

Eastern Trail Management District Board of Directors Agenda
April 12, 2006 • 8:30 – 10:30 am
Kennebunk Town Hall

Most of the items listed under “Agenda Items” will have an attached sheet that provides information including background, necessary attachments, staff recommendations and proposed motions. This should allow you to be better prepared and reduce the amount of time that I need to talk thus allowing more focus on the actual issues.

I. Welcome & Introductions

II. Presidents Report – As needed

III. Approval of Minutes

- A.** Minutes for February, 2006 approval by consensus or as amended (tabled from 3/8/06)
- B.** Minutes for March 8, 2006 approval by consensus or as amended

IV. Agenda Items

A. Construction Projects

- 1. S. Portland – Scarborough Connector Project
- 2. OOB Project
- 3. Scarborough Project
- 4. Desfosses Project
- 5. Saco River Crossing Project

B. Finances

- 1. Finance Report for March 2006 accepted by consensus
- 2. ETMD Auditors Report 03/04 and 04/05
- 3. ETMD IRS Non-Profit Application Status

C. Memorial Bridge and Bridge to the Greenway Report

- 1. Revised NHDOT Bridge Project Information
- 2. Bridge to Greenway Report
- 3. ETMD Position on Bridge Rehabilitation Project
- 4. ETMD Support of NH Planning Grant

D. ETMD Website Development

V. ETA Report

VI. Consultant Report – As needed

VII. Next meeting: May 10, 2006 8:30am – 10:30am

VIII. Adjourn

2006 Meeting Schedule (Second Wednesday of the month)	
January 11	February 8
March 8	April 12
May 10	June 14
July 12	August 9
September 13	October 11
November 8	December 13

ETMD Agenda Commentary

Agenda Item: IV-A-1 Agenda Item: SP Connector Study

- Steve and WSA conducted a site walk of the proposed water district easement between Rigby Road and Pond View. The option appears to be viable, but there is a small wetland that would have to be avoided. As a result of the route taking several unanticipated “jogs” WSA is going to reexamine the water district ROW directing across from where the trail meets Pleasant Hill Rd after crossing the Nonesuch River. Initially this was thought too costly and the terrain difficult; however, with the overall cost of the potential routes it may end up being comparable while avoiding the impacts to Pond View. WSA should be providing more detailed information on this option for Steve to present to the Board.
- If the water district options prove viable WSA will need more time to develop the option. Under this scenario WSA will attend the May Board meeting to present all identified viable options and the Board will have to make a decision at that meeting. If the water district options are not viable, Steve will be asking the Board to make a route determination at this meeting.

Agenda Item: IV-A-2 Agenda Item: OOB Project

- The second and final public hearing was held on Tuesday, April 4 at the Scarborough Town Hall. There was a small, but helpful turnout for the meeting with no objections to the project noted, but several concerns about ATV usage and delaying the full project because of the high cost to relocate the gas line.
- Bob Hamblen reports that Elliott Chamberlain is the prospective buyer of the Cascades property, including the 'island parcel' that is bisected by the OOB/Saco town line. They walked it last week, and Chamberlain voiced a willingness to convey to the ETMD, or the most appropriate party, not a 50' wide strip to support the ET, but 100', or thereabouts -- whatever necessary for the ET, and more if of little or no value to him.
- Steve and Milone and MacBroom have revised the construction schedule as follows:
 - May 10th- 8:30am- Attend ET Board meeting to update Board members on design
 - May 19th- Submit 90% plans and specs to MDOT for final review
 - June 16th - Advertise for bids, have plans and specs completed
 - July 10th- Bid Opening
 - August 1 - Authorize construction start

Agenda Item: IV-A-3 Construction Projects – Scarborough Project

- Steve Workman met with officials from CPM, Duncan Galvanizing and ARC onsite to discuss the topcoat failure on the bridge and railings. The problem rests with Duncan Galvanizing; however, Duncan was not able to explain why this happened and initially was trying to blame the failure of the coat to scratches from bike chains until Steve pointed out that cyclists were not chaining their bikes out over the Dunstan River. Duncan will be providing a written remediation plan; however, initially they believe that spot repairs will be sufficient and that scraping of the old coating will be done by hand and easily contained. The railings continue to deteriorate and Steve discovered a problem with a second bridge truss on the west side. Steve has request that CPM gather all receipts, purchase orders and support documents that were generated in the ordering of the topcoat in order to determine if the right product was ordered to specification. Until CPM provides this, no money will be released.
- The difference in grade that was noted in John Andrews ETA Report is a result of disturbed material settling after the winter freeze, not a specific erosion problem. When CPM completed their work at the bridge in January Steve called them back to install more fill to eliminate this gap until they would be able to return in warmer weather to re-grade and

compact the area. Prior to this disturbance there was a reasonably level transition from bridge to ground; I do not recommend additional paving or concrete at this time.

Agenda Item: IV-A-4 Construction Projects – Desfosses Project

- Steve Workman did a site visit on Friday, April 7 to develop a signage and gate/bollard plan. Dearborn Construction is back onsite and doing work. Dearborn expects to have the trail completed in the next few weeks with plenty of time to spare before the June 3 opening.
- There is an enormous amount of junk in the woods along the trail. In order to ready the site for the opening it would be very beneficial to have a volunteer crew to clean up the area. Steve is hoping that the ETA membership will volunteer to help with this. Perhaps the crew that was going to do the Scarborough Marsh Section at the end of April could focus more energy on this section as the Marsh Trail is basically in good shape?
- John Andrews has been working with the Town of Scarborough to plan the opening ceremonies scheduled for June 3. Perhaps John will provide a verbal status report of how the event is shaping up?

Agenda Item: IV-A-5 Construction Projects – Saco River Project

- John Andrews, Dan Letellier and Steve Workman conducted a site walk of the Biddeford Eastern Trail to explore route options to avoid problem areas. Steve will take the information that pertains to the Saco River Crossing Project and incorporate it into the engineering.

Agenda Item: IV.B.2 & IV.B.3 – Finances – Auditors Report FY 2003 & 2004 & Non-Profit Status

• RHR Smith has completed the audit for 2003 and 2004. They are currently working on our IRS Non-Profit application. Once this is completed RHR Smith will complete ETMD tax filing for fiscal years 2003 and 2004. The additional work to complete the IRS application will cost about \$250.00. I have authorized the work as I feel that it is the most expedient and accurate way to complete the task. In order to make this process move through IRS most efficiently both RHR Smith and I should be authorized as a Power of Attorney for the ETMD for the specific purposes of the non-profit application process and tax years 2002-2005. This will allow the IRS to communicate directly with us. The Board had previously authorized such authority to me; however, the submission of this new form will nullify all previous authorizations.

- 2003 Report: No exceptions or irregularities found.

- 2004 Report: No exceptions or irregularities found.

[See Attachments IV.B.2.a & IV.B.2.b for the auditors reports for 2003 and 2004 – sent under separate cover]

- **Proposed Motion:** “Move that the Board authorize accept the June 30, 2004 Audited Financial Statements for the ETMD.”

- **Proposed Motion:** “Move that the Board authorize accept the June 30, 2005 Federal Compliance Audit for the ETMD.”

- **Proposed Motion:** “Move that the Board authorize Steve Workman and RHR Smith & Company to represent the ETMD to the Internal Revenue Service for the following tax matters: Forms 1023 & 8718 for the purpose of determining nonprofit status and tax form 990 for tax years 2002, 2003, 2004 and 2005 under IRS Form 2848”.

Agenda Item: IV-C.1 – Memorial Bridge & Bridge to the Greenway

- The Memorial Bridge Project continues to move forward. Thanks to the efforts of the Bridge to the Greenway initiative NHDOT Commissioner Carol Murray directed the project team to complete the design phase by November 2007 and to be ready to start construction in 2008. This is a change from the original 2010 construction start date. Commissioner

Murray referenced the strong advocacy and connections of the B2G as a primary reason for moving the project up. In order for the project to be moved to 2008 NHDOT, MEDOT and the City of Portsmouth will have to make their share of the costs available. Currently, NHDOT is indicating that it can do this and the City of Portsmouth has the ability to shift its capital improvement budget if the Council chooses to do so. MEDOT is said to be struggling with finding the money at a time when the transportation funding was already short. Both DOT commissioners and both governors are in regular communication about this issue. For project specific information refer to the attached NHDOT project information pamphlet dated April 6, 2006. With regard to bike/ped issues on the bridge we have successfully advocated for solid decking and sidewalks, an earlier construction time to reduce the time left under the current unsafe situation for cyclists, improved stripping and signage, temporary shuttle service during complete closure and maintained pedestrian (cyclists walk) access after the two month complete closure. Remaining issues that we are advocating for are: Sidewalks be widened from 5.5 feet of clear travel area to 10 feet; improved traffic patterns transitioning on and off the bridge; removal of the “bikes must walk” signs currently on the bridge and replace with “bikes yield to pedestrians”; and funding for construction in 2008.

[\[See Attachment IV.C.1 for the NHDOT Project Pamphlet\]](#)

Agenda Item: IV-C.2 – Memorial Bridge & Bridge to the Greenway – B2G Report

- On March 27 the Bridge to the Greenway held its public kickoff meeting at the Portsmouth Brewery. Approximately 75 people attended included elected officials, NH & ME DOT staff, bike/ped organizations and regional planning commissions. The event was programmed to be a networking and energizing event for the Bridge to the Greenway Strategic Plan. The efforts thus far, led by the ETMD, has reinvigorated the NH East Coast Greenway and transformed the Memorial Bridge rehabilitation into a high profile project. The B2G Strategic Plan has a section that deals with continued support of the ME East Coast Greenway on the Eastern Trail including the KEYS Gap Study. The greatest realized success thus far is that the B2G has brought officials and users from two states and multiple towns together to focus on regional bike/ped planning of shared transportation routes. The next public meeting of the B2G will be Monday, April 24 from 6:30-8pm at the Portsmouth Gas Light, 3rd floor on Market Street in downtown Portsmouth. This will be a workshop with stations focused on each of the major sections of the B2G Strategic Plan. Participants will rotate through each station. Members of the ETMD and ETA are strongly urged to attend to both move our own Eastern Trail goals forward and to share our experience with NH as it begins to move its greenway forward.

[\[See Attachment IV.C.2 for the revised Bridge to the Greenway Strategic Plan\]](#)

Agenda Item: IV-C.3 – Memorial Bridge & Bridge to the Greenway – ETMD Position on Bridge Project

- The ETMD should take an official position on the Memorial Bridge Project. Steve Workman recommends that this position should include a 2008 construction start date, support of the Partial Closure construction schedule, removal of the “bicycles must walk” signs to be replaced by “bicycles yield to pedestrians” signs in the interim before construction begins and a bridge designed with a solid decking, 10 foot wide sidewalks, enhanced stripping and signage for bike/ped usage and better defined traffic patterns when entering and exiting the bridge. The Kittery Town Council has already taken a similar position.

- **Proposed Motion:** “Move that the ETMD take the following position on the Memorial Bridge Rehabilitation Project: a 2008 construction start date, project constructed per the “Partial Closure” schedule option as outlined by NHDOT, removal of the “bicycles must walk” signs to be replaced by “bicycles yield to pedestrians” signs in the interim before construction begins and a bridge design that includes a solid decking, 10 foot wide sidewalks, enhanced stripping and signage for bike/ped usage and better defined traffic patterns when entering and exiting the bridge.”

- Based upon the Boards newly adopted position, Steve Workman will generate letters stating this position with special emphasis on funding the 2008 construction. Letters will be sent to Governor Baldacci and Commissioner Cole with courtesy copies to our ME ET state representatives and NHDOT and Governor Lynch.

Agenda Item: IV-C.4 – Memorial Bridge & Bridge to the Greenway – ETMD support of NH planning grant

- Through the Bridge to the Greenway, Steve Workman has been working with Scott Boggle of Rockingham Planning Commission to identify planning funds that can be used to further the B2G strategic plan and begin the process of

establishing the NHECG. A planning grant is now available which an appropriate fit for the project is. Steve and Scott are working on the application which is due by April 15. The maximum anticipated amount available is 10,000 to 15,000 with a 20% match required. We believe that NHDOT could and should cover much of the match; however, in an effort to receive as much funding as possible and to show a solid coalition the B2G is asking the organizations collaborating with it to contribute funding. Steve is asking the ETMD to make a commitment of \$1,000 of in-kind match. The match would be primarily in staffing for a total of 20 hours. The funds (staff hours) dedicated to this project can be used specifically where the ETMD has a clear shared interest like the Memorial Bridge and regional planning efforts that will foster the continued development of the ET. Essentially this becomes a paper contribution for work which the ETMD would be doing anyway.

- **Proposed Motion:** “Move that the Board issue a letter of support for the Bridge to the Greenway application of planning funds from NHDOT and make a commitment of 1,000 dollars of in-kind match.”

Agenda Item: IV.D – ETMD Website

- The domain name for the ETMD website is www.eastertrailmanagement.org
- Steve reviewed several design software options and in consultation with Larry Glanz selected Dreamweaver. This software is very powerful, widely used and is easier to grasp. I am purchasing the software from Techsoup.com at a highly discounted rate (\$35.00 dollars compared to app. \$800) so that I will be able to make content updates and changes in addition to the design and tech support Larry Glanz has agreed to provide.
- We are in the process of selecting a company to host the site. We anticipate that the site as conceived will require high bandwidth and memory. Steve is putting together content lists and mock pages so that Larry can use them while designing. A skeleton page should be ready as soon as the hosting company is selected.

Agenda Item: V ETA Report – Written notes provided by John Andrews by email 4-10-06

- **Feedback from this weekend's ET-Amtrak Ride:**

Elizabeth Ehrenfeld, past president of Portland Trails, expressed amazement at the extraordinary quality of ET signage. Applause to us all! All ET signs from Wells Amtrak Station to the Casco Bay Bridge were in place, even in Biddeford where reports of missing signs had been heard.

A freelance writer joined the ride for a proposed *Boston Globe* feature story about the ET-Amtrak loop ride. I'll pass on the date of publication, if it makes it to print.

Amtrak is getting better and better about handling bikes-on-board. This year, for the first time, all bikes were loaded into the wheelchair space in two adjacent passenger cars. By avoiding the cabbage car, loading and unloading is accomplished in less than 30 incremental second. And, there's no need to move the trail to align the cabbage car with the platform. The Downeaster may eventually join other American rail lines and make this standard practice with OOB & Saco allowing bikes to load and unload. The writer wants access at the 3 NH stops.

- **Two ET problems**

In Wells, the traffic light exiting the transportation center has no manually operated switch to press. We waited until a car left the lot to activate the in-road sensor. First time we noticed the problem.

In Scarborough the surface transition from stone dust to concrete bridge abutment has eroded into a two-inch sharp-edged rise. This has the potential for dumping a rider onto the bollards or less likely causing a flat tire. A few inches of asphalt or concrete might provide a smoother transition.

- **Pond View Road Rejection of ET link**

ETA mailed copied of its Crime on the ET flyer, attached, to residents of Pond View Road. This resulted in an extended e-mail dialog with one resident.

[\[See Attachment V.1 for John Andrews' "Worried About Crime on the Eastern Trail" publication\]](#)

- Guilford Rail (aka PanAm Rail?) Rails with Trails Update

We met with David Fink in Saco a few weeks ago reason together about whether adding trails to rails really does save lives. He's most agreeable and thoughtful guy, who seems to be taking this seriously. A low-resolution summary of the dialog concerning saving lives by adding trails is attached. The dialog has taken on a life of its own across the county. According to Craig Della Penna, I may be on the Federal Rail Administration's enemy's list. MaineDOT is aware of the dialog and not optimistic about eventual success.

[\[See Attachment V.2 for John Andrews' "Can Trails Make Rails Safer" publication\]](#)

- **Restructuring the ETA**

Alix Hopkins, author and founding executive director of Portland Trails, strongly urges ETA to expand into a fully-staffed organization with a full time executive director. Toward that end, ETA is seeking, with her help, a \$50K, 3-year capacity building grant.

- **Easement Question?**

Should ETMD consider during the balance of this year restoring all easement negotiations to the ETA? To quote the ETMD Membership Agreement approved by the 12 towns and ETA:

Article 5 Duties of the Eastern Trail Alliance

5.1 b "negotiate and hold the easement(s) for the Eastern Trail Management District."

In 2002 after making easement progress with the presidents of Columbia Gas and NiSource, ETMD asked ETA to allow it to complete the easement. Is it time to reconsider that action. I suggest we not be hasty, but allow several months consideration.



Construction Scheduling

The construction will involve either a partial closure option or a reduced partial closure with alternating one-way traffic. Local and regional traffic analysis will consider these options. The options are summarized in the table below:

Partial Closure	Reduced Partial Closure with Alternating One-way Traffic
24-month duration	24-month duration
5-month complete roadway closure	2-month complete roadway closure followed by 6 months alternating one-way traffic
probably 2-month closure for pedestrians and cyclists	probably 2-month closure for pedestrians and cyclists
2 to 3 day navigational closures during 5 month period	2 to 3 day vehicle and navigational closures during 6 month period
19-month normal two-way traffic	16-month normal two-way traffic
Traffic impacted March 1 to August 1	Traffic impacted March 1 to November 1
• Shorter total traffic impact (5 months)	• Longer total traffic impact (8 months)
• Longer complete closure (5 months)	• Shorter complete closure (2 months)
• only ½ summer impacted	• impact entire summer season
• more cost effective	• additional delays during one-way traffic

Selection of Preferred Alternative

The preferred alternative for the project is:

Replacement of the Lift Span while utilizing the Partial Closure Option

The decision is based on:

- Replacement is a more economical long term investment
- Replacement may result in construction time savings (less traffic disruption)
- Partial Closure is the public preference
- Partial Closure is more economical
- Partial Closure is the shortest traffic disruption

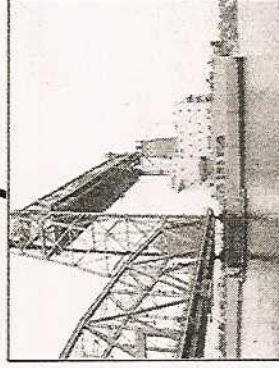
Public and Officials Outreach

Project outreach has included:

- Coordination with regulatory agencies, natural resources agencies, and State Historic Preservation Officer
- Meetings with US Coast Guard, Portsmouth Planning, Portsmouth DPW, resource agencies
- Intercept survey at bridge in August 2005
- Navigational surveys mailed November 2005
- Business surveys completed February 2006
- Public officials meetings
- Public informational meetings

Public Informational Meeting-April 6, 2006

Memorial Bridge Rehabilitation Project Portsmouth-NH, Kittery-ME



U.S. Route 1 over the Piscataqua River

Comments on the project can be forwarded to the following contacts:

Nancy J. Mayville, P.E. Project Manager New Hampshire Department of Transportation 7 Hazen Drive Concord, NH 03302 603.271.2107 nmayville@dot.state.nh.us	John F. Watters, P.E. Project Manager HNTB Corporation 75 State Street Boston, MA 02109 617.542.6900 jwatters@hntb.com
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HNTB



Purpose and Need for Project

The NHDOT, in cooperation with the FHWA, the MeDOT, and the City of Portsmouth, plans to rehabilitate the Memorial Bridge and replace the Scott Avenue bridge. The Memorial Bridge is a vertical-lift bridge that carries U.S. Route 1 over the Piscataqua River. When fully open the bridge provides 150 feet of vertical and 275 feet of horizontal clearance. The roadway is 28 feet curb to curb with two variable width sidewalks.

The bridge is actually three structures:

- Scott Avenue Concrete Spans
- Memorial Bridge Truss Spans
- Kittery Viaduct

Originally constructed in 1922, the bridge:

- Is a vital link for Seacoast Region
- Lifts approximately 4000 times per year
- Carries 11000 vehicles per day
- Provides for pedestrian and cyclist use
- #1 Priority NHDOT Red List Bridge

The project needs are:

- Structural steel repairs to remove the 20 ton load restriction
- Replacement of the mechanical and electrical components
- Improved roadway and sidewalk safety
- Relocation of the control house for reliable operator access

Project Schedule

Part A

2003-2004

- In-depth Structural / Mechanical /Electrical Inspection
- Bridge Load Rating
- Preliminary Structures Report
- Historic Structures Report
- Emergency Repairs

Part B

2005-2006

- Environmental Study
- Public Outreach
- Preferred Alternative Identification
- Historic / Archaeological Investigations
- 6 month - Mechanical Inspections

Part C

2006-2007

- Final Design
- 6 month - Mechanical Inspections
- Potential Interim Repairs

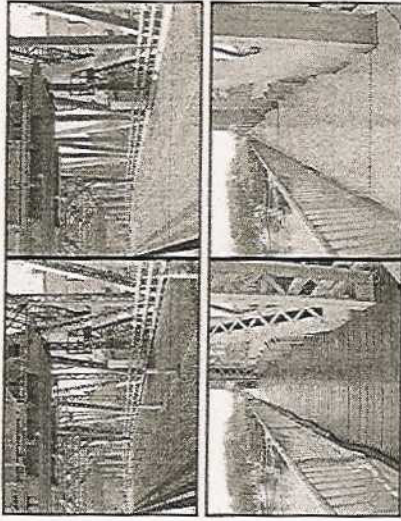
Construction

- Ready for Advertisement Nov 2007
- Actual construction depends on availability of funding

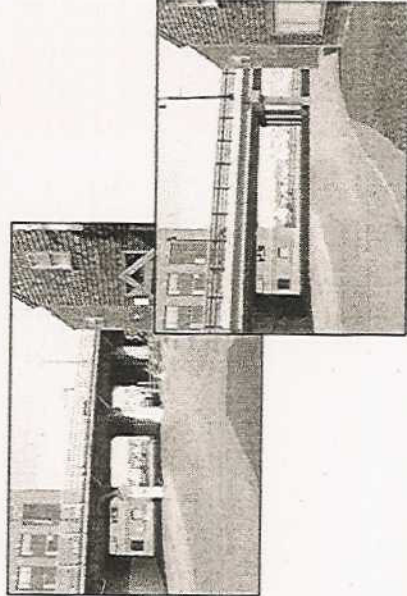
Project Description

Major project components may include:

- Improved roadway and sidewalk surfaces



- Replacement of the Scott Avenue bridge



- Relocation of the control house to the south tower

Bridge to the Greenway 2006 Strategic Plan

Mission Statement: A Memorial Bridge that provides a safe, unrestricted connection for pedestrians and cyclists to a fully developed East Coast Greenway in New Hampshire and Maine.

<p>Goals & Objectives</p> <p>Headings: The goals for the Bridge to the Greenway have been organized under 4 headings: <i>Interim Bridge Solutions; Bridge Design Phase; Bridge Construction Phase; and East Coast Greenway Development.</i></p> <p>Goal: A goal generally focuses on an end product or results. It should be tied directly to the mission statement.</p> <p>Objective: An objective is a set of steps or tasks that must be taken to achieve the goal to which it is connected.</p>	<p>Abbreviations</p> <p>Bridge – Refers to Memorial Bridge ECG – East Coast Greenway ECGA – East Coast Greenway Alliance MEECG – Maine East Coast Greenway NHECG – New Hampshire East Coast Greenway NHDOT – New Hampshire Dept. of Transportation MEDOT – Maine Dept. of Transportation ET – Eastern Trail (Kittery to South Portland, Maine) ETMD – Eastern Trail Management District ETA - Eastern Trail Alliance KEYS – Kittery, Eliot, York, South Berwick</p>
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I. Interim Bridge Solution

A. Identify and evaluate temporary options for allowing unrestricted bike access

1. Develop a list of possible interim solutions and evaluate - Completed
2. Create a fact sheet that lists options with evaluations for public distribution - Completed
3. Select most viable options

NOTE: *See Appendix I.A for a list of options already identified and evaluated*

B. Develop information packet that identifies the problem, viable interim solutions, and makes the case for construction in 2008.

1. Draft contents
2. Review and amend
3. Prepare packets

C. Lobby NH & ME DOTs to implement the temporary solution(s) identified and move construction start up to 2008

1. Meet with NHDOT Commissioner Murray
2. Meet with MEDOT Commissioner Cole
3. Individual (form) letters of support for solutions sent to NHDOT
4. Resolution from Portsmouth & Kittery Councils supporting identified solutions
5. Gain support of local elected state officials (ME & NH)
6. Gain support of Federal elected officials (ME & NH)
7. Gain Support of Ruth Griffin, NH Executive Council
8. Gain support of Governors Baldacci and Lynch
9. Media Campaign

D. Implement temporary solution(s) for 2006 Season

II. Bridge Design Phase

- A. Equal Representation of Maine & New Hampshire Departments of Transportation in design process**
 - a. ME DOT official(s) at all public meetings
 - b. Design review and regular meeting attendance by both NH and ME DOT bike/pedestrian coordinators
- B. Bridge Designed with a skid-resistant solid decking, sidewalks and appurtenances in accordance with AASHTO (American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials) standards**
 - a. Bridge to Greenway and ET members notified of and attend all public meetings
 - b. Work directly with NHDOT Project Team to review designs and provide user input
 - c. Request monthly project updates to the Bridge to Greenway Committee from the NHDOT Project Team
- C. Advanced stripping and signage for bike/pedestrian usage in accordance with MUTCD (Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices)**
 - a. Provide NHDOT Project Team with stripping and signage design ideas
 - b. Review and formally approve the stripping and signage plan proposed by NHDOT Project Team

III. Bridge Construction Phase

- A. Determine impact of bike/ pedestrian access beyond initial, required two month complete closure**
- B. Participate in the decision making process with the NHDOT Project Team to provide Temporary means for a pedestrian/bike crossing over the river.**
 - 1. Identify options and evaluate through user feedback
 - 2. Make recommendations to NHDOT Project Team
 - 3. Educate users about closure through local bike/ped/trail organizations

IV. East Coast Greenway Development

- A. New Hampshire East Coast Greenway**
 - 1. Lobby for increased federal and state funding for bike/ped projects
 - 2. Review NH East Coast Greenway Blueprint for Action and revise as needed
 - 3. Identify & apply for planning funds to develop NHECG
 - 4. Contract with a consultant to undertake planning process
 - 5. Gain support of communities through which the designated NHECG corridor runs: Portsmouth, Rye, Greenland, North Hampton, Hampton, Hampton Falls, Seabrook
 - 6. Establish infrastructure to plan, construct and maintain the NHECG
 - 7. Establish Friends of the NH East Coast Greenway
 - 8. Identify & sign interim, on-road NHECG Route
 - 9. Undertake easement/ownership negotiations for identified off-road NHECG Route
 - 10. Identify spur connections to the off-road NHECG
 - 11. Develop working partnership with Eastern Trail (ME) and NH ECG to move both projects forward
- B. Southern Maine East Coast Greenway (Eastern Trail – Kittery to South Portland)**
 - 1. Lobby for increased federal and state funding for bike/ped projects
 - 2. Advocate for the continued participation of ET municipalities in the ETMD
 - 3. Advocate for the development of a York Spur of the Eastern Trail
 - 4. Support the Kittery, Eliot, York, South Berwick Eastern Trail route study
 - 5. Increase KEYS users membership in the Eastern Trail Alliance
 - 6. Develop working partnership with Eastern Trail (ME) and NH ECG to move both projects forward

Interim Options for Bicycle Travel on Memorial Bridge

The Memorial Bridge rehabilitation project is currently scheduled to start in 2010. The NHDOT Project Team has indicated that the plans for rehabilitation could be completed by 2008. With the required allocation of construction funds, work on the bridge could conceivably begin in 2008 thus eliminating two years of bridge use under the current conditions or unsatisfactory interim solutions. **The Bridge to the Greenway is advocating that NH & ME DOT move the start of the bridge rehabilitation from 2010 to 2008.**

The following are options for interim solutions to allow bicyclists to safely ride across the Memorial Bridge prior to the completion of the main bridge rehabilitation project, currently scheduled for 2010. Options 1-3 were discussed by a working group in the Summer of 2004 which included representatives from NHDOT, MEDOT, the City of Portsmouth, the Town of Kittery, three regional planning commissions, and the Eastern Trail Management District. Options 4 and 5 have been proposed more recently.

Option 1 - Shared use of walkways by bicycles and pedestrians with new signage, shorter dismount zone, and stepped up enforcement

In 2004 a proposal was put forward to allow shared use of the bridge walkways by bicyclists and pedestrians while addressing safety issues with a three point approach combining 'yield to pedestrians' signs with stepped up enforcement and a dismount zone near the utility cabins. In this scenario responsible cyclists who must now walk would be allowed to ride responsibly, while irresponsible cyclists who are currently riding anyway in spite of the posted prohibition would be subject to increased enforcement. Concerns here involve the cost of enforcement (to minimize cost perhaps there could be randomly scheduled police presence such as with neighborhood speeding crackdowns); potential user conflicts; and potential difficulties from a legal designation standpoint (whether the bridge is formally designated a sidewalk, in which case it may be subject to Portsmouth's municipal ordinance prohibiting the riding of bicycles on sidewalks).

As of the Summer of 2004 the NHDOT did not support this option due to the narrow width of the walkway, and railing heights that are below standards recommended by the American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (AASHTO). In light of this they believed shared use of the walkway by pedestrians and cyclists would create unsafe conditions for pedestrians, cyclists, and bridge workers. The concern was also cited by NHDOT that cyclists riding on the walkways ran counter to Portsmouth's municipal ordinance preventing cyclists from riding on sidewalks.

Option 2 - Shared use of downstream walkway by bicycles and pedestrians with new signage and stepped up enforcement

This option would be similar to Option 1, but with bicycle riding allowed only on the downstream side where there are no bridge operator cabins narrowing the walkway width. Two-way bicycle travel would be allowed with the yield to pedestrians provision. This option would eliminate some of the potential conflict that would arise with passing on the narrow stretches of the upstream walkway, though it would necessitate Portsmouth-bound cyclists to cross over on each end of the bridge.

While this option would eliminate conflicts with bridge operators and limit shared use by bicyclists to the wider downstream walkway, the railings on the downstream side are not tall enough to meet AASHTO Standards. NHDOT maintains additional concerns over bi-directional bicycle traffic on the relatively narrow walkway. Again, the concern cited by NHDOT that cyclists riding on the walkways ran counter to Portsmouth's municipal ordinance preventing cyclists from riding on sidewalks applies to this option.

Option 3 - Installation of non-slip perforated metal plate on shoulders of grid deck

The table below includes cost and weight figures to install non-skid metal plate shoulders on the roadway grid deck. This material, which has been used in similar applications around the country, is known as SlipNOT. This option would have involved a material and installation cost not incurred by the two options above, but would remove cyclists

altogether from the walkways, which all members of the working group that looked at interim solution options in 2004 view as a preferred approach. However, as noted below, the weight of the plate material appears to present an insurmountable technical problem.

Estimated costs and weight for steel plate bike shoulders on Memorial Bridge

Using SlipNOT non-slip perforated steel plate. Does not include labor

300' lift span with 3' shoulders

Assumes 3/16" galvanized plate, perforated to remove 60% of material (standard)

	Weight	Cost
Rate for plate @ \$18.50/ft ² and 4.6 lb/ft ²	8,280	\$33,300
Rate for plate w/fabrications (45° bevels, 12" countersinking) @ \$33/ft ²	8,280	\$59,400

The NHDOT Project Team, including HNTB Engineers, have reviewed this option and concluded that even the additional weight from this partial decking would put an unacceptable stress on the bridge trunnions. An additional impact could come from wind shear that the solid sheeting would produce. While this approach would have eliminated the safety concerns around shared use of the walkways, it has been determined to be technically infeasible given the capabilities of the bridge's aging lift assembly.

Option 4 – Higher Railings

This option would be used if bicycles were to be allowed to ride on one or both sides of the bridge. The current height of the railings does not meet AASHTO safety standards for bicycle use; therefore, a new railing would need to be installed. Chain link fencing may be the lightest, most cost effective way to accomplish this option.

The added weight of a new rail or fencing could be an issue. The NHDOT Project Team has agreed to assess both the cost of this interim retrofit and the ability of the lift mechanism to handle the weight of an extension to the railings. Concerns have been raised about the aesthetic impact that the installation of chain link would have.

Option 5 – Simple Removal of “Bicyclists Must Walk” Signs

Remove the “Bicycles Must Walk” signs from the bridge. This would be a return to the pre-2004 status quo, tacitly allowing cyclists to ride on the walkway. It would not address the question around whether the walkway is legally a sidewalk. In the absence of signage giving specific instructions as to how a bicycle should be ridden on the walkway, though, there would be no explicit endorsement of riding by Kittery, Portsmouth, NHDOT or MEDOT, which could limit liability concerns. As to how significant the safety issue would be for shared use of the walkway without higher railings or ‘bikes yield to pedestrians’ signs, inquiries with the Kittery and Portsmouth police departments have yielded no records of serious injuries to pedestrians, cyclists, or bridge operators sustained from collisions on the walkway involving cyclists. Records do show ambulance calls for serious accidents in which cyclists have gone down on the grid deck. Records should be available for any collision that involved an ambulance call, though if an accident did not result in an ambulance call police records may not exist.

As of Summer 2004 this option was not acceptable to NHDOT based on concerns for pedestrian and bridge operator safety. As noted above, this would not involve any substantive changes to the safety situation on the bridge, simply plausible deniability of liability. This option could also escalate altercations between cyclists and pedestrians.

Option 6 - No Action

Concerns here relate to: 1) safety problems created by those cyclists who currently disregard the posted prohibition on riding; 2) 'vigilante' situations where aggressive pedestrians or bridge personnel actively seek to block the walkway to force a cyclist to dismount; 3) lack of safe accommodation for a class of vehicles (bicycles) on a public roadway that is not otherwise a limited access facility, coupled with the absence of other options for bicycle passage across the river.

Not suggested or endorsed by the Bridge to Greenway or Eastern Trail Management District.



Worried about Crime on the Eastern Trail?

John Andrews,
President, Eastern Trail Alliance

“There is no crime problem caused by Saco’s Trails. - None whatsoever.” – Chief Paul, Saco Police Department. At first, Chief Paul seemed surprised at our question because there simply had been no reported crime. As a founder of Saco Bay Trails, I have also not heard of any crime on our trails. But we do hear comments about the reduction in litter after the trails are opened. We frequently hear reports of volunteers quietly removing trash left by others.

We also asked South Portland’s Chief of Police Edward Googins what his department had experienced when the South Portland Greenbelt was opened. That trail, which we hope will form the eastern end of the Eastern Trail, has been expanding since it was first opened ten years ago. The Chief told us, “South Portland does not have a crime problem related to its Greenbelt Trail. The heavier the use, the safer they are, because, bad guys are concerned about being detected.” It is safe to conclude that trails are generally free of crime, or are these just two unusual reports?

Often when residents first learn of proposals to develop a neighborhood trail, there are legitimate questions about the possible influx of undesirable visitors. Many trail developers have heard these questions, which have resulted in several nationwide studies. In 1998 Rails-to-Trails Conservancy in cooperation with the National Park Service published the results of their survey of the impact of 372 trails. Two statements from that 33 page report indicate the good experiences in Saco and South Portland are typical.

“Compared to the abandoned and forgotten corridors they recycle and replace, trails are a positive community development and a crime-prevention strategy of proven value. By generating lawful activities such as walking, running, bicycling and in-line skating, rail-trails are also bringing communities together and reintroducing neighbors to each other.

Trails are actually one of the safest places to be and the incidence of crime on trails is minor in comparison to other locations.”

The report also quotes the Chief of Police in South Burlington, Vermont who wrote to a local planning agency, “Crime and the fear of crime do not flourish in an environment of high energy and healthy interaction among law abiding community members.” He went on to say, “The trail may be one of the safest places in the city.”

The Eastern Trail Alliance wishes you many safe, and “Happy Trails.”

WWW.EasternTrail.Org

Can Trails Make Rails Safer?

Annually 500 trespassers are killed in rail corridors.

With 142,000 miles of freight corridor, that's an annual fatality rate of

One fatality for every 300 miles of rail corridor

Not even one fatality has been recorded during the 40-year history of rails-with-trails for a pessimistically estimated annual fatality rate of:

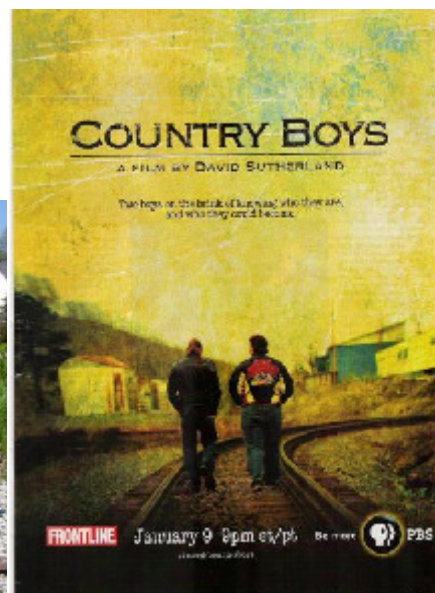
One fatality for every 8000 miles

Can we explain this 26-to-1 difference in fatality rates?

Americans, rightly or wrongly, consider rail corridors to be trails. If Rails are trails, they are terribly dangerous ones. They are also poor trails, awkward to walk.

Simply by providing a better, nearby trail, people apparently walk on the real trails thus reducing rail trespass fatality rates.

John Andrews
President, Eastern Trail Alliance
207-282-1979
JAndrews@GWI.Net
21 March 2006



Do Americans, albeit wrongly, consider all rails to be trails?