

Arcand, Richard

From: ewj [REDACTED]
Sent: Thursday, July 02, 2020 12:31 PM
To: Winters, Shelley
Cc: Corliss, Chuck A; Robinson, John (B66); Barker, Louis
Subject: RE: Beecher Falls Branch

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Shelly,

Monday July 20th in the afternoon works best for me, I can meet with everyone in person down in Concord.

Ed

Sent from my T-Mobile 5G Device

----- Original message -----

From: "Winters, Shelley"
Date: 7/2/20 12:23 PM (GMT-05:00)
To: "Ed Jeffrey" [REDACTED]
Cc: "Corliss, Chuck A" , "Robinson, John (B66)" , "Barker, Louis"
Subject: Beecher Falls Branch

Good afternoon, gents,

I would like to setup a meeting (either in-person or via Zoom) to discuss the northern limits of state ownership and NH Central use in the Colebrook-Columbia area on the Beecher Falls Branch. The Department has been approached by the towns and DNCR Bureau of Trails over the last few years (with a more recent re-inquiry) to ask about OHRV use and/or bike-ped use in Columbia & Colebrook.

These uses would be very difficult to implement within the limited adjacent ROW, with the RR line staying, and the use would probably be better suited for full use of the corridor, which would require STB abandonment and discontinuance of service as the rails would need to be removed, etc., etc. These actions aren't ones that we take lightly, but as there are pending inquiries and request for the use of the property and it has been many moons since the northern portions of this branch have seen rail service, or even maintenance activities, I think it is time that we put our collective heads together and discuss future rail potential and use.

I would like to meet within the month of July to develop a recommendation on the portions of the line that can be availed for other uses (assuming we conclude that) and the portion that should be retained for current and future/potential rail use. Upon our collective suggestion I would then like to approach the Commissioner's Office with the suggested line of demarcation (railroad use vs. other possible use) and develop a plan by which entities other than NHDOT or the railroad could fund the abandonment & discontinuance of service (similar to Littleton, but hopefully much more streamlined)!

There are many steps that need to occur in the process, but I think the first is for us all to formally start the conversation and look at the future of the Beecher Falls Branch. If there are no objections, I would ask you, Ed, to provide dates/timeframes that you are available for such a meeting and I'll coordinate with DOT staff on availability.

Thank you,

Shelley

PS—we may want to also discuss the Berlin Branch from Whitefield (west of 116) to Wing Road in Littleton as that may be the next section that is inquired about.