

Ms. Cynthia T. Brown, Chief Section of Administration
E Street SW
Room 1034
Washington, DC 20423-0001

Dear Ms. Brown:

Surface Transportation Board: Office of Proceedings
395 RE: Docket AB-180X Lowville & Beaver River Railroad Company
Docket AB 768 Mohawk, Adirondack & Northern Railroad Corporation

Regarding the proposed abandonment of railroads in Lewis County NY (Docket #'s AB-180X and AB-768X please consider that New York State recently (3/23) shut down the biomass powerplant on Fort Drum N.Y. due to its carbon output. 38 of the world's larger container vessels are now using sails to reduce carbon output and lower operating costs. The United Nations, United States, and New York State are all pushing to reduce carbon footprints. As of April 2022, NYS signed into law the mandate that all school buses will be emission free by 2035. It seems very likely that the USPS will be required to lower its carbon footprint.

Lowering pollution levels is a concern to the governing bodies that Lewis County operates under. Wouldn't it be wise for Lewis County to also seek ways and methods of reducing its carbon footprint?

Transporting anything by rubber wheels on pavement releases 7 times the amount of carbon dioxide into our biosphere than does transporting by steel wheel on steel rail. Fortunately, methods that reduce our carbon footprint usually use less energy. Using less energy lowers costs. This simple concept has me puzzling as to why the merchants of Lewis County aren't begging the Lowville & Beaver River Railroad and Mohawk, Adirondack & Northern Railroads for service. If these two railroads won't or can't provide service then perhaps Lewis County would, should it acquire ownership of the tracks.

The situation I most want to avoid is the scenario where the taxpayers purchase these two railroads, pay for the proper disposal of the ties, pay to set up a Rails to Trails system, then five years later be required to pay millions of dollars per mile to put the ties and rails back in place so that freight can be moved at a lesser carbon footprint than what rubber wheels on pavement can.

Acquiring a railroad at this point in time would be one of the best investments ever made by a government, removing the rails would be about the stupidest.

Sincerely,

Eric Schwartzentruber

CC: All Parties of Record