

Stewards of the Potomac Highlands

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

September 18, 2023

WVDOH to hold public meeting on Corridor H in Wardensville Thursday, Sept. 21

WARDENSVILLE, W.Va.—West Virginia Division of Highways (WVDOH) officials will hold a public informational workshop on the Corridor H highway in Wardensville on Thursday, Sept. 21, from 5 to 8 p.m. at the War Memorial Building, 190 Main Street.

A formal presentation will begin at 6 p.m. Maps and construction plans of the 6.8 mile section from the current terminus west of Wardensville to the Virginia state line will be available, and may also be found [online](#).

WVDOH has completed most of the 100-mile Appalachian Corridor through the sparsely traveled Potomac Highlands, but two of the most environmentally sensitive sections—the 6.8 miles through Wardensville, and the nine-mile stretch in Tucker County that traverses the Monongahela National Forest and Blackwater Canyon area—have not yet received final approval. Costs to build a new four-lane through these rugged mountains is estimated to cost over \$1 billion in federal and state funds.

[Stewards of the Potomac Highlands](#), a regional environmental advocacy nonprofit, has long questioned the need for a four-lane road to the Virginia state line, especially considering the Commonwealth of Virginia has no plans to build the originally proposed section to I-66 and I-81 near Strasburg, Virginia.

“Why is there such a rush to put people’s drinking water in harm’s way, uproot lives, destroy precious forests and habitats, and bypass a bustling, charming downtown full of small businesses to continue a major four-lane that will stop at the state line and never meet its connection in Virginia,” asked Bonni McKeown, president of the Stewards of the Potomac Highlands.

In October 2022, the Shenandoah County Board of Supervisors [passed a resolution](#) opposing construction of the corridor in Virginia, reaffirming an earlier resolution made in 1993.

The resolution states, “Said route through Shenandoah County would likely be harmful to farms, private homes, and public-use facilities such as churches, community centers, lodges, etc.” Among other concerns, they continued that the four-lane would cause “irreversible damage” to Cedar Creek and Belle Grove National Historical Park and the Fishers Hill Civil War Battlefield.

The Town of Strasburg echoed the Shenandoah County Board of Supervisors resolution [in a letter](#) opposing the project in December 2022.

Stewards of the Potomac Highlands, in previous comments shown on their [website](#), pointed out Corridor H's likely impacts on Wardensville's drinking water wells and other groundwater, the George Washington National Forest, and local businesses if Main Street is bypassed.

Environmental groups have also warned of damages to native trout streams, Trout Run and Waites Run, both Tier 3 protected streams—citing some 52 violations of water pollution controls along the unfinished construction of the Kerens to Parsons section of Corridor H.

Comments are due on the project by Oct. 23 and may be submitted at the meeting or sent to Travis Long, director, Technical Support Division, WVDOH, 1334 Smith Street, Charleston, WV 25301. Comments may be submitted via the agency website at <http://go.wv.gov/dotcomment>.

Economically and culturally, our area has a proud tradition of small farm and forest ownership and historic towns. Stewards of the Potomac Highlands, a 501c4 nonprofit citizens group, networks in West Virginia's northeastern counties to protect this heritage and support an environmentally and socially sustainable, locally-controlled economy. Learn more about the Stewards of the Potomac Highlands at potomachighlandstewards.org

-STEWARDS OF THE POTOMAC HIGHLANDS-

09/18/2023

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