

May 6, 2018

Compiled email communications in order sent and received from May 1, 2018 to May 6, 2018 related to the emergency repairs made to the Eagle Lake causeway bridge supports- compiled by R. Tiedemann

From: rolf tiedemann [mailto:camptouchstone@yahoo.com]

Sent: Tuesday, May 01, 2018 3:14 PM

To: Chris Hyde; Keith Park; Stephen Phelps; Jack & Debra Mulcahy; Stephen Meier (ELPOI); Peter Popinchalk

Cc: Mary Lloyd & Paul Burroughs

Subject: causeway access very restricted

just put the boat in and tried to make the south basin of the lake- was very surprised upon arrival at causeway- appears that DOT has placed large 2+ foot diameter and 8-10 foot long black bags along the sides of the causeway concrete wall as side wall reinforcement - these were then pumped full of concrete-

width of the causeway as well as the depth for boat traffic and water flow are significantly impacted, bags cover the entire bottom on the north larger lake side and about 1/2 of width on the south-

images were taken with lake at +5- lots of rain sunday and monday, along with snow melt lake is high, but good, did not see much if any shore line damage, still ice in the shadows of the small side

I was able to get my small aluminum boat through but would not want to be in anything much bigger.

there is no signage indicating that access is restricted or more appropriate dangerous

Steve can we add a note to the e copy of the newsletter indicating this- also maybe a short 1/4 piece of paper note to be stuffed with printed copy.

see images- first 2 are on the south (small) side 2nd 2 are from the north side

fellow officers we need to promptly address our response to this





On May 1, 2018, at 3:28 PM, Keith Park <topnotch@nycap.rr.com> wrote:

when I was last up in the fall, Nov 30th? there were DOT divers in Forrest Lisle's driveway doing an inspection of the bridge, I guess they didn't like what they saw.

I think it looks worse now! At least for boat traffic. This doesn't seem like an acceptable mediation, how they gonna get all that concrete out of the lake? is the Bridge up for replacement now? Yea, lots of questions....

Keith

Sent: Tuesday, May 1, 2018 4:59 PM

Subject: Re: causeway access very restricted

I'll work on updating the newsletter tomorrow and send you new copies. I think I can add a "bulletin" to the reverse side of the member application in the print version, too. Will try. Will also post on Facebook pages.

Steve

On Tue, May 1, 2018 at 6:31 PM, rolf tiedemann <camptouchstone@yahoo.com> wrote:
Steve sounds good

Keith big equipment will remove it as its "bagged" when the bridge is out of course.

motored -more like carefully float through again a few minutes ago- "channel" is deeper than I gave credit before- about 4 feet deep all the way through, but it's not straights and its narrow

Stephen Phelps <stephenphelpsjr@gmail.com> May 1 at 7:44 PM
To Stephen E. Phelps, Jr. Chris Hyde Debra & Stephen Meier Jack & Debra Mulcahy Keith Parks and 4 more...

I've posted these warnings on the Facebook page and I'm in the process of incorporating them into the newsletter for posting, e-mailing and snail-mailing:

URGENT WARNING FOR BOATERS ON EAGLE LAKE:
ROUTE 74 CAUSEWAY UNDERPASS HAZARDOUSLY BLOCKED

From Rolf Tiedemann, today, May 1, 2018:

It appears that DOT has placed large cement-filled black bags, two feet in diameter and six to eight feet long, against the sides of the causeway wall as apparently temporary reinforcement. This means that the width of the causeway underpass, as well as its depth for boat traffic and water flow, are significantly reduced. The concrete-filled bags cover the entire bottom on the north side and about half of its width on the south side.

These images were taken with the lake at +5" (lots of rain Sunday and Monday, along with snowmelt, mean that the lake is high). I was able to get my small aluminum boat through, but would not want to try the passage in anything much bigger.

There is no signage indicating that access is restricted -- or, to be more accurate -- dangerous. ELPOI officers will follow up with DOT, but in the meantime don't try to get under the causeway with anything larger than a canoe or aluminum rowboat. -

ANOTHER URGENT ALERT FOR BOATERS IN EAGLE LAKE

Well, aren't we just full of good news today. Tonya Condon stopped by this afternoon to alert us to another problem caused by DOT (and/or its contractors) when they worked on the causeway this winter.

It seems that while they were working under the causeway, they set up sections of those orange-mesh "snow fences" on the ice at both ends of the underpass – and never removed them. Now that the ice has melted, pieces of that mesh are floating free in the lake, and represent a hazard to boaters who could get them wrapped around their propellers. Even more troubling, they represent a life-and-death hazard to waterfowl and other wildlife around the lake who could become entangled in them. As with the blocked causeway boat passage, ELPOI's officers will be following up with DOT (and, in this case, DEC).

Steve

smeier1@roadrunner.com May 1 at 9:38 PM

To Stephen Phelps Jack & Debra Mulcahy _____ Stephen E. Phelps, Jr. Liz Popinchalk Chris Hyde and 4 more...

We saw the notices on the Facebook page before checking my emails.

Who is contacting the DOT and the DEC?

Should we ask the DOT to post a warning at the boat launch / causeway?

I would be willing to make calls on Thursday morning. (will be gone most of the day tomorrow / in Lake Placid afternoon on Thursday)

Thankfully Rolf and Tonya "found" these for there were problems / accidents!

SteveM

Chris Hyde <cdhyde1@gmail.com> May 1 at 9:51 PM

To rolf tiedemann

CC Stephen Phelps Keith Park Jack & Debra Mulcahy Stephen Meier (ELPOI) Peter Popinchalk Mary Lloyd & Paul Burroughs

We all know that bridge is a time bomb.... Major project to replace since I can't imagine they would close the road to replace in exact location. If anyone has time to call DOT - please report your findings.

jdmulcahy5@verizon.net May 1 at 10:54 PM

To camptouchstone@yahoo.com cdhyde1@gmail.com topnotch@nycap.rr.com stephenephelpsjr@gmail.com

smeier1@roadrunner.com pdpop58@gmail.com

CC eaglake@aol.com

Does anyone know when DOT did this work? When were the orange snow fences put up? I was there a number of times this winter and didn't see them. Rolf, when you went up in February, did you see them?

Jack

Keith Park <topnotch@nycap.rr.com> May 1 at 11:05 PM

To 'Chris Hyde' 'rolf tiedemann'

CC 'Stephen Phelps' 'Jack & Debra Mulcahy' 'Stephen Meier (ELPOI)' 'Peter Popinchalk' 'Mary Lloyd & Paul Burroughs'

I remember when I was a little kid, never wanted a logging truck to go over that bridge when Dad was going under it!

the steel is heavily scaled now, the cement underneath has been undermined for many years now and no Rip-rap has even been placed in the channel under the footings. As Chris said... a time bomb.

Keith

Keith Park <topnotch@nycap.rr.com> May 1 at 11:08 PM

To jdmulcahy5@verizon.net camptouchstone@yahoo.com cdhyde1@gmail.com stephenepheljsr@gmail.com
smeier1@roadrunner.com pdpop58@gmail.com
CC eaglake@aol.com

They were diving at the end of November, and I did see the fencing there at the end of January when I went up for the day to get the power going again, I think it was there again in Feb when I went up for a weekend.

Keith

smeier1@roadrunner.com May 2 at 6:39 AM

To Chris Hyde rolf tiedemann
CC Stephen Phelps Jack & Debra Mulcahy Mary Lloyd & Paul Burroughs Peter Popinchalk Keith Park

If no one has posted an email on calling DOT, I will call them tomorrow morning.

SteveM

rolf tiedemann <camptouchstone@yahoo.com> May 2 at 9:12 AM

To smeier1@roadrunner.com Chris Hyde
CC Stephen Phelps Jack & Debra Mulcahy Mary Lloyd & Paul Burroughs Peter Popinchalk Keith Park

Steve your reaching out to them would be fantastic- I may have a contact from several years ago but will have to look in my file later tonight - will post when I'm back at the files later tonight- at a minimum contact is in E town for DOT that covers this area, need to inquire about bridge replacement and request ELPOI be considered in any and all designs and implementation- we in the distant past had Ruth Cummings ELPOI member (deceased) as a liaison to the DOT for rt 74 and bridge info

rolf tiedemann <camptouchstone@yahoo.com> May 2 at 9:17 AM

To jdmulcahy5@verizon.net cdhyde1@gmail.com topnotch@nycap.rr.com stephenepheljsr@gmail.com smeier1@roadrunner.com
pdpop58@gmail.com
CC eaglake@aol.com

I did not see any fencing when I was up in Feb, but was not looking

I also did not see anything in my 2 trips thru the causeway yesterday, again did not know to look, but will look when I go thru again on Thurs. and or Friday

UPDATE ON CAUSEWAY - READ BEFORE TAKING ANY ACTION

Stephen Phelps <stephenepheljsr@gmail.com> May 2 at 4:51 PM

To Stephen E. Phelps, Jr. Chris Hyde Debra & Stephen Meier Jack & Debra Mulcahy Keith Parks and 4 more...

I've had communications on Facebook from Lynne Rogan Reale, who teaches nursing at North Country Community College, and at first I didn't realize that she's married to the owner of Reale Construction in Ti, and that Reale must have the contract with DOT to repair the causeway bridge.

This is important because Reale is not only well known and well respected in Ticonderoga, but is also traditionally a generous donor to not-for-profits. They are NOT a company or a family that I want to get on the wrong side of.

In addition, she offered very reasonable explanations for why the work had to be done over the winter (the bridge is falling down), and why the snow fence wasn't able to be removed before ice-out (it had frozen into the ice).

I tried to make it clear that our complaints were not about Reale, but about the DOT's lack of communication with us or with the public about any of this. Public relations and public communications are not the contractor's job.

So I ask whoever does reach out to DOT to make the complaint very specifically about their lack of communication, and not to let them fob off blame on Reale.

Here's a transcript of my contacts with Lynne Reale:

Lynne Rogan Reale: These are a temporary fix for a causeway that was at risk of collapse until a permanent redesign fix can be made. Signs are also going up soon. The ice just went out.

Eagle Lake Property Owners, Inc.: Thanks, Lynne. Sounds like you have some familiarity with this. Do you happen to know anyone at DOT with whom our board should be in contact to follow up? If you do, and you don't mind, would appreciate a PM. Thanks!

Lynne Rogan Reale: I would like to also add that due to the emergency nature of the repair during the winter months the snow fence became frozen into the ice with a thaw/refreeze situation. Now that the ice is out the fence was planned to be retrieved. Everything that was done was for public safety and the use of that road by preventing its collapse.

Eagle Lake Property Owners, Inc.:
First, thanks for explaining about the emergency nature of the temporary repairs, and how the snow fence ended up in the lake. I've already passed that information along to the board members.

Second, I want to make clear that our complaint is to DOT, not the construction contractor. No one in his right mind would criticize a contractor for shoring up a collapsing bridge. The issue is that we've tried over the years to establish some kind of liaison with DOT so that we can exchange information back and forth, but have met with mixed success. In this case it would have been helpful if they had let the public know what work was being done when, and why, and that it would result in unavoidable problems for the boat passage under the causeway. Happily, no one wrecked his or her motor by driving into the new obstacles, but that was just luck. We're just asking DOT to do better.

Thanks,
SteveP

Keith Park <topnotch@nycap.rr.com> May 2 at 8:19 PM

To rolf tiedemann' smeier1@roadrunner.com 'Chris Hyde'
CC 'Stephen Phelps' 'Jack & Debra Mulcahy' 'Mary Lloyd & Paul Burroughs' 'Peter Popinchalk'

Steve and Rolf,

I have DOT contacts down here in the Albany area, so if you dont get anywhere let me know, I may be able to worm my way thru the organization to find out who is assigned the bridge project up there.

Keith

smeier1@roadrunner.com May 2 at 9:09 PM

To Chris Hyde' 'rolf tiedemann' Keith Park
CC Stephen Phelps' 'Jack & Debra Mulcahy' 'Peter Popinchalk' 'Mary Lloyd & Paul Burroughs'

I will see what I can do tomorrow morning.

SteveM

Stephen <smeier1@roadrunner.com> May 3 at 6:25 PM

To Chris Hyde rolf tiedemann Keith Park
CC Stephen Phelps Jack & Debra Mulcahy Peter Popinchalk Mary Lloyd & Paul Burroughs

I called the Elizabethtown DOT
The engineer was going to call me back but
Will follow up again tomorrow

SteveM

rolf tiedemann <camptouchstone@yahoo.com> May 3 at 11:39 PM

To Stephen Chris Hyde Keith Park
CC Stephen Phelps Jack & Debra Mulcahy Peter Popinchalk Mary Lloyd & Paul Burroughs

sorry to not get engineers name to you but file must be home- sounds like you may be on to a connection without my name- thanks for following up on this

Steve P. thanks for the additions to the newsletter and the follow up info from Reale construction

smeier1@roadrunner.com May 4 at 9:47 AM

To Chris Hyde rolf tiedemann Keith Park
CC Stephen Phelps Jack & Debra Mulcahy Mary Lloyd & Paul Burroughs Peter Popinchalk

Everyone -

Just got a call back from James Fredericks, a structural engineer with NYS DOT.

Per James, there is really not much to report at this time. It came to State's attention that the causeway's foundation needed to be reinforced. Therefore, over the winter, the State contracted out the work to have the "cement bags" placed to shore everything up. Although this may be considered a temporary fix, they believe there is no problems with the causeway at this time.

The State's plan is to eventually replace the causeway. At this time they are considering their options. The actual work on replacing the causeway could not occur until a couple of years. The work time line could take a couple of months or more depending if they close the road completely and replace the whole causeway as opposed to trying to keep a lane open.

The State was aware of the restricted access under the causeway. They had scheduled to place caution signs so boaters know of the restrictions. They also will be searching the lake to see if anything went into the lake and needs to be removed. They are aware of the orange netting / fencing. It should have been tied up to prevent it from floating out into the main body of the lake. This had been scheduled to be done next week.

If anyone notices or sees anything that needs to be removed, let me know and I can contact James and the State will make sure it will get removed.

As stakeholders in this, he stated that the State would be more than willing to work with the ELPOI when designing in replacing the causeway.

SteveM

rolf tiedemann <camptouchstone@yahoo.com> May 4 at 8:17 PM

To smeier1@roadrunner.com Chris Hyde Keith Park
CC Stephen Phelps Jack & Debra Mulcahy Mary Lloyd & Paul Burroughs Peter Popinchalk

In my trip thru the causeway today I rescued the remains to the Orange fencing, it was grounded by the cottages, it is outside my boat house awaiting a trip to the dump unless the State wants the scrape back, I looked for other pieces on both sides and found nothing else, I did take a picture of the scrape in my boat and will share in a separate email

Stephen <smeier1@roadrunner.com> May 5 at 8:42 AM

To camptouchstone@yahoo.com
CC Chris Hyde Keith Park Stephen Phelps Jack & Debra Mulcahy Mary Lloyd & Paul Burroughs Peter Popinchalk

So what you are saying the causeway is filled with the bags and once the water recedes to the maintained levels no one may be able to get through?

SteveM

rolf tiedemann <camptouchstone@yahoo.com> May 5 at 10:20 AM

To Stephen
CC Chris Hyde Keith Park Stephen Phelps Jack & Debra Mulcahy Mary Lloyd & Paul Burroughs Peter Popinchalk

NO! bags are lining the bottom and the sides- leaving a more restricted path then what was there previous- travel is possible even with water down some it will just require more care in threading the boat thru the narrower and somewhat shallower opening-

water is at "normal" height right now

see additional image- underpass is now about 4' narrower

also see image of fence- it looks like someone cut the bulk of the fence lengthwise and what remained (and I captured) may have been as was described the portion frozen in the ice



rolf tiedemann <camptouchstone@yahoo.com> May 5 at 1:20 PM

To smeier1@roadrunner.com Chris Hyde Keith Park
CC Stephen Phelps Jack & Debra Mulcahy Mary Lloyd & Paul Burroughs Peter Popinchalk

Steve thanks for the prompt and very detailed reply for your inquire,

what you reported is not much different from what Ruth C. got when she inquired some 30- 40 years ago, and what Joe M. (at the time a retired DOT employee) we were told by about conditions and repairs to the causeway- and what I was told in my more recent inquires.

It just appears that at the moment they were forced to make some emergency/ temporary repairs or waited till there was an emergency.

when we did the milfoil removal project in 2008-10 my son swam/dived through the causeway and commented at that time the piers, especially the eastern one was significantly undermined/ scoured and crumbling, not surprising that something finally needed to be done

what you were told about plans to replace the bridge have been in the discussion stages since I attended my first ELPOI meeting in the late 70's.

as to DOT "considering their options", they have very few under "normal" times- the APA has set/ and enforces very restrictive land use/change guidelines (and they are held by NYS law to not be flexible to changes to these) with the location of the bridge approaches to state forest preserve land and forever wild status, NYS protected water/ wet lands etc. they have very limited options- couple this to new state and federal road design guidelines for road width, turns, grades, road run off on or near protected water bodies etc. that have to be met when a redesign is undertaken, and you have even more challenges. under grandfathered clauses they can make some repairs/ changes w/o having to complete a major redo

hence nothing major having been done to this failing structure in the past 40 plus years that I have been hearing about its condition.

all past repairs to the road approaches etc., the addition of shot rock along both sides of the east and west approaches several years ago to "stabilize" them, replacement of failed guide rails etc. were done under "emergency" repairs

from what I've been told working under the terms "emergency" gives the DOT some leeway in permits, notifications and design guidelines that are not afforded under "normal" design guidelines- I was told this by DOT when they made emergency road repairs following super storm Sandy when several roads were severely compromised and needed repair.

I suspect that ultimate replacement of the causeway, its approaches and related road changes will be done under an emergency decree. this will give to DOT some of the leeway they may need to make it happen- this means that we the ELPOI need to be vigilant with them in making sure we are kept apprised of any emergency status updates and possible emergency plans for a replacement

We the ELPOI officers and members should try to also come to agreement as to what we would like to see incorporated into a redesign

do we want the size width and height to remain the same as some suggest to limit boats?

or go bigger to allow those with bigger boats access to the big side of the lake?

other visual changes?

foot/ bike path along the edge on one side or both?

also what are environmental impacts during and after construction?

road run off of salt and vehicle droppings of fuels etc.

lots to think about, discuss, and get consensus to present to DOT should we be given the opportunity for input

Just FYI, from my dealings with Lincoln Pond many years ago, related to Milfoil control and other dialog's, they were faced with the same challenges we are with regard to their causeway/ lake crossing

bridge. From what I was told, they had some input into the design process, but were not well prepared as a "lake association" to come to agreement for suggestion as to what lake owners wanted in the replacement and as such there were many lake owners who were disappointed/ mad in what was put in. I was told that they at the time did not have an active lake association and did little if any "member" communications.

If at this time we get signage indicating the restricted access and the opportunity for an invite for input we are doing well.

Steve thanks again for the valuable feedback

Rolf

Stephen Phelps <stephenphelpsjr@gmail.com> Today at 6:11 PM

To Stephen E. Phelps, Jr. Chris Hyde Debra & Stephen Meier Jack & Debra Mulcahy Keith Parks and 4 more...

Rolf,

Here's the most recent update I posted on the ELPOI Facebook page and copied to the Chilson Volunteer Fire Department and Chilson Founders association pages.

Steve

----- Forwarded message -----

From: Stephen Phelps <stephenphelpsjr@gmail.com>

Date: Sun, May 6, 2018 at 5:52 PM

Subject: For Rolf

To: ___SEP @ Gmail <stephenphelpsjr@gmail.com>

UPDATE ON CAUSEWAY CONDITIONS

Since our first report on this situation, your editor has learned that the overwinter emergency work on the causeway was done by a Ticonderoga-based bridge construction contractor with an impeccable reputation. Rolf Tiedemann's latest findings back up that reputation.

Rolf was back at the causeway this morning for a closer inspection and reports that the reinforcing cement-bag bolsters do line the bottom and sides of the underpass, leaving a more restricted path than what we're used to, The channel is about four feet narrower and a foot or two more shallow, BUT boat transit is still possible. Transit will require more care and caution in threading boats through a narrower and shallower passage.

Rolf was also able to retrieve a large section of snow fence from the north side of the causeway. He says that this appears to be a lower portion that was frozen into the ice, and that the corresponding upper section had apparently been cut away lengthwise to minimize the debris left behind. Rolf provided the accompanying photos.

In other news, ELPOI board member Steve Meier has been in touch with a structural engineer at NYS DOT, who said that the temporary shoring-up of the causeway with cement bolsters was done as a precaution, and that there is no imminent danger to the roadway. The state is considering its options for repairing/replacing the bridge structure, but the actual work may not take place for several years. In the meantime, the engineer said that DOT will work with ELPOI on developing its ultimate solution, and take our concerns into account. Finally, he said that warning signs for boaters will be put in place soon, and that DOT will look for and remove any snow-fence remnants that might remain.

Steve