



12 years without VIA Rail service east of New Carlisle

GILLES GAGNÉ

CHANDLER – The Coalition of Gaspésians for the return of VIA Rail’s passenger train issued a press release on December 13 to remind people that December 10 marked a sad anniversary for the region. In fact, on December 10, 2011, VIA Rail withdrew its trains between Gaspé and New Carlisle because of the state of a bridge located at the limit of Pabos Mills and Chandler.

On August 13, 2013, VIA Rail stopped sending trains between Matapédia and New Carlisle due to the state of rail infrastructure and stopped the Matapédia-Gaspé shuttle service six weeks later.

With the holiday season knocking at the door, the Coalition also deplores the end of the partnership between VIA Rail and the Régie inter-municipale de transport

Gaspésie-Îles-de-la-Madeleine (REGIM), which provided a shuttle service between Campbellton and Gaspé. That service was not renewed after the holiday season last year.

For several years, many travellers relied on this collective transport service, which facilitated family reunions during the holiday season and tourist development in the summer.

According to a press release issued by the Coalition of Gaspésians for the return of VIA Rail’s passenger train, “over the past ten years, the Coalition has continued to highlight the many negative effects of the absence of VIA Rail on the public transportation offer. The Coalition has also proposed solutions with a view to restoring service.”

Encouraged by the progress of the railway infrastructure repair work, its



Photo: G. Gagné

The VIA Rail passenger train stopped going east of New Carlisle in December 2011. It is shown here in Douglastown, seconds from reaching Haldimand’s bridge, which spans over the Saint John River.

members estimate that the resumption of VIA Rail train traffic between Matapédia and New Carlisle would be possible at some point in 2024. Recent announcements from the

Government of Quebec in view of railway rehabilitation work on the section between Port-Daniel-Gascons and Gaspé also represent very good news.

The press release also mentions that the Coalition had a very active year in 2023, and its members are delighted with the results of its ongoing campaign.