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July 8, 2015

John Schmid, Natural Resources Planner
New York State Department of Environmental Conservation
625 Broadway, 5th Floor
Albany, NY 12233-4254

Dear Mr. Schmid,

On behalf of the Board of Directors of Historic Saranac Lake, I am writing to express our support for the preservation of the New York Central Railroad, Adirondack Division, corridor.

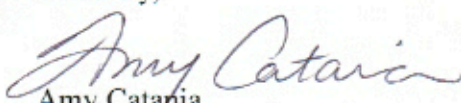
As a National Register resource, the rails merit the State's protection. The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Preservation dictate that ideally an historic resource be used as it was historically. As such, the scenic railroad represents an important success of historic preservation, and it deserves ongoing stewardship and protection by the state agencies. Removal of the rails will destroy the fabric of this National Register listed resource.

We believe that rail removal will trigger federal 106 review. We are in discussion with the Advisory Council for Historic Preservation about the proposed rail removal, and the agency is currently investigating the proposed action to remove the rails.

We applaud the state's proposal to rehabilitate the rails to Tupper Lake. Investment by NYS to upgrade the rail infrastructure preserves economic development options for the future and enhances the probability for access to the Adirondack Region by persons of any age, physical condition, and recreational interest. We urge the state to reconsider the plan to remove the rails from Tupper Lake to Lake Placid. Knowledgeable volunteers have worked to develop plans for a continuous trail system within and alongside the travel corridor. This enhanced and upgraded trail system can be built cost effectively in conjunction with the upgrade to the rail infrastructure.

The railway merits preservation not only as a State and National Register resource, but also because of the important role it is playing now in the development of the tourism industry in the Saranac Lake region. We are certain that a rail with trail option, which allows tourists to explore portions of the park by trail while maintaining the existing railway, is the best way to support the development of our tourism economy going forward. We urge the state to choose a rail with trail option, a win-win for all sides, and the solution which offers the most promise for economic development.

Sincerely,


Amy Catania
Executive Director