



Hudson Highlands Fjord  
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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## **Central Hudson to begin utility pole relocation work on Route 9D in the Town of Fishkill as early as February**

**FISHKILL, NY** — Hudson Highlands Fjord Trail, Inc. (HHFT) announced today that in the coming weeks, Central Hudson will begin site work on the east side of Route 9D, just north of the Breakneck tunnel in the Town of Fishkill, to relocate utility poles from the west side of Route 9D. The utility relocation project will eliminate utility poles and wires from the view of the river in this section of the Route 9D Scenic Byway.

This preparatory work will include regrading and targeted tree removal. Work is expected to be completed by June. Although Route 9D will remain open, the site work could cause some minor traffic delays, as well as short-term closures at the Breakneck and Wilkinson Memorial trailheads and associated trail parking areas. Specific information on any trail closures will be provided when available.

The main work on HHFT's Breakneck Connector & Bridge project is slated to begin in November 2024. The relocation of utilities in the area of the Breakneck Connector trailhead will make way for new improvements, including restrooms, improved parking, the bridge across Metro-North railroad tracks, enhanced crosswalks, and wayfinding signage.

This work is the first phase of a multi-year construction project that will transform the Breakneck/Route 9D corridor. Central Hudson's work in the spring will be followed by the New York State Department of Transportation's planned improvements to the Breakneck tunnel during the summer, then construction of the Breakneck Connector & Bridge, beginning in the fall.

According to a comprehensive tree survey conducted by national environmental consulting firm Great Ecology, nearly 80% of the trees that will be removed for the utility relocation are either invasive species or are native trees in "Poor" or "Dead" condition. Ultimately, these will be replaced with 2,080 shrubs, 430 trees, and thousands of additional native plants to foster more early successional forest, dense shrub, and grassland habitat, which will better serve native wildlife.

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### About HHFT

Hudson Highlands Fjord Trail, Inc. (HHFT) is a subsidiary nonprofit of Scenic Hudson, Inc., an organization devoted to protecting the natural beauty of the Hudson Valley. HHFT is responsible for the planning and construction of the Fjord Trail, which is slated for completion in 2031. HHFT's mission is to create and steward a 7.5-mile linear park along the Hudson River that solves existing safety concerns around visitation, provides welcoming access to people of all abilities, restores and protects natural resources, and enhances quality of life for local communities. The Fjord Trail, envisioned by locals nearly two decades ago, aims to address safety, manage visitation, and respect the landscape. The Fjord Trail 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. For more information, news, and timely announcements on the Hudson Highlands Fjord Trail, visit [hhft.org](http://hhft.org).