



Ashokan Rail Trail Project



U.C. Trail & Rail Advisory Committee

November 2, 2017

Presentation by Chris White, Deputy Director of Planning



Ashokan Rail Trail Project

Pending Legislative Resolutions

Resolution No. 421: Negative Declaration under the State Environmental Quality Review Act (“SEQRA”)

Resolution No. 422: Amendment of Capital Project No. 459 (Ashokan Rail Trail) to fund Phase 1 construction and authorize the removal of track and ties pursuant to Resolution No. 488 of 2015.

Resolution No. 423: Contract Approval for Taylor-Montgomery for tree and track removal.

Resolution No. 424: Contract Amendment for Barton & Loguidice engineering consultant for construction inspection and oversight services



Ashokan Rail Trail Project

Myths vs. Facts

TOP TEN REASONS TO LEAVE THE TRACKS IN PLACE TO THE GLENFORD DIKE

(MP 10 to 11.1)

- 1) Basin Road Terminus (MP 10). Limiting the tracks to MP 10 (Basin Road) will make unloading passengers there for the trailhead difficult, especially for the handicapped who will have to climb a 2% grade to get to the trailhead. There are no views of the Ashokan Reservoir from this area.
- 2) Rail Can Stay. Under the new Deed of Trail Easement with NYCDEP, the County has full discretion to leave ANY existing rail in the Ashokan Reservoir Easement (Paragraph 15, Page 7).
- 3) Rail Use by Permit. The Deed of Trail Easement does not need to be modified to allow Rail Use. Rail Use can be allowed by permit from the NYCDEP.
- 4) West Hurley Trailhead. Accessing the trailhead at West Hurley, which involves leaving the track to MP 10.4, will permit trail users to take the train from Kingston to West Hurley before taking the trail or vice versa. The Easement is 200 feet wide at West Hurley with room for rail and trail.
- 5) Extension Benefits Kingston. Extending the line to the West Hurley trailhead will allow Kingston businesses to benefit from Ashokan Trail users who take the train to the Ashokan Reservoir Trail from Kingston. Otherwise trail users will skip Kingston and drive directly to West Hurley.
- 6) Boiceville Trailhead. The County is already leaving 400 feet of rail at the western end of the Ashokan Easement so that RailExplorers can reach the trailhead at Boiceville.
- 7) Stone Report. The Stone Consulting 2015 report on Rail with Trail stated that MP 10 to MP 11.1 is “the most favorable area of the corridor for rail-with-trail”.
- 8) Glenford Dike. Reaching the Glenford Dike at MP 11.1 will give the railroad a scenic destination that will allow the railroad to run lunch and dinner trains, as well as other adult-themed rides. Adults now complain our ride is “too short with no views”. The Glenford Dike was designed for Rail with Trail, with a pre-built stone separation wall (which can be moved as needed).
- 9) Removal of the Rails. Removal of the Rails is irrevocable and once done the NYCDEP will make sure they cannot be easily put back. Keeping the rails in place to MP 11.1 may be “inconvenient” but this in no way delays the trail.
- 10) Railroad Extension. The CMRR has invested \$100,000 in track this year by upgrading equipment and replacing 1,100 ties and plans to reach Stony Hollow/Route 28a by 2018, Basin Road by 2019, and the Glenford Dike by 2020, at no cost to Ulster County.



Ashokan Rail Trail Project

Myths vs. Facts

Myth:

- 1) Basin Road Terminus (MP 10). Limiting the tracks to MP 10 (Basin Road) will make unloading passengers there for the trailhead difficult, especially for the handicapped who will have to climb a 2% grade to get to the trailhead. There are no views of the Ashokan Reservoir from this area.

Fact:

The Ulster County Legislature's Rail and Trail Policy (Res. No. 488) allows railroad use only to MP 8.33.

The segment from MP 8.33 (Route 28a) to MP 10 (Basin Road) is yet to be determined.

Class 1 (operable) track extends only to MP 6.5 while CMRR has available track to MP 8.33.



Ashokan Rail Trail Project

Myths vs. Facts



U&D Corridor Policy Map: Resolution No. 488 of 2015



Ashokan Rail Trail Project

Myths vs. Facts

Myth:

- 2) Rail Can Stay. Under the new Deed of Trail Easement with NYCDEP, the County has full discretion to leave ANY existing rail in the Ashokan Reservoir Easement (Paragraph 15, Page 7).
- 3) Rail Use by Permit. The Deed of Trail Easement does not need to be modified to allow Rail Use. Rail Use can be allowed by permit from the NYCDEP.
- 4) West Hurley Trailhead. Accessing the trailhead at West Hurley, which involves leaving the track to MP 10.4, will permit trail users to take the train from Kingston to West Hurley before taking the trail or vice versa. The Easement is 200 feet wide at West Hurley with room for rail and trail.

Fact:

“The proposal by CMRR to utilize some of the U&D Corridor along the Ashokan Trail Easement is contrary to the provisions within the trail easement, and if allowed, would effectively terminate the Ashokan Trail Easement and block construction of the Ashokan Rail Trail.”

- Ulster County Attorney Beatrice Havranek (Opinion Memo- 11/1/2017)



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Myths vs. Facts

Myth:

- 5) Extension Benefits Kingston. Extending the line to the West Hurley trailhead will allow Kingston businesses to benefit from Ashokan Trail users who take the train to the Ashokan Reservoir Trail from Kingston. Otherwise trail users will skip Kingston and drive directly to West Hurley.

Fact:

The Legislature stipulated in Res. No. 488 of 2015:

“RESOLVED, the segment between MP 8.33 and Basin Road will require further investigation on the future feasibility of rail with trail and shall be the last segment to be altered or converted on the east side of the Ashokan provide that trail connectivity co-located on the corridor shall be preserved;”



Ashokan Rail Trail Project

Myths vs. Facts





Ashokan Rail Trail Project

Myths vs. Facts





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Myths vs. Facts





Ashokan Rail Trail Project

Myths vs. Facts

Myth:

- 6) Boiceville Trailhead. The County is already leaving 400 feet of rail at the western end of the Ashokan Easement so that RailExplorers can reach the trailhead at Boiceville.

Fact:

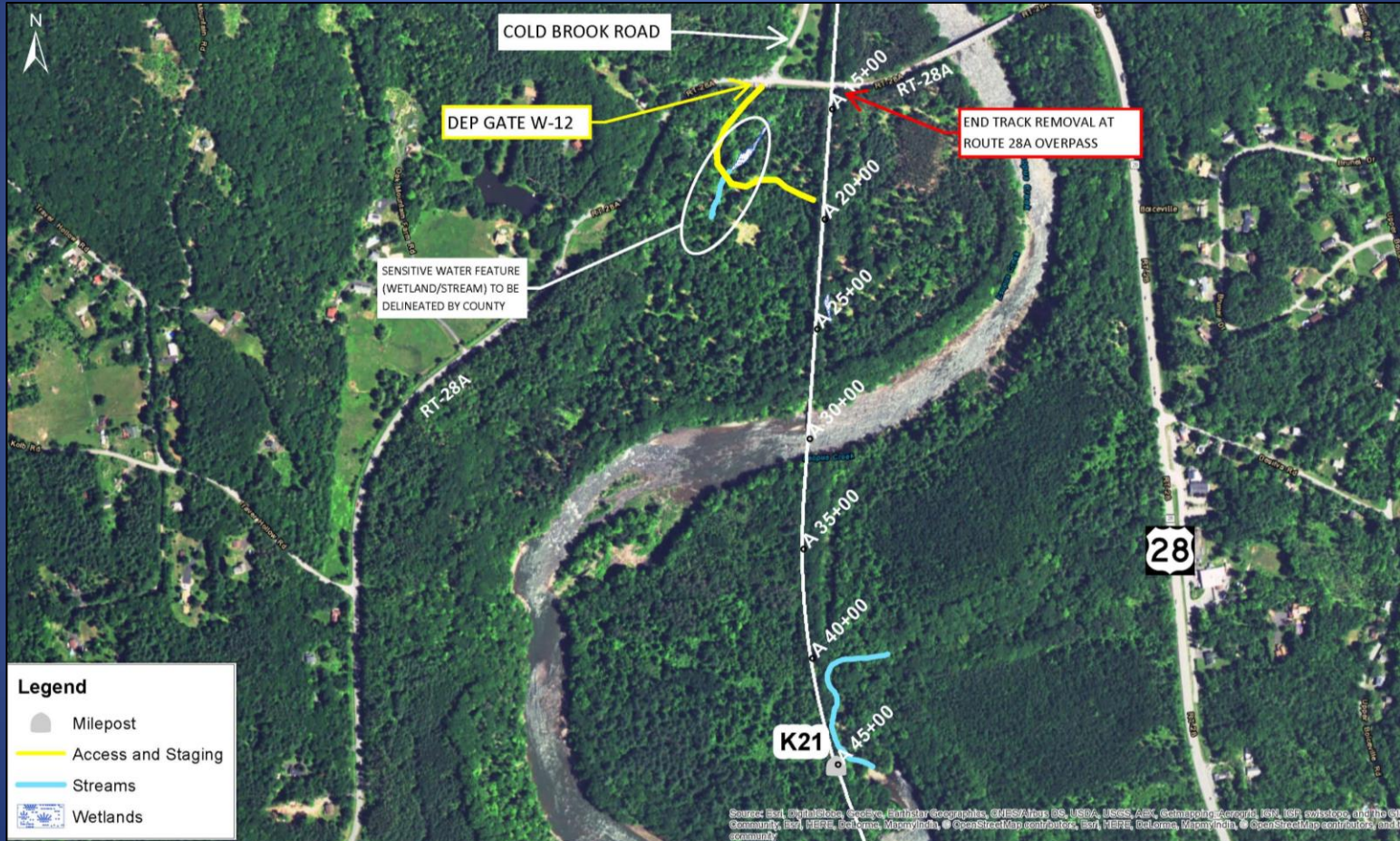
All rail, ties and other track materials will be removed between Basin Road and Route 28A in Boiceville as per the Ashokan Trail Easement agreement and Ulster County RFB-UC17-152C-REVISED.

The only exception is a short double-tracked area (“siding”) west of the Woodstock Dike, which will be retained for historic interpretation and education.



Ashokan Rail Trail Project

Myths vs. Facts





Ashokan Rail Trail Project

Myths vs. Facts





Ashokan Rail Trail Project

Myths vs. Facts

Myth:

7) Stone Report. The Stone Consulting 2015 report on Rail with Trail stated that MP 10 to MP 11.1 is “the most favorable area of the corridor for rail-with-trail”.

Fact:

From the 2015 Stone Consulting Report (p. 55):

“Rail with trail conflicts on the climb to Ashokan are significant. Once reached, the trail potential recommendation within this zone is one of the clearest decisions on the entire corridor.”

Trail benefits are relatively clear, feasible and funded- and strongly supported by DEP as a goal within their own control. The trail value here is the highest of the entire corridor in terms of economic impact for the County.”



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Myths vs. Facts

Myth:

8) Glenford Dike. Reaching the Glenford Dike at MP 11.1 will give the railroad a scenic destination that will allow the railroad to run lunch and dinner trains, as well as other adult-themed rides. Adults now complain our ride is “too short with no views”. The Glenford Dike was designed for Rail with Trail, with a pre-built stone separation wall (which can be moved as needed).

Fact:

The Ashokan Trail Easement negotiated with the City of New York and adopted by the U.C. Legislature notes:

“This Trail Easement, and the rights and obligations of the parties hereunder, shall cease and terminate in the event rail use or service is reactivated for railroad purposes.”

The Agreement does not allow for both railroad and trail uses.



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Myths vs. Facts

Myth:

9) Removal of the Rails. Removal of the Rails is irrevocable and once done the NYCDEP will make sure they cannot be easily put back. Keeping the rails in place to MP 11.1 may be “inconvenient” but this in no way delays the trail.

Fact:

Removal of the rails is not irrevocable.

The Ashokan Trail Easement states the following:

“This Trail Easement...shall not alter, modify, or extinguish the Railroad Easement or any right of the Grantee’s (County’s) pursuant thereto.”

Keeping the rails in place to MP 11.1 is not allowed in the trail design approved by NYC DEP.



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Myths vs. Facts

Myth:

10) Railroad Extension. The CMRR has invested \$100,000 in track this year by upgrading equipment and replacing 1,100 ties and plans to reach Stony Hollow/Route 28a by 2018, Basin Road by 2019, and the Glenford Dike by 2020, at no cost to Ulster County.

Fact:

CMRR was issued a permit starting on August 1, 2016 for the 4.5 miles between Kingston Plaza (approx. MP 3.8) and Route 28A in the Town of Ulster (MP 8.33).

CMRR is only operating on approx. 2.7-miles of track and has not extended the Class 1 track in the 15 months of its permit.

The remaining 1.8-miles does not meet the minimum FRA Class 1 standards and is not currently in service.



Ashokan Rail Trail Project

Myths vs. Facts

Myth:

The County can build the Ashokan Rail Trail by burying the existing steel rail, ties and other track materials.

Fact:

False. The design plans approved by NYC DEP require:

“The County will remove and dispose of all rail, ties and other track materials offsite prior to construction of the Ashokan Rail Trail with the exception of the one double-tracked area identified on the Plans for historic interpretation only.”



Ashokan Rail Trail Project

Myths vs. Facts

Myth:

The County can build the Ashokan Rail Trail by burying the existing steel rail, ties and other track materials.

Fact:

From Richard C. Semenick, P.E. (35 Years Railroad Engineering)
July 20, 2017 Summary of Opinion:

“Based on cost, constructability, drainage considerations, current condition of the track and ties, and other factors, any future restoration of railroad uses on the Corridor is best served by removal of existing track and ties and stabilization of the underlying railroad infrastructure, including repairs to drainage structures, as proposed for the ART development.”



Ashokan Rail Trail Project

Myths vs. Facts

Myth:

The County can build the Ashokan Rail Trail by burying the existing steel rail, ties and other track materials.

Fact:

From Thomas C. Baird, P.E.
(26 Years Civil and Environmental Engineering)
October 31, 2017- Alternatives Analysis Memo

“Any proposal to bury the track and ties would undermine several years of detailed negotiations and work with DEP and more than likely result in the Ashokan Rail Trail not being approved by DEP or constructed.”



Ashokan Rail Trail Project

Existing Conditions





Ashokan Rail Trail Project

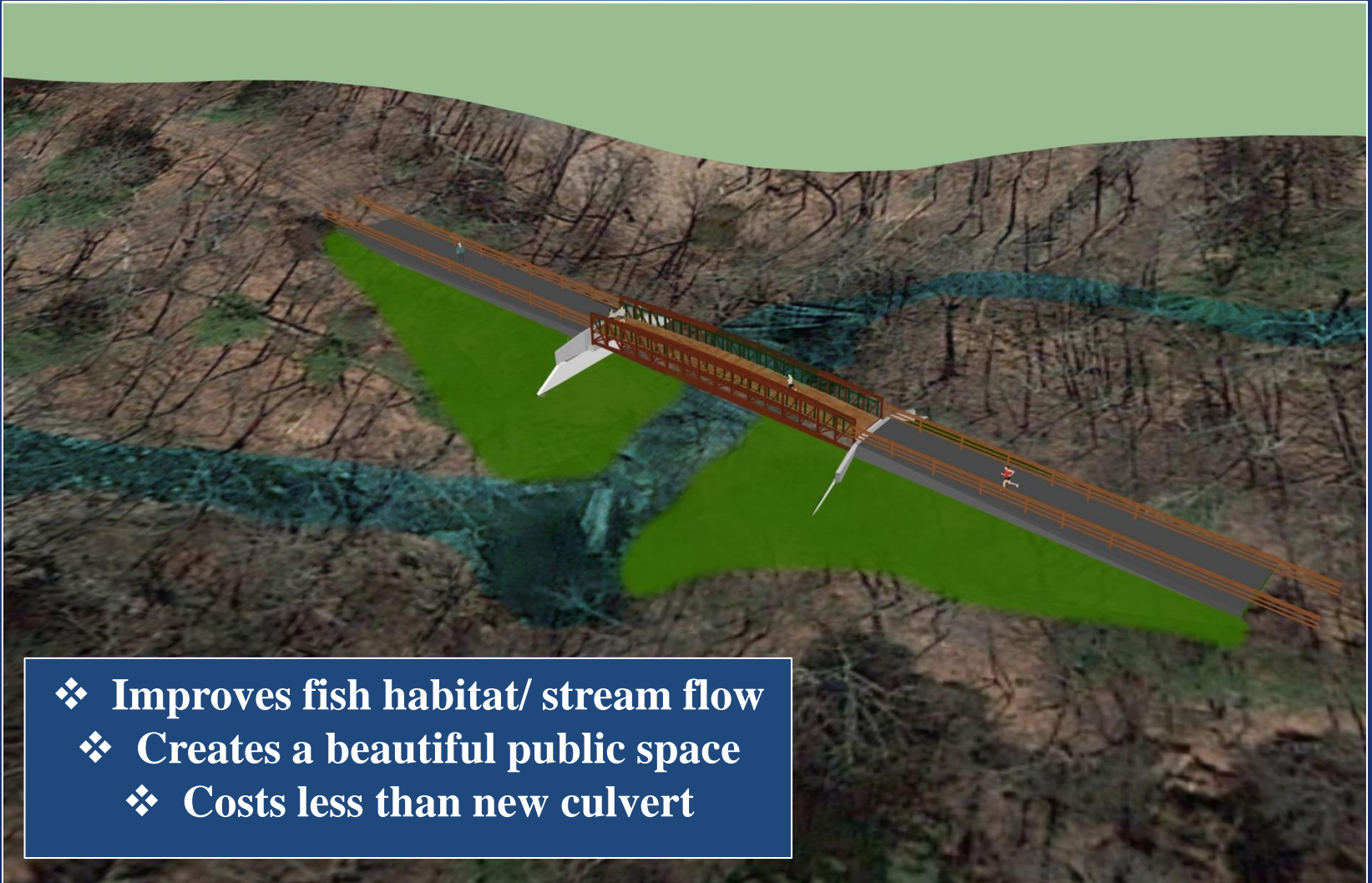
Existing Conditions





Ashokan Rail Trail Project

Proposed Daylighting with Truss Bridge



- ❖ Improves fish habitat/ stream flow
- ❖ Creates a beautiful public space
- ❖ Costs less than new culvert



Ashokan Rail Trail Project

Existing Conditions





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Existing Conditions





Ashokan Rail Trail Project

Existing Conditions





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Existing Conditions





Ashokan Rail Trail Project Views from the Corridor





Ashokan Rail Trail Project

Existing Conditions





Ashokan Rail Trail Project Boiceville Bridge Reconstruction





Ashokan Rail Trail Project

Ulster County Resolution No. 488

*Revised Rail and Trail Policy for the U&D Corridor
Adopted Unanimously – 23 to 0*

*“Nobody got everything they wanted,
but everybody got something.”
The policy “is good for the county.”*

- Legislator David Donaldson- Daily Freeman- December 15, 2015

*“While the Catskill Mountain Railroad did not get
everything it wants, we support the resolution.”*

*- David Hilliard reading statement from CMRR President Ernie Hunt
Daily Freeman- December 15, 2015*



Ulster County Tourism Video

