Mountain Division opens up another tourist possibility – rail biking. Rail biking is a pedal-powered excursion that rides on railroad tracks that are not being used for train traffic. There is no need to steer as the tracks will provide the steering, leaving the rider free to take in the scenery and to thoroughly enjoy the experience. Oh, by the way, peddling your way across western Maine is also a great gym-like workout.

These pictures are from the rail biking enterprise on various abandoned track railroads, including Maryland.





The company sends a flagman on a small motorized vehicle in advance of the paying customers to guard the crossings.

BTW. I intend to peddle my way along the 3 and a half miles of track at the Trolley Museum in Kennebunkport this October.

As the promotion says, enjoy the biking, see the historic trolleys and head on down to Kennebunkport for a lobster roll or two. A real treat

to the Chamber of Commerce and the tourists.

So that's a view of a successful trail by tracks railroad and a look had how the unused rails can bring tourists to the Mountain Division.

It takes a pause in the rush to rip up the rails and some creative thinking. Thank you for your attention.

William Lord  
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<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tWITGkNblmM> Railbiking