



**Eastern Trail Alliance (ETA)  
Eastern Trail Management District (ETMD)**

**OVER THE RIVER  
Closing the Saco – Biddeford Gap**

Total off-road miles planned: 3.1 miles within the old Eastern Railroad corridor

Existing off-road miles:	South Portland	6	
	South Portland – Scarborough	1.6	Open 2020
	Scarborough – Saco	9.5	
	Biddeford - Kennebunk:	6.2	

Total off-road miles planned: Kennebunk through South Berwick 19

Final phase from South Berwick to Kittery will need a feasibility study to determine the route.

Average costs are estimated at \$10,000 per mile for existing conditions survey, \$700,000 per mile for design, permitting & construction.

**EASTERN TRAIL OVERVIEW**

- The Eastern Trail (ET) is a 65-mile transportation/recreation trail of local, state and national significance. The trail today is 22 off-road miles from Bug Light in South Portland to Kennebunk. A scenic on-road route then follows quiet country roads to Kittery. When complete, it will be a seamless off-road greenway for commuting and recreation from Casco Bay to the Piscataqua River.
- As part of the 3,000 mile East Coast Greenway, the nation's longest connected biking and walking route, the Eastern Trail represents a commitment to public health, environmental sustainability, economic development, and civic engagement providing a safe and scenic off road trail. Together, we are connecting people to nature and communities via a safe, accessible trail.

**OVER THE RIVER: SACO TO BIDDEFORD CONNECTION**

- When complete, this project will add 3.1 miles, joining together two off-road sections between Saco and Biddeford. This extension connects 16 miles north of Saco and 6 miles south of Biddeford linking together 7 communities for a total of 25 off-road miles in the most densely populated region in the state (Greater Portland, Cumberland and York Counties). It will provide a safe and convenient facility for bicycle commuters, recreational riders, walkers, and people of all ages and abilities, for transportation, health and enjoyment.
- This extension will promote trail-associated economic development in Cumberland and York Counties by providing a safe and scenic transportation and recreation corridor forming connections between towns as a thread to promote regional cooperation in economic and tourism development plans. Based on the 2018 ETA Economic Impact Study data, over 252,000 annual visitors visited 22 miles of the off-road ET generating approximately \$3,000,000 for soft and hard goods plus equipment rentals.

- There is strong support and interest in moving forward on these 3 miles. The Cities of Saco and Biddeford, the surrounding communities and industries are working together with the Eastern Trail Alliance and Management District to plan the next steps.
- First step would be approaching the current operating rail corridor owner to explore rail to trail potential for access and easements. The Cities of Saco and Biddeford along with the Eastern Trail Management District plan on reaching out to them during the spring of 2019.
- Providing the rail corridor owner grants an easement, the next step would be seeking funding for a feasibility study to determine costs for survey, design and construction.
- Costs per mile for the 10 foot wide ADA accessible, federal and state compliant trail run on an average of \$800,000 per mile.
- There is a bridge required for this project to cross over the Saco River. If access is given to place a trail alongside the existing rail bridge, costs would be reduced by hundreds of thousands.
- Funding will be a combination of individual, corporate, foundation and municipal support for the survey and design portions. Once the project is “shovel-ready” we will apply for Federal and State allocations to cover 80% of the construction and permitting costs.
- To raise these funds, the ETA/ETMD together with the individual municipalities will embark on a fundraising campaign similar to the model first used for the successful \$4.7 million Close the Gap campaign in Scarborough.

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**5/3/19**