

SUSQUEHANNA RIVER RAIL BRIDGE PROJECT



Recent Progress



The Amtrak Susquehanna River Rail Bridge Project team recently met with project stakeholders, including the Town of Perryville, the City of Havre de Grace, Harford County Public Schools, and the Maryland Department of Transportation (MDOT) to discuss recent project updates. Amtrak will continue to coordinate with stakeholders throughout the duration of the project to ensure local input is taken into consideration. [Click here](#) to view a copy of a recent public presentation.

The Project team recently attended Havre de Grace's City Council meeting to provide a project update and answer questions from the Council Members.

What's Happening Here?

Amtrak recently selected [Fay Construction](#) as the contractor for the demolition of the remnant piers, adjacent to the existing Susquehanna River Rail Bridge. The contractor will be implementing various measures to minimize environmental impacts during this activity. Fay Construction is currently installing bird deterrent netting to prevent birds from nesting on the remnant piers. This is being timed in accordance with seasonal restrictions on construction and demolition activities for nesting birds such as Osprey. The contractor will monitor the piers for nesting activity throughout Spring 2024.



Installation of bird deterrent netting on the 1866 remnant piers.

Frequently Asked Questions

Q Why can't the 1866 remnant piers be reused?

A As part of the project's early planning and engineering phase, FRA, Maryland Department of Transportation (MDOT), and Amtrak evaluated the potential to retain or reuse the remnant piers from the original 1866 Susquehanna River Bridge. The planning phase included a comprehensive community and stakeholder engagement program inviting the public to submit questions and ideas about the project. One suggestion from the public was to repurpose the remnant piers to support a new bicycle and pedestrian bridge across the river. This suggestion was determined to be infeasible by the Maryland State Highway Administration (MD SHA). Their studies concluded the aged piers were in poor condition and it would be cost-prohibitive to raise and strengthen the piers to meet current navigational requirements and design criteria. The removal of the remnant piers is necessary to begin the Susquehanna River Rail Bridge Project construction phase. The pier removal will also improve safety and navigation for waterway users. Amtrak also received requests from the maritime community and other stakeholders to remove the remnant piers in the interest of improving navigation and aesthetics. More information can be found at www.amtrak.com/susquehanna-river-rail-bridge-project under "Public Outreach."

For More Information:



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Digging into History

The environmental studies related to the Susquehanna River Rail Bridge Project are extensive and vast. One key area under consideration is the project's potential impacts to significant cultural resources. Studies of the area's history and pre-contact past have been ongoing since 2014. Current work includes the completion of an archaeological reconnaissance survey to locate areas in the impact zone that may contain archaeological sites that could be disturbed during construction. Portions of the project area have the potential to contain historic-period sites, such as the land around Rodgers Tavern in Perryville, which has been in use for centuries. The banks of the Susquehanna River were frequently used by Native American tribes for fishing and travel. The riverbed itself also has the potential for underwater archaeological sites and is undergoing an archaeological scan for submerged resources. Future archaeological studies will include the identification of sites through shovel-test pits and backhoe trenching, underwater exploration, and archaeological site testing to understand significance, with accompanying archival research to learn more about the past use of this corridor. Together, these studies will help the team further the understanding and documentation of the archaeological potential of the project area. Should significant sites be recorded, they will be thoroughly studied and included in project planning, design, and construction in accordance with federal and state requirements.



The ongoing archaeological reconnaissance survey includes a review of the entire corridor to locate areas that may contain archaeological sites. It also includes segments where soils have been disturbed resulting in a lower potential for intact sites, such as this area with extensive railroad construction activity and steep slopes.



The existing transmission tower is located across from Rodgers Tavern in the Town of Perryville, Maryland. Property owners affected by the tower relocation project will be notified by BGE prior to the start of construction.

Up Next ...

Baltimore Gas and Electric (BGE) recently selected Stella May Contracting to perform civil engineering and foundation installation for the BGE Tower Relocation Project located in the Town of Perryville. Relocation of the transmission tower is necessary for the Amtrak Susquehanna River Rail Bridge Project and will be performed by BGE. The existing tower, which is used exclusively by Amtrak, will be removed and replaced with two monopole transmission towers. These towers will provide the clearance necessary for future retaining walls, reduce future maintenance costs, accommodate planned improvements to catenary and substation systems, and allow for more flexibility to support railroad operations especially during construction. Associated utility work will begin as early as April 2024. BGE's work is anticipated to be completed by the end of the year.

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