

Eileen Burns
Topsham
LD 29

I am writing in support of the recommendations of the Lower Road Rail Use Advisory Council. I would like to see the railroad bed become the Merrymeeting Rail Trail. It is a trail that I would use regularly for bicycle riding. I have been riding a road bike or gravel bike for distances over 15 miles for almost 60 years. I have lived in states like Pennsylvania and Florida which have a much more robust rail trail system than Maine. Since moving here 3 years ago, I have struggled with the limited options for safe, off-road bicycle riding. I live in Topsham. My choices are the very short Androscoggin Bike Path, driving 30 minutes to the Kennebec Rail Trail, or driving 40 minutes to the Eastern Trail in Scarborough. All other bike riding has to take place on narrow paved roads that lack shoulders and carry frequent traffic. A new rail trail that actually connects the Androscoggin Bike Path to the Kennebec Rail Trail would offer tremendous opportunities for short and long safe rides.