

## Continental 1 Board Sets Strategic Agenda

Continental 1 board members and regional representatives met in Dubois, Pennsylvania, on June 10, 2010 to continue strategic planning for the organization.

"Our role is to create awareness and garner support for Continental 1 – which will create jobs and economic development for those

communities along the corridor," said Meg Lauerman, project manager.

The Board of Directors determined that outreach would target community leaders, elected officials, community representatives and the general public. As an incentive to gain public support, C-1 is offering a free, full color, car window decal to supporters. Go to [www.continental1.org/support](http://www.continental1.org/support) to request your free decal. ■

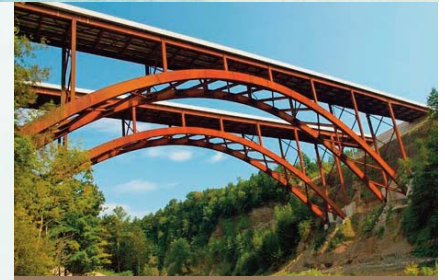
## Route 219 Bridge Design Receives Award

The U.S. Route 219 twin arch bridges over Cattaraugus Creek located in Concord, Erie County, and Ashford, Cattaraugus County, have been recognized with an award from the Association of Bridge Construction & Design (ABCD), Western New York Chapter.

Completion of these bridges is a milestone in the development of the C-1 corridor, leaving just 20 miles to go in New York State. They carry northbound and southbound

traffic over Cattaraugus Creek at the Zoar Valley Gorge.

The design and construction of the bridges were a cooperative effort between NYSDOT Region 5 in Buffalo's Design Unit C and other stakeholders, including the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, State Department of Environmental Conservation, State Historic Preservation Office and the Erie County Department of Parks and Recreation. Cold Spring Construction Company of Akron, Erie County, was the construction contractor on the project. ■



## In the News

### House Committee says proposal would streamline highway projects

Daily American  
July 7, 2011

The House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee announced a proposal for a six-year transportation reauthorization bill in Washington, D.C.

*continued on page 2*

### PA Legislators are working together to finish Rt. 219

Daily American  
June 28, 2011

The state Senate is urging the federal government to reinstate toll credit language in legislation to finish local highway projects such as Route 219.

*continued on page 3*

### Bill would help boost north/south highway

Cumberland Times-News  
May 15, 2011

A bill introduced by two U.S. senators and a congressman has added some new life to the prospects of finishing a north/south highway...

*continued on page 4*



## Save the Date for "Jobs and Progress"

Construction of safe highways brings jobs and connections to our communities. Universities, manufacturing, tourism, construction and

banking all benefit in the longer term. Explore the connection between highway construction and economic progress on Monday, October 24. Visit [www.continental1.org](http://www.continental1.org) in the coming weeks for more details. ■

## House Committee says proposal would streamline highway projects

*continued from page 1*

The transportation bill, when written, could be the vessel to change the language to allow toll credits to be used as matching funds to finish Route 219 from Somerset to Meyersdale.

Chairman John L. Mica, R-Fla., said during a news conference Thursday that the proposal is a result of hearings held across the country during the last six months and feedback from states.

"Everything you see in this proposal is something that has been discussed in these open forums and with our colleagues," he said.

Mica said the package will authorize \$35 billion a year, which is the projected yearly amount in the Highway Trust Fund. Gas taxes are deposited into the fund and distributed to states and transit agencies.

"We looked for every way possible to maximize those dollars," he said.

Mica explained that one of the large changes is streamlining the process to get federal approval for projects and giving some of the control to individual states.

Streamlining the process could save money, which would help the federal government maximize its funds, U.S. Rep. John J. Duncan, R-Tenn., said. Duncan said he has

heard about projects that have taken 15 years from planning to construction.

"This is government at its worst," he said. "If we can cut that time in half, we can do twice the amount of projects."

Part of streamlining the process is changing the review process to allow for concurrent — rather than consecutive — reviews among different agencies.

**Streamlining the process could save money, which would help the federal government maximize its funds.**

"We will pass a good bill for the people in this country," Duncan said.

U.S. Rep. Bill Shuster, R-Hollidaysburg, also spoke during the teleconference, calling the proposal an important step in the right direction. Shuster is the chairman of the Subcommittee on Railroads,

Pipelines and Hazardous Materials.

"Don't underestimate the effect streamlining is going to have," he said. "Those dollars are going to magnify themselves."

Shuster said the committee does not have a draft of the legislation.

"Right now we're deeply invested in putting the meat on the bones," he said. "We're doing that right now."

The legislation will not be introduced until the committee can get the bill on the legislative calendar. Shuster said he is not sure if it can be placed on the calendar before the recess scheduled for Aug. 8.

The proposal represents a 33 percent reduction in funding. More than \$50 billion

*continued on page 3*

## Upcoming meetings/activities

**C-1 representatives are working on the following initiatives:**

- Meeting with NYSDOT Commissioner Joan McDonald in August to request funding of the Route 219 Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement included in the New York State statewide transportation plan.
- Teleconference among the FHWA representatives in New York, Pennsylvania, West Virginia and Maryland to discuss the project's national significance and planning needs.
- Meeting with Pennsylvania Congressmen Thompson, Critz, Schuster and Vatauvuk to discuss ideas for Continental 1 in Pennsylvania, including the route and funding options. This is a significant opportunity for C-1 to build consensus to complete the 200 miles of Pennsylvania Route 219 as a four-lane interstate, which will create further need to push for the New York completion. Many thanks to Pat Jones, ED of the IBTTA, and to C-1 Board members John Vatauvuk and Mike Glesk, for their invaluable contributions and attendance.
- Continued education of state legislators on the need to return the ability for Appalachian Regional Commission (ARC) states to use toll credits as a federal match on their ADHS highway projects in order to move C-1 construction forward in southern PA, MD and WVA.

## House Committee says proposal would streamline highway projects

*continued from page 2*

in spending was authorized in 2010, according to the committee. Shuster said the additional money came from the general fund.

The Highway Trust Fund consists of the 18.3-cent tax on every gallon of gasoline that is sent to the federal government.

"It is a user fee," Shuster said. "If you don't use the roadways, if you don't fill up your car with gas, you don't pay for the highways."

With Republicans making cuts, Shuster said the transportation committee was not able to take money from the general fund.

"I'm a huge supporter of the transportation system," he said. "We've got to make sure we're responsible."

In 2006 the toll credit language was changed to not allow Appalachian highways to use toll revenues as a state match on federal-aid projects such as Route 219. Shuster said changing the toll credit language to allow toll credits as the required state match for new highway construction is a top priority.

"It is one of my highest priorities," he said. "Until we draw a draft copy up, I can't say it is in there." ■

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## PA Legislators are working together to finish Rt. 219

*continued from page 1*

The resolution, which was introduced by Sen. John Wozniak and passed unanimously Monday by the Senate, urges the federal government to promote completion of local highway projects by again accepting toll credits as matching funds.

Construction on part of Route 219 from Somerset to Meyersdale is at an impasse due to a \$35 million state funding shortfall.

"There is no reason to put roadblocks in the way of progress," Wozniak, D-Westmont, said in a press release. "The improving economy has been slow to provide jobs and we have to have more options in moving forward with transportation investments."

In 2006 the toll credit language was changed to not allow the Appalachian Development Highway System to use toll revenues as a state match on federal-aid projects such as Route 219. Toll credits could help Pennsylvania generate its 20 percent share of the \$300 million project.

Somerset County Commissioner Jim Marker said the resolution is another step in the process.

"I appreciate the support from Sen. Wozniak and the Pennsylvania Senate in urging Congress to include toll credit language in the new transportation bill," he said.

Marker said the Somerset County commissioners have been working with many groups to have the language reinstated.

"The commissioners have built a coalition of congressmen and groups in support of this vital language," he said.

A transportation bill has not yet been introduced, but federal lawmakers from Pennsylvania are committed to getting the language back into a bill.

*continued on page 4*

## PA Legislators are working together to finish Rt. 219

*continued from page 3*

“(U.S. Rep. Bill) Shuster remains committed to completing Route 219 and continues to monitor efforts at the state and federal level to see that it is accomplished,” said Jeff Urbanchuk, Shuster’s spokesman.

In April U.S. Rep. Mark Critz, D-Johnstown, testified before the House Subcommittee on Highways and Transit on changing the toll credit language. He said Tuesday that he agrees with Wozniak.

“States must be allowed to count toll credits as the required state match for new highway construction,” Critz said in an email. “Members of the Pennsylvania congressional delegation are working to address this important issue in the next transportation bill, and its success will jump-start highway construction projects throughout the commonwealth.”

Critz said the resolution could help influence congressional leadership.

“This resolution is helpful because it lets our leadership know that the states are serious about this issue and are committed to advancing construction projects throughout the Appalachian Development Highway System,” he said. ■



Award winning U.S. Route 219 twin arch bridges over Cattaraugus Creek located in Concord, Erie County, and Ashford, Cattaraugus County.

## Bill would help boost north/south highway

*continued from page 1*

that would greatly impact our area, a project that seemed almost doomed just a few years ago.

U.S. Sen. Benjamin Cardin of Maryland and U.S. Sen. Robert Casey and Rep. Bill Shuster of Pennsylvania have sponsored a measure that would allow states to use road toll funds to match federal dollars for the Appalachian Development Highway System. The highway would connect U.S. Routes 219 and 220 to Corridor H and Interstate 79.

A study by Frostburg State University indicates that if the highway is completed, 2,400 to 2,600 new jobs would be created in the region because businesses would be attracted to the area.

Anyone who doubts those figures should note the development that has taken place along

the north-south routes of I-79, which goes through Morgantown, W.Va.; Interstate 81, which passes through Hagerstown, Martinsburg, W.Va., and Winchester, Va., and the Interstate 95 corridor.

There has been little progress recently with regard to the Appalachian Highway Project because of funding problems, and passage of the Cardin-Casey-Shuster measure would help alleviate that situation.

Completion of the route still lies a good distance in the future, but this latest development gives us continued hope. ■