

# MOUNTAIN DIVISION RAIL USE ADVISORY COUNCIL

## LIVE VIRTUAL PUBLIC MEETING

*March 31st, 2022: 6:00-7:30pm*



**Mountain Division Rail Use Advisory Council**  
**Open for Public Comment**

# MOUNTAIN DIVISION

- Mountain Division extends from Portland, ME to St. Johnsbury, VT (51 miles in ME)
  - PAN AM Railways owns and operates first 5 miles from Portland to Westbrook (SAPPI siding)
  - Bicycle and Pedestrian trails exist adjacent to the line from Windham to Standish and Fryeburg
  - Snowmobile clubs use the line in the winter under Agreement with MaineDOT
- Maine Central Railroad discontinued service in 1983
- Purchased by MaineDOT under the Rail Preservation Act in 1998 and 2008
  - **Use of railroad line.** The department may lease the railroad line, or otherwise contract for operation of the railroad line, to a railroad operator, or it may hold and manage the railroad line for future transportation use.

# RAIL USE ADVISORY COUNCIL

- **LD 1133**
  - Established Rail Corridor Use Advisory Council Process for review of *nonrail recreational or nonrecreational transportation use*
  - *The council shall review and make recommendations on the likelihood, benefits and costs of potential uses of the rail corridor, including, but not limited to, rail use, trail use or bikeways. Any nonrail use of a rail corridor must be considered by a council to be interim in nature, and all such rail corridors must be preserved for future rail use*
- **LD 672**
  - Established Rail Corridor Use Advisory Council for Mountain Division between Standish and Fryeburg
  - The subject area of this study is an approximately 31-mile section of the line between Route 35 in Standish and Route 113 in Fryeburg
- **How the Council Process works:**
  - Within 9 months, Council submit findings and recommendation regarding use of the corridor to MaineDOT
    - May include majority and minority reports
  - If Commissioner concurs, MaineDOT shall seek legislative approval of the recommendation by submitting legislation to the Joint Standing Committee on Transportation prior to track removal or the other change for nonrail use.



**OUR MISSION** | To support economic opportunity and quality of life by responsibly providing our customers the safest and most reliable transportation system possible, given available resources.

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 **Rail Use Advisory Council**

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## Mountain Division - Rail Use Advisory Council

The Mountain Division Rail Use Advisory Council was officially formed in September of 2021 by MaineDOT Commissioner Bruce Van Nostrand, *Chapter 239*.

MaineDOT received letters of support from several communities along the rail corridor requesting that the future of the 31 miles of state rail line be discussed. 200 pieces of testimony were submitted for public comment on LD 672, *Resolve, To Direct the Department of Transportation to Review the Mountain Division Line for Potential Non-rail Uses*.

The Council, after deliberations, will provide recommendations on the future use to the Commissioner of Transportation in the spring/summer of 2022.

### Supporting Documents

- [Economic Impact of Eastern Trail – Southern Maine Planning and Development Commission \(SMPDC\) \(PDF\)](#)
- [Executive Summary, The Mountain Division Rail Study, December 2007 \(PDF\)](#)
- [A Report on Potential Uses and Implementation Costs Full Report, The Mountain Division Rail Study, December 2007 \(PDF\)](#)
- [Draft Mountain Feasibility Study \(PDF\)](#)