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Safety Improvements at Breakneck Station Begin

Preparation for Station Reopening and Fjord Trail Construction

FISHKILL, NY (Dutchess County)—The Hudson Highlands Fjord Trail, Metro-North Railroad, NYS Department of Transportation, and NYS Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation announced today that work will commence October 12, 2021 on safety improvements to the Breakneck Station. Once complete, Metro-North will be able to reopen the station as a weekend stop on the Hudson Line. This is an interim step towards the comprehensive redesign of the Route 9D corridor north of Breakneck known as the Breakneck Connector. That segment will mark the first mile of the planned 7.5-mile Hudson Highlands Fjord Trail linear park when it goes to construction next year.

Some initial site preparation has already taken place in the area between the train tracks and Route 9D. Metro-North removed overgrowth to ready the area for necessary measures including an off-road trail that will connect passengers to the southbound platform, a safety fence separating pedestrians from the railroad tracks, and temporary wayfinding signage. The station safety improvements are slated for completion before year's end. The project is being funded by Hudson Highlands Fjord Trail and MTA funds secured by State Assemblywoman Sandy Galef of District 95 for Metro-North.

“Safety is at the core of everything we do,” said Catherine Rinaldi, President of MTA Metro-North Railroad. “Our Breakneck Ridge station is the gateway to one of the most popular and iconic hiking destinations in the region. As Metro-North ridership continues to recover, especially weekend ridership, I am thrilled that Hudson Highlands Fjord Trail is moving ahead with these safety improvements and that we will soon be able to reopen a safer and more inviting station for our returning customers.”

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“The fencing Hudson Highlands Fjord Trail will install is the first step in implementing the larger Breakneck Connector project. Safety has always been one of our core aims and securing the tracks from pedestrians in this busy hiking destination is a major step forward,” said Amy Kacala, Executive Director of the Hudson Highlands Fjord Trail.

The Hudson Highlands Fjord Trail is envisioned as a world-class linear park, spanning 7.5 miles along the Hudson River connecting the Village of Cold Spring and the City of Beacon in New York State’s Hudson Valley. Construction of the first segment of the Fjord Trail will commence in 2022. Metro-North, NYS DOT, and NYS Parks are among the many partners working together to make the Fjord Trail a reality, including local municipalities, governmental agencies, community groups, and regional conservation organizations, such as project lead Scenic Hudson. The Metro-North Hudson Line includes three stations where visitors will be able to access the Fjord Trail directly: Cold Spring, Beacon, and, once reopened, the Breakneck station.

“This next step in improving the safety of the Route 9D corridor and the hiking experience in the Hudson Highlands is due to the collaboration of many partners. We thank everyone for the thoughtfulness of the approach to the entire system. It’s an exciting time to be in the Highlands,” said Linda Cooper, Taconic Regional Director for New York State Parks.

This summer, as part of safety improvements at Hudson Highlands State Park, Hudson Highlands Fjord Trail and State Parks partnered to create the new Nimham Trail on Breakneck Ridge. The half-mile connector trail allows for a safer alternative path to start the ascent to the Breakneck summit, and eliminates two-way hiker traffic at the narrow, steep beginning of that trail.



A Metro-North train on the Hudson Line near Breakneck.
Photo Ty Cole for Hudson Highlands Fjord Trail, Inc.



The Metro-North platform at Breakneck.
Photo Ty Cole for Hudson Highlands Fjord Trail, Inc..

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The Hudson Highlands Fjord Trail will offer a linear park experience inviting people of all abilities to immerse themselves in the sublime beauty of the Highlands and river landscapes. It will serve as the gateway to some of the most breathtaking and popular day hikes in the United States, including Breakneck Ridge, Mount Taurus and Little Stony Point. Impact management, habitat restoration, and easing the burden of heavy recreation visitation on local communities are all core components of the project’s mission. Completion of this regionally defining resource is projected for 2027. <https://www.hudsonfjordtrail.org/>

For more information on the Metro-North Railroad Hudson Line, please visit: www.new.mta.info/agency/metro-north-railroad.

Hudson Highlands Fjord Trail, Inc. is a supporting organization of Scenic Hudson.

***For high-resolution photos, contact dtanyol@hudsonfjordtrail.org . Selection available for viewing at <http://fjordtrail.tandemvault.com/lightboxes/WmOwjKAA>**