



Upper Delaware Council

PO Box 192, 211 Bridge Street, Narrowsburg, New York 12764-0192 • (Tel.) 845-252-3022 • (Fax) 845-252-3359

William E. Douglass, Executive Director • David B. Soete, Senior Resource Specialist
Laurie Ramie, Public Relations/Fund Raising Specialist • Carol Coney, Office Manager

May 29, 2008

Contact: Laurie Ramie, (845) 252-3022 or udcramie@hvc.rr.com

NY-PA Commission Sets Work Plan for Upper Delaware Bridges

BINGHAMTON – The New York-Pennsylvania Joint Interstate Bridge Commission approved capital construction and maintenance plans for 10 Upper Delaware River bridges at its annual meeting held May 27 at New York State Department of Transportation (NYS DOT) Region 9 headquarters in Binghamton.

Representatives from the Upper Delaware Council (UDC) and National Park Service (NPS) Upper Delaware Scenic and Recreational River attended the meeting.

With the new Barryville, NY-Shohola, PA Bridge lacking only the installation of a customized ornamental railing this September to be entirely complete, the next bridges on the Commission's radar for potential replacement are the 1904 Pond Eddy, NY-Pond Eddy, PA Bridge and the 1961 Callicoon, NY-Damascus, PA Bridge.

Construction of the \$11,620,400 Barryville-Shohola Bridge got underway in 2004 at a location slightly upstream of the prior 1941 structure, which was demolished at the end of 2006.

Completion of the six-span bridge with bluestone-reminiscent architectural treatments and pedestrian overlooks featuring interpretive signage was significantly delayed by the three major floods that struck the Upper Delaware River Valley from 2004-06.

Pond Eddy Bridge

The Pond Eddy Bridge's proposed contract-letting is targeted for 2010 at an estimated cost of \$12 million.

It would be a "complete build" contract in which companies would bid to construct the bridge using the context-sensitive design approved in advance by a Design Advisory Committee of citizens and consulting parties working in partnership with the Pennsylvania Department of Transportation (PennDOT). That committee has yet to meet.

The fate of the 504-foot, single-lane Pennsylvania Truss structure listed on the National Register of Historic Places since 1988 has been tied up in environmental compliance review for years to allow for the required study of alternatives and respond to objections raised by the "Friends of the Pond Eddy Bridge" who seek to preserve it.

While leaving the historic bridge in place is not feasible due to the backwater flooding potential caused by the introduction of new piers into the river, there have been no fruitful responses to the DOT's advertised offer to turn over ownership of the bridge to any entity capable of re-locating it.

Working together to conserve the Upper Delaware Scenic and Recreational River

*Town of Hancock • Town of Fremont • Town of Delaware • Town of Cohecton • Town of Tusten • Town of Highland • Town of Lumberland
Town of Deerpark • Lackawaxen Township • Shohola Township • Westfall Township • State of New York • Commonwealth of Pennsylvania
Delaware River Basin Commission • In partnership with the National Park Service*

Engineering consultants recommend building a new bridge since rehabilitating the existing structure would carry a higher price tag for upfront costs and annual maintenance, yield a shorter life expectancy, necessarily alter its historic appearance, take twice as long, and could not achieve modern standards.

The connected municipalities of the Town of Lumberland, NY and Shohola Township/Westfall Township, PA have supported the replacement option in the interest of safety for the motorists who use the bridge as their only access to the approximately 26 homes on the Pennsylvania side.

The bridge is currently posted at seven tons, a weight limit that does not allow most service vehicles or emergency equipment to cross it. The 7-ton load capacity was obtained only after DOT crews replaced 15 deteriorated steel stringers last year that had caused a decrease in its rating to three tons.

Crews recently removed the plastic barrels that had been placed along the edges of the deck to channel traffic to the center of the lane and installed timber curbs instead.

An inspection conducted on April 24, 2008 revealed the further need to replace rotted 2x4" timbers at various locations on the deck, clean debris from the surface, re-point the abutments and piers, and address an erosion problem on the PA approach. The Commission approved a \$44,000 allocation for the pier repairs and related work.

UDC Executive Director William E. Douglass urged PennDOT District 4 Executive George Roberts to keep the communities apprised of developments regarding the Pond Eddy Bridge. The last public meeting took place on August 23, 2007. Roberts said he would explore the idea of issuing a newsletter.

Callicoon-Damascus Bridge

A new Callicoon, NY-Damascus, PA Bridge was included on the Commission's approved schedule for a 2013 contract-letting at an estimated cost of \$11.6 million.

The DOT officials noted that a rehabilitation alternative for the 47-year-old, seven-span bridge also remains under study during this preliminary design phase.

The agency had last convened a meeting on Sept. 12, 2006 to explain the bridge's deficiencies and seek public input. The estimated cost for a bridge replacement at that time was \$7.7 million.

Port Jervis-Matamoras Bridge

The Commission budgeted \$1,804,000 for a major capital repair project at the 1939 Port Jervis, NY-Matamoras, PA Bridge. The proposed contract-letting is in 2012.

Work would include spot-painting of truss members and the entire floor beam system, utilizing a crane to check the bearings beneath the expansion dam, repairing various areas of spalling on the NY and PA abutments and back walls, leveling the edge of the pier, and fixing the concrete wall adjacent to the sidewalk on the NY approach.

Maintenance Plans

In total last year, the transportation departments expended \$127,423 on the bridge structures, approaches, and for snow and ice control. The largest individual price tag of \$48,730 was allocated to the Callicoon-Damascus Bridge to seal localized wearing areas on the deck, repair portions of the sidewalk, clean the deck, fix a broken grate and joint, and seal pavement on the New York approach.

The commission approved a budget of \$85,000 for general maintenance of the 10 bridges from April 1, 2008 to March 31, 2009. Nearly one-quarter of that fund, \$21,500, is earmarked for maintenance of the Pond Eddy Bridge.

Other bridges that fall under the NY-PA Joint Interstate Bridge Commission's jurisdiction are: the 1954 Narrowsburg, NY-Darbytown, PA Bridge; the 1901 Skinners Falls, NY-Milanville, PA Bridge; the 1952 Cochection, NY-Damascus, PA Bridge; the 1890 Kellams, NY-Stalker, PA Bridge; the 1992 Lordville, NY-Equinunk, PA Bridge; and the 1937 Hancock, NY-Buckingham, PA Bridge.

###