



The General Court of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts
State House, Boston, MA 02133-1053

January 30, 2023

Doug Rice, Commissioner
Massachusetts Department of Conservation & Recreation
251 Causeway Street, 9th Floor
Boston, MA 02114

Dear Commissioner Rice,

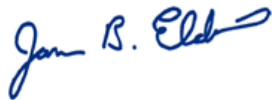
We write to you as the legislative delegation that represents the towns of Ayer, Groton, Pepperell and Dunstable with concerns about the current condition of the Nashua River Rail Trail (NRRT). We recently took a walk along the portion of the trail in Groton and saw first hand the despair of the trail, including numerous potholes and bumps. We also spoke with regular trail users who gave us other examples of hazards along the length of the 11 mile trail, including stretches of washboard and spots heaved up with root damage.

The NRRT was constructed in 2001 and 22 years later continues to serve as a vital recreational resource to our residents as well as the many others each year who travel to the Nashoba Valley to enjoy its unique and beautiful natural areas. The lack of regular maintenance and the passage of time have left the NRRT in a deteriorated condition with many surface obstructions that impact public safety and user enjoyment. We have been told that there have been incidents where EMT responses to rider crashes have occurred due to these unsafe conditions.

As in other parts of the state where DCR undertakes the reconstruction of rail trails when their age and condition warrants, we request that you do this for the NRRT and start the process to repave the entire trail. The local communities worked closely with the DCR on the initial construction and remain committed to this collaboration. The trail's current condition does not reflect well on anyone and is a danger to all that use it.

We appreciate your consideration of our request and look forward to working with you and the Nashoba Valley communities to make this happen. Please do not hesitate to contact us if we can do anything to help you achieve this goal.

Sincerely,



James B. Eldridge
State Senator
Middlesex & Worcester District



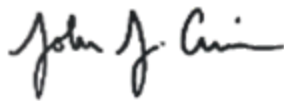
Danillo A. Sena
State Representative
37th Middlesex District



Edward J. Kennedy
State Senator
First Middlesex District



Margaret Scarsdale
Margaret Scarsdale
State Representative
1st Middlesex District



John J. Cronin
State Senator
Worcester & Middlesex District

cc: Jannice Livingston, Chair, Ayer Select Board
Kieran Meehan, Chair, Dunstable Select Board
John Reilly, Chair, Groton Select Board
Mark Mathews, Chair, Pepperell Select Board