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# Regionale Schmalspur-Idee braucht noch Geld

(Local narrow gauge idea needs money)

(Heading from "Der Bund" 18/8/95)

by Beat Feller

At an information exhibition at Gstaad in August, an initiative group composed of members of the young economic chamber of Saanenland, Canton Wallis and the Montreux - Oberland - Bernois Railway (MOB) informed the public about a new idea to connect the Gstaad - Saanen area to the capital of Wallis; Sion.

They plan to construct a 42 km (26 mile) long metre gauge railway from Gstaad to Sion/Sitten.

Between Gsteig and Saviese they have to build a 9.1 km (5.7 mile) tunnel through the Alps under Sanetsch pass. From a station constructed in the tunnel, an automatically operated funicular railway will carry people up to glaciers in the Sanetsch area.

At Gstaad MOB station there is the connection to the Golden Pass line, to Montreux and Zweisimmen, plus the future third rail between Zweisimmen - Spiez - Interlaken Ost and the onward connection via the SBB - Brünig line to Luzern).

The costs to realise all of this will be 510 million Swiss Francs (£310 million) and it is expected that 95% will be by private financial groups. Today the initiative group is looking for Swiss Francs 700,000 (£406,000) to obtain the government licence. At the moment, Wallis government and the municipalities have said they will find Swiss Francs 400,000, the MOB Swiss Francs 100,000.

The third rail Zweisimmen - Interlaken Ost is a separate venture costing Swiss Francs 71 million (£42 million). Equivalent to 1 kilometre of the new Gotthard base tunnel.

## Further Information?

It seems that some private funding may be available for the third rail. All locos and rolling stock that pass through Chernex for refurbishment or major overhaul are being updated to the same level as the Brünig line.

