



ADIRONDACK RAIL TRAIL

Phase One: Lake Placid to Tupper Lake, 34 miles.



Adirondack Recreational Trail Advocates

An all-volunteer 501c3 not-for-profit, seeking the best way to grow our economy using this major unused resource

The need ...

The Adirondack Park features thousands of miles of hiking and paddling trails.

But nowhere in this largest American park outside Alaska is there a safe, scenic, level, compactly-surfaced, long-distance trail that ties together various communities, traverses wild and beautiful terrain, and can be enjoyed by people of all ages and physical abilities.



The Adirondack Rail Trail

The 90-mile rail corridor between Lake Placid and Old Forge could be one of the outstanding tourist attractions in the Adirondack Park and one of the greatest recreational trails in the United States.



Background

- 81 of the 90 miles of train corridor between Old Forge and Lake Placid have been idle and unused for 40 years.
- The Town of North Elba proposes to build a parallel trail beside the tracks on the 9-mile segment linking Lake Placid and Saranac Lake.
- Once built, this trail can link to the Adirondack Rail Trail from Saranac Lake to Old Forge
- Today we examine the 34-mile segment connecting Lake Placid, Saranac Lake and Tupper Lake.
 - Assuming the North Elba trail is built
 - And examining the alternatives



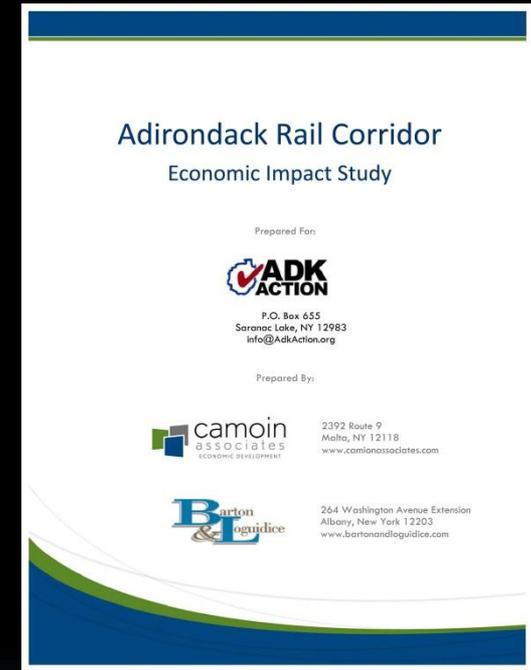
Health, safety, quality of life



- Trail users will include bikers, walkers, runners, people in wheelchairs, athletes in training, families with young children, nature lovers of all kinds, and snowmobilers in season.
- The Adirondack Rail Trail will enrich the quality of life for residents and visitors alike.
- The recreational trail will also spur our regional economies and help revitalize communities, as rail trails are doing throughout the country.

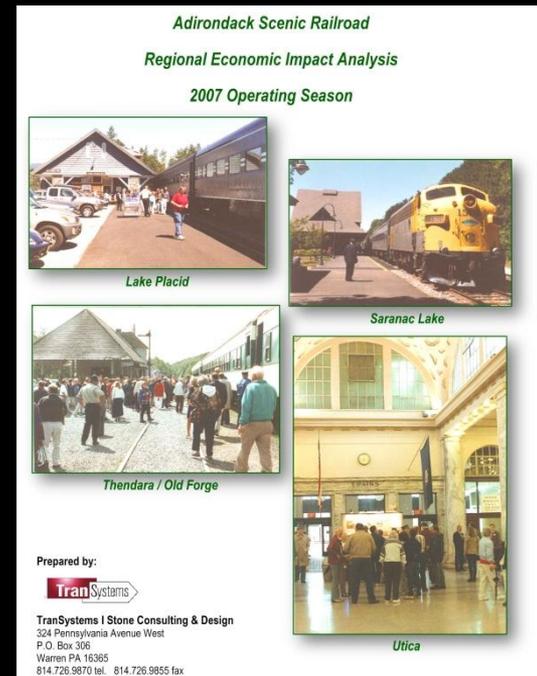
The 2011 Camoin Study said:

- A recreational trail, even if just to Tupper Lake, will produce 61% more in new local spending (\$1.2mm) than would extension of train service over the same path
- A trail will create 54% more permanent jobs (20) and 75% more temporary jobs (25) than would restoration of the rail service
- Extending the 9-mile “scenic railroad” to 34 miles, an increase of 278% in length, will produce a 75% increase in ridership. The passengers per mile will drop 37% from 1555 per year to 980

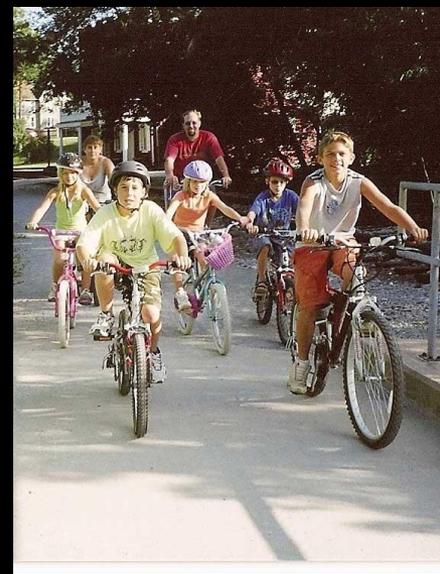


– And more studies

- The 2012 Stone Consulting study said that restoring train service the entire 140 miles from Utica to Lake Placid would attract 7,000 new visitors to the region.
- Local spending by 7,000 additional visitors would be \$648,855 per year
- Stone put the cost of restoring rail service from Utica to Lake Placid at \$16.5 million dollars and \$2 million per year in operating expense
- That's an initial cost to taxpayers of \$2,137 for attracting each new visitor, or \$512 per visitor over ten years.



So why yet another study?



- Because some essential information is still needed, and because Camoin's methodology is suspect.
- Only new biking visitors were included in Camoin's economic-impact projections.
- Camoin assumed that visitor traffic would be proportional to trail length, e.g., a 100-mile trail should attract 4x as many visitors as a 25-mile trail. But that assumption is wrong. For example:
 - The Heritage Rail Trail in Maryland is only 21 miles long yet attracts 394,000 visitors yearly.
 - The Virginia Creeper Trail is 2 1/2 times as long but attracts only 35% as many visitors.
- And Camoin has been historically low on estimating traffic (e.g., three times as many visitors came to the Walkway over the Hudson as Camoin predicted).

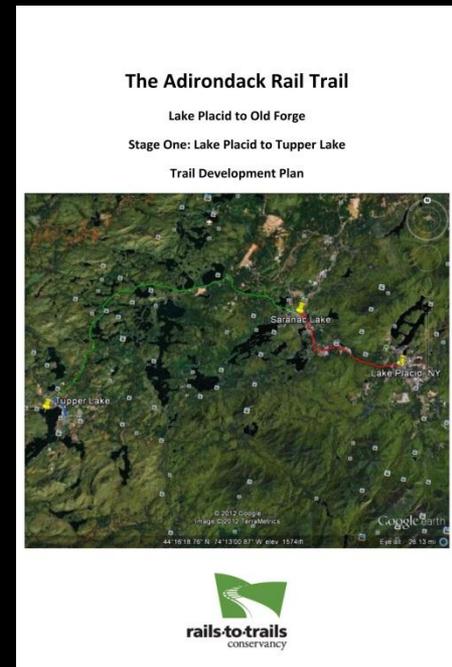
Camoin's cost estimates are also questionable



- Camoin used the same bridge and culvert repair costs for train restoration as for the recreation trail
- Camoin used best-practice construction standards and costs not found in almost any other trail
- But Camoin did point out that “Lower costs may be achieved in any of the scenarios through volunteerism, donations of time and materials, and alternative designs (for trail conversion)”.
- Stone's estimated cost to restore rail service was 2/3 of Camoin's, but both were way below NYSDOT's own estimate (\$45 million)

So ARTA commissioned one more study

- Rails-to-Trails Conservancy (RTC) is the country's expert on rail/trail conversions:
 - More than 150,000 members
 - RTC's expert staff has helped hundreds of community-based organizations and federal, state and local government agencies build trails
 - RTC's National Trails Database includes Information on more 721 rail-trail projects
 - RTC has facilitated more than 20,000 miles of rail-trail throughout the country
- Carl Knoch is RTC's Northeast Regional Director for trail development. He managed the study that he will now present



Carl Knoch

Manager of Trail Development



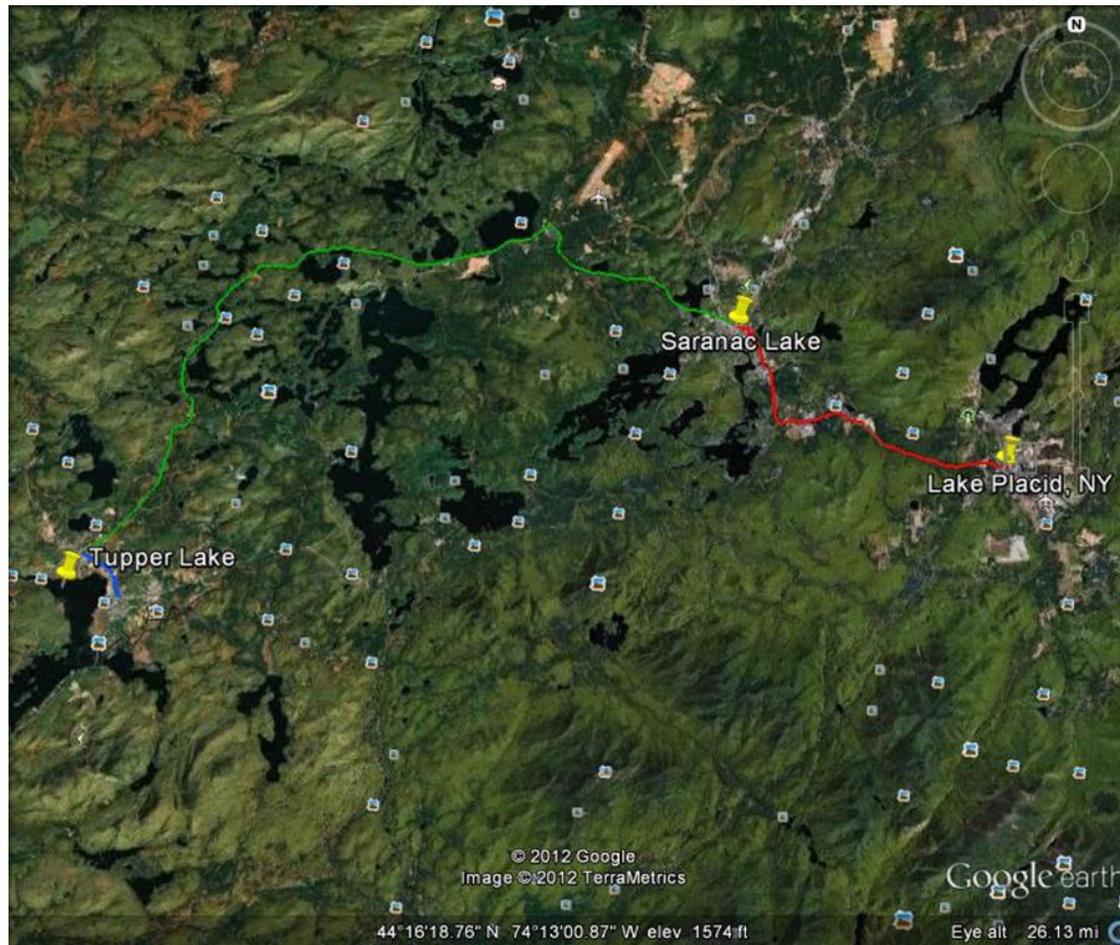
Northeast Regional Office
2133 Market Street, Suite 222
Camp Hill, PA 17011

National Headquarters
2121 Ward Court, NW, 5th Floor
Washington, DC 20037

The Adirondack Rail Trail

Lake Placid to Old Forge

First phase: Lake Placid to Tupper Lake



Outdoor Recreation Economy

- 6.1 million American jobs
- \$646 billion in outdoor recreation spending
- \$39.9 billion in federal tax revenue
- \$39.7 billion in state/local tax revenue
- Americans spend more on bicycle gear and trips (\$81 billion) than they do on airplane tickets and fees (\$51 billion)
- Outdoor recreation economy grew approximately 5% annually between 2005 and 2011
- 130,000 jobs in New York
- Nearly \$800,000 in NY state tax revenue
- \$11.3 billion in annual retail sales and services in New York
- More than 50% of New Yorkers participate in cycling or trail outdoor recreation



Purpose and Needs Statement

- Evaluate the 34-mile rail corridor between Lake Placid and Tupper Lake
- Provide alternatives for the planned adjacent trail between Lake Placid and Saranac Lake
- Investigate the opportunities and constraints affecting the proposed trail alignment and make recommendation for proceeding with the next phase of implementation
- Rail trail conversion are proven, practical way to connect and enhance communities and improving local economies



Project Goals



- Conduct site assessment
- Provide accepted standards for trail development
- Evaluate site constraints
- Research case studies of other trails
- Provide a construct cost analysis
- Provide estimates of trail related spending
- Provide funding options

Executive Summary



- Upgrading of rail corridor never took place
- 81 miles from Saranac Lake to Old Forge is only used twice a year
- Unit Management Plan has never been reviewed or revised
- Recreational trail built on rail beds are major tourists attractions
- Cost of removing rail is far less than building a trail adjacent to the existing rails
- Dual use corridor between Saranac Lake and Tupper Lake is not logistically or financially feasible
- The economic impact of a trail is much greater than would be generated by extending the rail service to Tupper Lake or Old Forge

Summary of findings

	Low	Midpoint	High
Trail Visitors - local	23,250	109,740	278,000
Trail Visitors - overnight	51,750	244,260	354,000
Revenue per local visitor per day	\$ 9.14	\$ 16.35	\$ 30.30
Revenue per overnight visitor per day	\$ 63.86	\$ 81.02	\$ 99.30
Trail Revenue from locals	\$ 212,505	\$ 1,794,249	\$ 8,423,400
Trail Revenue from visitors	\$ 3,304,755	\$ 19,789,945	\$ 35,152,200
Rail/tie salvage value per mile	\$ 26,190	\$ 65,000	\$ 78,571
Salvage value, 81 miles (SLK-Old Forge)	\$ 2,121,429	\$ 5,265,000	\$ 6,364,286
Construction Cost per mile	\$ 15,000	\$ 86,549	\$ 214,286
Total Construction cost, SLK -Tupper Lake	\$ 375,000	\$ 2,163,725	\$ 5,357,150
Total Construction cost, LP -Tupper Lake	\$ 510,000	\$ 2,942,666	\$ 7,285,724
Overage usable for second phase	\$ 4,890,000	\$ 3,101,275	\$ (2,020,724)

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Remsen-Lake Placid Travel Corridor Unit Management Plan



- Six alternatives were evaluated
- Selected alternative was to permit rail use over the entire length of the corridor, encourage compatible recreational trail uses in the corridor
- DEC was responsible for implementing the recreational trail component
- No viable rail operations have been established between Saranac lake and Old Forge
- The UMP was to cover an initial; five year period. “At the time of the five-year revision (2000), the planning process will be reopened” . Has not happened!

Adirondack Park Agency Project Permit Order 2007-148



- Adirondack Park Agency received notice from NYS DOT for proposal to construct a shared use recreation path in state owned designated Travel Corridor
- Permit originally issued in 2007, recently renewed
- Covered construction of trail adjacent to active rail between Old Military Road in Lake Placid and Scarface Mountain Trail near Ray Brook
- Five different types of construction were described
- Wetland loss would be 0.71 acres
- Involved one crossing of the rails

Trail Design Considerations



- Pedestrians
 - Low speed 3-7 mph
 - Prefer soft surface
 - 6-8 foot wide tread
 - 7 foot overhead clearance
- Bicyclists
 - Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (AASHTO) Guide for Development of Bicycle Facilities
 - 10 foot wide tread
 - 2 foot wide shoulders
 - Vertical clearance 8 feet
 - Minimum site distance 150 feet

Case Studies



- **Down East Sunrise Trail**
 - Maine
 - 85 miles
 - Opened July 2010
 - Maine DOT and DEC
 - Crushed Stone
 - Single track corridor
 - Constructed in 27 months
 - Average construction cost \$46,309 per mile

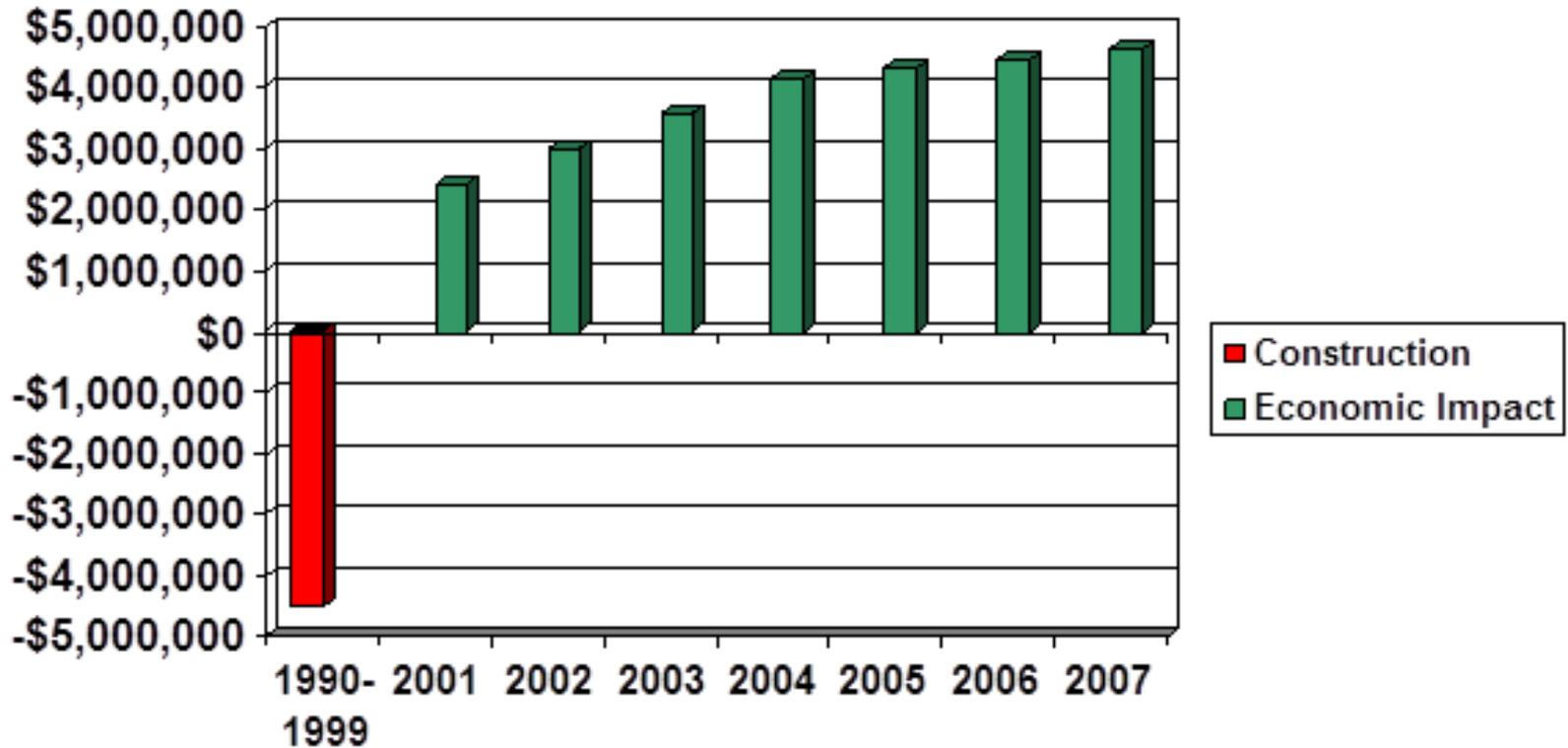
Case Studies



- **Heritage Rail Trail
County Park**

- Pennsylvania
- 21 miles
- 9 years to construct
- Crushed stone
- Double track corridor
- York County Rail Trail Authority
- Average construction costs \$214,285 per mile

Construction vs. Economic Impact



Case Studies



- **Lamoille Valley Rail Trail**
 - Vermont
 - 93 miles
 - Pre-construction
 - Single track corridor
 - VTRANS and statewide snowmobile organization VAST
 - Crushed stone
 - Estimated construction cost \$80,212 per mile

Case Studies



- **Northern Rail Trail**
 - New Hampshire
 - 34 miles (25 miles currently open)
 - Friends of the Northern Rail Trail in Merrimack County
 - Single track corridor
 - Stone dust
 - Average construction cost \$15,000 per mile
 - Most work completed by volunteers and donated equipment

Case Studies



- **Pine Creek Rail Trail**
 - Pennsylvania
 - 62 miles
 - Construction 1996 – 2007
 - PA DCNR
 - Single track corridor
 - Crushed stone
 - Average construction cost \$91,935 per mile

Case Study

- **Merrymeeting Rail-with-Trail**

- Maine
- 25 miles
- Feasibility study complete 2011
- Single track corridor, rails to remain in place
- Maine DOT owns corridor
- Estimated construction cost \$2,025,714 per mile



Case Studies Summary

Trail, State	Developer	Configuration	Length in miles	Surface	Construction cost	Average construction cost per mile
Down East Sunrise Trail, ME	ME DOT	Single track corridor, rails removed, built on rail bed	84	Crushed stone	\$3,889,996	\$46,310
Heritage Rail Trail County Park, PA	York County Rail Trail Authority	Double track corridor, one set of rails removed, built on rail bed	21	Crushed stone	\$4,500,000	\$214,286
Lamoille Valley Rail Trail	VT DOT and VAST	Single track corridor, rails removed, built on rail bed	93	Crushed Stone	\$7,459,692	\$80,212
Northern Rail Trail Merrimack County, NH	Friends of the Northern Rail Trail in Merrimack County	Single track corridor, rails removed, built on rail bed	25	Stone dust		\$15,000
Pine Creek Rail Trail, PA	PA DCNR	Single track corridor, rails removed, built on rail corridor	62	Crushed stone	\$5,700,000	\$91,936
Average						\$86,549

Segment 1: Old Military Road, Lake Placid to Scarface Mountain Trail, Ray Brook – 4.5 miles

10 foot wide trail, 8 feet where constrained by wooded areas, steep slopes or wetlands

6.5 – 11 feet separation from the closest outside rail

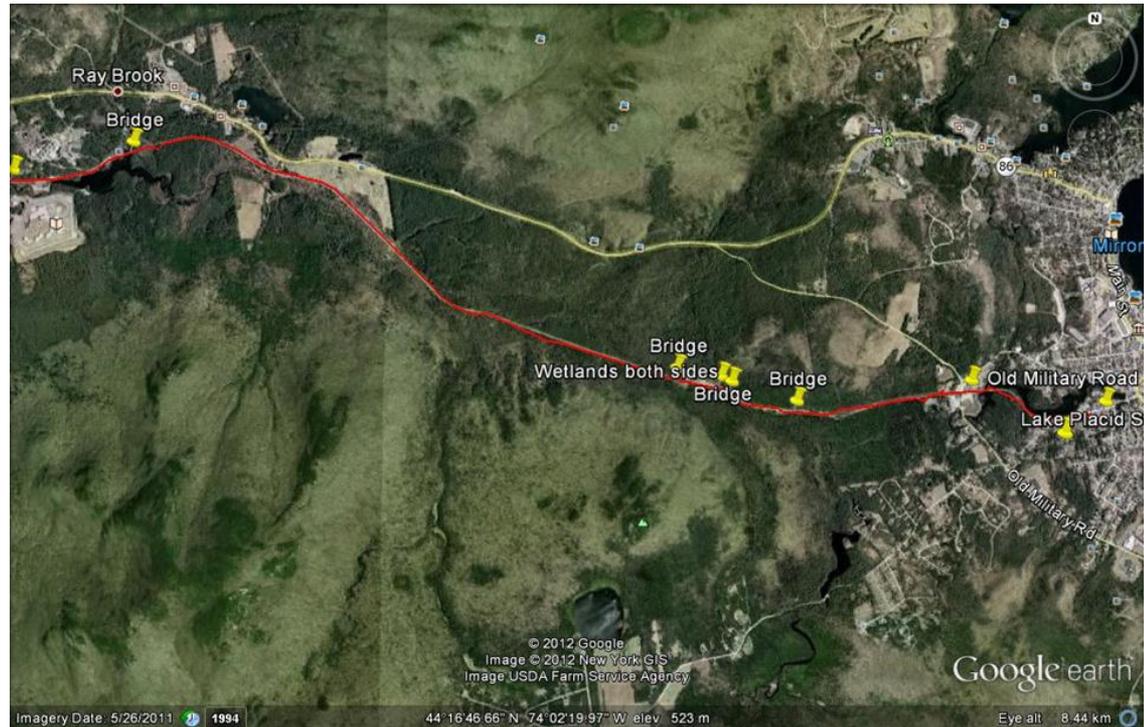
.71 acres of wetlands impacted

Trailheads at Old Military Road and on County Road 32 in Ray Brook (Scarface Mountain Trailhead)

Construction engineering during 2012

Construction possible in 2013

Estimated construction cost per mile \$666,666 to \$888,889.



Segment 2 – Option A Scarface Mountain Trail, Ray Brook to Brandy Brook Avenue, Saranac Lake – 3.7 miles

No engineering completed to date

Needs to acquire Adirondack Park
Agency permit

10 foot wide trail with 2 foot shoulders

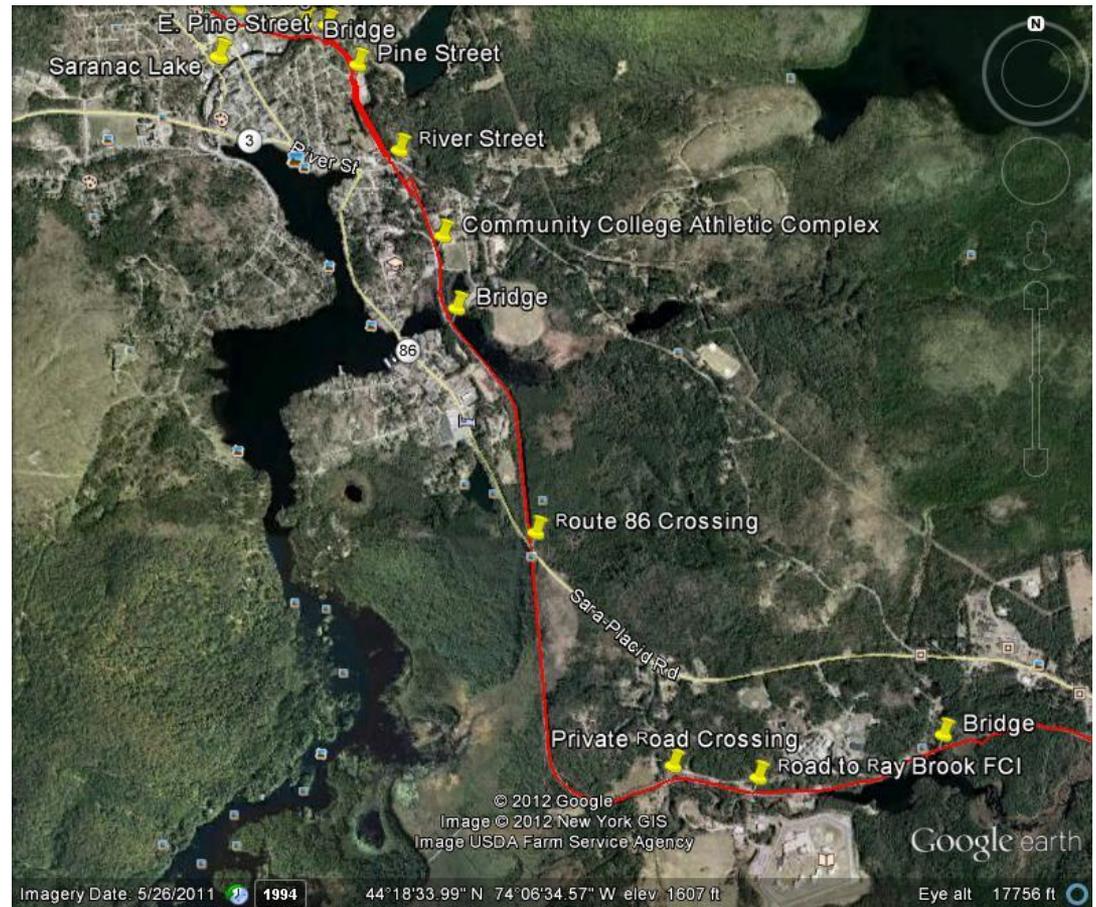
Crossing of Route 86 will require
special attention

Trailhead at Route 86 crossing

Boardwalk and bridge at Lake Flower

No parking at Brandy Brook Avenue

Estimated construction costs \$405,405
to \$540,541 per mile



Segment 3: Brandy Brook Avenue to Saranac Lake Depot – 1.0 miles

Pick-up Saranac Lake Recreational Path

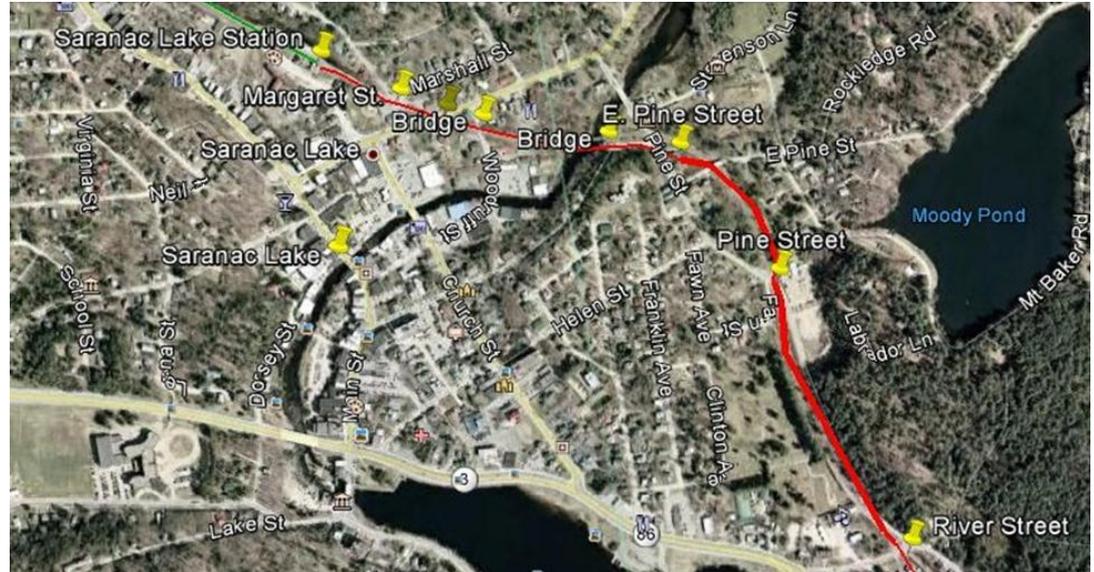
Path needs to be widened and surface improved

No parking at Brandy Brook Avenue

Limited parking at Pine Street

Develop on street/sidewalk access to business district and Saranac Lake depot

Estimated cost \$3,000



Lake Placid to Saranac Lake

Two Options

Segment	Rail with Trail	Rail Trail (rails removed)
Old Military Road to Scarface Mountain Trail	\$3.5 million	\$390,000
Scarface Mountain Trail to Brandy Brook Avenue	\$1.75 million	\$320,000
Pine Street to Saranac Lake Depot	\$3,000	\$50,000
Total	\$5,253,000	\$760,000

Saranac Lake to Tupper Lake to Old Forge

Requires revision to Unit Management
Plan to remove rail and ties

Rail salvage can help offset
construction cost

Current salvage value of 81 miles of
rail is over \$5 million

Creates destination worthy trail

Opens Tupper Lake and Saranac Lake
to Old Forge snowmobile market



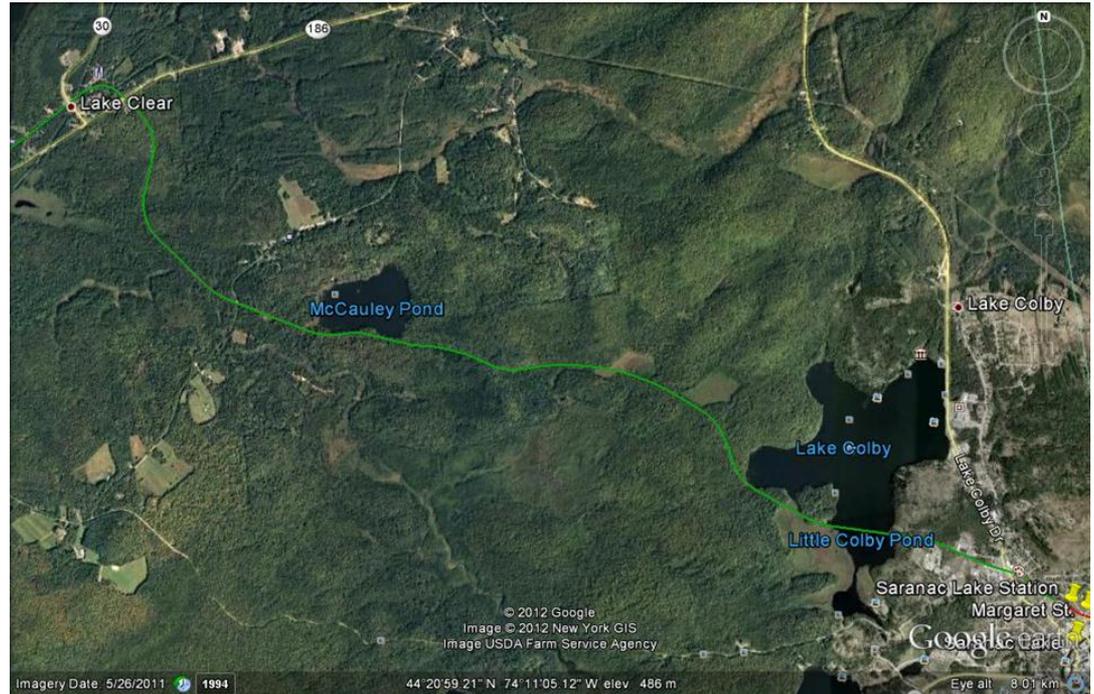
Segment 4: Saranac Lake Depot to Lake Clear – 6.2 miles

At grade crossing of Broadway will require signage and possible signalization

Lake Colby causeway may require fencing

Trailhead in Lake Clear Junction at Charlie's Inn Junction campground.

Estimated cost of construction \$75,000 to \$100,000 per mile



Segment 5: Lake Clear to Tupper Lake - 17.8 miles

Corridor parallels Route 30 for approximately 2.5 miles

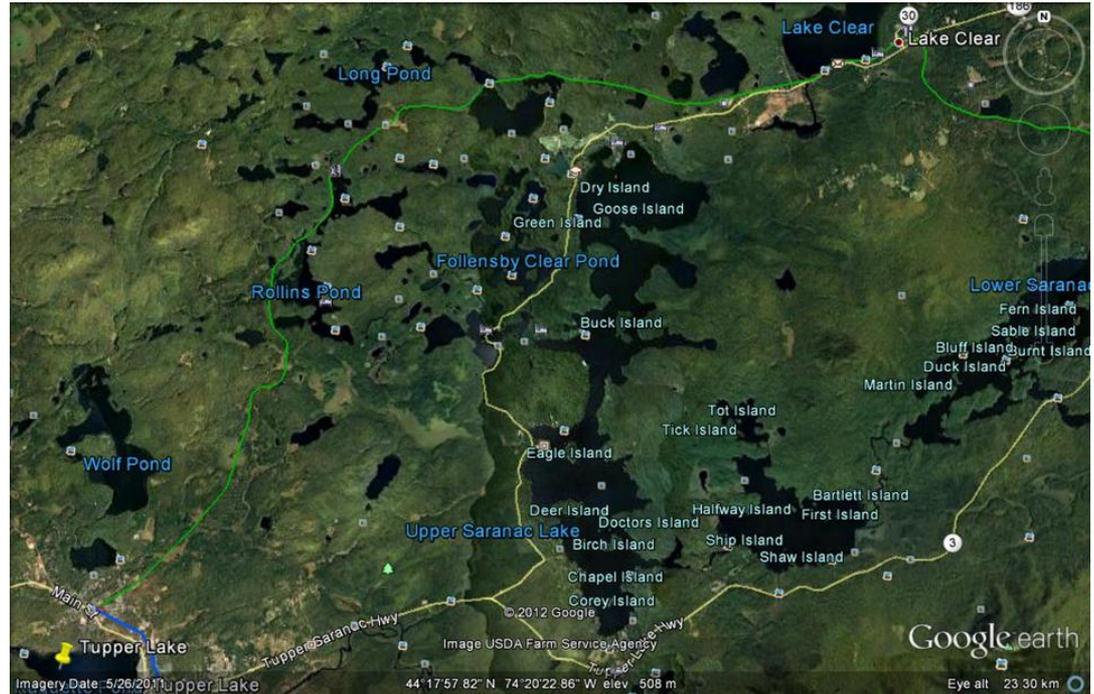
Corridor travel along the edge of several ponds before intersection Floodwood Road.

Outfitter here could provide services and a trailhead location

Proximity to Rollins Pond and Fish Creek State Campgrounds with nearly 200,000 visitors

Tupper Lake Depot could serve as visitors center, museum or café

Estimated construction cost \$50,000 to \$75,000 per mile



Tupper Lake Spur – 1.7 miles

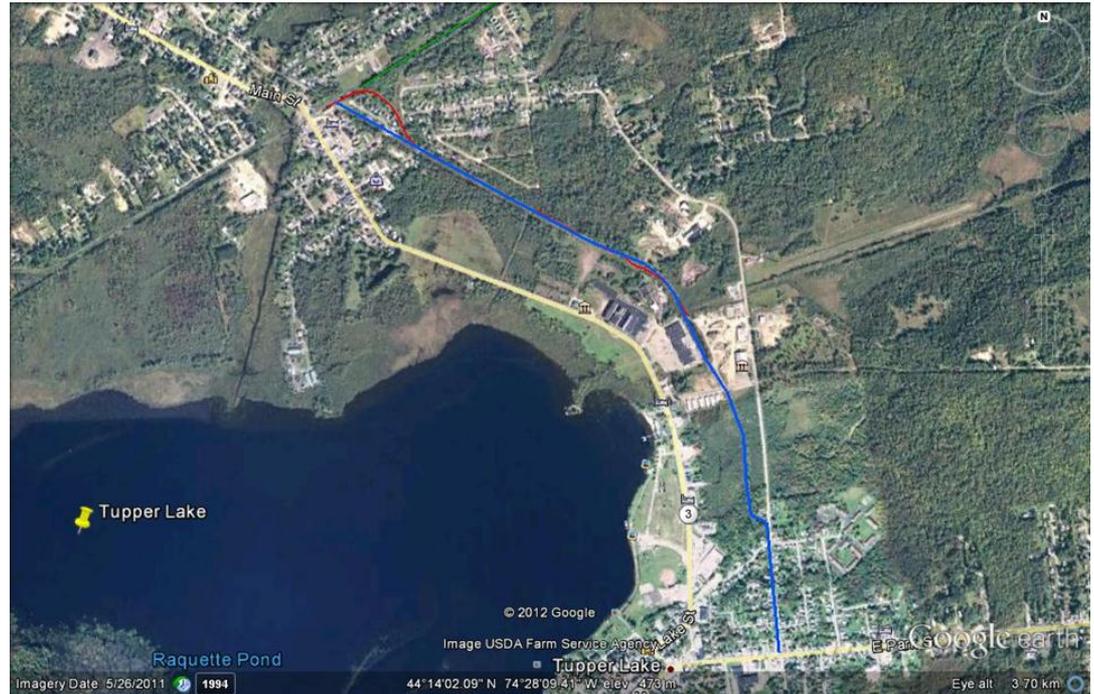
Spur owned by NY DOT

Rail in place along its length

Salvage of rail and ties could offset construction cost

Connect depot to Route 3 businesses

Estimated construction cost \$45,000 to \$50,000



Adirondack Rail Trail Cost Estimates

Trail Segment	Developer	Configuration	Length in miles	Surface	Construction Cost – Estimated	Average construction cost per mile
Old Military Road to Scarface Mountain Trail	Town of North Elba	Single track corridor, new adjacent corridor proposed for trail	4.5	Crushed stone, boardwalk	\$3,000,000 to \$4,000,000	\$666,666 to \$888,889
Scarface Mountain Trail to Brandy Brook Avenue	Town of North Elba	Single track corridor, new adjacent corridor proposed for trail	3.7	Crushed stone, boardwalk	\$1,500,000 to \$2,000,000	\$405,405 to \$540,541
Pine Street to Saranac lake Depot	Village of Saranac Lake	Improve existing recreational path and on street/sidewalk	1.0	Crushed stone, on-street and sidewalk	\$3,000	NA
Saranac Lake Depot to Lake Clear Junction	NY DEC, ARTA	Single track corridor, rails removed, built on rail bed	6.2	Crushed stone	\$558,000	\$90,000
Lake Clear Junction to Tupper Lake	NYS DEC, ARTA	Single track corridor, rails removed, built on rail bed	17.8	Crushed stone	\$890,000	\$50,000

Economic Impact of Rail Trails

- Pine Creek Rail Trail (2006)
- Perkiomen Trail (2008)
- Schuylkill River Trail (2009)
- Ghost Town Trail (2009)
- Armstrong Trail (2010)
- Morris County Trails (2010)
- Paulinskill Valley Trail (2011)
- Lebanon Valley Rail-Trail and Conewago Recreation Trail (2012)
- Henry Hudson Trail (2012)
- Sussex Branch Trail (2012)
- RTC has been conducting trail user surveys and economic impact analysis since 2006
- RTC maintains a library of economic impact studies conducted by others on trails across the US
- Results of studies have been presented at local, regional and national trail conference
- Studies are used to help build awareness of the dramatic economic benefits of trails in terms of business revitalization and new business development

Economic Impact

Trail, State Survey Date	Avg \$ soft goods (local users)	% purchasing	Avg \$ per overnight stay	% overnight	Annual user visits	Avg non-local user expenditure/day (soft goods + overnight)	Total Annual Visitor Expenditures
Pine Creek Rail Trail, PA, 2006	\$30.30	86%	\$69	26%	138,227	\$99.30	\$6,081,712
Heritage Rail Trail County Park, PA, 2007	\$12.86	79%	\$51	12.5%	394,823	\$63.86	\$6,528,161
Ghost Town Trail, PA, 2008	\$13.62	72%	\$78	7.3%	75,600	\$91.62	\$1,171,830
Great Allegheny Passage, PA/MD,2007-2011	\$13.00	67%	\$65	40.8%	612,991	\$98.00	\$21,595,673
Virginia Creeper Trail, VA, 2004	\$19.20	NA	\$47	33.5%	103,172	\$66.20	\$1,624,443
Torrey C. Brown Trail, MD, 2005	\$9.14	72%	\$61	.05%	800,000	\$70.14	\$5,508,640
Average	\$18.73		\$61.83		354,135	\$81.02	\$7,085,077

Conclusions

- The Adirondack Rail Trail will link Adirondack communities, spur community development, and enhance the quality of life for both residents and visitors. Public health and safety will be advanced, and people of all ages and physical abilities will benefit.
- As for measurable economic benefits from increased tourism, the following chart tells the story:



You decide ...

	TRAIL	TRAIN
	RTC	Stone
New overnight visitors, summer and winter	244,260	7,000
Direct annual visitor spending	\$ 19,789,945	\$ 648,855
Highest cost to construct, SLK - TL	\$ 5,357,150	\$ 4,592,754
Cost/visitor	\$ 21.93	\$ 656.11
Net revenue per \$ spent	\$ 3.69	\$ 0.14

Final thoughts



- A recreational trail will bring more than 30x as many visitors to the area than would train restoration.
- Each \$1 spent on a trail brings \$3.69 in annual visitor spending versus fourteen cents from restored train service.
- Salvage costs should pay for the entire trail from Lake Placid to Tupper Lake.
- Just removing the tracks between Tupper Lake and Old Forge will enable Tupper Lake to take its place with Old Forge as a winter snowmobiling center.
- We've been waiting 40 years for this to happen—and there's no reason to wait any longer.

What you can do



- Sign up at www.TheARTA.org
- look for us on Facebook at "The Adirondack Rail Trail"
- Make a tax-deductible donation if you can afford it (**Give!** tab on our website)
- We will contact you when the time is right to call or write to our local and state representatives
- Ultimately, it is about what we, the people, want