Skinners Falls Bridge
Planning and Environmental Linkages (PEL) Study
Public Meeting
March 30, 2021
Agenda

01  Introduction

02  Project History

03  Planning and Environmental Linkage (PEL) Study Components

04  Discussion of Local Needs

05  Next Steps
Introduction
Skinners Falls PEL Study Team

- **PennDOT**: Co-owner, primary responsibility for maintenance, manages the planning process
- **NYSDOT**: Co-owner and partner in Joint Interstate Bridge Commission
- **FHWA**: Federal lead agency, primary funding source, provides regulatory oversight
- **AECOM**: Consultant completing technical work on behalf of PennDOT
- **Project Advisory Committee**: County and municipal government representatives and other key project area stakeholders, advising on local needs
Project History
Bridge History

Owned by the NY-PA Joint Interstate Bridge Commission

- Established 1919 to eliminate bridge tolls
- Joint ownership of 10 bridges over the Delaware River
- PennDOT maintains primary maintenance responsibility for the Skinners Falls Bridge

SR 1002 over the Delaware River between Wayne County, PA and Sullivan County, NY

Originally constructed in 1902

Baltimore through truss

Two span structure with overall length of 466-ft
Cultural Significance

- Contributing Element to the Milanville, PA Historic District
- National Register of Historic Places
- Located within the Upper Delaware Scenic and Recreational River Area managed by the National Park Service
Operational History

From inception weight posted for 9 tons

- **1971**: Rehabilitation project
- **1986**: Weight posting reduced to 7 tons
- **2007**: Closed for emergency repair
- **2010**: Closed for emergency repair
- **2012**: Weight posting reduced to 4 tons
- **2013**: Re-opened to traffic
- **2015**: Closed for emergency repair
- **2016**: Re-opened to traffic
- **2019**: Bridge closed

**March 30, 2021**
Operational History
Alternate Routes

Skinners Falls Bridge: Planning and Environmental Linkages (PEL) Study
# Bridge Usage

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Volume</th>
<th>Volume of Vehicles &gt; 10 Ton</th>
<th>Volume of Heaviest Truck Counted</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>July 27, 2017</td>
<td>379</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>13 (2-axle w/ 6 tires) 8+ tons</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>July 18, 2012</td>
<td>384</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>1 (4-axle) 30+ tons</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>September 6, 2007</td>
<td>412</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>3 (5-axle semi) 40+ tons</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>September 10, 2002</td>
<td>368</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>3 (5-axle semi) 40+ tons</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>July 15, 1998</td>
<td>913</td>
<td>83</td>
<td>7 (5-axle semi) 40+ tons</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- **Source:** PennDOT

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**Skinners Falls Bridge: Planning and Environmental Linkages (PEL) Study**

- Weight posting reduced from 9 tons to 7 tons
- Weight posting reduced from 7 tons to 4 tons
- "Headache bars" installed
Joint Position Statement

• Submitted to PennDOT by local governments and other project stakeholders

• Key Issues
  • Emergency response
  • Economic importance
  • Historic value
  • Roadway connectivity
  • Long-term functionality

• PEL study seeks to understand and identify specific transportation needs
PEL Scope
The Skinners Falls Planning & Environmental Linkages Study

• Planning and Environmental Linkages is a flexible process that can be used to aid decision-making for transportation projects
• The Skinners Falls PEL Study goal is to build agreement for a path forward
  • Work with key stakeholders and the public
  • Identify transportation needs
  • Evaluate potential options for future project analysis
• Study findings become the foundation for the environmental review process
Skinners Falls PEL Components

- Stakeholder and Public Involvement (Throughout Project)
- Review existing data – with limited collection of new data
- Purpose and Need Document

- February
- March
- April
- May
- June

Public review of Purpose and Need
Public & Stakeholder Coordination
Stakeholder and Public Outreach

Purpose

Understand local needs

Identify opportunities, concerns, and areas of conflict

Use feedback to inform recommendations

Components

Project Advisory Committee

Key stakeholder meetings

Public meeting/online survey

Public comment on draft products

Skinners Falls Bridge: Planning and Environmental Linkages (PEL) Study
Project Advisory Committee

Made up of major stakeholders to represent the needs and priorities of the community

- Counties
- Municipalities
- NYSDOT
- PennDOT
- National Park Service
- FHWA
- Upper Delaware Council

Committee Responsibilities

- Provide information on local and regional needs, issues, and activities related to Skinners Falls Bridge
- Advise Study Team on how transportation needs could be met within realistically available resources
- Communicate with constituents about the project
- Encourage participation in public meeting and survey
Stakeholder Meetings

Focused discussions to identify key issues to be considered

PennDOT Agency Coordination Meeting
Confirm regulatory issues to be considered

Emergency service providers
Understand emergency response needs
- How was bridge used prior to closure
- Closure impacts to response times
- Types of vehicles that need to access bridge

National Park Service
Understand cultural and economic impacts of current bridge closure
Public Meeting & Survey

Seeking feedback of local users and visitors

Online survey through April 23rd

Video conference live meeting with presentation

Meeting materials posted on PennDOT District 4-0 website
Role of Purpose and Need
Purpose and Need Document

Identify past and projected future traffic demands

Identify circulation needs to support local economy

Identify safety needs, including those of emergency service providers

Use public feedback to support transportation needs of the area and associated goals for the project
Establishes the transportation need for the investment

Drives the process for alternatives consideration

Only those alternatives that meet the established Purpose and Need can move forward into design
Local Needs
Local Needs

• Held first Project Advisory Committee meeting in February 2021 to discuss local needs
• Project Advisory Committee felt that a transportation connection is needed that can serve all vehicle types
• Seeking additional information at tonight’s meeting and through an online survey

Skinners Falls Bridge: Planning and Environmental Linkages (PEL) Study
Project Advisory Committee Feedback

Roadway Connections

- Past usage was low due to width and condition – not lack of demand
- Usage by overweight vehicles demonstrates need for unrestricted weights
- Emergency response times have increased since closure
- Need to reinstate bridge connection with:
  - Two travel lanes
  - Full weight access
Project Advisory Committee Feedback

Economic Needs

- Economic generators on both sides of river
- Deliveries, local commerce, and circulation require full weight access
- RV and trailer access needed to support tourism base
- Improved bridge could enhance tourism economy and support increased traffic needs due to increased migration and visitation due to COVID
Project Advisory Committee Feedback

Historic Resources

- Oldest bridge in the Upper Delaware Region
- Located in Upper Delaware Scenic & Recreational River Corridor
- Goal to balance historic significance with safety concerns
Next Steps
Skinners Falls Bridge: Planning and Environmental Linkages (PEL) Study

Status and Next Steps

Survey open until April 23, 2021
Draft Purpose and Need
Final Project Advisory Committee meeting anticipated in May
Purpose and Need available for public review in June
Finalize study document, considering comments received
Begin design and environmental review process

March 30, 2021
For More Information

**Project Website**
https://www.penndot.gov/RegionalOffices/district-4/PublicMeetings/Wayne_County/Pages/default.aspx

**Project Hotline**
(610) 234-5148 or Skinnersfallsbridge@aecom.com