

What are the effects of Corridor H alignment in Tucker County on recreational trails?

Both the R-ROPA (WVDOH's preferred southern alignment) and the BAA2 (northern route) would affect local trails. This newsletter describes the differences in trail impact between the two routes.

The Northern Route of Corridor H, called BAA2, would be closer to the five-mile trail system in the Thomas City Park. The southern alignment of Corridor H (called the R-ROPA), which divides the towns of Thomas and Davis, would be closer to the ten-mile Dobbin House National Forest trail system. Additionally, **R-ROPA would have significantly more impact than BAA2 on other major trail routes.**

Unfortunately, four nationally significant trails are all currently routed on Route 32/48 between the towns of Thomas and Davis. The Tucker County Commission recently unanimously adopted a Resolution to have the WV Division of Highways build a separate pedestrian and bicycle trail paralleling Route 32/48 between Thomas and Davis.

This connector trail will enhance public safety, public health, community connection, traffic reduction, economic development, and quality of life. Additionally, this trail will provide a separate pathway for the four interstate and international trail routes listed below.

The **331-mile Allegheny Trail** travels north/south on roads and hiking trails through West Virginia from Pennsylvania at the Mason Dixon Line near Bruceton Mills to the Virginia State line at Peters Mountain, where it intersects the Appalachian Trail.

On the Allegheny Trail there are three trail crossings of Corridor H on the old R-ROPA route plan, and only one affected by the new BAA2 Northern route.

The **Allegheny Highlands Trail (AHT)**, an old Western Maryland Railroad line, is split into two sections. One section is 35 miles from Thomas to Elkins, WV via the Blackwater Canyon railroad grade. The eastern section is open for 5.5 miles outside of Davis paralleling Route 48.

Another proposed section of the AHT will link the two existing sections together via the Francis Grade between Davis and Thomas. This section appears as a trail on Western Pocahontas Property future development maps, and would be an incredible addition to Tucker County's rail-trail system.

Corridor H would cross the AHT six times with the R-ROPA plan and only four with the BAA2 route.

The **5057-mile long American Discovery Trail** runs through Davis and Thomas coast to coast from Cape Henlopen, Delaware to Point Reyes, California. *There would be four Corridor H crossings with R-ROPA, and only two with BAA2.*

The **5950-mile Eastern Divide Trail (EDT)** runs north south from the eastern most point in North America at Cape Spear, Newfoundland, Canada to Key West, Florida. The EDT is the longest contiguous off road centric trail in the world, with 68% unpaved and an over 315,000-foot elevation gain.

The EDT would have three Corridor H crossings with R-ROPA and only one with BAA2.

All of the above routes currently on Route 32 could be routed off the road onto the trail between the towns, as endorsed by the Tucker County Commission.

The number one industry in Tucker County is outdoor tourism. The common element in outdoor tourism is trails. Trails include ski slopes, rivers, railroad grades and single-track paths. How much of the source of our economy are we willing to degrade and sacrifice for this highway?