



For Immediate Release:

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**Delaware Riverkeeper Network calls on elected officials
to direct PennDOT towards a viable plan to re-open Headquarters Road bridge**

Tinicum Township, PA – The Delaware Riverkeeper Network (DRN) is providing details for a solution that will lead to the re-opening of Headquarters Road in Tinicum Township, Bucks County, which has been closed since 2011. During a press conference near the bridge on May 7 experts discussed how to, in the most timely fashion, reopen the Headquarters Road Bridge in a way that protects natural resources and preserves historic resources, including providing information showing a temporary bridge could be erected over the current bridge footprint in a short period of time.

PennDOT is moving ahead with plans to demolish the historic bridge built in 1812 and replace it with a two-lane structure. The bridge is a contributing element to the Ridge Valley Rural Historic District, listed in the National Register of Historic Places. DRN and experts believe the loss of the historic resource and the environmental impacts on the Exceptional Value, Wild & Scenic designated Tinicum Creek will violate the National Historic Preservation Act and the National Environmental Policy Act. DRN supports rehabilitation of the bridge to preserve the area's natural and historic resources, with the temporary structure being a step towards rehabilitating and re-opening the bridge.

DRN is calling on state representatives from both parties to take action in order to provide residents with relief. "PennDOT has a record of destructive bridge replacement projects in Upper Bucks County that result in the loss of historic resources and damage to Delaware River tributaries," said Maya van Rossum, Delaware Riverkeeper and leader of the Delaware Riverkeeper Network. "This bridge has been closed for seven years. We've provided alternatives to replacement including preliminary engineering plans for rehabilitating this historic bridge but PennDOT has decided to continue with these harmful policies," van Rossum said.

PennDOT plans on replacing the one-lane bridge with a two-lane structure. "We believe that our rehabilitated one-lane bridge will be safer than PennDOT's new, bigger, wider bridge, which would lead to

higher speeds and a possible increase in the number and severity of crashes," said Mark Stout of Mark L. Stout Consulting.

Griffin Engineering of Sea Girt, NJ says a temporary bridge could be erected in place of the current bridge deck in less than three months. "A single lane temporary bridge could be quickly erected spanning over the entire existing superstructure, providing local access, and concurrently enabling rehabilitation of the existing piers while requiring only limited modification to the existing bridge deck and bridge approaches," Joe Griffin of Griffin Engineering said.

Experts say by erecting a temporary bridge, restoration work could be conducted on the historic piers. Doug Bond, Vice-President of McMullan and Associates, a firm specializing in restoring historic structures, said the stone masonry substructure can be rehabilitated to carry vehicles. "The historic stone masonry of the Headquarters Road Bridge substructure can be rehabilitated to support modern vehicle loadings using similar techniques that PennDOT has worked with on stone masonry piers that support stone arches," Bond said.

PennDOT's plans for a new bridge will result in moving one of the abutments 15 feet to the west. Several environmental experts have determined the new alignment will result in serious environmental impacts including erosion of the downstream bank resulting in property losses and sedimentation. PennDOT's proposal calls for a much larger footprint than a rehabilitation project, leading to more damage.

DRN has shown a rehabilitation would provide a faster alternative and have fewer impacts than PennDOT's proposal.

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Delaware Riverkeeper Network (DRN) is a nonprofit membership organization working throughout the four states of the Delaware River Watershed including Pennsylvania, New Jersey, Delaware and New York. DRN provides effective environmental advocacy, volunteer monitoring programs, stream restoration projects, public education, and legal enforcement of environmental protection laws.