

# Railroad Eyes Expansion To Dunkirk<sup>(2)</sup>

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By DEVON BLAIR

GOWANDA — If Robert O. Dingman has his way, some new trains could be steaming into Dunkirk in the next few years — and they won't belong to Conrail or the Norfolk & Western railroads.

Dingman is founder and president of the New York and Lake Erie Railroad. His is a small outfit that runs from Gowanda to Waterboro, servicing companies such as Carnation and running

through such communities as South Dayton and Cherry Creek.

Dingman is looking to expand, and he wants to rebuild the old Erie-Lackawanna line that used to run from Dunkirk to Dayton. All that's left of that line now is the original bed and a few of the bridges that cover the 20-mile route.

"We consider the Dunkirk market to be of potentially great interest for an additional railroad," Dingman said.

"One of the possibilities is that we would convert the coal that is now moving to Dunkirk by truck, onto the railroad. This would represent a substantial traffic movement."

However, the project is a big one. Dingman estimates it will take \$2.5 million and three years to complete the line to Dunkirk.

"It will be a complete reconstruction project, and would represent a new rail line on an existing rail bed," Dingman said.

He said the work would be done in stages as funding becomes available. Dingman hopes to get some of the preliminary work on bridges out of the way this year.

Right now the New York & Lake Erie Railroad does about \$200,000 a year in business. Dingman hopes to do nearly \$1 million a year when the line to Dunkirk is completed.