



Hudson Highlands Fjord
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Hudson Highlands Fjord Trail begins work on Breakneck Upper Overlook March 1, 2023

Marks start of Phase 1: Breakneck Connector & Bridge

FISHKILL, NY— Hudson Highlands Fjord Trail, Inc., New York State Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation (OPRHP), Metro-North Railroad (MNR), and New York-New Jersey Trail Conference (NYNJTC) announced today that initial work to relocate the Breakneck trailhead farther up the ridge and repair eroding trail surfaces will begin on March 1, 2023 and is scheduled to be completed by July 1, 2023. During this construction phase, OPRHP will close the Breakneck Ridge trailhead to the public.

During this period, the Wilkinson Memorial trailhead is expected to remain open, along with the Metro-North Railroad train station, however additional utility relocation work by Central Hudson along the Route 9D corridor may make some additional closures necessary. The duration and scope of any additional closures will be communicated when scheduling is finalized.

The scope of this initial work, which launches Phase 1: Breakneck Connector & Bridge of the Hudson Highlands Fjord Trail project, includes a new series of stone steps at the initial ascent of the Breakneck Ridge trail, repair of existing erosion conditions, closure and restoration of unauthorized social trails, and the construction of a new trail steward station further away from busy Route 9D. Tahawus Trails and JIG Builders will complete this work.

From March 1 through July 1, 2023, hikers wishing to access the viewsheds at the peaks of Breakneck Ridge will need to take alternate routes, including Wilkinson to the Nimham Trail, or the Cornish/Brook/Undercliff Bypass/Undercliff trails from the Washburn parking lot. No descent through the construction zone will be permitted.

With potentially reduced parking available in the Breakneck area during this period, hikers are encouraged to take the Metro-North Railroad train to the trail, when possible.

The complete scope of work for the Breakneck Connector & Bridge phase of the Fjord Trail, which completed its SEQRA environmental review process in December 2022, will take place in the area just north of the tunnel on Route 9D to the Metro-North Railroad train station in

the Town of Fishkill, NY. Slated to begin in winter 2023/2024, the remainder of work at Breakneck will include the construction of a shared use trail parallel to Route 9D from the train station to trailhead, new and improved parking areas, enhanced crosswalks, two trail bank areas, stormwater management enhancements, new ADA restroom facilities, and a comprehensive replanting of the area with a native plant palette.

The main Breakneck Connector construction will occur in tandem with the Breakneck Bridge project. The Breakneck Connector construction will be managed by HHFT and its selected construction manager, Consigli Construction Company. The Breakneck Bridge construction project will be managed by OPRHP. Both projects are scheduled to be substantially complete by the end of 2025. Related closures to specific affected trailheads, interruptions of service at the Breakneck Ridge train station, and roadwork along Route 9D will be announced when details are finalized.

The mission of the Hudson Highlands Fjord Trail is to develop and operate an accessible linear park, in cooperation with the State of New York, located between Cold Spring, NY and Beacon, NY. The Fjord Trail, envisioned by locals over fifteen years ago, aims to address safety, manage visitation, and respect the landscape. It will add organized parking, public restrooms, trash/recycling collection, and distribute users of the park along a 7.5-mile route with six main access points. Hudson Highlands Fjord Trail is a subsidiary nonprofit of Scenic Hudson, Inc.

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Hudson Highlands Fjord Trail Station rendering by Gray Organschi Architecture