

Bill Gegas

From: Levine, Leigh [Leigh.Levine@fhwa.dot.gov]**Sent:** Wednesday, April 09, 2008 2:50 PM**To:** Bill Gegas**Cc:** Chris Gamache; Ram Maddali**Subject:** RE: Sugar River Recreational Rail Trail

Bill,

This is to affirm that use of TE funds for these bridge preservation projects will not affect current permitted motorized access across these bridges in conjunction with the Sugar River Trail.

The bridge preservation projects are Category 7 TE projects (rehabilitation and operation of historic transportation buildings, structures, or facilities, including historic railroad facilities and canals). Because the bridges qualify as TE Category 7 projects, they do not depend on TE Category 1 (provision of facilities for pedestrians and bicyclists) for their eligibility. Other TE-funded bridge rehabilitation projects (including other covered bridge projects) continue to allow pre-existing legal motorized vehicle use, so there is no need to make an exception for these bridges just because they are trail bridges.

Because there is pre-existing legal motorized use, the motorized use must be accommodated. We cannot use TE funds on a trail for the purpose of banning pre-existing legal motorized use, unless there is mitigation to accommodate the legal motorized use.

Leigh

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From: Bill Gegas [mailto:bill.gegas@dred.state.nh.us]**Sent:** Wednesday, April 09, 2008 11:49 AM**To:** Levine, Leigh**Cc:** Chris Gamache**Subject:** Sugar River Recreational Rail Trail

Leigh,

The NH Bureau of Trails manages the recreational use of The Sugar River Recreational Rail Trail which runs from Newport to Claremont. This corridor is owned by the NH DOT and was originally purchased with funds other than Federal Transportation Enhancement funds. For many years this former rail line has been designated as a year-round motorized trail for use by ATVs and trail bikes. Along the trail are two of the last remaining railroad covered bridges in the country. Current plans for preservation projects of these bridges are to be funded through the TE program. Considering the restrictions of the TE program our first concern was that current management for

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motorized use of this trail will be interrupted. I recently received verbal confirmation from the FHWA that because these will specifically be preservation projects, restrictions against motorized use will not apply. If you would, please provide further affirmation that use of TE funds for these bridge preservation projects will not affect current permitted motorized access across these bridges in conjunction with this trail.

Thank you,

Bill

Bill Gegas, Program Specialist

New Hampshire Bureau of Trails

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