

§1814-A. Easements across rail trails

To the extent permitted by the deed or other instrument of ownership, the director, with the consent of the Governor and the commissioner, may sell or otherwise convey a right of access by easement across a rail trail as provided in this section. For the purposes of this section, "rail trail" means a former railroad right-of-way that is no longer used for rail service, in which the department has an ownership interest and that is managed by the department for use as a recreational trail. [PL 2011, c. 278, §5 (NEW).]

1. Notice. At least 30 days prior to conveying a right of access by easement under this section, the director shall notify interested parties of the proposed conveyance, providing the location and purpose of the access easement and the anticipated date of conveyance. The notice must provide a name and contact information for a person at the bureau to whom inquiries may be made and comments submitted. For the purposes of this section, "interested parties" means owners of property abutting the parcel on which the proposed right of access is located, local trail clubs, statewide trail associations, the municipality in which the proposed easement is located, the Land for Maine's Future Board, each Legislator and other persons with a known interest in the use of the segment of the rail trail affected by the proposed conveyance.

[PL 2011, c. 278, §5 (NEW); PL 2011, c. 657, Pt. W, §7 (REV); PL 2013, c. 405, Pt. A, §24 (REV).]

2. Terms of conveyance. The access easement must include terms that ensure the transaction does not unreasonably interfere with the safety, maintenance and continuity of the rail trail. The access easement must ensure that public investment in the rail trail is protected by a negotiated exchange of value. The exchange of value may include, but is not limited to, negotiated improvements to the rail trail or payment of survey, title and appraisal expenses associated with the conveyance of the right of access by easement.

[PL 2011, c. 278, §5 (NEW).]

3. Proceeds from sale of an access easement. Proceeds from the sale of a right of access by easement under this section must be deposited in the Parks General Operations Fund established under section 1825.

[PL 2019, c. 343, Pt. Y, §1 (AMD).]

4. Opportunity for review by legislative committee. A Legislator receiving notification under subsection 1 may notify the director of concerns and may in writing request review of the proposed access easement by the joint standing committee of the Legislature having jurisdiction over parks and lands matters. A Legislator requesting a review under this subsection shall notify the chairs of the joint standing committee of the request.

When a request for legislative review is received under this subsection, the director may not finalize the transfer until the legislative committee has met and reviewed the proposed transaction.

[PL 2011, c. 278, §5 (NEW).]

SECTION HISTORY

PL 2011, c. 278, §5 (NEW). PL 2011, c. 657, Pt. W, §7 (REV). PL 2013, c. 405, Pt. A, §24 (REV). PL 2019, c. 343, Pt. Y, §1 (AMD).

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