



Vermont Rail Trails

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House Transportation Committee
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Railbanking Authorization



Vermont Rail Trails

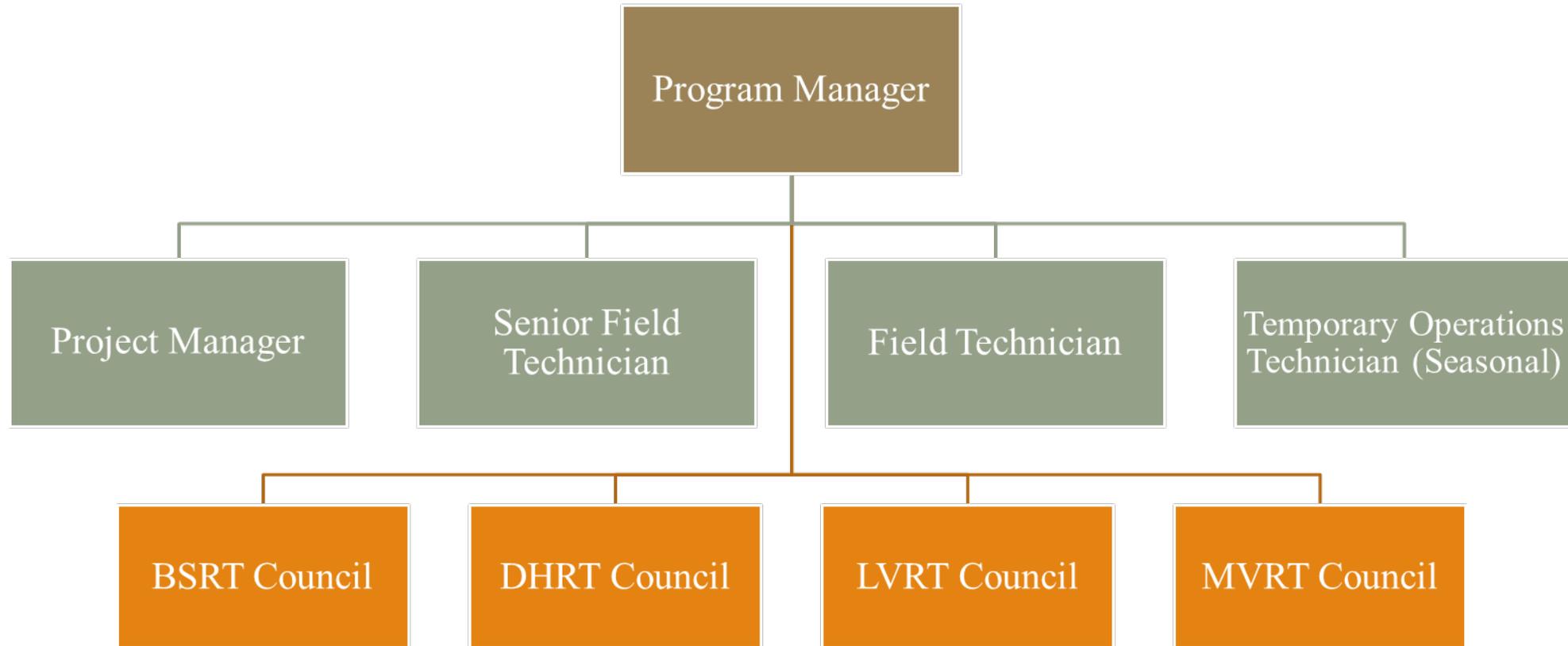
- What is railbanking?
 - Rail-trails are public paths created from railbanked former railroad corridors. Established in 1983 as an amendment to Section 8(d) of the [National Trails System Act](#), railbanking is a voluntary agreement between a railroad company and a trail sponsor to use an out-of-service rail corridor as a trail until a railroad might need the corridor again for rail service.
 - AOT holds the right-of-way to rail lines approved for railbanking and interim trail use as authorized by the Surface Transportation Board under the Federal Trails Act (16 U.S.C. § 1247(d)) or by the Vermont Secretary of Transportation under Vermont's own railbanking statute (5 V.S.A. § 3408).



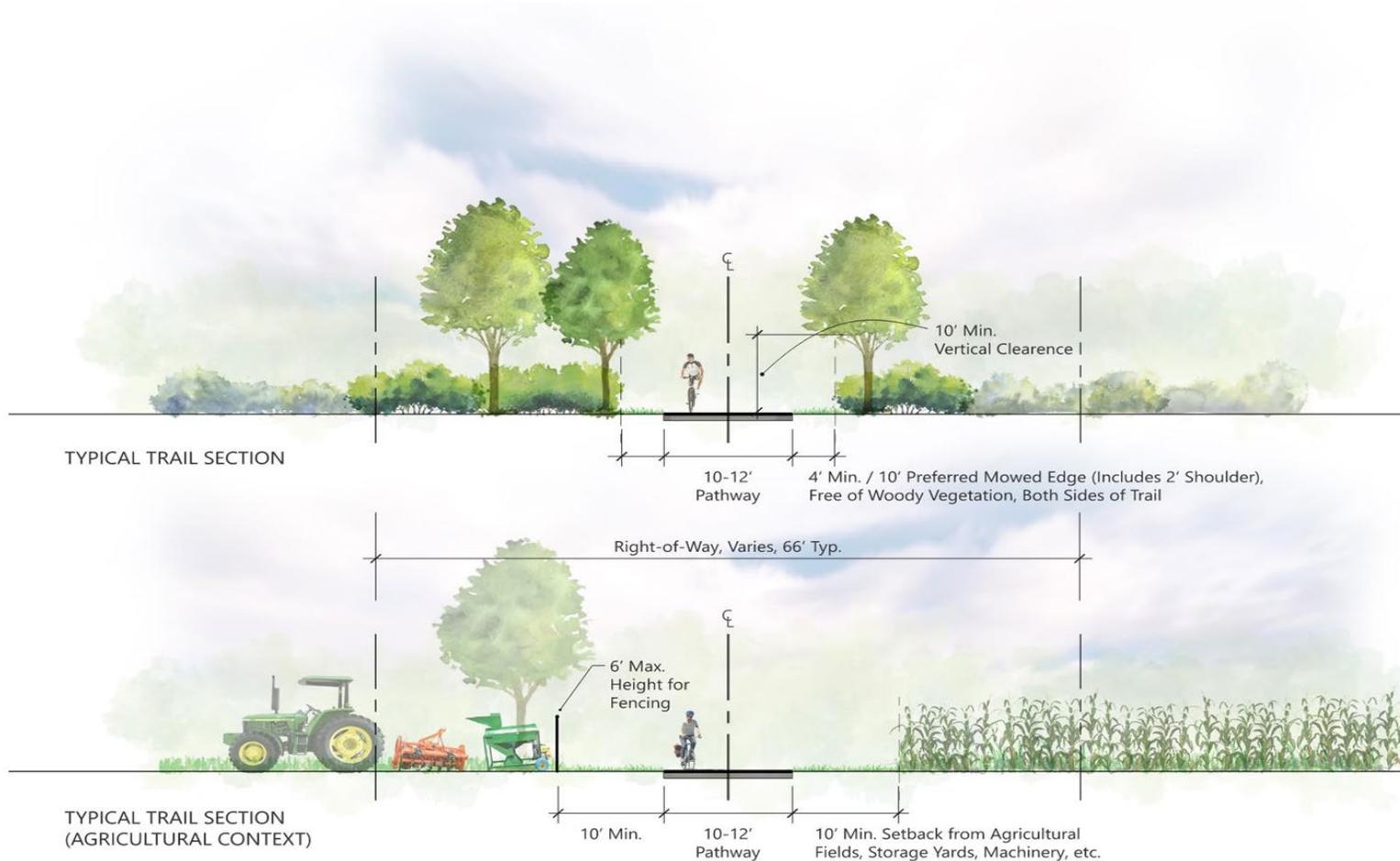
Management & Operations



Roles & Responsibilities



Trail Maintenance & Operations



Winter Trail Etiquette

- Education
 - [Pass & Yield Guidelines](#)
 - Stay to the right of the trail except when passing.
 - In the winter, yield to those that have more difficulty stepping off the groomed trail.
- Outreach
 - Rail Trail Councils
 - Key stakeholders
 - Ambassador Program
- Enforcement



Engagement & Coordination: Management Plans





Project Background

A management plan is required for each of the state-owned rail trail corridors ([23 U.S. Code § 206](#)):

- ✓ Lamoille Valley Rail Trail
- Missisquoi Valley Rail Trail
- Delaware & Hudson Rail Trail
- Beebe Spur Rail Trail

Goals of the planning process:

1. To establish **community-led vision and goals** for each trail system
2. To identify **goal-oriented priorities** for each trail system
3. To improve **community connections** and spur **economic development**
4. To adapt **management, maintenance, and operations** frameworks to fit each trail's needs
5. To enable **funding**, including funding that requires a documented management plan

Engagement

- Public Input Tool & Survey
- Stakeholder Interviews
- 2025 Wednesdays on the Waterfront
- Rail Trail Council

Beebe Spur Rail Trail Management Plan Public Meeting

Date: August 6, 2025

Time: 5:00 PM

Location: Outside the Emory A. Hebard State Office Building, 100 Main Street, Newport, VT 05855
(We will be set up outside the Wednesdays on the Waterfront event)

Project Website: <https://railtrails.vermont.gov>

Development of a management plan for the Beebe Spur Rail Trail is underway. The plan aims to define a community-led vision and identify goal-oriented strategies for the trail that will foster connection to the local community, spur economic activity, and enable future investment in this community asset. Your input will help align the plan with the experience of those who use and cherish the trail.

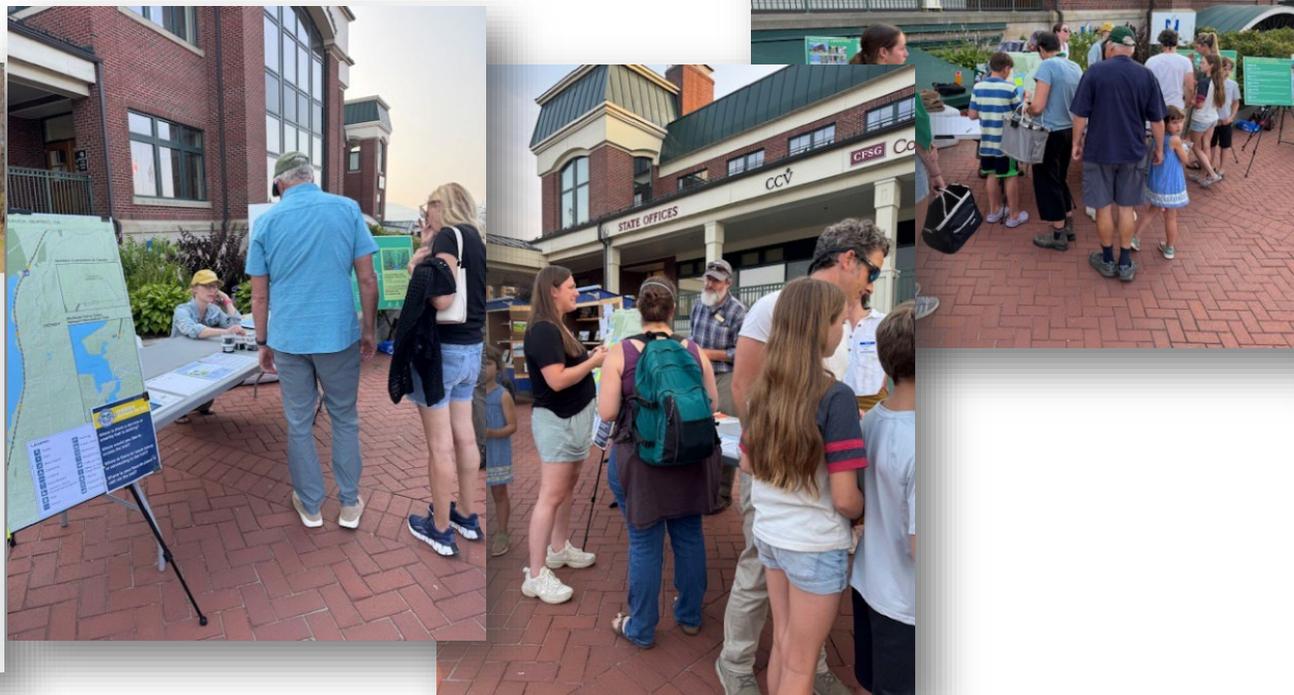
Please join us at this public meeting or use the survey link or QR code below to share your feedback on the short- and long-term strategies that will guide priorities for maintenance, operations, enhancements, and community connections.

WE WANT TO HEAR FROM YOU!

To provide input on the trail please scan the QR Code or go to: <https://survey.com/BSRailtrail>

To learn more about the Plan process and upcoming engagement opportunities go to: <https://railtrails.vermont.gov/information/management-plan/>

For more information contact: Doug Merton | 802-748-1221 | dmorton@vtda.net



Engagement | Key Takeaways

- Connection to:
 - Trails
 - Downtown Newport
 - Quebec
- Lakeshore Access
- Interpretive Signs
 - History
 - Shoreline Protection
 - Native plants/animals/birds
- Trailside Amenities
 - Etiquette Signs
 - Repair Stations
 - Benches
 - Waste Receptacles
 - Wayfinding
- Shoreline Restoration
- Maintenance Issues
- Events!!



Management Plan Vision

The Beebe Spur Rail Trail is a vibrant, year-round multi-use corridor nestled along the scenic shores of Lake Memphremagog with stunning views of the Green Mountains. As a key connection in a broader network of trails, the Beebe Spur serves as a local asset and international gateway linking Newport and Derby, Vermont, to Quebec, Canada offering accessible outdoor recreation, immersion in nature, and cross-border connectivity.



Management Plan Goals

- Cultivate a distinct trail identity anchored in the lakeside location and many trail connections.
- Promote economic vitality of surrounding communities through regional connectivity and recreation tourism.
- Plan proactively for trail resilience and future challenges.
- Promote year-round outdoor recreation by providing support for a diversity of uses and users.
- Employ best management practices for a well-maintained trail facility.

Example

Strategies / Actions	Roles			Timeframe	Goals				
	Lead	Partners	Support		Identity	Vitality	Resilience	Recreation	Maintenance
Support evolution of the Rail Trail Council to include stakeholders, engage membership, cultivate trail champions and advance initiatives focused on community connections.	NVDA	VTrans Rail Trail Program	Membership (Towns, Organizations, etc.)	Short Term	X				

- Strategy or action that addresses needs and supports plan objectives
- Lead, partner, and support roles to execute the strategy or action
- Timeframe for execution
 - Short = 0-2 years
 - Medium = 2-5 years
 - Long = 5-10 years (Note: *does not mean action can't be taken sooner*)
- Goals supported by the strategy or action



Questions

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