



STATE OF NEW HAMPSHIRE
DEPARTMENT of NATURAL and CULTURAL RESOURCES
DIVISION of PARKS and RECREATION
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January 29, 2019

The Honorable David Watters, Chair
and the Senate Transportation Committee
NH Legislative Office Building, Room 103
Concord, NH 03301

Re: SB 185-FN-A, AN ACT establishing a rail trail corridors advisory committee to assist the department of transportation in updating the state trails plan and making an appropriation therefor.

Dear Chairman Watters and Members of the Committee,

Please accept this testimony on behalf of the Department of Natural and Cultural Resources, Division of Parks & Recreation in support of Senate Bill 185-FN-A.

For several years the Division's Bureau of Trails has worked with NH DOT, Bureau of Rail and Transit, on this topic of abandoned rail corridors and their interim use as recreational trails. The Bureau of Trails has had a management agreement with NH DOT for more than 20 years, which allows the Bureau to manage these DOT properties for recreational use, until such time as they are needed for transportation purposes again. Having an updated plan on how to address the interim use, funding of projects, liability of user groups and other topics would be beneficial to have.

The language of SB 185-FN-A is derived from the SB 80 Study Committee from 2016. The Division of Parks & Recreation supports the bill, provided the funding in line 36, page 2, of the bill continues to be included. We would respectfully request that the title of the plan be changed in lines 12 of page 1 and lines 36 and 38 of page 2 from the "NH State Trails Plan" to the "NH Rail Trail Plan", or something that would accurately reflect the intent of the plan and the properties it is intended to address, namely rail trails.

Thank you for considering our testimony in support of SB 185-FN-A. Chris Gamache, Chief of our Bureau of Trails is available to answer any question that the committee should have.

Sincerely,


Philip Bryce
Director