

# Train coalition waits to hear how ACR will use funding

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Federal funding of \$4.2 million to help passenger rail service between Sault Ste. Marie and Hearst is welcome, but the co-chair of a lobbying group still wants to hear from Transport Canada and Canadian National Railway.

Algoma Coalition for Passenger Trains co-chair Al Errington said he doesn't know if that money will be spent on pressing needs such as disabled access and electric lifts for snowmachines and all-terrain vehicles, or general expenses.

"Nobody's talking to us," said the operator of Errington's Wilderness Island Resort Sunday.

"To us, it would make sense to talk to the stakeholders about what would make the train really work for the economy and inter-community transportation.

"You should talk to the people who use it."

The coalition was formed in 2006 due to unpredictable Algoma Central Railway scheduling and deteriorating service.

The government aid was announced Friday by Sault MP Tony Martin.

He and other train backers spent three days travelling by rail from Sault Ste. Marie to Toronto in April to draw attention to their concerns.

"This money probably isn't enough (to pay for all needed improvements)," said Martin.

"We're not going away. This is a really important piece of infrastructure. We think it has more potential than it's achieving." Canadian National owns the ACR.

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