

A RESOLUTION SUPPORTING THE ACQUISITION AND CONVERSION OF OUT-OF-SERVICE RAILROAD RIGHT-OF-WAY TO A TRAIL FOR ALTERNATIVE TRANSPORTATION AND RECREATION

WHEREAS 48 miles of the former Manassas Gap Railroad which lie between Riverton Junction, in Warren County, and the Town of Broadway, in Rockingham County, and passing through the service area of the nonprofit Shenandoah Valley Partnership, are in a state of disuse, all freight and passenger service having ceased;

WHEREAS the prospect of restoration of freight or passenger service along the aforementioned section of railroad is very unlikely;

WHEREAS the railroad, in its current state of disuse, is a blight on our community, and a danger to youth who may be tempted to trespass;

WHEREAS the railroad presents an opportunity to create a world-class trail providing bicycle, pedestrian and equestrian access to extraordinary landscape views and several important Civil War battlefields;

WHEREAS such trail would catalyze tourism-related economic growth;

WHEREAS such trail would connect eleven communities including, offering the option of safe alternative transportation within and between these communities to a broad segment of the local population, for commuting to work and school, thereby improving the quality of life;

WHEREAS, such trail would greatly enhance outdoor recreation opportunities, public health, equitable transportation alternatives, local economic development, community richness, and connection to our region's historic resources;

WHEREAS an organization known as the Shenandoah Valley Rail Trail Exploratory Partnership, whose membership includes representation of each locality through which the trail would pass, has been formed to explore trail feasibility;

WHEREAS the 2020 Virginia General Assembly directed the state Department of Conservation and Recreation to study trail feasibility and deliver a report no later than November 1, 2021;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Shenandoah Valley Partnership endorses the conversion of the aforementioned 48-mile discontinued railroad to a multiuse trail for alternative transportation and recreation;

FURTHERMORE, the Shenandoah Valley Partnership resolves to join with the other trail localities and nonprofits in seeking the support of regional, state and federal agencies and the railroad's owner, Norfolk Southern Corporation, toward the goal of development of the trail.

Signed on January 28, 2022



Jay A. Langston, Ph.D.
Executive Director
Shenandoah Valley Partnership



Chris Kyle
Chairman
Shenandoah Valley Partnership