

NEWS RELEASE

For Immediate Release

Sea to Sky MP Weiler and MLA Valeriote see opportunity in CN Rail announcement

British Columbia, July 16, 2025 — News that CN Rail is giving up on the line north of Squamish presents a unique opportunity to push for a passenger rail service in the corridor, according to the federal and provincial representatives for West Vancouver and the Sea to Sky.

In their “discontinuance” announcement of July 11, CN Rail initiated the process of ending its lease on the rail corridor between Squamish and 100 Mile House, returning it to BC Rail - a wholly-owned subsidiary of the BC Government.

MP Patrick Weiler (West Vancouver-Sunshine Coast-Sea to Sky Country) said: “the potential transfer of this rail corridor marks a pivotal moment for the Sea to Sky region. Over the 23 years since regular passenger rail service was discontinued, the region’s population has grown by more than 60%, and recreational traffic has increased significantly.”

“This is a once-in-a-generation opportunity to take over a lease that has nearly 40 years remaining on it, and to restore the rail line for public use and benefit as it was before it was controversially privatized by the BC Liberal government in 2004.” said Jeremy Valeriote, MLA for West Vancouver-Sea to Sky.

From July 2026, interested parties will be able to take over the rail line segment from CN Rail for train services. In the event that there are no interested parties for continued operations, the segment will be offered for net salvage value to different levels of government in accordance with the *Canada Transportation Act*.

“This gives us a one-year window to build a business case, secure support from all levels of government, and make an offer to acquire the lease, via an operating entity” said Valeriote. “This summer, the Sea-to-Sky highway is clearly showing itself to be at capacity, even without closures due to tragic crashes. Regional bus and rail transit can ease the pressure on Highway 99 and give people affordable options for travel in the corridor.”

“Restoring passenger rail service is a promising avenue worth serious consideration,” MP Weiler adds, “alongside the imperative of a regional bus transit system this year. Passenger rail would reduce traffic congestion, lower emissions, and better connect communities – enhancing both economic resilience and quality of life.”

The other consequence of this news is the possible suspension of the high-rail bus that supports daily travel for N'Quat'qua and Shalath Nation members to and from Lillooet. This loss of mobility for Indigenous communities who were once served by BC Rail needs to be addressed in the short term.

“Naturally, there are complexities,” says MP Weiler. “Any move to include or prioritize passenger rail would require a future operator and significant coordination among governments, freight operators, and First Nations. Fortunately, the formal process now underway provides us with a full year to examine the details, assess feasibility, and engage the public thoroughly.”

MLA Valeriote and MP Weiler will be working closely with local governments and community leaders to explore every viable path forward. “These kinds of decisions will shape our region for decades. If senior levels of government are serious about investing in infrastructure to create jobs and strengthen our economy, this is an opportunity we can’t afford to miss,” said MLA Valeriote.

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