



FD 35559
Saratoga & North
Creek Railway
EI-18851
yr

**Resolution #1 in Support of Preservation and Rehabilitation of
Adirondack Rail Infrastructure**

Whereas, the North Country Regional Economic Council deems rail service to be a critical component of its Strategic Plan and supports the preservation and rehabilitation of all surviving rail infrastructure in the Adirondacks, and

Whereas, rail infrastructure has purposely been retained as an economic development asset, with the eventual restoration specifically targeted to access former mining operations, which would allow the movement of materials to new markets by means other than truck, and

Whereas, existing rail will become an increasingly important shipping alternative for small to medium sized Adirondack businesses as the price of gasoline and diesel fuel increases, while also supporting tourism train services such as those between Lake Placid & Saranac Lake, and the Saratoga to North Creek line that provides a unique eco-tourism experience, and

Whereas, the rehabilitation of the Saranac Lake-Tupper Lake line holds the potential for additional future passenger and tourism services, if it is preserved, while accommodating freight shipments to existing companies, and

Whereas, the Saratoga & North Creek Railway has applied to the Surface Transportation Board (STB) for an exemption to re-activate the Tahawus-North Creek rail line formally owned by NL Industries to haul freight, support other economic development efforts, and fully realize potential job creation by use of this asset, and

Whereas, recently announced plans to re-activate freight traffic into Tahawus in Essex County have faced resistance from environmental opposition groups, as well as, NYSDEC Division of Lands and Forests which submitted objections to the STB and asserted jurisdiction of the easement that transverses the forest preserve, and

Whereas, those actions were in part is responsible for the initial denial of the request which is now on appeal, and

Whereas, with the North Country Regional Council deeming rail service as

a critical component of their Strategic Plan, the recently expressed assertions raise immediate concerns about the State's commitment to implementing Regional Strategies.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT

Resolved, that the Adirondack Park Local Government Review Board fully supports the preservation and rehabilitation of all surviving rail infrastructure in the Adirondacks because it will facilitate the creation of badly needed employment in this highly distressed area of New York, tap the use of rail as a green form of transportation for freight, restore historic infrastructure to promote tourism and further bolster the sustainability of our communities, and it is further

Resolved, that opening the Tahawus line provides the NYSDEC a perfect opportunity to demonstrate its commitment to realign the agency's approach from a past "adversarial" one to one that seeks to improve the Adirondack economy and, in this instance, one which also reflects acknowledgment of the Regional Plan as an important guide for actions by all state agencies, and it is further

Resolved, that the Review Board strongly supports the pending Surface Transportation Board application from the Saratoga and North Creek Railroad to provide freight service on the existing rail line to the former mine operations at Tahawus, and it is further

IT IS FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this Resolution be forwarded to Governor Andrew Cuomo, Senator Kirsten Gillibrand, Congressman Chris Gibson, Congressman Bill Owens, Senate Majority Leader Dean Skelos, Senator Elizabeth Little, Senator Hugh Farley, Senator James E. Seward, Senator Joseph A. Griffo, Senator Patty Ritchie, Senator Roy J. McDonald, Senator Mark Grisanti, Senator David Valesky, Senator Liz Krueger, Assemblywoman Claudia Tenney, Assemblywoman Teresa Sayward, Assemblywoman Janet L. Duprey, Assemblyman Al Graf, Assemblyman Tony Jordan, Assemblyman Mark Butler, Assemblyman Ken Blankenbush, Assemblyman Robert Sweeney, DEC Commissioner Joe Martens, Assembly Speaker Sheldon Silver, DEC Region 5 Director Bob Stegemann, DEC Region 6 Director, Judy Drabicki, the Twelve Counties of the Adirondacks, The Adirondack Park Agency, The Association of Towns and Villages and The Surface Transportation Board
