



**Environmental
Protection**

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Acting Commissioner

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September 19, 2016

Honorable Sylvia Rozzelle
Supervisor, Town of Olive
P.O. Box 180
West Shokan, New York 12494

Dear Supervisor Rozzelle:

Thank you for your letter regarding Route 28A in the Town of Olive, which the New York State City Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) has the obligation to operate and maintain. On behalf of Acting Commissioner Sapienza, I would like to give you an update on work completed and planned for Route 28A.

As you know, following the terrorist attacks on 9/11/01, DEP closed both the Kensico and Olivebridge dams to traffic. Following requests from the Town of Olive and others to improve safety and reduce travel times, DEP realigned 2.5 miles of Route 28A, at the cost of \$15.4M. The project eliminated an "S" curve, cut trees to minimize shading, widened shoulders, improved drainage, installed new guiderails, and adjusted two intersections.

Between 2009 and 2011 DEP reconstructed the Bushkill, Reservoir Road, Stone Church, Spillway, and the Release Channel bridges on Route 28A and adjacent NYC routes at a cost of \$29M. In 2011 DEP made emergency repairs to the Bushkill Bridge following Hurricane Irene.

In 2015 DEP reconstructed two culverts under Route 28A. One, a repair of a large concrete arched culvert located 0.4 miles west of Ulster County Route 3, and the second, a repair of a smaller culvert located 0.4 miles west of Ulster County Route 42. Also within the past six years DEP completed chip and seal treatment for the majority of Route 28A.

As you noted, future work includes the replacement of the Esopus Creek Bridge and the nearby Railroad Bridge starting in 2020 at an estimated cost of \$82M. This project will replace both structures with new spans, improve site distances, and replace the non-conforming intersection of Route 28 and Route 28A with a modern "T" intersection. It will also re-align the "S" curve near Oak Mountain Farm that you reference. In coordination with Ulster County,

this project includes construction of a trailhead with parking to access the planned rail trail and a dedicated bike/pedestrian lane on the bridges.

DEP is also in the midst of making interim repairs to the arches of the Dividing Weir Bridge. These current repairs, at a cost of \$1.8M, are expected to be completed this fall with the bridge re-opening in November with a posted weight limit of 16 tons.

Within the next 12 months, DEP expects to issue a request for proposals for a design contract to rehabilitate or replace the Dividing Weir Bridge. Due to the hydraulic connection between the weir, bridge, and reservoir spillway, design for rehabilitation of all three structures will be done under one contract. Given the design, permitting, and procurement processes, actual construction may be as far as ten years in the future.

In 2008, DEP estimated the cost to fully reconstruct Route 28A to exceed \$125M. That project scope included replacement or extension of up to 80 box culverts, milling and repaving the roadway, creating shoulders, tree removal, drainage improvements, and the replacement of guiderails. To advance this work, DEP intends to issue a request for proposals in 2017 for planning services to study the current conditions and create a program that prioritizes improvements in phases.

Besides these past and planned projects DEP will continue to conduct yearly inspections and repairs of Route 28A and City owned bridges. These inspections and repairs include pothole filling, shoulder grass cutting, roadside ditch cleaning, guiderail inspection, road re-striping, crack filling, winter sand removal, chip/seal coating, and culvert cleaning as needed.

I am hopeful this response addresses your concerns and the Town Board's interests regarding DEP's intentions for present and future maintenance of Route 28A. If the Town identifies urgent or emergency work that is required, please contact the Ashokan Regional Manager Carl Davis at (845) 657-7624.

Sincerely,



Paul V. Rush, P.E.
Deputy Commissioner

- c: Vincent Sapienza, P.E., Acting Commissioner, DEP
- David Warne, Assistant Commissioner, BWS, DEP
- Carl Davis, Ashokan Regional Manager, BWS, DEP
- Hon. James L. Seward, NYS Senator
- Hon. Kevin Cahill, NYS Assemblymember