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Management Plan For

Lamoille Valley Rail Trail

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Management Plan For the Lamoille Valley Rail Trail

1.0 Executive Summary

The Lamoille Valley Rail Trail (LVRT) will be a year-round multi-use recreation and alternative transportation facility (ATF). The LVRT will be located on the premises and right-of-way, as described in the lease executed between the Vermont Agency of Transportation (VTrans) and the Vermont Association of Snow Travelers, Inc. (VAST) on September 20, 2006, of the original St. Johnsbury and Lake Champlain Rail Road Company established June 30, 1916 and most recently managed as the Lamoille Valley Rail Road Company (LVRR).

In 2002 the Vermont General Assembly authorized the State to enter into a long-term lease with a USER for the State owned railroad line beginning in the Town of St. Johnsbury in the east and ending in the Town of Swanton (the Line) in the west. In 2003 the General Assembly of the State of Vermont directed that the state-owned railroad corridor between St. Johnsbury and Swanton should be converted to a year-round, multi-use recreation ATF managed by the Vermont Association of Snow Travelers, Inc. (VAST); and the Line was to be rail-banked and used for interim trail use.

The adoption of a long-term lease and the acceptance of this management plan by both the State of Vermont, Agency of Transportation and VAST will govern the management and usage of the Line as a year-round, multi-use recreation and ATF. The parties have agreed to be legally bound by the terms of the lease between the State of Vermont, Agency of Transportation (Lessee) and VAST (Lessor). The VAST Management Plan for the Lamoille Valley Rail Trail will detail the conversion of LVRR right-of-way and its management to a year-round multi-use facility.

The ultimate responsibility for the conversion of the LVRR railbed, into a year-round multi-use recreation and ATF and its management, will be born by VAST. The VAST Board of Directors has established the Lamoille Valley Rail Trail Committee (the LVRTC) that will be charged with overseeing the planning and funding for the conversion and management of the Lamoille Valley Railroad into a year-round multi-use recreation and ATF. The VAST Board of Directors has adopted Policies for the Committee and it will be the responsibility of the LVRTC to develop an annual Development and Maintenance Plan (DMP). The DMP will be developed based upon the results and recommendations of the engineering assessment and plans development process that will take place, and will determine the overall scope of the work to be accomplished by this project. The DMP will identify activities new construction, repair, and maintenance that will take place for the ensuing year.

During the Summer of 2007, VAST completed an assessment of the LVRT ROW and was able to establish the condition of the rail bed as well as identifying the scope of work necessary to complete the conversion

from rail bed to rail trail. A written assessment, details all of the information collected, details necessary work to be completed, and it contains more than 1,600 photos that document the current condition of the rail bed. This document outlines in extensive detail the present conditions to be found on the ROW, and includes tabulations of culverts, bridges, washouts, problem areas, and encroachments. More importantly, the assessment GPSed the entire length, and linked the Valuation Plan stationing to the GPS datum, making it possible to use the accumulated information for eventual use in trail design and construction, future development plans, and trail maintenance plans.

Also completed as a secondary document, and attached to the assessment, was a recommended construction methodology for a proposed trail alternative, in accordance with the Local Transportation Facilities (LTF) project development guide. Much of the information from this document is also included within this plan.

A portion of the rail bed, located in East Hardwick, was damaged in the summer of 2007 by heavy rainfall that caused a landslide and washout of the rail bed. This gave VAST the opportunity to repair the damage that was created, and in the process it allowed VAST to experiment with alternatives that might be successful in our efforts to convert the rail bed into a four-season trail. It also allowed VAST to develop accurate costs for projecting the total cost of the LVRT. This information is detailed within this report and based on the experimental project it is anticipated that it will cost more than \$6.8 million to complete this project.

This plan further outlines and defines the roles of all parties that will be a part of the LVRT process. The plan also outlines the proposed financial possibilities for both conversion of the rail bed and for its future maintenance.

1.1 Mission and Vision

We envision a rural facility that will provide an environment so all users can enjoy nature and the scenic Vermont landscape to its fullest. This environment away from vehicular traffic will become an inviting place where the elderly and persons with disabilities can enjoy more leisurely endeavors and bicycle riders can set their own pace with short rides or multi-day trips. Users will fall into two categories; (1) local users who live within a short distance and will use the ATF on a regular basis; (2) out-of-town and out-of-state users who will commute to a selected location and enjoy their own preferred form of recreation. It is this second category, with the proper promotion, that will provide the positive economic impact to the communities. To varying degrees all user groups will require new dining, lodging and repair businesses to be established to fill the need. The National Rails to Trails Conservancy estimates that a 95-mile rural scenic rail trail in Vermont, after 10 years of proper promotion, should conservatively have 250,000 users per year. These user numbers will drive the economic growth at the local level and provide increased tax dollars at the state level.

The mission of VAST and the LVRTC is to produce and maintain a premier year-round multi-use recreation and ATF that will have national and international recognition as one of the finest Rail-Trails in the US and Canada. We envision a rural ATF that will allow all users to enjoy the natural, scenic Vermont landscape to its fullest.

2.0 LVRT Purpose & Need Statement

PROJECT DESCRIPTION:

The Lamoille Valley Rail Trail (LVRT), project Swanton-St. Johnsbury STP LVRT (1), will be a year-round shared-use recreation and alternative transportation path/trail. The proposed path/trail will be 93 miles in length and traverse an east west 'Cross-Vermont' route across northern Vermont from the village of St. Johnsbury to the town of Swanton. The LVRT will be located on the premises and right-of-way of the former St. Johnsbury and Lake Champlain Rail Road Company (SJ&LC). The SJ&LC was primarily a single-track railroad with a typical right-of-way width of at least 66 feet. In areas of cuts and fills the right-of-way is wider. The easterly terminus is in an industrial area on the south side of the Village of St. Johnsbury (elevation 600 feet) that is located in the Passumpsic River Valley. From St. Johnsbury the line climbs westward through hilly rural country. The line gains elevation for about 28 miles until Greensboro Bend (elevation 1,700 feet) where it crosses the Green Mountain range, passing from the watershed of the Connecticut River to that of Lake Champlain and the St. Lawrence River. Just west of Greensboro Bend the line begins to descend along the westward flowing Lamoille River, which it follows westerly for the next 36 miles to Cambridge Junction (elevation 462 feet). Just west of Cambridge Junction the line turns in a northwesterly direction proceeding across rolling countryside a distance of about 20 miles to Sheldon Junction (elevation 347 feet). At Sheldon Junction, the line begins to follow the westward-flowing Missisquoi River, along which the line continues another 12 miles to its westerly terminus at Swanton (elevation 157 feet) near Lake Champlain. The LVRT will be a predominantly rural trail, separate from automobile traffic except at highway crossings, for bicyclists, hikers, snowmobiles and other users. The LVRT must be in compliance with applicable FHWA standards, including those for ADA, therefore it is logical to build it on the track bed of a former railroad, which has a maximum grade of 2%. The majority of the completed trail will have a compacted gravel surface, not a paved asphalt surface. More than forty trailhead locations were identified along the trail corridor and the majority of those sites would be accessible to persons with disabilities.

HISTORY:

The St. Johnsbury and Lake Champlain Rail Road Company was established on June 30, 1916. In 1972 the SJ&LC petitioned the former Interstate Commerce Commission for authority to abandon the entire line. The State of Vermont acquired the railroad on December 7, 1973 and the Lamoille Valley Rail Road Company (LVRR) most recently managed the line under lease. Over the intervening years operations waned and ceased in August 1995 as a result of flood damage.

In 1993 the Vermont Legislature recognized the importance of recreational resources for the health, welfare and economic benefit of the State and its citizens and passed legislation that created the "Vermont Trails System". Chapter 20 of Title 10 commences with the following statement of purpose: *"In order to provide access to the use and enjoyment of the outdoor areas of Vermont, to conserve and use the natural resources of this state for healthful and recreational purposes, and to provide transportation from one place to another, it is declared to be the policy of this state to provide the means for maintaining and improving a network of trails to be known as the "Vermont trails system. It is the intent of the legislature that trails be established within and without boundaries of state parks and forests and, when feasible, to interconnect*

units of the state park and forest system, as well as such federal and municipal lands as may be appropriate. The development, operation, and maintenance of the Vermont trails system is declared to be a public purpose and in this context, the agency of natural resources together with other governmental agencies is authorized to spend public funds for such purposes and to accept gifts and grants of funds, property, or property rights from public or private sources to be used for such purposes where permission is granted. It is the intent of the legislature to maintain Vermont's eligibility for receiving and spending federal funds for trails. It is the intent of the legislature that whenever a railroad line not already owned by the state of Vermont is proposed for abandonment, and continuation of railroad service is not economically feasible under present conditions, the right-of-way may be acquired by the state of Vermont for railbanking and interim trail use under chapter 58 of Title 5."

On June 21, 2002 the Vermont General Assembly authorized the Vermont Agency of Transportation to enter into a long-term lease with Vermont Association of Snow Travelers, Inc. (VAST) for the State owned railroad line between the City of St Johnsbury and the Town of Swanton for the purpose of creating a year-round, multi-use recreation trail. To expedite that prior action, effective June 04, 2003, the Vermont General Assembly directed that the State owned railroad corridor between St. Johnsbury and Swanton should be converted into a year-round, multi-use recreation path and that the Line be rail-banked, and is to be used for interim trail use in accordance with authorization from the federal Surface Transportation Board (STB) based on its ultimate action issued on STB Docket No. AB-444 (Sub-No, 1X) [*Lamoille Valley R.R. Co. – Abandonment and Discontinuance of Trackage Rights Exemption – In Caledonia, Washington, Orleans, Lamoille and Franklin Counties, VT*] (served February 13, 2004). The above Legislative and STB actions set the stage for the creation of "*The Lamoille Valley Rail Trail (LVRT)*."

On July 31, 2005 the Vermont Department of Forests, Parks and Recreation published its Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP) for 2005-2009. The SCORP identified the important role that outdoor recreation provides in support of the health, vitality and well being of Vermonters as well as the benefits that recreational resources provide to Vermont's Economy. Chapter IV "Vermont Trails and Greenways Plan" of the 2005-2009 SCORP identifies retired railbeds, shared-use paths and rail-trails as important resources for providing recreational opportunities for Vermonters and visitors to the state, Chapter 4 specifically identifies accomplishments of VTrans and VANR in establishing existing rail-trail systems and the availability of up to 150 miles of additional retired railbed that might provide opportunities for shared-use.

In January 2008 the Vermont Agency of Transportation published its third "Vermont Pedestrian and Bicycle Policy Plan" (VPBPP) The VPBPP is a five year plan and contains the following vision statement: "*The State of Vermont has safe, convenient and accessible conditions for bicyclists and pedestrians of all ages and abilities. Bicycle, pedestrian and roadway networks provide mobility and links with other transportation modes, while complementing Vermont's natural environment, community character, and overall quality of life.*" The goals of the VPBPP are to enhance and improve Vermont's pedestrian and bicycle system in support of: enhanced Cultural Environment; enhanced Economic Vitality; improved Health; improved Natural Environment; improved Safety and enhanced Transportation Choice.

PURPOSE:

The purpose of the LVRT is:

- 1) to provide a year-round, shared-use, recreation and alternative transportation path/trail between the City of St. Johnsbury and the Town of Swanton, located on the premises and right-of-way of the former Lamoille Valley Rail Road;
- 2) allow widespread access promoting the types of recreation identified in Chapter IV of Vermont's Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP);
- 3) promote accomplishment of the goals of the State of Vermont outlined in the "Vermont Pedestrian and Bicycle Policy Plan" (VPBPP);
- 4) provide an east-west connecting corridor for adjoining communities to plan and build their own connecting trail systems or to connect their existing trails to this 'Northern, Cross-Vermont Trail', including the following north-south trails:
 - A) planned community recreation paths in St. Johnsbury, Morrisville, Johnson, Jeffersonville and Swanton, which will provide access to and from the villages, and the LVRT;
 - B) the Missisquoi Valley Rail Trail from St Albans to Richford which will connect in Sheldon Jct. and provide users further rail trail options to the Canadian border;
 - C) the Cambridge Greenway Rail Trail connection, which will provide access to and from the village of Jeffersonville;
 - D) the Long Trail that crosses near Johnson Village will provide access for the hikers to and from the village for services and connections north and south;
 - E) the Catamount Trail that will cross near Hardwick will provide skiers the choice of groomed or ungroomed trails;
 - F) the VAST statewide snowmobile trail network with 21 connections.

NEED:

The need for the project is based upon the following:

- 1) The Vermont General Assembly's directive, effective June 01, 1993, recognizing the importance of recreational resources for the health, welfare and economic benefit of the State and its citizens by passing legislation that created the "Vermont Trails System," Chapter 20 of Title 10. Chapter 20 indicates that; "It is the intent of the legislature that whenever a railroad line not already owned by the state of Vermont is proposed for abandonment, and continuation of railroad service is not economically feasible under present conditions, the right-of-way may be acquired by the state of Vermont for railbanking and interim trail use."

- 2) The Vermont General Assembly's authorization to the Vermont Agency of Transportation, effective June 21, 2002, to enter into a long-term lease with the Vermont Association of Snow Travelers, Inc. (VAST) for use of the State owned railroad line between the village of St. Johnsbury and the town of Swanton for the purpose of creating a year-round, multi-use recreation trail.
- 3) The Vermont General Assembly's directive, effective June 04, 2003, that the State owned railroad corridor between St. Johnsbury and Swanton should be converted into a year-round, multi-use recreation path and that the Line be rail-banked, and used for interim trail use
- 4) The goals identified in: the Vermont Department of Forests, Parks and Recreation's Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP) for 2005-2009; and in the Vermont Agency of Transportation's 2008 five year "Vermont Pedestrian and Bicycle Policy Plan".

2.1 Additional History and Definition

In 2006 the Vermont Legislature passed additional legislation related to the operation and development of the LVRT. Section 271d. of the 2006 Transportation Bill, entitled "Lamoille Valley Rail Trail" established that the State of Vermont would accept the federal earmark for the LVRT and authorized the project to proceed. The language also indicated as follows:

- a) The federal earmark for development of the rail banked Lamoille Valley rail corridor recreational trail shall be classified and administered by the agency of transportation as an enhancement project under 23 U.S.C. § 101 (a)(35) subject to terms and conditions of that classification
 - (1) In-kind services and donations, including credit for volunteer labor, equipment, and operator time donated by private individuals, nonprofit organizations, and governmental entities, shall be allowed and may be used for any match requirements within the FHWA regulations.
 - (2) Contractors that are not on the VTrans pre-approved list, but are judged to be a responsible bidder under FHWA guidelines shall be eligible for project related work.
 - (3) Project funds may be used on construction, reconstruction, restoration, and maintenance on the trails as authorized by FHWA.

The passage of this legislation is significant to the LVRT as it allows a much greater amount of latitude for what can be allowed as an in-kind match and/or for donated services and materials.¹

The execution of the long-term lease and the acceptance of this management plan by the State of Vermont, Agency of Transportation and VAST will govern the management and usage of the Line as a year-round, multi-use recreation and ATF. The lease also describes and details the responsibilities of the State and

¹ It must be noted that even though the Vermont Legislature has passed this legislation FHWA has ruled that the project is one that is funded by Congressional High Priority Funds and that rules applying to these funds will apply. It is not immediately known if there will be a significant impact on the project due to this ruling.

VAST relative to the future use and management of the LVRT. A copy of the lease is attached to this Management Plan and becomes a part of it as “Exhibit A.”

The ultimate responsibility for the conversion of the LVRR rail bed, into a year-round multi-use recreation and ATF and its management, will be born by VAST. The VAST Board of Directors has established the Lamoille Valley Rail Trail Committee (LVRTC) that will be charged with the day-to-day conversion and management activities of the project.

3.0 Development of Partnerships and the Management Plan

VAST has been actively pursuing partnerships that will ensure the success of the LVRT. Partnerships have been formed with the three regional planning commissions that are impacted by this project and The Friends of the Lamoille Valley Rail Trail. The LVRT Management Plan calls for the establishment of the Lamoille Valley Rail Trail Advisory Committee (LAC). The LAC is made up of representatives from the regional planning commissions, municipalities, business owner’s representation as well as representation from adjacent landowners. The LAC also has representation on the LVRTC. In addition, VAST has reached out to groups like the Vermont Mushers Association, Lamoille Valley Anglers and the Vermont Bicycle and Pedestrian Coalition, etc. VAST will continue to reach out to these and other interest groups to request input to ensure that the LVRT is a success.

The LVRT Management Plan is a requirement of the lease between VAST and VTrans and it will be the document that will guide VAST in the development and management of the LVRT. VAST has been working on developing this Management Plan since the date that it responded to the request for RFPs for the future use of the Lamoille Rail Road Corridor. During the development of the plan VAST attended a series of meetings with VTrans and the Regional Planning Commissions to work out the finer details of the plan. In addition, each of the three Regional Planning Commissions held public informational meetings that allowed the public to voice their support or concerns over the LVRT. The public’s concerns are reflected in this Management Plan. The general public will have additional opportunities to review the Management Plan and to make comments about the plan’s future content. The public will be able to view the LVRT Management Plan on the LVRTC website (www.lvrt.org) and they will be able to make comments, via e-mail, to the LVRTC from that site. In addition, the public will have the opportunity to review and comment on Management Plan amendments every two-years from the original adoption date of the plan and/or as otherwise required by the lease.

The LVRT Project Manager has assembled an assessment of the 93.2 miles of rail bed. This assessment serves as the basis for this LVRT Management Plan. The results of the assessment have been used as the basis a series of six public informational meeting that have been conducted by the LVRT Project Engineer/Manager. Three of these meeting were held to inform the Friends of the LVRT and three were held in conjunction with the three regional planning commissions, and their Transportation Advisory Committees (TACs).

3.1 Public Involvement

Public involvement will be welcome and sought throughout the facility conversion process. The first major opportunity was in the summer of 2008 when the public was able to comment on the revised LVRT Management, Development and Maintenance Plan. There was public involvement, as required, at the alternatives presentations, and there will be further public involvement at conceptual plans as well as other times defined in the LTF Project Development Process. There will also be a website for the facility that will allow for comments to be submitted from anyone accessing the site. We will be looking for constructive comments as well as positive feedback on the project. Since November 2007, six public informational meetings have been held to better inform the public about the future of the LVRT, the Friends of the LVRT and three by the regional planning commissions hosted three of those meetings. The LVRTC sent letters to all adjoining landowners requesting feedback about the trail as well as collecting additional information about those landowners.

4.0 Governance Structure

The VAST Board of Directors has oversight responsibility for the LVRT. The Lamoille Valley Recreational Trail Committee was formed to oversee planning and funding for the conversion and management of this railroad to a year-round multi use recreation and ATF.

4.1 Lamoille Valley Rail Trail Committee (LVRTC)

The Purpose of the Lamoille Valley Rail Trail Committee; hereinafter, referred to as the LVRTC, shall be to oversee the planning and funding for the conversion and management of the Lamoille Valley Railroad into a year-round multi-use recreation and ATF serving the needs of those who recreate in Vermont as well as the communities and their residents. The LVRTC shall include representation from the motorized and non-motorized users. It shall further be the responsibility of the LVRTC to develop and implement the DMP for the purpose of overseeing the year-to-year maintenance, and facilitating the day-to-day management as well as developing a policy for resolving issues and conflicts as they arise. The LVRTC shall also establish and update a five-year "General Maintenance Plan" that details annual maintenance of the LVRTC and its associated costs and it is to be included within the annual DMP.

A. LVRTC Authority

The authority of the LVRTC shall be as directed by the Vermont Association of Snow Travelers, Inc. (VAST) Board of Directors and shall not exceed the authority necessary to complete the stated purpose(s) of the LVRTC and/or exceed the authority of the VAST policies and By-Laws. The LVRTC shall have the authority to develop and implement plans and policies of the LVRTC, including, but not limited to the following duties:

- Solicit members from user groups and/or other interested parties.

- Develop operation and management plans, and conflict resolution procedures.
- Obtain through all possible sources the funding necessary to cover the costs of planning, permitting, construction, and maintenance of the LVRT.
- Oversee the conversion of the rail-bed into a four-season recreation and ATF.
- Ongoing management of the trail; and planning, funding and implementation of necessary promotional activities, and events, including the production of publications, brochures, events, etcetera.
- Coordinate with private landowners the location of and installation, and maintenance of “No Trespassing” signage. The signs are to be installed within the trail right-of-way, adjacent to the private landowners’ property and facing the trail. Signs and installation, of the signs, will be by the LVRTC or by one of the user groups if so designated by the LVRTC.
- Hire a paid Technical Assistant and Project Manager/Engineer to handle the technical, financial and business aspects of the LVRTC if financially viable, and approved by the VAST Board of Directors and included within VAST’s fiscal year budget. Both the Project Manager/Engineer and the Technical Assistant will be employees of the Vermont Association of Snow Travelers, Inc and covered by all applicable rules, regulations and policies.

It shall be, in part, the duty of the Technical Assistant to perform the following functions:

- Technical and administrative support to the LVRTC Project Manager/Engineer and LVRTC Fiscal Officer.
- Assist the LVRTC Secretary to provide records of all meeting and provide support for all communication items and issues of the LVRTC.
- Establish and maintain a database for issues and complaints.
- Establish and maintain a secure database of LVRT adjoining landowners, initial landowner information shall be provided by LAC members.²
- Work with LVRTC sub-committees and provide technical support and necessary information for members to make informed decisions.
- Assist LVRTC members and staff, as well as VAST staff, to keep communication, statistical and financial records for the LVRT project.

Prior to the implementation of any of the above, the VAST Board of Directors shall approve said plan and policies.

² Information within this database that was secured through access to public documents and files shall be made available to the public. All information collected through individual contact shall remain confidential and shall not be shared.

B. LVRTC Membership

The LVRTC shall be made up of volunteer members representing both motorized and non-motorized recreational activities. Volunteers serving on the LVRTC shall not be paid for their services; however, they will be asked to document their time spent on this committee to potentially be used as match for any federal grants. LVRTC members will be paid mileage, at the appropriate IRS designated rate, for their attendance at all meetings of the LVRTC. The expertise needed from volunteers on this committee may change over time as the conversion is completed and the emphasis changes to one of trail enhancement, management and promotion. All members shall serve two-year terms.

1. The LVRTC shall consist of no more than eleven (11) volunteer members. The makeup of the LVRTC shall be as follows:

- The VAST Board of Directors shall appoint five (5) members to the Committee annually, one shall be a representative of the Vermont ATV Sportsman's Association (VASA),³ and a second member shall represent adjoining landowners, the remaining three members shall be at the discretion of the VAST Board of Directors.

- Adjoining Landowner Representation - *The VAST Board of Directors shall be responsible for appointing the initial Adjoining Landowner member to the LVRTC, and subsequent appointments shall be recommended by the LVRTC. The LVRTC will request interested adjoining landowners to submit a letter of interest for serving on the LVRTC annually, this request shall be made in July. The letter will ask the individual to express their interest for serving on the LVRTC and their qualifications are, as well as detailing what valuable attributes they will bring to the LVRTC. Based on the submitted letters of interest, the LVRTC shall select the adjoining landowner who they feel is best qualified for this position.*

- Five (5)-members of the LVRTC shall be appointed annually from a list of potential members representing non-motorized users who have been nominated by their respective recreation user group to serve on the LVRTC. The Regional Planning Commissions (RPCs) and the "Friends of the LVRT" will assist in reaching out to the various user groups and will make recommendations to the LVRTC on potential candidates to represent trail user groups. Each nominee shall present a letter of interest indicating his or her qualifications, and reasons for wishing to serve on the LVRTC. If more names are submitted than there are positions to fill, the positions shall be filled by election by ballot. Only the current members of the LVRTC, including those that are in the positions being decided for appointment, will be eligible to cast a ballot. If there were five (5) seats open and seven (7) candidates are nominated, to fill the vacancies, each voting LVRTC member would vote for five (5) of the candidates and the five (5) candidates receiving the most ballots would be elected to fill the vacant LVRTC positions.

³ VASA will continue to hold its seat on the Lamoille Valley Rail Trail Committee (LVRTC) even though the use of ATVs is currently not allowed. ATV use on the trail continues to be a high visibility problem and VASA's input to help reduce illegal operation and to coordinate law enforcement is needed.

- One (1) LVRTC member shall be the Chair, or other appointed individual, representing the Lamoille Valley Recreational Trail Advisory Committee (LAC). The LAC, representing Municipalities; Adjacent Landowners; Regional Planning Commissions; Regional Business Owners; VAST and the Vermont Agency of Transportation, shall select by majority vote, this individual on an annual basis.
- All members shall be elected or appointed at least one month prior to the annual meeting of the LVRTC.
- A slate of Members and Officers shall be submitted to the VAST Board of Directors one (1) month after their Annual Meeting.
- The VAST Executive Director shall act as an advisor and a resource to the LVRTC, but will not serve as a LVRTC member and shall not have a vote.
- The VAST Board of Directors shall ratify the Chair of the LVRTC as elected by the LVRTC.

In the event that any member of the LVRTC sustains three consecutive absences the LVRTC shall contact the absent member and determine whether there is continued interest in serving on the LVRTC. If not, the LVRTC may deem the member to have resigned and shall proceed to take steps to replace that member. Members shall be replaced using the criteria specified in section “B” above. The term of all LVRTC members shall be for two (2) years, but there shall be no maximum number of terms that can be served.

C. LVRTC Officers

The officers of the LVRTC (Executive Board) shall be the Chair, Vice-Chair, Secretary and Finance Officer.

1. The duties of the officers are as follows:

- **Chair** - The Chair shall preside at all meetings of the LVRTC and Executive Board. The Chair shall be an ex-officio member of all subcommittees of the LVRTC. The Chair shall have the usual powers of supervision and management, as they pertain to the office of Chair, and perform such other functions as may be designated by the LVRTC or Executive Board. If one has been established, the LVRTC may designate the Executive Board to finalize negotiations for contracts. The Chair shall recommend to the VAST Board of Directors that they approve and sign contracts upon approval of the LVRTC. The LVRTC Chair shall be elected by a majority vote of that committee.
- **Vice Chair** - The Vice-Chair shall, in the event of absence, disability, or death of the Chair, possess all the powers and perform all the duties of the office of Chair, until such time as the VAST Board of Directors has named an individual to fill the vacancy. The Vice-Chair shall also perform such duties as the Chair may designate. The Vice-Chair shall be an appointed member of the LVRTC and he/she shall be selected by the LVRTC.

- **Secretary** - The Secretary shall keep minutes of all meetings of the organization, or shall designate a minute keeper. The Secretary shall notify members of regular meetings ten-days in advance and special meetings at least 24-hours in advance. The notice shall include the time, place, and general nature of the business to be transacted. All requirements for meeting notice for public meetings shall be followed. The secretary shall perform other incidental functions as necessary. The Secretary shall be an appointed member of the LVRTC and he/she shall be selected by the LVRTC.

- **Financial Officer** - The FO shall be an appointed member of the LVRTC and he/she shall be elected by majority vote of the LVRTC. The FO will work with the LVRTC membership, LVRT Project Manager and VAST Staff and Treasurer to ensure that all of the funding for the LVRTC is in place, and to ensure that all of the proper project documentation is in place that will satisfy FHWA and VTrans when submittals for reimbursement for completed work are filed.

D. LVRTC Subcommittees

The LVRTC may appoint subcommittees, as it deems appropriate.

E. LVRTC Executive Board

The LVRTC may appoint an Executive Board, consisting of its Officers, to carry out the work of the LVRTC between regular and special meetings of the LVRTC.

F. LVRTC Meetings

- **Regular** - The LVRTC shall meet monthly.

- **Special** - Special meetings of the LVRTC or Executive Board may be called at any time by the Chair, or by petition of at least five members of the LVRTC.

- **Meeting Notice** - The Secretary shall notify members of regular meetings ten-days in advance and special meetings at least 24 hours in advance. The notice shall include the time, place, and general nature of the business to be transacted. All requirements for meeting notice for public meetings shall be followed.

- **Annual Meeting** - The annual meeting of the LVRTC shall be held in September of each year.

G. LVRTC Quorum

A quorum for a LVRTC meeting shall consist of a majority of the members, one of which shall be the Chair or Vice-Chair.

H. Amendments to Management Plan

The VAST Board of Directors shall approve the Management Plan and any subsequent changes made to it. Changes may be proposed by a two-thirds majority of those members voting on proposals of amendments at a duly notified meeting of the LVRTC. Such proposals for amendments shall be set forth in the notice of

the meeting and changes to the amendment dealing with the same subject matter may be proposed from the floor. All approved changes shall be submitted to VTrans for approval as an attachment to this document.

I. Rules of Order

Business shall be conducted in accordance with the most recent edition of the “Roberts Rules of Order.”

J. Fiscal Year

The Fiscal Year of the LVRTC shall be the same as that of VAST, October 01 to September 30 of the next year. The LVRTC shall be responsible for developing an annual budget for the LVRTC. The proposed budget shall be capable of supporting the work and maintenance plans necessary for the next fiscal year. The budget shall include the funding source(s) that will be used to accomplish the work as outlined in the annual DMP. The proposed budget shall be presented to the VAST Board of Directors, for approval, no later than May 15, preceding the start of the new fiscal year.

4.2 LVRTC Advisory Committee (LAC)

The participating Regional Planning Commissions shall organize the LAC as a stand-alone committee governed by its own articles of association and by-laws. The LAC shall develop, and adopt their by-laws. This committee shall work on consensus discussions and make recommendations to the LVRTC. Its purpose shall be to advise the LVRTC on issues relating to trail management, promotion, user conflicts, town issues, adjoining landowner issues, as well as other issues that may require LAC input.

A. Membership

Membership of the LAC should be oriented toward municipal, adjacent landowners, and regional representation. State agencies should be considered as technical resources and participate in the LAC discussions as needed. Membership for the LAC shall be as follows:

- (3) three Municipal representatives: one selected by each of the three RPC regions.
- (3) three adjacent landowner representatives: one selected by each of the three RPC regions
- (3) three Regional planning commission staff representatives: one from each of the three RPCs
- (3) three Business owners: one from each region, as identified by Chambers of Commerce and/or Development Corporations
- (1) one VAST member appointed by the VAST Board of Directors
- (1) one VTrans member

The LAC will rely upon the following agencies as technical resources used in forming their recommendations, to the LVRTC, for the implementation and management of the trail:

- Technical Resources

- Regional Development Corporations
- Regional Chambers of Commerce
- Department of Public Safety (Recreation Enforcement)
- Department of Economic Development
- Department of Tourism and Marketing
- Department of Forests, Parks, and Recreation
- Agency of Agriculture, Food & Marketing
- Department of Housing and Community Affairs
- Other agencies as necessary

The LAC shall elect a Chair, Vice-Chair and any other officers as needed. The LAC shall elect one of its members to serve on the LVRTC as the LAC Representative.

The RPCs will assist with the solicitation of municipal representatives and adjacent landowners, to represent their respective regions, by convening meetings for these two constituency groups. RPCs will also work with their respective Chambers of Commerce to identify members of the business community to serve on the LAC.

5.0 Trail Uses

We envision a rural rail trail facility which will provide an environment so all users can enjoy the recreational benefits, nature, and the scenic Vermont landscape to its fullest. Recreation activities like the following will take place: Walking; Hiking; Biking; Equestrian; Cross Country Skiing; Dog Sledding; Sleigh Rides; Snowmobiling and many other compatible forms of recreation including competitive events for the preceding uses. The State of Vermont shall decide on any ATV use on the trail on a case by case basis through a public decision making process that includes public hearings conducted by the State; guided by the Federal Guidelines for motorized use on Rail banked trails.

VAST may authorize or issue non-renewable permits for special events which do not exceed 10 days and are recreational in nature or that facilitate temporary agricultural access, not to exceed 10 days duration, to adjoining and adjacent lands for agricultural purposes. VAST shall consult with and coordinate all special use permits with the VTrans. VT statutes annotated under Chapter 60 §3431 of Title 5, “Aeronautics and Surface Transportation Generally” covers agricultural access, to railbanked railroad rights-of-ways.⁴

⁴ Notwithstanding the provisions of section 213 of Title 1, when railroad operations cease on railroad rights-of-way owned by the state or municipality, the title or interest held by the state or municipality in such rights-of-way shall be retained by the state or municipality for future transportation purposes and such other purposes as are not inconsistent with future transportation

Competitive events and commercial use of the trail shall require additional coordination with VAST, VTrans and the LVRTC. A special use permit may be required.

6.0 Connectivity

1. Trail Systems

The LVRT will accomplish two very important functions. First, it will act as a starting point for the communities to plan and build their own trail systems. These community systems will provide the economic growth by connecting the rail/trail with the business district. Secondly, an east-west trail provides the linkage connecting the following north-south trails:

- Planned community recreation paths in St. Johnsbury, Morrisville, Johnson, Jeffersonville and Swanton will provide the access into the villages from the rail/trail.
- Missisquoi Valley Rail Trail from St Albans to Richford will connect in Sheldon Jct. and give the users further rail trail options.
- Cambridge Greenway Rail Trail connection will provide access into the village of Jeffersonville.
- The LVRT will provide access for Long Trail hikers into Johnson Village for services. The Long Trail crosses the LVRT west of Johnson Village, and follows a short section of the trail.
- The Catamount Trail that crosses near Hardwick will provide skiers the choice of groomed or ungroomed trails.
- VAST snowmobile trail network with 21 connections.

These trail systems will expand the trail options available and enhance the recreational user's opportunities and enjoyment.

2. Excursion Rail

Presently there is only one operating tourist train that could affect trail users. The Fairbanks Scenic Train rail heads in the village of St. Johnsbury and could be accessed from the Three Rivers Bike Path. This train runs a limited schedule.

purposes; except that such rights-of-way shall not be used by members of the general public without permission of the state or municipality. *The state or municipality shall allow abutting farm operations to use the land over which the rights-of-way pass for agricultural purposes.* Unless use and occupancy of railroad rights-of-way adversely affect railroad safety, broadband facilities and wireless and other telecommunications facilities that are installed along or within the railroad right-of-way in compliance with applicable operations and safety standards at the time of installation are consistent with existing and future transportation purposes. (Added 1981, No. 187 (Adj. Sess.), § 1; amended 2007, No. 79, § 8, eff. June 9, 2007.)

4. Public Transportation Routes

The Lamoille County Hub & Spoke Passenger Transit Service provides weekday “hub” service in Morrisville, and “spokes” of service extending out to most of Lamoille County’s communities and beyond. The service connects with the Oxbow Recreation Path where it meets the LVRR corridor. The Stowe Mountain Trolley runs the Morrisville Shopper bus service between Stowe and Morrisville Tuesday and Thursday, meeting the LVRR corridor near the Senior Center Shop.

5. Park and Ride

There are currently several park and ride lots adjacent to the LVRR corridor, including one in Cambridge near the Deerrun Motor Inn. VAST will work with VTrans to address issues related to the use of STATE owned park and ride lots. (RPCs to Update this Information)

7.0 Compatible Multi-Use

Plans from the beginning have been to build a rail/trail facility that would be available for multi-use recreation activities. The committee comprised of representatives from various user groups or interested individuals from along the corridor will manage the development of this trail to be sure all user groups collaborate on the project. By having user group experts available the final product will be a user-friendly trail for everyone.

Major user groups will work with the LVRTC on this conversion project such as; the Vermont Trails and Greenways Council, Green Mountain Club, VT Mountain Bike Assoc., VT Horse Council, bicycle tour groups (2), Friends of the LVRT, Vermont Mushers Association, Vermont Bicycle & Pedestrian Coalition and the Lamoille River Anglers.

Municipalities that the trail passes through will also be included as the LVRTC works with them to resolve concerns and/or to incorporate their local path plans, and local ordinances, with the plans of the LVRTC. When a higher grade of path, such as asphalt pavement is desired/preferred, a written agreement will be enacted allowing the municipality to install and maintain that surface as long as the overall multi-use plans are not adversely affected.

8.0 Hours of Operation

The rail/trail will be open for use 24 hours per day, 7 days per week, 52 weeks per year, without any planned restrictions except as noted below:

- a) walking/hiking/jogging - unrestricted year round use, except as noted in section i) below.
- b) Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) accessibility - restricted by trail condition, suitable hardened surface for wheel chair use from approximately May to November. Winter time use is allowed, but would be difficult.

- c) bicycles - year round, mostly in late spring through the fall season. Winter biking on snowmobile trails is becoming popular and will be allowed.
- d) horses - to lessen the damage when the trail surface is soft, use will be restricted from March through May as well as other times as dictated by the condition of the ATF surface, and as noted in i) below. Use during the winter months must be approved by the LVRTC, and must be coordinated with other winter uses.
- e) snowshoe/x-country skiers - unrestricted from first snow to spring thaw.
- f) snowmobile – Snowmobile use will be allowed during the legal Open Season, December 16 through April 15. The hours of operation will be as described in the LEASE between VTrans and VAST. A speed limit of 35 mph will be posted and enforced.
- g) atv's - not allowed for recreational use unless approved through the process outlined in section 5.0). The exceptions will be ATVs used for maintenance during daylight hours May through December 15, law enforcement and emergency service vehicles, all with appropriate markings and flashing lights.
- h) motorized wheeled vehicles - not allowed. The exception will be maintenance vehicles, law enforcement and emergency service vehicles with appropriate markings and flashing lights motorized wheelchairs, and when state or local regulations permit, electric bicycles per 23 U.S.C. § 217.
- i) if necessary, the trail may be closed for its entirety, or certain sections due to floods and other natural events. The trail may also be closed during late fall and early spring to ensure the integrity of the trails surface and to prevent it from being torn up by premature use while the trail is wet. During these closures proper signage will be installed.
- j) nothing in this Management Plan shall prohibit a municipality from establishing local ordinances that control legal uses of the LVRT, but in no case shall the ordinance prohibit legal uses during legal hours of operation.

9.0 Required Facilities

The following facility estimates are based on an anticipated user base of 10,000 persons in the first year following completion of the trail. Within 5 years it is estimated that the annual total number of trail users will increase significantly.

1. Parking Facilities

There are currently suitable public parking lots in every town along the corridor. More would have to be constructed to keep pace with the increased numbers of users. As the need arises for new parking

facilities or expansion of existing facilities, local municipalities will be consulted to determine if a partnership can be developed to meet local needs as well as the LVRT needs. A map of parking lots available to users and their accommodations will be developed and made available in marketing materials and on the website.

2. Path Connectivity

Adequate interface with communities will be provided as the number of local paths and trails is anticipated to increase following the opening of the Lamoille Valley Rail Trail.

3. Trail Enhancements & Amenities:

a) Fishing & Canoeing Access –

82% of the LVRR corridor runs adjacent to the Missisquoi River, Lamoille River and Black Branch Brook. We will work with VTrans, Trout Unlimited, Northern Forest Canoe Trail and other interested fishing groups, and several canoe touring agencies that currently utilize these waterways utilizing Department of Fish and Wildlife as a Resource Agency.

b) Emergency Telephones –

Arrangements will be made to install signage directing users to telephone access available along the trail for emergency purposes.

c) Benches, Resting & Picnic Areas –

Coordination with local communities and path committees for planning, installation, and maintenance.

d) Signage & Markings –

Warnings for trails and roads, speed limits and other safety related signage will be installed as required by applicable sections of the MUTCD. Later installation will include informational, mile markers and distance signs. Mile markers and their location will be coordinated with VTrans Rail section prior to installation to maintain a single marking system.

e) Access Points -

Access points from local and state road systems, including VT Rte 2, 15, 108 and 78 will be correctly configured and defined in accordance with Vermont Standard Drawing B-71.

f) Recreational Facilities and Sporting Fields –

Will be identified with “where and what” information signs and kiosks.

g) Bike Racks –

Will be added as user density grows

h) Bollards -

Installed as necessary to control unauthorized vehicle access, as the problem becomes troublesome.

i)Information Kiosks –

Posting of information on local amenities will be coordinated with the respective chambers of commerce and recreation and conservation committees.

j)Restored stations or sheds –

Specifications and guidance will be coordinated with local historical societies, State Historic Preservation Officer, and VTrans.

10.0 Economic Impact

The following listing gives the summation of existing entities, which are estimated to be sufficient to support an annual trail user population of up to 75,000. We will be working with Visitor Bureaus, Chambers of Commerce and Economic Development Organizations along the corridor to encourage the establishment of additional businesses and recreational facilities, required to keep pace with the growing user base. We will also coordinate with Historic Preservation groups to accomplish historic site/structure identification, restoration and information awareness signing.

St. Johnsbury	Danville	Walden	Greensboro
9 Restaurants 2 Gas Stations 2 Motels 1 Market 1 Bus Station 1 Pool/Tennis	3 Restaurants 3 Gas Stations 4 Motels 2 Horse Stables 1 Public Beach 1 Health Center	1 Gas Station 1 General Store 1 Picnic Area	1 Gas Station 1 General Store
Hardwick	Wolcott	Morristown	Hyde Park
6 Restaurants 8 Gas Stations 1 Motel 1 Snowmobile Sales	1 Gas Stations 1 Mini Mart 1 Bed & Breakfast 1 Hist. Covered Br. 1 Camp Ground	10 Restaurants 5 Gas Stations 2 Hotels 2 Bike Shops 1 Snowmobile Sales 2 Information Kiosks 1 Museum 1 Horse Stables 3 Conv. Store/Delis 2 Public Phones	1 Restaurant 1 Market 1 Snowmobile Sales
Johnson	Cambridge Jct.	Jeffersonville	East Fairfield
3 Restaurants 3 Gas Stations 1 Canoe Guide Ser. 1 Health Clinic 1 Grocery Store 2 Conv. Store/Delis 1 Fire & Rescue	2 Bed & Breakfasts 1 Hist. Covered Br.	2 Gas Stations 2 Restaurants 2 Bed & Breakfasts 1 Grocery Store 2 Conv. Stores/Delis 1 Fire & Rescue 1 Horse Stable 1 Bicycle Sales	2 Gas Stations 1 Grocery Store 1 Convenience Store 1 Fire & Rescue
East Highgate	Highgate Center	Highgate	Swanton
1 General Store	2 Gas Stations 1 General Store 1 Cafe 1 Fire & Rescue	1 County Airport	3 Restaurants 5 Gas Stations 2 Motels 1 Camp Ground 1 Ice Cream Parlor 2 Grocery Stores 1 Bicycle Shop 1 Fire & Rescue

11.0 Conflict and Dispute Resolution

From time to time user conflicts of the LVRT may develop, as well as conflicts and/or disputes with adjoining landowners. There may also be times when disputes may arise over decisions that have been made over trail maintenance, operation and development. In the eventuality that conflicts and/or disputes do arise the following steps shall be taken to resolve conflicts or disputes that arise:

A. VAST and VTrans

In the event that a dispute between VAST and VTrans arises, the terms spelled out in Article XVII (Dispute Resolution; Exhaustion of Administrative Remedies) of the lease between the parties shall be used to resolve it.

B. All Other Conflicts or Disputes

Step 1 – The aggrieved party shall state their grievance in writing to the Executive Director and President of VAST. The Executive Director and President of VAST shall coordinate with the LVTRC in reviewing the grievance. A written response to the grievance shall be completed within 14 days. If the aggrieved party is not satisfied with the results the process will go to step 2. Notification shall be mailed to VAST/LVRT, 26 VAST Lane/Berlin, Barre VT 05641.

Step 2 – If the aggrieved party is dissatisfied with the ruling of the Executive Director and President of VAST, they may petition the VAST Board of Directors to hold a hearing on the issue. The Board shall hold the hearing within 21 days of receipt of the request and issue their decision within 7 days of the hearing.

Step 3 – If the aggrieved is not satisfied with the VAST Board of Directors' decision they may appeal it to the Vermont Transportation Board under 19 V.S.A. § 5(h), the notice of appeal must be filed with the Secretary within 30 days of the decision from which the appeal is taken. The Secretary shall promptly forward the notice of appeal to the Board, together with the Agency's record of decision.

Step 4 – In accordance with 19 V.S.A. § 5(c), a final order of the Board may be reviewed on the record by the superior court pursuant to Rule 74 of the Vermont Rules of Civil Procedure.

12.0 Citizen Concerns, Requests and Complaints

From time to time citizens may have concerns, requests for information, or complaints about the LVRT. The following procedures will be used to document citizen concerns, requests or complaints, as well as outlining the steps that will be taken to resolve their issues.

The Lamoille Valley Rail Trail Committee (LVRTC) oversees the planning and development of the trail, the LVRTC meets on the second Wednesday of each month at 6:30 PM. The location of these meeting shall be indicated on the LVRT website www.lvrt.org. The LVRTC will provide the necessary forms for

citizens to use to register their complaint, concern, or to facilitate a request. The forms are available from members of the LVRTC, and the Lamoille Valley Rail Trail Advisory Committee (LAC) for distribution and are available through VAST and the LVRTC website. It will be the citizens' responsibility to submit their issues in writing, either mailed or e-mailed, on the appropriate form to:

VAST
Attn: LVRT Issues
26 VAST Lane-Berlin
Barre, VT 05641
Or email to:
jessi@vtvast.org

• **Understanding the Process**

Whether a citizen submission is made directly through VAST, the LVRTC or the LAC, it is required that the citizen provide all of the information requested by the complaint form. VAST or the LVRTC will send an acknowledgement of receipt form to the individual filing the complaint within 10 days. The concern, request, or complaint will be entered into the issues database and forwarded to the LVRTC Chair and Trail Issue Sub-Committee for action.

The Trail Issue Subcommittee is made up of 2 LVRTC members and a member of the LAC. The LAC member will rotate based on the county where the submission originated. The Trail Issue Subcommittee will consider the submission and apply one of the following options:

1. Seek additional information from the citizen, if needed;
2. Take action and report to the LVRTC and/or other relevant parties;
3. Seek counsel from other relevant parties and then implement option #2 above;
4. Refer the submission back to the full LVRTC or to another relevant party, if the submission goes beyond the authority of the Trail Issue Subcommittee; or
5. Request an extension for more time to consider your issue and seek resolution.
6. The Chair of the LVRTC is empowered to act on behalf of the Issues Subcommittee, and to respond to the individual if it is felt that this action is warranted, and the subcommittee cannot respond in a timely manner.

Regardless of the option chosen, it is the LVRTC goal to issue a response to the submission within 30 days. The response will include a summary of actions taken, an explanation of the next steps to be taken, and information on who to contact in order for the citizen to follow-up.

• **Conflict Resolution Process**

If a citizen submits a complaint, and they are unsatisfied with the results of this protocol, they may consider pursuing their issue using the Conflict Resolution Process as described within the Section 19.0 of this plan.

• **Process Exhibits**

Appendix “A” in the rear of the Management Plan shows a flowchart that outlines the “LVRT Protocol for Citizens Concerns, Requests, and Complaints.”

Appendix “B” in the rear of the Management Plan is a document that will explain the process to the citizen.

Appendix “C” in the rear of the Management Plan is a copy of the form to be used to register a citizen concern, request or complaint.

13.0 Law Enforcement

As more and more Vermonters, as well as visitors to Vermont, begin to participate in all forms of recreational activities there arises a need for recreational education and law enforcement. The LVRT will ultimately need a presence of law enforcement both to educate the public as well as to ensure that all Vermont laws are properly and adequately enforced.

Vermont statutes do not grant VAST any law enforcement authority; therefore, the LVRTC and VAST will address public education, signage and public outreach to reduce the number of incidents on the trail that require action by a law enforcement officer. VAST and the LVRTC will cooperate with all Vermont law enforcement agencies in an effort to secure adequate funding for recreational law enforcement for the LVRT.

VAST and their partners through the LVRTC will strive to educate each of their memberships as well as the general public and/or visitors to Vermont of the laws, rules and regulations that govern the use of the trail. This will be done through the development of brochures; outreach to members through various newsletters and publications; signs at entry points to the trail and along the trail; general public outreach and education. The LVRTC will explore the option of creating a volunteer monitoring process for users of the trail. This will allow for “eyes and ears” on the trail at times when law enforcement officers are not available.

VAST has purchased and installed devices that record the time and speed of all snowmobiles that pass over the trail. These devices have been strategically placed at five locations along the trail and they will give us valuable information about the use of the trail; especially, after curfew use as well as the speed of those using the trail. This information will allow us to better inform law enforcement as to when violations are taking place; specifically, if we have a location where it appears that a pattern of misuse is apparent. With this information law enforcement will be able to target special areas during the time frames of misuse. Curfews are the hardest of all laws to enforce and to some extent there will never be 100% adherence; regardless, of the time frame of curfews. It is hoped that the steps that have been taken will work and the information that we are able to compile will allow law enforcement to more adequately enforce imposed curfews and speed limits on the LVRT.

The issue of sound is one that VAST is trying to address. Another difficult law to enforce is the one that pertains to the allowed decibel level of snowmobiles. The Society of Automotive Engineers (SAE) has devised a new standard that allows an effective field test to ensure that all snowmobiles adhere to the legislated decibel level. VAST has introduced legislation that will allow Vermont law enforcement officials to utilize this new test to ensure that all snowmobiles are in compliance with the law. VT law enforcement agencies will be conducting tests using this standard to see how effective it is in the field.

The following law enforcement agencies shall be the primary sources for law enforcement for the LVRT:

• **Caledonia County – Caledonia County Sheriff**

Sheriff Michael Bergeron
1126 Main Street, Suite 2
St. Johnsbury VT 05819
1-802-748-6666

• **Lamoille County – Lamoille County Sheriff**

Sheriff Roger Marcoux
222 Main Street
PO Box 96
Hyde Park VT 05655-0096
1-802-888-3502

• **Franklin County – Franklin County Sheriff**

Sheriff, Robert Norris
330 Lincoln Avenue
PO Box 367
St. Albans VT 05478-0367
1-802-524-2121

All violations of VT law, including trespass related issues should be reported to the County Sheriff. County Sheriffs will be responsible for investigation and follow up for all complaints and violations of law regarding the LVRT. County Sheriffs will also be responsible for patrols on the LVRT and will be working cooperatively with the VT Department of Fish and Wildlife in an effort to provide these services.

If a caller is unable to contact the Sheriffs' Departments they are to call the VT State Police Dispatcher in their District and advise them that they have a Lamoille Valley Rail Trail issue and ask that the on call VT Fish and Wildlife Warden, for their District/County (Caledonia; Lamoille; Franklin), be advised of and dispatched to investigate the violation of law. The on call Warden will respond to the call or complaint. The telephone numbers for the Regional VT State Police offices are as follows:

• **Caledonia County**

1-802-748-3111

• **Lamoille County**

1-802-878-7111

- **Franklin County**
1-802-524-5993

VAST; currently, has a “cooperative agreement” with the following Vermont law enforcement agencies: Vermont Department of Public Safety (State Police); Vermont Department of Fish & Wildlife (Law Enforcement Division) and the Vermont Sheriffs’ Association, a copy of that agreement is included as Appendix “P” of this plan. This agreement is renewed on an annual basis, and will be modified as necessary to include investigation and response to LVRT complaints that are registered with the identified agencies.

14.0 Snowmobile Use Relocation Criteria

From time to time there may be instances where an adjoining landowner may ask to have snowmobile use on the LVRT relocated around an occupied dwelling that exists within 100 feet of the LVRT. Requests shall be handled on a case-by-case basis and the following steps and procedures shall be followed:

1. A landowner wishing to relocate snowmobile use away from their existing dwelling shall first notify the Vermont Association of Snow Travelers, Inc. (VAST) in writing of their request. The request shall be mailed to VAST, Attn. LVRT Relocation, 26 VAST Lane, Barre VT 05641. VAST will contact the requesting landowner within 10 workdays, after receipt of the letter, and will provide the landowner with the current construction standards for snowmobile trails entitled “Guide for the Development of Snowmobile Trails. At that time a meeting date will be established, between VAST and the requesting landowner(s), to review the proposed snowmobile trail relocation route. Landowners shall be responsible for the following:
 - a) If there is a cost to relocate the trail around the property, the landowner, making the request, is responsible for the involved cost of the relocation.
 - b) If the relocation of the trail involves crossing property, the landowner requesting the relocation is responsible for obtaining the necessary written permission from any and all landowners over whose property the relocated snowmobile trail will be located. Landowner Permission Forms will be provided by VAST.
2. VAST shall inform and consult with local and county snowmobile clubs during the relocation process.
3. If agreement on the relocation cannot be reached, the process established under Section 19 of this Management Plan, “Conflict and Dispute Resolution” should be used to resolve the impasse.

VAST shall draft an agreement between VAST and the landowner(s) describing the necessary work that is to be completed, project cost (if any), and responsibilities. The duration of the agreement shall be annual unless otherwise stated in the agreement. All involved parties shall sign the agreement.

15.0 Restoration of Existing Facilities to Meet Trail Criteria

As recommended in the earlier version of the IMP, VAST and the LVRTC completed an engineering assessment of the LVRT right-of-way (ROW) in April 2008, and copies have been distributed to VTrans, the state's environmental community, many of the trails stakeholders and all the adjoining communities along the line. This document outlines in extensive detail the present conditions to be found on the ROW, and includes tabulations of culverts, bridges, washouts, problem areas, and encroachments. More importantly, the assessment GPSed the entire length, and linked the Valuation Plan stationing to the GPS datum, making it possible to use the accumulated information for eventual use in trail design and construction, future development plans, and trail maintenance plans.

Also completed as a secondary document, and attached to the assessment, was a recommended construction methodology for a proposed trail alternative, in accordance with the Local Transportation Facilities (LTF) project development guide. In a nutshell it recommends constructing the trail on the existing ballasted way, and describes how VAST proposes to renovate and construct the trail. It includes detailed information on topics such as bridge reconstruction and rehabilitation, clearing, repair of ditch systems, culvert repair, trail work in beaver regions, ANR Floodplain Restoration Program sites, and the nature and severity of encroachments. It should be noted that as the LVRT project progresses through the development process, the recommendations in the Assessment may change to meet permit and other project requirements.

The Assessment identified many encroachments into the rail right of way, some of them are significant. VTrans is responsible for and is currently resolving these encroachments.

16.0 Project Funding

The estimated total cost to rehabilitate and convert the former LVRR railbed into a four-season multi-use and ATF will range between \$5,800,000 and \$6,800,000. Congressman Bernie Sanders has been an ardent supporter of this project for many years, and was successful in obtaining a Federal Transportation earmark in the amount of \$5,800,000+ included within the renewal of the Federal Highway Transportation Bill in the summer of 2005. The re-authorization of the Federal Highway Bill is a part of the Federal funding mechanism for all highway construction and maintenance. The appropriated amount has subsequently been reduced to \$4,900,000+ due to Congressional rescissions during the impacted budget years.

The LVRTC will work with the involved Planning and Development Councils in an effort to find any and all available options for grants, from private foundations and/or other entities that may have the potential to help achieve the requirement for 20% matching funds for this important project.

They will also have to investigate ways to raise any additional funds needed to complete the project. Other options that will be investigated include Transportation Enhancement Program funds. If interim working capital is required, or if money has to be borrowed, VAST will obtain sources for funding short term and/or long term financing for this project.

The LVRTC has hired a Capital Campaign Manager for the LVRT project. The goal is to raise at least \$2,000,000 of necessary funds through the generosity of the public and the many Charitable Trusts that exist both in Vermont and the northeast region.

17.0 LVRT Proposed Alternative Description

VAST is acting as a *town* or *municipality* for the purpose of following the project development process.

The LVRT is a rail-banked ROW owned and controlled by the state. Federal law behind the railbanking process precludes “moving” the ROW off its surveyed alignment. A state law, Section 17, Act No 56 of 2003, passed by the General Assembly and effective 4 June 2003, directs that the rail-banked corridor ROW be converted into a rail trail, and another law, Section 16, Act No 141 authorized the state to lease the ROW to VAST for the rail trail. Other than the “do not build” alternative, there are no other feasible alternative routes for the trail, assuming VAST is to use the federal funds, and the wishes of the public (legislation passed by the VT General Assembly), the Vermont Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP), the three Regional Planning Commissions, and the Vermont Pedestrian and Bicycle Policy Plan (VPBPP) are to be honored.

All work on the trail will be in compliance with the Federal Highway Administration’s requirements and guidelines as established by their Transportation Enhancement Program and applicable sections of the Americans with Disabilities Act. When applicable, Vermont’s Pedestrian and Bicycle Facility Planning and Design Manual, VTrans standards for vertical, horizontal and hydraulic clearance, shall be used when developing plans for the trail; and to prevent injury to nearby property, both public and private.

Next it is useful to review the sources of opinion and guidance VAST utilized in developing this trail alternative: Those sources include the results of the public hearing held on the trail management plan (written comments from which are posted on the LVRT website), discussions and meetings with the Friends of the Lamoille Valley Rail Trail, and the LVRT Advisory Committee, and discussions with a broad variety of trail developers, users, and critics.

Because of the time, cost, and complexity associated with ROW actions, the only trailheads considered in this alternative, in this project, are those located on the Val Plans’ ROW. Further, these may be easily eliminated if resource review and investigations reveal that the sites will cost the project significant funding, delays, or mitigation efforts. As a completed LVRT matures, more trailheads will be added, or subtracted, by the local communities, and the will of the public.

18.0 Maintenance:

Emergency maintenance efforts to unplug and rebuild stone culvert entrances, and debrush bridge abutments will be accomplished by the Vermont Youth Conservation Corps (VYCC) in the early stages of the project. This work is being undertaken to stop further deterioration of the ROW infrastructure, and preclude threatening washouts from occurring. This is the only work contemplated on the ROW until VAST reaches the point on the LTF project development schedule, which would allow the use of the federal funds.

Therefore, since the completed trail is still some years in the future the development of a detailed maintenance plan for the trail can only be theorized, and the plans characteristics only estimated. The assessment of the ROW revealed several salient points, which should be considered in a maintenance plan:

- The severity of deterioration of the ROW will increase the need for maintenance activities.
- The nature of the culverts (stone and granite) and the presence of trees and their root system, and beavers will increase the frequency of maintenance reconnaissance and activity.
- The presence of significant ATV activity will increase the need for trail observation.
- The erosive action of river current, poor ROW siting, and some farm and commercial abutters, will require above average reconnaissance of embankments and other unstable areas, and abutter operations.
- The age of the bridges, and composition of their abutments will also require above average surveillance.

The unknowns of trail maintenance funding sources, where the labor for maintenance and reconnaissance activities is to come from, and where the equipment to do the work will come from also make detailed planning at this time very difficult. VAST will work with its member clubs and other trail users to determine how trail maintenance activity resources may be found and applied. What can be accomplished is an estimate of the activities needed to maintain the trail, and their frequency.

18.1 - TRAIL MAINTENANCE RECOMMENDATIONS:

Appendix "O" - Trail Maintenance Schedule, lists tasks and their scheduling that represent a minimal level of maintenance and repair that should be accomplished on the LVRT. (No tasks have been generated for the trailheads that are to be maintained by the

local communities, who will also be responsible for their development.) Of particular importance:

Trail Inspections: Once sections of the trail are complete, and especially when the entire trail is open, random “reconnaissance” of the trail is of critical importance for the first year. A recommended procedure is to travel the trail slowly, logging on a form (recommended digitally) details, such as ATV activity and origins, trash, blow-downs, storm erosion, beaver activity, vandalism, fence problems, contract warranty issues, and signage problems. Many other maintenance activities may change their frequency based on the results of the logs and findings. Many other problems will also be identified and resolved before they become serious, and expensive. Eventually these “recons” may be reduced in frequency once an operational history of the various sections of the trail is developed.

Mowing Ditches and Far Shoulders: This is very necessary work, and potentially more difficult to accomplish than mowing of the trail shoulder because of the distance from the ballast. With a long enough outrigger mower (purchase recommended), the ditches and far shoulders should be mowable from a tractor, albeit with difficulty. It is important not to let tree and sapling growth return to the ditches if the ditches are to be maintained.

Leaf/ Debris Removal from Lateral Ditches: Ditch cleaning and de-silting represent a very large cost of the trail project. The continued maintenance of those ditches is critical to the long-term health of the trail. The ditches must be kept in working condition, and must not be allowed to fill again with debris or silt.

Culvert Inspections and Repairs: The culverts along the ROW will always need more repair and maintenance than those along highways due to their location in rural, forested areas, and the presence of beavers. Only constant vigilance will keep the trail from experiencing plugged culverts and washouts.

Trail Log: VAST must develop a trail log system to record maintenance activities performed, their station, frequency, equipment and personnel used, and costs. Logged information should also include such information as acts of vandalism, beaver activity, blow-downs, signage problems, washouts, erosion, culvert and ditch cleaning activities, and any other information that would be useful in developing budgets, personnel needs, trends in needs for law enforcement, maintenance contracts, etc. **All of this is best handled through the development of a computerized spreadsheet and mapping system so GPS/GIS information can be logged concurrently with the activity. This is highly recommended.**

Trail maintenance on the LVRT has already begun. Since VAST signed the lease the trail has already experienced a small landslide, and has taken action at another site to stop a washout. In 2007 VAST spent considerable funds to slow beaver activities, and repair their damage. On a trail this long traveling through some regions not much different than before the colonists came, with many bridges and culverts well over 100 years old, adjacent to rivers with distinct personalities, and bordered by a very opinionated and

active population, observation, inspection, and regular and preventive maintenance procedures are a critical requirement. Failure to plan, budget, and spend the necessary maintenance funding will result in a trail quickly reverting to the conditions present before this project began.

18.2 Invasive Vegetation Management

Based on abutter comments during previous MP reviews, VAST does not plan on using herbicides during the construction or maintenance phases of the project. There is invasive vegetation that grows along, and in the LVRT corridor. At the request of ANR, other state agency, or town, VAST may use herbicides to control invasive vegetation.

VAST, if requested, will work with ANR, VTrans Landscape Coordinator and the Agency of Agriculture, Food & Markets Division, to develop a viable Invasive Vegetation Management Plan to be included as a future appendix of the Development and Maintenance Plan, a part of this MP. If the adopted plan includes the application of herbicides, that application will comply with all laws and rules of the State of Vermont **and will only be allowed for spot applications to address invasive vegetation that is not native to Vermont.**

Prior to the application of any herbicides, all adjoining landowners will be notified **directly as well as noticed in local newspapers** and given ample time to object to that usage. Where objections are noted, other means of vegetation control and management will be used on those properties.

Any area where herbicide use is directed will be signed to warn trail users of its presence. The signs will be placed at least 24 hrs in advance and will remain for some period after application to be determined by the VTrans Landscape Coordinator based on the characteristics of the herbicide used.

Sample signing and notification guidelines below:

18.2A Posting and notification:

(1) Before beginning each application, the applicator(s) shall post signs on the treated property at intervals no greater than one hundred (100) feet along all public and private rights-of-way. All properties, regardless of size, must post a minimum of two (2) signs at conspicuous points of access to the property. The specifications of the sign shall be as follows:

- a. Shall be at least four (4) inches by five (5) inches, of sturdy, weather-resistant material;
- b. Shall be with contrasting colors using the indicated point type size;
- c. Shall display the following warning on the front of the sign:

CAUTION
HERBICIDE APPLICATION
CAUTION
KEEP OFF
WHILE POSTED
CUSTOMER:
PLEASE REMOVE
AFTER 24 HOURS

(2) Both the fluorescent green symbol commonly known as "Mr. Yuk" and the international slash in a circle superimposed upon representational figures of an adult, child and dog as well as instructions that signs must remain posted for at least twenty-four (24) hours:

- a. Shall be posted at least twelve (12) inches above the ground;
- b. Shall contain the date and time of application on the back of the sign;
- c. The back of the sign shall contain the emergency numbers for poison control and 911, the city health officer's number for complaints, the brand or chemical name and concentration, and the name of the applicator's company.

18.3 Emergency Maintenance

The recommended daily reconnaissance of the trail will allow the rapid identification of problems and facilitate the identification of solutions and the source of materials and labor. Agencies potentially to be involved once an emergency has been identified include VTrans Rail Section, ANR (river engineers and environmental specialists), Department of Agriculture, and local and state police forces. Procedures will be developed for the communication efforts needed, and the meetings necessary to initiate action on emergency situations once the nature of the maintenance force and leadership structure are defined.

One aspect of emergency maintenance is the use of the trail by emergency services using the trail to access civilian emergencies, or to rescue individuals on the trail. Procedures with respect to these emergency services must be developed, once the trail is opened to ensure the agencies involved are informed as to the limits and nature of the trail. This is especially true of bridge classification (load limits), and other physical limitations.

18.4 Non-Winter Maintenance

For the purposes of this trail maintenance plan, seasonal maintenance falls into the two practical seasons on this trail, winter maintenance during the snow-covered, winter activity (snowmobiling, mushing, cross-country skiing, etc) portion of the year- generally

December to April, and the non-winter maintenance during the remainder of the year when the trail is either closed between the two seasons for snow melting and/or to dry out, and for users such as equestrian, bicycling, hiking, running, walking, etc. **Appendix “O” - Trail Maintenance Schedule**, is geared towards the latter period.

18.5 Winter Maintenance

Local snowmobile clubs, in coordination with VAST, will be responsible for additional maintenance for their sport such as additional temporary signage, law enforcement of posted speed limits, clean up of trash, limiting of use with curfew hours, snowmobile trail grooming and marking areas where the path has a higher volume of joint use with cross country skiing, school functions or other user groups.

19.0 Capital Improvements for Future

19.1 - Fencing in accordance with 5VSA§3642

1. Farm Style Fencing will be maintained along the corridor where it is necessary to protect crop fields or to prevent livestock from entering upon the pathway from abutting pastures and as necessary to meet statutory obligations. The LVRTC will meet with landowners along the corridor who have expressed concerns and their fencing needs have been documented. Farm Style Fencing consists of 6' posts installed in the ground approximately 2 feet, leaving 4 feet showing above the ground. Attached to the posts will be two strands of barbwire fencing or electrical wire strands. Said fence installation will be constructed at the limits of the pathway right-of-way.
2. 6' Woven Wire Fencing will be proposed at areas where pathway and extended village areas require separation for safety reasons. This could be as an attachment to a bridge located within the Town limits to prevent people from hanging off the bridge abutments. Installation of woven wire fencing may also be needed for safety along the village area pathway sections where there is a drop off bank situation or for separation in an area where a parallel roadway is below the grade of the railbed.
3. *Note: In the development of a “natural” path to be used as a multi-use trail it is not the intention of the Committee to fence the entire rail corridor. Such action would cause non-access areas to the adjoining rivers in the western end now used by anglers and canoe enthusiasts. We need to include access off the pathway to areas that are considered recreation areas and abut the corridor. Also, it would impair the free movement of wildlife that inhabits the entire rail corridor and is a vital part of a “natural pathway.” The LVRTC desires to keep this pathway open as much as possible for the pleasure and enjoyment of the users as well as unencumbered use by wildlife.*

19.2 - Control Barriers

1. In an effort to eliminate as much fencing as possible control barriers may be erected along steep slope areas. These control barriers will be designed and engineered to applicable standards.
2. Another option would be the planting of boundary line trees along areas where there are summer vacation homes (such as the Joes Pond Area) between the tracks and waterway. Also, this method could be used in Village or Town Areas to create a sound barrier between the corridor boundary and an abutting landowner's house.
3. Control Unauthorized Vehicle Access – A system will be developed that will limit access to the LVRT by unauthorized motorized vehicles, with the exception of snowmobiles during the open snowmobile season.

19.3 - Village and Town Areas

Village and Town areas may wish to upgrade the path surface material these limited conversions can be addressed with a written agreement between the village and/or town, VTrans and VAST. Nothing in this plan shall limit the ability of a municipality to establish stricter standards, through the adoption of municipal ordinances, for the use of the trail within the boundaries of the municipality. However, permitted legal uses during permitted hours shall not be prohibited by a municipal ordinance.

In previous discussions with town Selectboards, it was stressed that the conversion would try to accommodate the wishes of the individual towns. If a town is interested in something special, such as asphalt pavement in the village area, the LVRTC will work with them in order to accomplish their goals. The added cost of installation and future maintenance would be the town's responsibility, and would be handled with a written agreement between VAST and the town. (A good example would be the Three Rivers Bike Path in St. Johnsbury, their proposal shows using the first one-mile section of the corridor. The St. Johnsbury Selectboard has been assured that both projects can co-exist in the corridor. Letters of understanding have been exchanged documenting the willingness to work with others and resolve any conflicts that arise.)

19.4 - Trailheads

The development of trailheads has been discussed earlier in the plan and as shown in **Appendix "N"** of the Management Plan.

20.0 Future Development Opportunities

After the trail has been rehabilitated to basic trail standards the Committee will address future development of the trail corridor to accommodate and enhance the use of this asset. Working

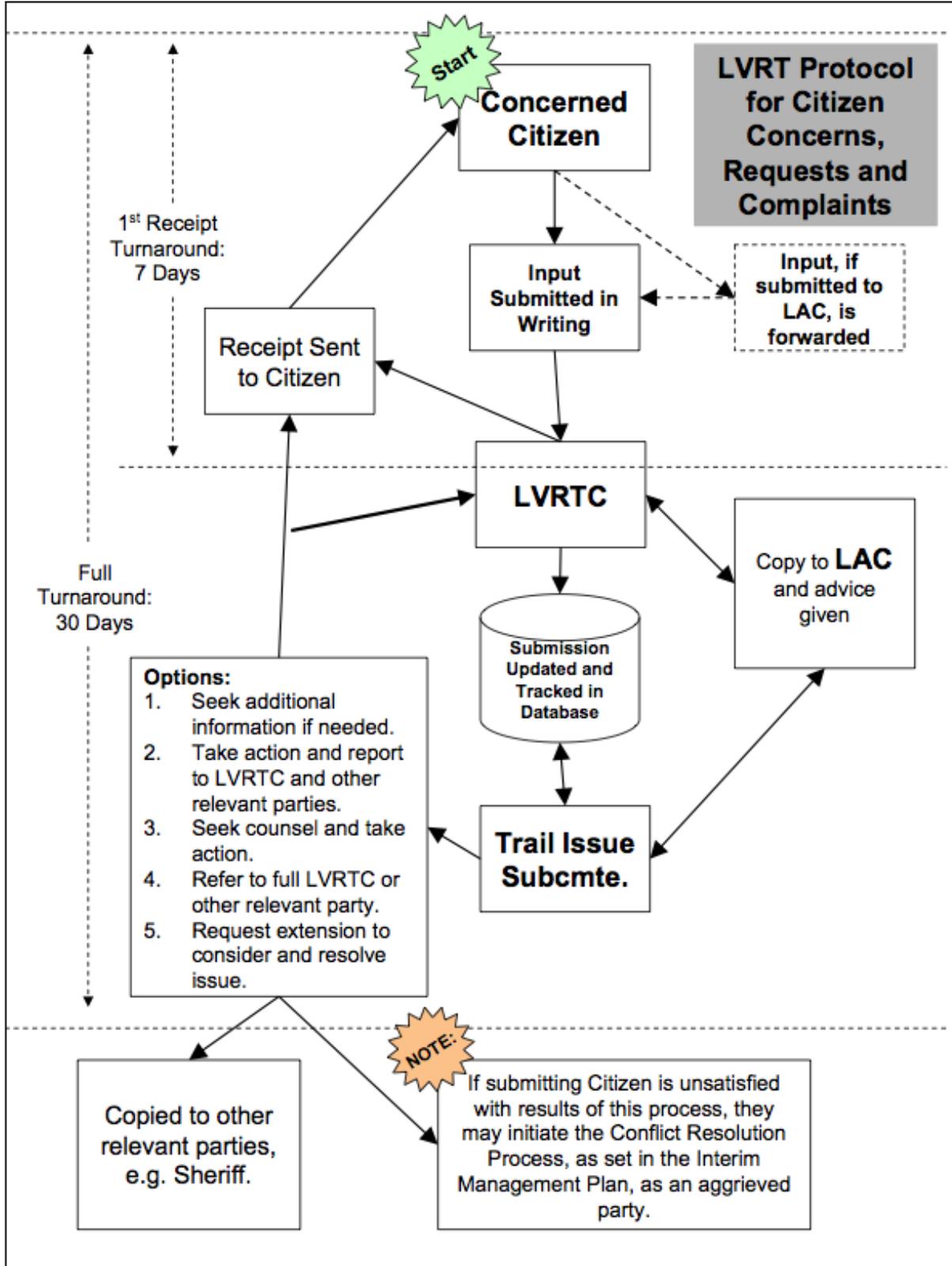
with the Regional Planning Commissions, we have been made aware of the following future plans that communities are working on. It is our goal to continue to work with the affected communities to include future enhancements along the entire trail.

- A. The construction of a connecting trail from the railbed at Bridge #12, alongside US Route 5 South, down to the Comfort Inn would provide both summer and winter access to lodging for users of the rail corridor. It would create a continual use of this facility with a resulting positive economic impact. The construction of such an access would also enhance the proposed St. Johnsbury Three Rivers Bike Path that also connects at this designated point on the trail corridor.
- B. Another access would be to the Fairbanks Inn located on US Route 2 entering St. Johnsbury from the west. With the conversion of a road crossing on Mt. Vernon Street, with permission from the Town, winter and summer users could obtain access by using Mt. Vernon Street or High Street to the Inn. It is anticipated that a bridge could be built to accommodate users to the Inn from High Street where there are presently old abandoned buildings. This would keep congestion away from residential homes in the immediate area.
- C. On US Route 2 across from the Fairbanks Inn is a parking lot that could be used as a trailhead and there will be access in the St. Johnsbury Area to Recreation Fields, Parks, and Swimming Facilities.
- D. Developing a program with the schools along the corridor to use the pathway in conjunction with their self help programs and gym programs, such as running, jogging, or biking, as well as their cross country ski program would be beneficial to the communities. The ATF will provide a protected outdoor recreation area and it would get children and others out into the natural surroundings. Schools in St. Johnsbury, Danville, Hardwick, Wolcott, Morrisville, Hyde Park, Johnson, Highgate and Swanton are all within walking distance of the ATF.
- E. This ATF already connects with the Long Trail, Catamount Trail System, Missisquoi Valley Rail Trail, and the Cambridge Bike Path. As other north-south paths are developed they will intersect with this corridor. Swanton and St. Johnsbury are in the process of developing pathways at their respective ends of the trail. If bridge 96 was replaced at the western end, it could be possible to connect with a path extending to Lake Champlain.

Appendix “A”

Flow Chart for Complaints Protocol

Appendix “A” – Concerns Flowchart



Appendix “B”

Protocol for Complaints, Concerns & Requests

Appendix “B” – Concerns Protocol

Lamoille Valley Rail Trail (LVRT)

Protocol for Citizen Concerns, Requests and Complaints

From time to time citizens may have concerns, requests for information, or complaints about the LVRT. The following procedures will be used to document citizen concerns, requests or complaints, as well as outlining the steps that will be taken to resolve their issues.

The Lamoille Valley Rail Trail Committee (LVRTC) oversees the planning and development of the trail, the LVRTC meets on the second Wednesday of each month at the Plaza Hotel in Morrisville, meeting time is 6:30 PM. The LVRTC will provide the necessary forms for citizens to use to register their complaint, concern, or to facilitate a request. The forms are available from members of the LVRTC, and the Lamoille Valley Rail Trail Advisory Committee (LAC) for distribution and are available through VAST and the LVRTC website. It will be the citizens’ responsibility to submit their issues in writing, either mailed or e-mailed, on the appropriate form to:

VAST
Attn: LVRT Issues
26 VAST Lane-Berlin
Barre, VT 05641
Or email to:
jessi@vtvast.org

Whether a citizen submission is made directly through VAST, the LVRTC or the LAC, it is required that the citizen provide all of the information requested by the complaint form. VAST or the LVRTC will send an acknowledgement of receipt of form, to the citizen, within 7 days and the concern, request, or complaint will be entered into the issues database and forwarded to the LVRTC Chair and Trail Issue Sub-Committee for action.

The Trail Issue Subcommittee is made up of 2 LVRTC members and a member of the LAC. The LAC member will rotate based on the county where the submission originated. The Trail Issue Subcommittee will consider the submission and apply one of the following options:

1. Seek additional information from the citizen, if needed;
2. Take action and report to the LVRTC and/or other relevant parties;
3. Seek counsel from other relevant parties and then implement option #2 above;
4. Refer the submission back to the full LVRTC or to another relevant party, if the submission goes beyond the authority of the Trail Issue Subcommittee; or
5. Request an extension for more time to consider your issue and seek resolution.

Regardless of the option chosen, it is the LVRTC goal to issue a response to the submission within 30 days. The response will include a summary of actions taken, an explanation of the next steps to be taken, and information on who to contact in order for the citizen to follow-up.

If a citizen submits a complaint, and they are unsatisfied with the results of this protocol, they may consider pursuing their issue using the Conflict Resolution Process as described within Section 19.0 of the LVRTC Management Plan. The Management Plan can be found on the LVRT website, www.lvrt.org or you may contact VAST for a copy.

Appendix “C”
Complaint Form

Appendix "C" – Complaint Form

Lamoille Valley Rail Trail Complaint form

Date _____	County: (please circle) Caledonia Lamoille Franklin Other: _____
Name _____	
Address _____ _____ _____	
Phone Number _____	
E-Mail _____	

Description of Complaint / Issue: (please use other side or another sheet if necessary)

Please mail this form to:
VAST
26 VAST Lane
Barre, VT 05641
attn: LVRT

Please check whether you would rather receive replies to your complaint via:

postal mail (please provide address above)
OR
 electronic mail (please provide email address above).

Acknowledgement of Receipt

Due Date 7 days from when complaint was made

Issue assigned to:

Response due 30 days from when complaint was made

Resolution, Next Steps, or Information Requested:

To follow up, please contact: _____

Signed _____ Date _____

Appendix “N”

Potential Trailheads

LVRT Management Plan As Approved by VAST/VTrans December 2009

TOWN	STATION	"NEW" MILEPOST	SIZE/ AREA	COMMENTS	MILES TO LAST TRAILHEAD	MILES TO NEXT TRAILHEAD	OWNERSHIP
St. Johnsbury	27+00	-0.53	ROW only	On 3 Rivers Trail; will need agreement/instrument to use private property	n/a	0.53	private
St. Johnsbury	55+20	0	N/A	Use of the St. Johnsbury Park and Ride; walk to the LVRT is 1/4 mile on 3 Rivers Trail	0.53	4.56	state/ town
Danville	296+14	4.56	significant	abundant parking off Trestle Road, but significant work necessary; photo 70-72	4.56	1.6	state
Danville	380+60	6.16	ROW only	Fisher's Crossing on the Old Stagecoach Road- enlarged ROW section (to rte 2?)	1.6	2.39	state
Danville	506+80	8.55	significant	abundant parking at Marty's 1st Stop, 500' away; photo 126	2.39	1.45	private
Danville	583+46	10	ROW only	Site of old station, limited area; photo 136	1.45	3.08	state
West Danville	745+00, 747+00	13.08	Old Quarry, Parking Lot	Abundant room; adjacent to other possibilities; photo 180, 181	3.08	5.02	unknown
Walden	1011+00	18.1	railroad siding	significant room for snowmobile, car parking; photo 242	5.02	8.19	state
Greensboro	1443+79	26.29	railroad siding	significant room for snowmobile, car parking; photo 377	8.19	3.27	state
East Hardwick	1615-1617	29.56	station, RR siding	abundant room for snowmobile, car parking; photo 433	3.27	2.17	state
Hardwick	1730+50	31.73	VTrans "bone yard" on rte 15?	abundant room for snowmobile, car parking; photo 470	2.17	1.41	state?
Hardwick	1805+00	33.14	railroad property	almost 1 acre straddling ROW on Maple Street, downtown Hardwick; photo 500	1.41	1.1	state
Hardwick	1862-1842	34.24	significant	parcel on S side of rte 15 Xing at Ford dealership; photo 522	1.1	3.35	state
Wolcott	2040+00	37.59	significant	Parking lot for the Fisher covered RR bridge state historical site; photo 585	3.35	1.81	state?
Wolcott	2135+80	39.4	small- ROW only	Area adjacent to town garage, School Street; photo 622	1.81	2.43	town/state
Wolcott	2264+21	41.83	ROW only	Corley Road; photo 658	2.43	3.98	state

LVRT Management Plan As Approved by VAST/VTrans December 2009

TOWN	STATION	MILEPOST	SIZE/ AREA	COMMENTS	MILES TO LAST TRAILHEAD	MILES TO NEXT TRAILHEAD	OWNERSHIP
Morrisville	2473+95	45.81	Rte 15A crossing	Likely to be significant space around the old bridge approach once the new is built	3.98	1.54	state
Morrisville	2555+47	47.35	significant	Melben's Restaurant parking is adjacent to Oxbow Public walking path; photo 753	1.54	1.07	unknown
Morrisville	vicinity of 2612+00	48.42	significant	Land saved after state sale of railroad parcel; photo 772	1.07	1.68	state
Hyde Park	2700+55	50.1	significant	railroad sidings; photo 803	1.68	0.9	state
Hyde Park	2748+20	51	small- ROW only	West Main St tangency to LVRT has possibilities; photo 818	0.9	3.01	state
Johnson	2905-2908	54.01	abundant	Significant railroad land adjacent to great scenery; photo 964, 865, 866	3.01	0.81	state
Johnson	2950+00	54.82	abundant	Railroad property behind Parker and Stearns; photo 884, 885	0.81	0.32	state
Johnson	2966+40	55.14	abundant	Old Mill Park, facilities adjacent to LVRT; photo 889, 891, 892	0.32	1.81	state/ town
Johnson	3062+32	56.95	adequate-ROW	Lot on Rte 15 across from Johnson Farm and Garden; photo 925	1.81	1.64	state
Johnson	3148+75	58.59	Rte 15/ LVRT ROW	Significant space between rte 15 and LVRT for Trailhead; photo 955	1.64	1.63	state
Cambridge	3235+06	60.22	unknown; considerable	VTrans garage on Rte 15 backs on LVRT; photo 976	1.63	0.32	state?
Cambridge	3251+80	60.54	unknown	LVRT straddles Rte 15 and 1829 House parking lot- large; photo 980	0.32	2.21	private
Cambridge	3368+60	62.75	abundant	RR land, sidings around Poland Bridge, Cambridge Greenway; photos 1008-1013	2.21	2.05	public
Cambridge	3476+72	64.8	abundant	RR land between Rte 108 and LVRT at old gravel pit site; photo 1056	2.05	2.61	public

LVRT Management Plan As Approved by VAST/VTrans December 2009

TOWN	STATION	MILEPOST	SIZE/ AREA	COMMENTS	MILES TO LAST TRAILHEAD	MILES TO NEXT TRAILHEAD	OWNERSHIP
Fletcher	3614+40	67.41	small- ROW only	land between LVRT and Wilson Rd on the south side; photo 1083(backup-3596+20)	2.61	3.9	public?
Bakersfield	3820+61	71.31	abundant	RR owned gravel pit with access to Whitney Road; photo 1122	3.9	1.5	public
East Fairfield	3897+00-3899+34	72.81	abundant	RR owned land on Rte 36 in downtown East Fairfield; photo 1152	1.5	1.19	state
Fairfield	3962+67	74	unknown	state land between RR and Rte 36, over Black Creek; photos 1188-1190	1.19	1.12	state?
Fairfield	4021+49	75.12	small-ROW only	land between Rte 36, Brusco Rd. and the ROW at those crossings; photo 1205	1.12	1.86	public
Fairfield	4119+50	76.98	abundant	RR land on SE side of Chester Arthur Road; photos 1231, 1232	1.86	4.61	public
Sheldon	4363+15	81.59	abundant	RR land on south side of Bridge Street in downtown Sheldon; photos 1312, 1313	4.61	0.99	public
Sheldon	4415+25	82.58	abundant	100' ROW on Bouchard Road (at bridge) on the S side of the Missisquoi; photos 1329, 1330	0.99	0.49	public
Sheldon Junction	4441+55	83.07	abundant	Existing trailhead at the start of the Missisquoi Rail Trail; photo 1338	0.49	1.05	public
Sheldon	4496+76	84.12	unknown	land between rte 78 and the RR at that station; photo 1365, 1366	1.05	1.34	public
Highgate	4567+34	85.46	abundant	RR land north of RR crossing of rte 78; photos 1396, 1397	1.34	0.6	public
Highgate	4599+25	86.06	abundant	RR land on the south side of the Hanna Road crossing; photo 1402	0.6	1.52	public
Highgate	4679+35	87.58	small-ROW only	land at the rte 78 crossing, southeast side; photo 1416	1.52	1.82	public
Highgate	4775+52	89.4	abundant	RR land (school parking lots) on the W side of the rte 207 (Gore Rd) crossing; photos 1438-1440	1.82	3.07	public

Appendix “O”

Trail Maintenance Schedule

LVRT Management Plan As Approved by VAST/VTrans December 2009

MAINTENANCE TASK	FREQUENCY	WHO	EQUIPMENT	COMMENT	COST DATA	COST DATA
trail inspection	daily	volunteer	ATV	necessary for first year; affects many other activities		
regrade gravel surface	monthly	staff	tractor with drag	May-November; less after some history develops		
add more gravel surface	as needed	staff	tractor with box- plow	minor effort if not allowed to backlog		
asphalt repairs (at intersections)	as needed	contract		probably not needed for first 5 years		
clear trail of trash and debris	as needed	staff/ volunteer	ATV or tractor with dump box			
clear ROW of blow-downs, debris	as needed	staff/ volunteer	tractor with dump box, chain saw, rakes, etc			
mow trail and shoulder	monthly	staff	tractor with outrigger mower	5 times- June -Oct		
mow lateral ditches	yearly	staff	tractor with outrigger mower	September		
mow far shoulder	yearly	staff/ volunteer	hand-held motorized trimmers			
leaf blowing	monthly	staff	tractor with blower or broom	2 times- October, November		
leaf/ debris removal from lateral ditches	annual	staff/ volunteer	by hand (?) from ditch	October/ November		
<p>LEGEND: STAFF refers to part or full-time workers employed to maintain the trail. VOLUNTEER refers to a club or association member, or a trail supporter, donating their time. CONTRACT refers to contracting the work out to a private contractor due to work type. VYCC refers to the Vermont Youth Conservation Corps. CRWP refers to the Community Work Restitutuion Program administered by the Department of Correction. The tractor is, most likely, a 50 HP , 4WD model with the indicated attachments.</p>						

Appendix “O” Trail Maintenance

MAINTENANCE TASK	FREQUENCY	WHO	EQUIPMENT	COMMENT	COST DATA	COST DATA
clear cross ditches of debris; non-beaver sites	annual *	staff/ volunteer	hand tools, ATV or tractor			
clear cross ditches of debris; beaver sites	monthly *	staff/ volunteer	hand tools, ATV or tractor	more often as needed		
inspect culverts; beaver sites	monthly *	staff/ volunteer	hand tools, ATV or tractor	more often as needed		
inspect culverts; non-beaver sites	annual *	staff/ volunteer	hand tools, ATV or tractor			
clean culverts and culvert trails	always underway as weather permits	CRWP	hand tools, ATV or tractor	ongoing throughout the life of the trail		
maintain and repair culverts	always underway as weather permits	VYCC, CRWP, and staff	hand tools, ATV or tractor	ongoing throughout the life of the trail		
bridge structural inspections	annual *	volunteer	transit, increment borer	* also after MAJOR storm, flood, hurricane events		
bridge painting	start program as \$ permits	contract		will need major funding within ten years		
sign and mile marker maintenance	monthly	staff	hand tools, ATV or tractor	less after some history		
fence repair and maintenance	as needed	volunteer	hand tools, ATV or tractor			
bridge deck, curb, and guard rail maintenance	quarterly	staff	hand tools, ATV or tractor	once in spring, and once in fall		
bridge deck replacement	as needed	contract		probably not for the first ten years		
<p>LEGEND: STAFF refers to part or full-time workers employed to maintain the trail. VOLUNTEER refers to a club or association member, or a trail supporter, donating their time. CONTRACT refers to contracting the work out to a private contractor due to work type. VYCC refers to the Vermont Youth Conservation Corps. CRWP refers to the Community Work Restitution Program administered by the Department of Correction. The tractor is, most likely, a 50 HP , 4WD model with the indicated attachments.</p>						

