

Time	Name (First)	Name (Last)	Comment	Address (City Add Zip)		
12/21/21 9:42 PM	Carol H	Brouwer	<p>My husband & I are in some part of the Douglas forest year round. We exercise our dog daily and revel in the natural world for our physical and emotional well being, We dodge rocks and clamber over tree roots. We greet and chat with fellow park users.</p> <p>I believe pavement is an unacceptable material for the SNETT. Hearing of the proposal to pave, I thought of the old song, Big Yellow Taxi, by singer songwriter Joni Mitchell.</p> <p>Please widen and maintain the areas in question and allow for permeable surfaces for drainage.</p>	Douglas	MA	01516-2840

12/21/21 8:47 PM	Valerie	Clark	<p>Living in the town bordering the Douglas State Forest, with its Airline Trail in CT connecting to the SNETT, I am a frequent hiker and horseback rider of the SNETT. I am opposed to the proposed SNETT project in its entirety for the following main reasons (limited by space, I have many reasons to oppose the proposal): The proposal to pave the 10' swath will ruin the beauty, usefulness and natural environment of the SNETT. Changing the surface will force some users (carriage drivers, dog sled drivers, horseback riders) off the main section of the trail and increase its danger for all users (increased speeds, risk of injuries from falls) and increase maintenance/maintenance costs. The proposal eliminates one parking area that is currently used by horseback riders. The proposal includes expensive parking lot development but as stated by the consultant at the hearing, does not accommodate adequately the needs of those using horse trailers (consultant had no information available on size of parking space). No indication is made of and the consultant couldn't and didn't answer questions about the consideration of how/where a tail gate could be lowered to unload a horse, space for the horse to step off or how a horse would safely be tied/secured in the parking area with traffic lanes next to the parking space. Only a single cab pickup and a regular two-horse trailer were considered for the area. Installation of "benches" takes away from the natural landscape. The proposal in its entirety develops a beautiful, natural area and makes it like a city park. No consideration was made on the impact to wildlife (turtles in particular) of this development. No funding is made for increased human resources to staff or maintain the park. Money would be far better spent on investing in DCR personnel. The proposal is a waste of funds and has given no consideration for those who use and love Douglas State Forest and the SNETT. Please reject this proposal in its entirety.</p>	Thompson	CT	06277
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12/21/21 5:44 PM	Ann	Hanscom	<p>As a horseperson, hiker, Audubon member, and Board member of Metacomet Land Trust, I think paving 6 miles of what is already a wonderfully managed (thank you, BSTRA!) functional wildlife and passive recreation resource is an ill-conceived idea. The SNETT trail serves as a quiet, neighbor-friendly, mental-health-restoring, natural space (as natural as can be expected in this century) for many, many users. Asphalt paving goes against every hope for reducing petroleum use, limiting toxic run off, and curbing run off erosion in the face of the challenges of climate change (voluminous, heavy rainfall, soil recharge). As the paving ages, surface drainage erodes the sandy soil at the edges of the paving, causing the paving to break up, thereby increasing soil subsidence under and beside the asphalt.</p> <p>Think of the thousands of turtles (of many species) , who depend on the SNETT trail for egg laying, and the predators who like turtle eggs for breakfast!</p> <p>If infrastructure money is burning a hole in DCR's pockets, why not use it to increase staff numbers, and staff salaries, and reasonable maintenance costs? Doesn't DCR stand for Conservation AND Recreation?????</p> <p>Ann Hanscom, Uxbridge</p>	Uxbridge, Ma	MA	02569
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12/21/21 4:25 PM	Lori	Hout	<p>My family resides in Douglas, where we have recently learned there are "near-complete" plans to pave most of the width of the Southern New England Trunkline Trail. We use this trail several times a week, and have only recently learned that despite strong local opposition, DCR plans to move forward.</p> <p>We are against paving this trail for a number of reasons, including reducing feasibility of use by existing users due to segmentation of the width into paved and unpaved surfaces. Shockingly, DCR attempted to argue against our opposition by saying (1) "This is how it was always planned" - which is untrue and (2) "It needs to be ADA compliant" - a characteristic that can be achieved with non-asphalt surfaces.</p> <p>This area is a wonderful natural environment which is used by many, including runners, bikers, horseback riders, and hikers. And those of us who currently use this trail feel that our voices are not being heard or respected.</p> <p>Please make a change to this plan, compromise with us, and make everyone happy rather than taking away something from those who have both used and maintained this trail. Equity is not achieved by taking away from one and giving to another. We can achieve equity without paving this trail. ADA compliance can be achieved without asphalt.</p>	Douglas	MA	01516
12/21/21 2:01 PM	Shirley	Mosczyński	<p>I am against the proposed asphalt paving of the SNETT for the following reasons:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - there has been no analysis of the endangered species habitat along the trail - paving makes it too hot for animals' feet - people like to ride/walk in a natural area and this is rural -- leave it natural - fix the parking areas and signage <p>Thank you.</p>	Douglas	MA	01516

12/21/21 1:07 PM	Dan	Fitzpatrick	Please do not put pavement on the trunk line. I walk often and would be too hot in summer and too icy in the winter.	Douglas	MA	01516
12/21/21 12:49 PM	Keri	Jackman	As a local Douglas resident who hikes this state forest regularly I am strongly opposed to paving the SNETT trail. There is a local trail system in Uxbridge that is paved that sees almost no traffic in the warmer months because of the heat coming off the pavement. That heat makes that trail unbearable for walkers, runners, cyclists, pets, and children, nevermind local wildlife. I have seen much wildlife on the Douglas trails including the SNETT. Turtles laying eggs on the trails, frogs, deer, and even spotted salamanders. Please take the consideration of the wildlife and local residents into account for your decision.	Douglas	MA	01516
12/21/21 12:36 PM	Karen	Eisenhauer	I am a user of the SNETT for horseback riding. There are fewer and fewer places to trail ride in central Massachusetts because of continued development, so it is important to us to keep the SNETT usable for horses. It is one of our favorite places to ride. Please consider another surface other than paving so that we can continue to ride our horses on that trail. Thanks for your consideration.	North Grafton	MA	01536
12/21/21 10:53 AM	Lisa	Mosczyński	On behalf of the Board of Directors of the Metacomet Land Trust, Inc., please be advised that at its December 2021 meeting the board voted unanimously to oppose the asphalt paving of the Southern New England Trunkline Trail as proposed for the trail bed in Douglas. The Metacomet Land Trust is a land conservation organization that serves the towns along the SNETT including Douglas and Franklin. https://metacometlandtrust.org/ Thank you for the opportunity to comment. Lisa Mosczyński, President	Franklin	MA	02038

12/21/21 10:47 AM	Lisa	Mosczyński	<p>I am opposed to this proposal as presented on December 7, 2021.</p> <p>I am opposed to the asphalt paving of the trail.</p> <p>I am opposed to dividing the trail.</p> <p>There was little mentioned re maintenance. The park is chronically short staffed and we need to have adequate staffing. Asphalt crumbles and cracks. The edges create a hazard. The ice in winter is dangerous. Snowmobiles will chew it up in the winter and illegal ATVs will destroy it in the summer.</p> <p>Illegal use of ATV's, camping, fires and more go unchecked because there is little policing (2 EPO's for Worcester County?).</p> <p>There is no analysis of what accident rates on an asphalt trail will add to the town's EMS capacity since they are the first responders. Were the Police and Fire Chiefs consulted?</p> <p>There is also no environmental impact mentioned. The wildlife along the trail is wild and that's what makes it so special. Asphalt paving will create a super-heated surface that will kill amphibious species trying to cross it in the summer months and make it too uncomfortable for people to use as the temperature increases due to climate change.</p> <p>Aggregate materials and/or stone dust can meet ADA requirements and retain the aesthetic of the trail as it exists now. It's used in Bellingham and on the Airline Trail in CT.</p> <p>I would rather that some of the funds for this proposal go to maintaining what we have in Douglas.</p> <p>Thank you for this opportunity to comment.</p>	Douglas	MA	01516
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12/21/21 10:37 AM	Susan	Perkins	<p>Hello, My name is Sue Perkins, resident of Wallum Lake Rd. Douglas, abut State Forest that connects to SNETT and a 20+ year volunteer serving on Open Space Committee. This 'proposal' to pave 6 mi. is unwanted and unwarranted. We fought a mega dump for 11 years and you bailed us out. Spending \$8 million on a remote trail with few paved accesses and eliminating uses of cycling, skiing, running, walking, riding horses, and horse pulled carriages due to a various levels and aging pavement is wrong. The DCR owns 6,000+ acres in this town and as such is an inferior tax payer. We do not have the services in town to oversee the drama at Wallum Lake in the summer as well as serve 6 miles of traffic accidents on the SNETT. One wonders at the environmental impacts as well, something us tax payers have to adhere to... Please reconsider this paving and compromise with crushed stone or another surface that suits everyone, or leave it alone.</p> <p>Hopeful that you make the right decision, I am, Susan T. Perkins</p>	Douglas	MA	01516
12/21/21 10:28 AM	Jane	Mosczyński	<p>I oppose DCR's SNETT proposal.</p> <p>Here's why:</p> <p>Asphalt paving will</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -diminish habitat for native flora, fauna, and fungi already stressed by climate change -increase the use of motorized vehicles -require additional maintenance in the form of people and materials, not factored into this proposal <p>The Douglas State Forest and Wallum Lake State Park are understaffed as it is and potential maintenance for this effort would be an additional burden.</p> <p>I enjoy mountain biking, hiking, dog walking, and cross-country skiing on the SNETT.</p> <p>Keep the SNETT wild.</p>	Douglas	MA	01516

12/21/21 8:36 AM	Nancy	Mahoney	I reside in Douglas right down the street from the SNETT. I am wholeheartedly AGAINST the paving of this beautiful NATURAL resource! Why in God's name would you pave such a wonderful place?? We are a rural town and want to remain as such. We are not the city and do not wish to have people foreign to our way of life making decisions for what is best for us. We can all follow the money trail to know what this is all about, and it is not for the "good of all". Who is going to maintain this? Black ice in the winter, roots growing through, trees falling on it, cracking and bulging after time, etc. You are just asking for trouble by doing this in a town that is happy the way it is. There is danger in having horses walking on a narrow path next a 10' paved path. What happens when an accident occurs? Will you take the blame? It will be squarely on your shoulders. In addition, what about the wildlife that reside in and around the trail? You will be disrupting so many things by doing this. All in the name of progress? For who's benefit, out of towners? In that regard, the proposed parking is insufficient for the amount of people that you will theoretically be bringing in to the town. If you say they will not come from out of town, then why push something down our throats that the townspeople DO NOT WANT? If you must spend the tax payers money somewhere, and insist on disturbing something that does not need it, please consider an alternative to pavement. Pavement is such an awful idea for this trail. In closing, I do not understand why you are trying to trick the town into having something done that we do not want. You only informed the Selectmen the day before the 12/7 meeting? Without giving them any plans and information to prepare. Then had it remotely instead of facing the townspeople. Then you change the comment period from 12/28 to 12/21. It was clearly stated that we had until 12/28, why the deception??? Please think about what you are doing and stop it.	Douglas	MA	01516
12/21/21 8:28 AM	Gregory	Reppucci	I am against the paving of southern new england trunkline trail	Groveland	MA	01834

12/21/21 7:05 AM	Debra	Carlson	<p>I am in opposition to paving the surface of the SNETT.</p> <p>I believe that 1 of the reasons for the increased use of our forested parks is the peaceful affect of being out in nature. The sight of pavement in the woods is certainly in direct contrast with that feeling & the esthetic quality of the SNETT. This is truly not an Environmentally Sensitive Design as slide 7 indicates is a goal; it is more in line with a city park than a state forest.</p> <p>Contrary to what Patricia said, equestrians & trail riders do not use pavement. While horses may walk on the pavement, the concussive force of any speed greater than that is detrimental to them. With the current footing, it is actually quite enjoyable for us to go at a faster pace than a walk on the SNETT. In addition, dry pavement is a slippery surface, even at a walk, for a shod horse. I would be interested to see Patricia's information regarding soil stabilization not being suitable for horses.</p> <p>If anyone has observed the actual traffic on the SNETT they would see horses, mountain bikers, joggers, dog walkers & families all co-using this trail in a manner that is courteous and accommodating to each other. Pavement and the addition of bike racks encourages the use of road bicycles. These bikes travel at a greater speed. Coming toward horses or from their behind at this speed is likely to spook them and causes a dangerous situation. Many road bike riders do not frequently come in contact with horses and are unaware of the safety issues or of trail etiquette, which actually states they should slow down, stop if signaled, etc.</p> <p>Paul mentioned something to the effect of this type of project separating users. This would definitely separate users who currently co-exist quite nicely. A 5' strip is barely wide enough for horses to walk single file. Horses essentially become excluded.</p> <p>With regard to the increased signage in the Park, perhaps signage that indicates trail etiquette could be incorporated, regardless of paving.</p>	Rutland	MA	01543
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12/20/21 11:01 PM	Denise	Skowronski	<p>I've lived in Douglas for 27 years , Was not our first choice to raise a family here but it has served us well . Do I want to retire here,No . There is nothing in this town and the so called "townies " will try and keep it that way as long as they can by lying and saying no one wants this paved trail. I have watch and heard a lot of comments about this. As a bike rider I would love to be able to hop on my bike and jump on this trail or take a nice safe walk . As of now street bike riding in Douglas is pretty much impossible The roads are so narrow I'm afraid of getting hit by a car . Having this paved trail would benefit greatly . I now have to load up my bike and travel to bike paths like the Uxbridge/Millville SNETT trail , Which is very nicely done !!!There has been talk that the Douglas residents do not want this in our town due to possibly ruining the nature of our forest . I would like to say this is not true. We have plenty of state forest for hiking,horses, mountain bikes , etc. in other areas of town . This would benefit our town with dog walkers and even promote physical activity for our youth like skateboarding. I commend the planning on incorporating a side horse trail for our horse riders. I ask for those Douglas residents that are against this to check out what SNETT committee has already done in Uxbridge/Millville . It is beautiful and well done Thank you Denise Skowronski</p>	Douglas	MA	01516
12/20/21 9:37 PM	mark	Brundage	<p>I disagree with paving the trail. Pavement/black top is hot in the summer and slippery in the winter. are you going to plow the snow for bike and wheel chair use? The dirt bikes and quads do almost all the damage so police them and you wont have the major damage issue. Talk about environmental.</p> <p>I've been around long enough to have seen trains on that track and motorized vehicles have always been the problem. What about the drain ditches on either side of the cuts? Are those going to be repaired and maintained? A lot of them have been damaged or filled in by well meaning maintainers.</p> <p>Please don't pave.</p> <p>Also, Its not the Southern New England Trunk line. That name goes to the unfinished rail line that runs parallel to the one you want to pave. Read a book titled "Titanic Railroad", lots of good information. That one was being built in 1917. The rail bed you want to pave was built in 1840s or 50s.</p> <p>Respectfully, Mark Brundage</p>	Uxbridge	MA	01569

12/20/21 9:14 PM	Bonnie	Lepage	<p>I am opposed to the paving of the SNETT in Douglas. I am not opposed to improvements being made by way of a stone dust or other natural surface as is done on other sections of the SNETT.</p> <p>I am an abutter to the trail. I use the trail in all seasons for walking, bike riding, cross country skiing and snow shoeing. During our recent covid pandemic the number of people utilizing the trail with their families has multiplied substantially.</p> <p>The improvements that have been made by the local groups who use the trail have made it more accessible to all groups while maintaining the local rural charm of the area.</p> <p>One of my concerns is the maintenance of the trail if it were to be paved with asphalt. I bike the trail that goes from Woonsocket to Providence; it is treacherous in areas where tree roots have broken through the asphalt. This would not happen on a natural surface trail.</p> <p>I respectfully request that you consider the concerns of those of us who live in this beautiful country setting and use your resources to improve the trail by means of a natural surface that would be usable by all who enjoy the beauty of our natural resources .. horses, bikes, hikers, dog walkers, snowmobilers, cross-country skiers, families just enjoying nature .. if done properly, there is room for all of us to share this beautiful natural resource.</p> <p>Thank you.</p>	Douglas	MA	01516
12/20/21 7:36 PM	Sharon	Smith	<p>I believe the SNETT should be kept as natural as possible. Many people use this trail for walking, horseback riding and cycling and it's a wonderful place to get away from all the black-top in order to enjoy nature and serenity. It's a fact of life that one place is not meant to be and does not need to be for all people. There is no place that is. Even if just a portion is asphalt, then why not start paving other place i.e. trails in Douglas State Forest or Purgatory Chasm? If motorized apparatus is allowed, it then becomes dangerous and a liability. If a portion is asphalt, what happens when it starts failing? These trails must be preserved before they too become extinct. The SNETT is a treasure and must be protected from having any asphalt.</p>	Douglas	MA	01516
12/20/21 5:46 PM	Sheila	Guimond	<p>NO Paving PLEASE</p> <p>(1)Paving will ADD our small bit to Global Warming. (2) Pavement is damaging to human & animal body joints . (3) Riders nose to tail on narrow pathway(not fun) (4)Pavement run off endangers wetlands. (5) Paving cost & maintenance exceeds natural surface cost (6)no natural aesthetics to a Long Black Line while walking, bike riding or horseback riding.</p>	North Attleboro	MA	02760

12/20/21 5:23 PM	Patricia	McElligott	<p>I am writing in regard to the proposed paving of the SNETT. We are avid hikers, bicyclists, bird watchers and horseback riders and cherish the natural beauty of this park.</p> <p>In these times of social distancing, the park and forest provide a therapeutic refuge, where we enjoy exploring the flora and fauna that it harbors. We hope that they can be preserved for future generations.</p> <p>We understand that this treasure should provide access for all nature lovers. However, we implore that a natural surface, such as stone dust or a soil stabilizer be utilized to achieve ADA compliance.</p> <p>Paving the State Park trail harkens to the lyrics of Joni Mitchell's song "They paved Paradise and put up a parking lot".</p> <p>Please reconsider the visual blight, runoff impact and heat and icing effect that a paved trail would create upon this tapestry.</p> <p>We respectfully request that a natural surface be utilized for reconstruction of the SNETT to act in concert with the intrinsic beauty and habitat of this State Park and Forest.</p>	Millbury	MA	01527
12/20/21 2:38 PM	Rachel	Gerstein	<p>I am a resident of Grafton, but often take my horse to ride the SNETT. paving the trail as proposed would make riding there much less enjoyable, as pavement is slippery and hard on the horses legs.</p> <p>PLEASE reconsider this!</p>	N Grafton	MA	01536
12/20/21 11:43 AM	Rita	Ballou	<p>As residents and taxpayers in Douglas, I am writing for my Husband, Howard Ballou and myself.</p> <p>We are completely against the paving of the SNETT you have planned.</p> <p>My family uses the trail very frequently for enjoyment just the way it is!</p> <p>Back to nature is why people seek that type of trail.</p> <p>There are already paved and hard surface recreational areas for people to utilize.</p> <p>We need to keep the SNETT natural.</p> <p>The most disturbing aspect of this entire project to me is how did it get this far without any prior resident, voter, or trail user input at all????</p> <p>There are many groups along the SNETT that work hard to keep the trails user friendly and maintained the way it is</p> <p>Please do not go ahead with this project!</p>	Douglas	MA	01516

12/20/21 11:18 AM	Carolyn	Assad	<p>Paving the Douglas State Forest would take away from the forest atmosphere. Enjoying nature on pavement defeats the purpose. The forest is enjoyed by many outdoor enthusiasts, Dog walkers, are going to have to deal with hot pavement in the summer, along with skateboarders and rollerblades which could be stressful for many dogs, not to mention the equestrians that enjoy the forest as well. Skateboarders with horses and dogs are not a good combination. The forest should remain a forest, not a paved roadway, there are natural options to keep nature in the forest and not turn the forest into urban roadway. I don't understand the point of having conservation land and a state forest if you are going to pave it? that's not conservation land, that's a road system, now are you going to have to plow and salt the roadway? what does that do to the pond and streams? What does that do to the water sources for all the animals that live in the forest? In the summer when that pavement is steaming hot, those animals might need to cross the road migrating thru the forest....The whole point of having a state forest for conservation to land is to keep it as a forest...people want to enjoy the beauty of being in nature. so using natural options to keep ADA compliant, and keeping the feel of the forest should be what is most important. Paving a portion of the forest takes away from the purpose of the forest. There are very few places where you can enjoy the beauty of nature without the sounds of city life...by paving you would be taking the sounds of city life into nature.</p> <p>Keep the forest natural as it was intended to be.</p>	Sutton	MA	01590
12/20/21 10:37 AM	Linda	Chita	<p>I am asking that you DO NOT pave the SNETT. My husband and I are horse owners and riders. Paving this trail would change the natural beauty of our rural town plus open it up to all kinds of vehicles. Riding our horses would become dangerous. Dog walking would become dangerous. Please reconsider this drastic change to our much loved SNETT.</p>	UXBRIDGE	MA	01569
12/20/21 10:35 AM	Nathaniel	Welch	<p>I fully support the improvements proposed to the SNETT and think it is a great idea to take it to the CT border to connect to the Airline Trail.</p> <p>I am in favor of a combined paved trail with equestrian path alongside. I have frequently ridden the Washington Secondary Trail in RI and a significant portion f that trail has an equestrian path running alongside.</p> <p>Please speed up the project if possible so that we can all enjoy the completed path</p>	CONCORD	MA	01742

12/20/21 10:06 AM	Ted	Salem	<p>I use the Trunkline for biking so I am excited about this project. My preference would be to have gravel used instead of asphalt. The current condition the path is in not is not enjoyable even with a mountain bike because rocks are too large in certain areas. If it can can be graded for use with a hybrid bike, I think would encompass a majority of users. Sad to say aggregate is probably not great for a wheelchair but I have no insights with that.</p> <p>So improvements are great, but my preference is an improved aggregate path and set aside savings (over asphalt) for maintenance.</p> <p>Best of luck.</p> <p>Ted</p>	Douglas	MA	01516
12/20/21 9:56 AM	Patricia	Arcure	<p>Please do not pave the SNETT, the rural character of the trails should be maintained and should be accessible, safe and comfortable for the horses that are ridden there. There should also be a designated parking area for the horse trailers that is accessible and safe.</p>	Oxford	MA	01540
12/20/21 8:45 AM	Susan	Freeman	<p>I am against paving the trail system and removing room for horse trailer parking on South Street. I am an avid equestrian local to the area that uses these trails.</p>	Douglas	MA	01516
12/20/21 8:32 AM	Michael	Quinones	<p>Absolutely ridiculous paving a walkway in the Douglas State Forest!! Might as well change the name from trunkline trail to highway trail. Waste of taxpayes money!! I am all for atv use on state land. Although it is prohibited it will never stop. This is going to be a problem with reckless rider's doing burnouts and going 100 mph! The commonwealth is loosing 10s of thousands of dollars in sales tax and registration fees because people are buying atvs in other states not required to pay sales tax and registering them elsewhere! Why cant the commonwealth open state parks that taxpayers fund to atvs. Get more patrols on trails! Its gonna be nothing but trouble paving a portion of the trunkline</p>	Douglas	MA	01516

12/20/21 8:30 AM	Bruce	Rioux	<p>Please DO NOT PAVE the SNETT!</p> <p>I highly recommend using a Stabilized Aggregate or Stone Dust surface instead, for many reasons:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Fits the rural community- Best maintains the natural beauty of the trail- Matches up with the connection to the Airline Trail in CT- Pervious surface- Doesn't promote high speed activities, thus reducing potential user conflicts- Has the least impact on current trail users- Doesn't get blisteringly hot in the summer heat- Reduces chances of ice buildup during the winter <p>Pavement is not only ugly in this setting, but also has many negative effects on the current users. Pavement would result in the opposite of all of the above items. So NO PAVEMENT please!</p> <p>Thank you, -Bruce Rioux</p>	Douglas	MA	01516
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12/20/21 1:38 AM	Donna	Peronace	<p>Dear DCR,</p> <p>I am writing to express my support of keeping the Southern New England Trunkline Trail (SNETT) a natural surface. I support making the trail sharing the trails with users of all abilities but as an equestrian it is important to me that the trail not be paved so that it remains natural and more suitable for horses. Douglas is a rural community. It is my understanding that there are natural surfaces that are also ADA compliant. If ADA compliance is the issue, please use a surface that aligns with Douglas' rural character while bringing the trail into compliance.</p> <p>I understand that current plan is for a shared use 10-foot-wide paved pathway, with a side path to accommodate equestrians. My issue with this plan is the fact that DCR wants to pave the SNETT in Douglas. The sections in Franklin and Bellingham have been finished off with a soil stabilizer mixed with (I think) stone dust, (could be some type of crushed granite). In other words, a natural surface. This made the surface ADA compliant and suitable for horseback riders. The SNETT turns into the Airline Trail when you hit Connecticut. CT is stone dust in the areas that have been improved and the existing natural surface for the rest of it. It makes no sense to not continue the continuity of the surface of the trail. Douglas is a rural community; we all enjoy the outdoors and want to keep it natural. We don't want a paved path.</p> <p>It is always a special treat when I can ride my horse on the SNETT in Douglas, I'd like to see that continue. Thank you for your attention and consideration of this matter.</p>	Westborough	MA	01581
12/19/21 10:49 PM	Audrey	Garcia	<p>I am writing to voice my opposition to paving the SNETT. Doing so would totally change the character of the SNETT. Historically it's been a trail in the woods and is enjoyed by horseback riders, mountain bikers, walkers and hikers all of whom prefer a non-paved surface to travel on.</p> <p>Sincerely, Audrey Garcia</p>	Waltham	MA	02452

12/19/21 6:48 PM	Lisa	Ferro	<p>Hello,</p> <p>I understand there are changes in the works for the SNETT.</p> <p>I would like to comment.</p> <p>Please continue to provide adequate parking for Horse Trailers and keep the trails footing user friendly for horses.</p> <p>We are being pushed out of so many DCR run areas in MA. Will this eventually be another one?</p> <p>We live here. We are not coming in from urban areas to use the trails.</p> <p>These trails are in our "back yards", towns and counties.</p> <p>I don't walk. I don't hike. I don't push a baby carriage. I don't ride a bicycle.</p> <p>These seem to be the only groups DCR prefers on these (EVERYONES) trails.</p> <p>Please note there are many more of these types of users than horse back riders.</p> <p>The horses manure is not poison. (Contrary to uneducated folks belief)</p> <p>Their hoof prints don't damage the ground. If adequate parking is available for trailers along a trail system, it would limit concentrated use of any one area.</p> <p>This country was explored, expanded and farmed by horses and on horseback by our forefathers.</p> <p>Please continue to provide equal trail access areas for horseback riders to continue the exploration of the amazing Massachusetts country side.</p> <p>A quick note is we are recently seeing motorized bicycles on trails.</p> <p>We can also see where Mtn. bikes are eroding bank ends and hill sides. This damage is not due to horse use.</p> <p>The equestrian community could be your eyes and ears monitoring appropriate use and protection of these valuable trails, don't exclude this group of users who enjoy these privilege's so much!</p> <p>Thank you for your consideration.</p> <p>Lisa Ferro</p>	Hubbardston	MA	01452
12/19/21 6:44 PM	Raymond	Lafave	<p>I agree with the majority that spoke on the 7th Dec not to pave the trail. I think holliston rail bed is done in stone dust and holds up really well and there are all kinds of people doing different activities on the trail. I would like to see either stone dust or the stabilized soil used. Thanks for your time</p>	Douglas	MA	01516

12/19/21 5:10 PM	Elizabeth	Faxon	<p>I would like to request that the trail surface be stone dust or packed soil only. If the trail is paved the creation of impervious surface, will have environmentally harmful effects such as increased Stormwater runoff, reduction in groundwater infiltration, increased need for erosion control and interruption of natural wildlife corridors.</p> <p>The trail can be used more safely by pedestrians, cyclists, equestrians, etc. if it is a non paved surface which. A surface which is packed soil is more forgiving and easier on the human body, horse and other animals to walk or more strenuous exercise.</p> <p>Finally my experience is cyclists & wheeled users tend to move with great speed along a paved trail which can be a safety concern when the trail is used for many different recreational activities.</p> <p>Please consider these comments and create parking for horse trailers (stone dust) too.</p> <p>Thank you so much Respectfully Elizabeth Faxon Environmental Scientist Equestrian 45 year Massachusetts resident</p>	Pepperell	MA	01463
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12/19/21 4:35 PM	Charles	Cheney	<p>I believe that the proposal to pave most of the width of the SNETT is a bad idea for three reasons.</p> <p>1: Is it worth the cost? It will be more expensive to implement than the alternative proposals (and during implementation will be more disruptive to ongoing use). Unless the design (and budget) will cover proper drainage and subsoil work (similar to the effort of building a subdivision road) it won't be long before frost heaves start to break up the surface, requiring expensive maintenance. Even if funds are available, what other projects could be funded if a less costly approach to the SNETT upgrade were selected?</p> <p>2: Who will actually benefit? All permitted uses of the SNETT are better supported by either of the other alternatives (stone dust or soil stabilant) over the full width of the trail.</p> <p>3. What about unintended consequences? Turning the SNETT into a high-speed access road seems very likely to make it more difficult to control illegal operation of motor vehicles in the Douglas State Forest and other green space adjacent to the SNETT.</p>	Douglas	MA	01516
12/19/21 1:28 PM	Jesse	Menard	<p>As a lifelong Douglas resident, and frequent user of the SNETT, I strongly oppose the paving of the trail, that already serves many different communities so well. Pavement would be a detriment to it's usefulness to thousands.</p>	Douglas	MA	01516

12/19/21 11:26 AM	Diane	Sullivan	<p>As a frequent user of the trails in Douglas State Park, I would like to state my strong objections to the proposed renovations to the trunkline Trail. I utilize these trails for multiple reasons. In addition to riding horses on these trails, I also mountain bike and walk my dogs.</p> <p>The current plan to pave the trail is definitely not in the best interest of all the people that currently use the area. The reason people like to use mountain bikes is the area is because it is not paved. There are many paved bike paths that can be utilized for anybody that would like to ride on pavement. There are very few areas that can be utilized for mountain bikers avoiding paved areas. As an equestrian the thought of having pavement is very depressing. Douglas is an amazing area to ride a horse. Paving this trail would in my opinion make it a very undesirable place to ride. Pavement can be slippery for horses especially with metal shoes. And if the area is paved we are going to have a lot of road bikes moving very quickly and it's just a matter of time before a horse gets spooked by fast moving bikes and a rider ends up falling onto a paved area. It would make it very dangerous for horseback riding for multiple reasons.</p> <p>Paving the area would also detract immensely from the woodsy feel and natural environment. And once this pavement is put in there is no taking it back. There is way too much of the world that is paved as it is. We don't need to add to it when it is absolutely unnecessary and unwanted. A more natural surface can keep the natural look and feel of the area And at the same time preserve the use of the area for everyone. I've heard the argument that it needs to be wheelchair accessible. A natural surface would be just as wheelchair accessible as pavement. And the environment would be much more enjoyable for those people as well.</p>	Harrisville	RI	02830
12/19/21 8:31 AM	Ralph	Williams	Please do not pave the trail! It is dangerous for horses and mountain bikes do not need it. Also, water needs a pervious surfae.	Ipswich	MA	01938
12/19/21 8:01 AM	Laurie	Harman	<p>Please don't pave this- there are plenty of alternative substrates to make it ADA compliant without paving. We go to the woods for a taste of natural surroundings- not more pavement. Keep the character of the railways and keep it natural.</p> <p>Thank you for your consideration.</p>	Medfield	MA	02052
12/19/21 7:41 AM	Deb	Cary	Hoping to continue multi use with horses allowed- seems like paving would be problematic	Princeton	MA	01541

12/19/21 5:11 AM	Stephanie	Dreyer	In regards to the refinishing of the SNETT trail, please refrain from using the plan of 10 feet width of pavement with a 5 foot natural surface beside it. As an equestrian on Martha's Vineyard, our State Forest has a similar path system, and the paving allows cyclists and others to "fly" by the horses, often startling them. Also the maintenance of the pavement is problematic as it gets cracks and fissures over time. I am in favor of the soil stabilizer to "harden" the soil and make it ADA compliant. Thank you,	West Tisbury	MA	02575
12/19/21 12:32 AM	Maureen	Navarro	NONONONONONONONOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOO. Pave paradise and put a parking lot????? WHY??	Douglas	MA	01516
12/18/21 8:04 PM	Christine	Nichols	Please do not pave the NE trunkline. The character and the availability to recreational multiuse is the best feature of this amazing trail system. Multiuse including horse back riding and mountain biking as well as hiking is best served with a softer surface.	South Grafton	MA	01560
12/18/21 7:52 PM	mark	kaminsky	no pave no way.....only used for horses , animals and people.....come on.....this is the new century.....act responsible	graffton	MA	01519
12/18/21 6:29 PM	Nancy	Russell	As a frequent user of the SNETT , please DO NOT pave the trail. Stone dust or a soil stabilizer would be a much more "natural" surface for the majority of trail users. Thank you.	Medway	MA	02053
12/18/21 6:23 PM	Lynn	Wentworth	Please do not pave this trail. Please leave it available for us horseback riders to continue to use and enjoy.	N. Grosvenor	CT	06266
12/18/21 6:21 PM	Margo	Petracone	Please do not pave this trail. Equine trails in Massachusetts are disappearing at alarming rate. don't take this one. Margo Petracone	BARRE	MA	01005-9141

12/18/21 4:45 PM	Brian	Forestal	<p>Hi There,</p> <p>I'm writing to express displeasure with the idea of paving the SNETT. This rural area could use some of the upgrades suggested but the pavement portion of the proposal is very unpopular and just a bad idea.</p> <p>Adding pavement to any outdoor park or trail, except for maybe the parking lot, is a bad idea. The idea of adding impervious surface to an area that is natural now is terrible.</p> <p>The area now is beautiful and in my opinion adding pavement will hurt the overall environment and natural beauty of the area.</p> <p>Please keep the SNETT natural.</p> <p>Respectfully, Brian Forestal</p>	Ashland	MA	01721
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12/18/21 11:05 AM	Rachel	Grant	<p>Hello,</p> <p>I wanted to respectfully request that you DO NOT pave the SNETT in any configuration. Even when providing 2 paths, a paved 10 ' and a non paved 5' path it is not safe for all users especially horses or horseback riders.</p> <p>If you would like to provide ADA access I would ask you to consider only using a surface that is safe for all users especially horses. The reason the proposal is so worrisome to me is that only 5 feet is proposed for the non-paved path. If pavement has to be used please ensure that the additional path is wider than 5 feet. The reason for this request is that five feet is not wide enough to accommodate horses coming in both directions. Passing horses on pavement is very dangerous due to the majority of horses wearing metal shoes. Metal shoes on pavement is like ice skates. When horses are passing each other in the same direction and especially from opposite directions you have to provide a very wide buffer between the animals because a horse can kick at another horse. Having one horse kick at another horse is dangerous for horse and rider. Many riders have been stuck in their leg by another horse kicking while passing without appropriate room.</p> <p>As a horse owner and rider we moved to Douglas for the amazing horse community as well as the State Forest and SNETT resources. I also live on South Street and use the South Street Parking lot because it is the safest way to get to the SNETT from my home 1 mile down the street from this lot. You cannot safely ride on South Street due to the traffic and lack of respect from vehicle drivers. Please ensure that horse trailer parking is continues to be available at this lot.</p> <p>Respectfully, Rachel and Steve Grant 99 South Street, Douglas, MA 774-571-0906</p>	Rachel M Gra	MA	015 16- 255 3
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12/18/21 10:22 AM	Savannah	Audet	<p>Good morning:</p> <p>I have been an avid user of the SNETT for many years. We utilize the area for equestrian use, walking, mountain biking and skiing in the winter months. Paving this area is so detrimental to all of these uses and will absolutely exclude so many users. It is an area that so many different people can utilize for different uses at the same time, by paving there will be a significant limitation for sharing the trail. Additionally the main reason so many come here is for the natural atmosphere and to get away from the "streets". The trails can be used year round without fear of ice in the winter, paving will present a new issue with ice.</p> <p>I would advise talking to the community that uses this area before making such a pricey and time consuming decision. These funds could go further in so many other areas.</p> <p>Thank you!</p>	Woodstock	CT	06281
12/18/21 9:03 AM	Geoff	Phillips	<p>Please do not pave the SNETT from the CT border to Douglas. There are far more cost effective, environmentally friendly, and end user effective methods to solve the problem. The charm of the trail is its rustic nature, along with the equestrian traffic it receives.</p>	Upton	MA	01568
12/18/21 8:33 AM	Sheila	Turner	<p>Please do not pave the SNETT. It is a natural path used by many who want to walk, ride, and or bike. We go to the woods seeking peace and quiet in nature. To introduce pavement is an intrusion and defeats the purpose of going to this treasure.</p> <p>Thank you for taking this into consideration.</p>	Douglas	MA	01516
12/18/21 8:11 AM	Stephen	Carroll	<p>My opinion is that the trail should not be paved. Improvements to the CT line should be made in order to connect to the airline trail. Treatment should be similar to what CT is doing to the airline trail with gravel pack.</p>	Douglas	MA	01516

12/18/21 7:53 AM	Carol	Manning	<p>Why would anyone believe that pavement in the midst of this beautiful natural resource be the material of choice? As someone who has lived here for 70 years, I have had the opportunity to witness the changes from the time of the rails to what the trail is at present, all for the better. The many reasons that pavement should not be the material of choice is well-stated in the letter from the Town of Douglas Board of Selectman.</p> <p>Please consider the use of a natural aggregate that would enhance the beauty of this trail while leaving the turtles nesting places intact, the beavers, endangered lady slippers and other wildlife undisturbed. This natural material would favor equestrians as well as mountain bikes and hikers. Motorized vehicles would not be so likely to be attracted to the trail. Hopefully you will hear those of us who are reaching out</p>	Douglas	MA	01516
12/17/21 9:40 PM	Lauren	Fontana	Please keep this trail accessible to horses and more natural. I'm a jogger but I have also ridden my hybrid bike here.	Sutton	MA	01590
12/16/21 4:21 PM	Lynn	Brundage	A natural surface looks much nicer than paved, is better to run on, cooler in the summer, and less slippery in the winter. Please don't pave this section of the SNETT!	Uxbridge	MA	01569
12/15/21 10:32 PM	Isa	Grigaitis	I live in Webster MA and am exactly 1 mile from DSF. I have ridden the SNETT with my horse and walked with my dogs since moving here in 1986. This is a beautiful forest for all to enjoy but paving the SNETT will have a huge negative impact for many people using this property. I am a member of Bay State Trail Riders and we are a very active club that is always working with DCR to help maintain and improve the trails for all users to enjoy not just a few groups of people. If the SNETT is paved it will have a very negative effect on the beauty of this forest and will force the Equestrian population off this beautiful rail road bed that we currently use for our Hunter Paces and other organized trail rides throughout the year. Please don't ruin the beauty of this forest and take away the trail I have enjoyed riding for 35 years.	Webster	MA	01570
12/15/21 7:09 PM	Mike	Govoni	Our family uses this trail for horses dogs walking and biking the way it is is beautiful please don't destroy it with concrete or tar	Douglas	MA	01516

12/15/21 7:03 PM	Darlene	Falcone	<p>I am writing to oppose the paving of the trunk line.</p> <p>I am a resident of Douglas on SE Main Street. I am an advocate for keeping the natural beauty of the land. Paving this beautiful trail would be a sin!! I am a mountain bike rider as well as an equestrian and use this trail several times a week. In these troubled times it has been a god send to be able to connect with nature. I hope you will preserve the natural beauty of the land scape and not scare the surface with pavement.</p>	Douglas	MA	01516
12/15/21 11:22 AM	A	Smith	<p>As a lifelong lover of the outdoors, I understand the idea behind paving a path to make it easier for bikers and mobility-impaired individuals to access. However, outdoor recreation leadership organizations such as the Massachusetts Audubon Society have improved trails in their sanctuaries for all visitors without resorting to pavement. Their beautiful main trail at Broad Meadow Brook in Worcester is an example of carefully graded crushed stone accessible to all, wheelchairs included. The proposed change to the SNETT would completely alter the natural setting. The trail would become a bike path primarily. Equestrian riders need lots of breathing room and calm, slow, shared path users. Turning the beloved SNETT into a bike free-for-all means locals would be pushed out of using the trail for solo contemplation or dog walking as well. Let's not urbanize our precious gem. I am all for trail improvement, but not when it destroys the character of a resource, especially when alternative tried-and-true options such as crushed gravel exist. This path is near and dear to me. Please don't "fix" what isn't broken.</p>	Douglas	MA	01516
12/14/21 10:02 PM	Allyssa	Gniadek	<p>I am strongly against paving this trail. Natural alternatives welcome. The natural beauty of the paths themselves do not need to be disrupted by pavement.</p>	Douglas	MA	01516

12/14/21 9:47 AM	moe	chamberland	<p>Gentlemen, first of all I would like to acknowledge the great work that the staff at Wallum Lake does on the SNETT and surrounding trails. I am a member of Rails to Trails and a serious road/gravel mtb cyclist and have ridden rail trails throughout New England including the full length of the Airline/SNETT, all the single track trails in DSF, the Hop River trail, Cheshire, Ashuelot, Rockingham Rec, and the Northern Rail Trail. On these trails I have encountered many users including other cyclists, runners, walkers, equestrians, and yes, baby strollers. I don't recall anyone asking for pavement. I have also done trail clearing on the Airline after storms on downed trees and overgrowth.</p> <p>The only areas I have encountered pavement on these trails is in the urban (Blackstone/Millville) and inner city areas (Willimantic Ct) (Keene NH). All the rail trails in RI are paved, also inner city/urban environments. I do not believe paving is the way to go on the SNETT. This is a unique rural area and I do not believe paving is in keeping with that environment. I would like to echo the comments of the gentlemen at the meeting regarding turtle egg laying and hatching on the SNETT and all other non paved trails I mentioned, I have seen this many times myself. Surely paving must be contrary to regulations in these wetland adjacent areas.</p> <p>One other matter should be considered, E-bikes, which are exploding in popularity and which I have encountered and are largely unregulated. These bikes are silent can easily travel 20+ mph and not all users know how to act properly when encountering equestrians and other trail users.</p> <p>I agree that the SNETT needs attention and improvement particularly south of the arch bridge which has drainage issues and lots of holes full of water. I believe stone dust or aggregate would be better options for the SNETT. Pavement sounds more like construction (DcR) rather than Conservation (DCR).I do believe the parking areas should be paved however. MC</p>	Greenville	RI	028 28- 164 0
12/14/21 7:05 AM	Brad	Waterson	Please do not put pavement on the SNETT. Non paved improvements are great and as I understand it would also be ADA compliant. Paving would interrupt a beautiful area and disturb wildlife.	Northbridge	MA	015 34- 200 5
12/13/21 3:48 PM	Timothy	Stilwell	As a life long Douglas resident I think paving the SNETT would be great for families in town	Douglas	MA	015 16

12/13/21 9:46 AM	BARRY	KEITH	<p>I am a property owner abutting the project for several thousand linear feet adjacent to the South Street parking area. This is the first time I was aware of the project and planned improvements.</p> <p>I understand that the need and general use of areas for trail-based recreation has increased over the years. However, I am opposed to the overall scope of the planned improvements, that in my view, will promote over-use and unintended damage to the environment. My specific concern centers on paving. This area is a rural recreational area and not the Greater Boston Area. Improving parking, signage, and amenities are understandable over time. I have had issues with ATV's and motorized trail bikes in the past. I have hunted off of the trail (railroad) for over 50 years and have observed trail use change over time.</p> <p>Maintaining the rural character is highly important. Connectivity with other trails within the Douglas State Forest should be considered a priority. The use of funds to acquire other "keystone" lands should be considered. These measures will serve to protect the environment at a landscape level while providing for enhanced outdoor recreational opportunities.</p>	FREEDOM	NH	03836
12/13/21 8:23 AM	Evan	James	<p>I don't know the rationale behind wanting to pave the snett, but there can be zero upside to it. The thought of paving a "trail" through the woods is asinine, this isn't Cambridge or Newton, it's Douglas. A small wooded town, that's already loosing much of it's small town wooded feel to over development as it is. Leave the snett alone and allocate those funds for something useful.</p>	Douglas	MA	01516
12/12/21 5:14 PM	Diane	Przybylek	<p>This trail is perfect the way it is. Many of us walk our dogs here because paved roads are very rough on paws. This portion of the trail is fairly flat so walkers, bikers and horses can easily navigate around each other. We walked 6 miles on it today. Passed multiple walkers,dogs,bikes and a horse. I don't understand why anyone would want to 'pave paradise'.</p>	Thompson	CT	06277

12/12/21 11:01 AM	Paul	Kreswick	<p>I object to paving the snett with asphalt for a number of reasons.</p> <p>1. This former railroad bed is primarily used by hikers, mountain bikers, gravel grinder bikes, equestrians, and dog walkers who don't need pavement to enjoy the trail.</p> <p>2. Unless the current surface is properly prepared as would be done for a motorized roadway the asphalt applied would deteriorate rapidly requiring excessive and expensive maintenance. For example, tree roots, cracks, frost heaves, and crumbling pavement would occur. I have observed this at paved rail trails. Constant maintenance would consume any maintenance budget.</p> <p>3. Since the snett is wide it would be feasible to create a narrow stone dust pathway to one side to accommodate handicapped users who need a more solid and uniform surface. The remainder of the area would remain as is or repaired as needed. An good example of a properly installed stone dust surface is the Massachusetts central rail trail in Rutland MA</p> <p>4. I am a mountain biker who enjoys the rustic single track trails off the snett and the relatively undeveloped nature of the snett itself. More asphalt would not be my choice.</p>	Worcester	MA	01609
12/12/21 7:26 AM	Brian	Trimby	<p>Please skip the pavement plan.</p> <p>My old joints would rather walk on the good old ground that nature supplies.</p> <p>Let the tails in the woods be natural.</p>	Oakham	MA	01068
12/11/21 1:30 PM	Rich	Victor	<p>I am excited to hear that there is a project to improve the SNETT. However, am in not in favor of the proposal to pave the path. This trail is unique in our area as a long stretch, unpaved, and in good condition for gravel bike riding and trail running. I use the trail to ride from Uxbridge all the way down to the Airline trail in Connecticut. For people who prefer to use paved trails the section from Uxbridge into Blackstone is available.</p>	Mendon	MA	01756
12/11/21 1:27 PM	Josh	Keith	<p>Please consider a permeable surface, stone dust or hardener, instead of paving this section of trail. Paving is "simple" but I don't think it is an ecologically sound or aesthetically pleasing solution.</p>	Norfolk	MA	02056

12/11/21 11:46 AM	Marie	Ralff	<p>Hi! Thanks so much for the presentation to the public the other day. The new proposed signage looks fantastic! I use the SNETT quite frequently with my sled dogs.</p> <p>However, not a big fan of the plan to pave 10ft with an unpaved 5ft. Understand that ADA compliance is of concern, but CT has done ADA compliant trails of packed gravel/stone.</p> <p>Would love to keep access to the trail with a natural surface, the 5ft unpaved really does not leave enough room and when winter hits the paved portion will be an icy mess. Pavement heats up and freezes worse than natural surfaces and if left untreated it won't be walkable. With the wetland there, treating doesn't seem like a good option either.</p> <p>Overall thanks for the hard work and presenting all this info to the public, but hoping it can stay unpaved and natural!</p>	Dorchester	MA	02122
12/11/21 11:21 AM	Len	Oneil	<p>Please do not pave the section of SNETT. Please consider stone dust, it is easier on the knees when walking or running and blends in more naturally with the surroundings. When packed correctly it is accessible to all.</p>	Milford	MA	01757
12/11/21 9:58 AM	Bill	Rossi	<p>I live in Douglas and currently use the SNETT for mountain biking and hiking. I find the trail to be very good as it currently is. I don't see the need for improvement, and I certainly don't want it paved.</p> <p>As it stands right now, there is a continuous 18 mile segment of gravel trail from 146 in Uxbridge to route 12 in Thompson, CT. This is the only long dirt trail in the region, and I wouldn't want to see that destroyed by paving the middle of it. I rode my bike on all 18 miles of this trail this week, and I feel the section in Douglas is in excellent condition as it is. Some sections in Uxbridge could use improvements in drainage as they were quite wet.</p> <p>Putting a paved trail though the State Forest would change the character of the forest.</p> <p>If something MUST be done, I'd prefer a stone dust surface as that it would have the least impact.</p>	Douglas	MA	01516

12/11/21 9:51 AM	Jennifer	Fields	There are so few dirt/stone dust trails left in Massachusetts. These surfaces are great for running and gravel biking. They're great for kids to learn to bike on as the surface isn't as fast as pavement. It's good for horses and dogs as well. I've driven from Westborough just to run and ride on the unpaved section of the SNETT. I would hate to see it paved! Respectfully, Jennifer Fields	Westborough	MA	01581
12/11/21 7:55 AM	Steven	Underwood	Of the 3 proposals, I am against only the paving option. Please don't have this trail.	Whitinsville	MA	01588
12/11/21 6:49 AM	Steven	Pohnert	I think it's great to finally get some improvements on SNETT	Bellingham	MA	02019-1875
12/10/21 10:21 PM	Steve	Levandosky	I regularly run SNETT and the trails in Douglas State Forest connected to it, and would urge DCR to keep the surface unpaved, and instead use a stone dust surface if resurfacing it needed. The Holliston portion of the Upper Charles rail trail is stone dust and a very popular destination for runners in the area because the softer surface reduces risk of injury compared with pavement. Additionally, this portion of trail is quite scenic and goes through a wooded area, so a natural surface seems more appropriate than pavement. Thank you for your consideration of this request.	Hopkinton	MA	01748
12/10/21 9:17 PM	John	Altobello	Please do not pave trail. A gravel surface allows for far more uses.	Brighton	MA	02135
12/10/21 8:52 PM	Kevin	Kearnan	Hi I've ridden a number of trails in Massachusetts and I'm an avid road/mountain biker. I really like stone dust trails, but paved trails offer multi-use for road, hybrid and mountain bikers. The only knock against paved trails that I've experienced is the speed of cyclists and roots heaving up the pavement in places. I hike on the trail often and have biked from Uxbridge to the end in CT. Route 146 in Uxbridge to the Rod and Gun Club in Uxbridge section needs a lot of work, impassible in the Spring. Thank you for any improvements that come out of this effort.	Uxbridge	MA	01569

12/10/21 7:59 PM	Janet	Deguirr	I think paving the trunkline would be a big waste of time and money. The trail is fine "as is". I walk my dog daily and can only imagine how hot that would be on her paws in the summer, not to mention the heat it will generate to humans as well. Also, in the spring there are turtles all along the water laying their eggs. I'm sure it will be detrimental to other wildlife as well. I see no reason to do it.	Uxbridge	MA	01569
12/10/21 7:26 PM	Lynn	Wrzosek	Please do not pave the trunkline and Douglas!	Douglas	MA	01516
12/10/21 7:26 PM	Jeffrey	Edwards	I hope this project will not affect OHV use in Franklin state forest and the other remaining legal riding areas.	Waltham	MA	02453
12/10/21 6:36 PM	Steve	Sanders	I am very strongly against the proposal to pave the part of the SNETT in Douglas related to this project. I recently moved to Douglas and I have property along the SNETT by the Depot ST parking area. I bought the property and built my house because of the trail. I walk my dogs, hike, ride horses and bikes on the trail. I do not feel that paving ten feet on the trail is in the best interest of our community. There are already bikers on the trail and we all coexist together, Paving the trail will bring in a new group of biker who will be riding bikes that will go over 20 MPH. You can say that you will set speed limits but it will do no good you do not have resources to even patrols the trails now. These new bikers will be a hazard to horse riders and walkers. We do not want to use the paved trails. If we did we would walk on the streets. This new group of bikers have other placers with paved roadways. They also have all the paved roads they can ride on. I do not know a person who supports the trails being paved	Douglas	MA	01516
12/10/21 5:32 PM	Valerie	Tomolonis	As someone who frequently runs/walks many parts of the SNETT from Franklin to Douglas and beyond, I'd very much prefer to see a stone dust path instead of pavement so as to preserve the natural beauty while still offering a hard surface. Thank you.	Bellingham	MA	02019

12/10/21 5:29 PM	Rob	Dexter	The Old Railroad Grade in Sterling between Spring Lake Road, near Railroad Ave to the bridge over Providence Road is a paved trail. This more than a ½ mile section, and has been paved for a number of years. This section was paved because the ATV's have so much traffic that they rip up the surface. The surface was like ocean waves- the ATV's made swells on the trail and the trail was difficult to just walk it never mind ride on a bicycle. The solution of the poor trail quality was to pave that section. If ATV traffic will be on this new trail section paving should be an option. I realize ATV's should not be allowed on the trails, but they are bold and don't take no for an answer. On the Old Railroad Grade in Sterling the trail leads into Rhode Island and connects to the Moosup Valley State Park Trail where many ATV's come from (RI). If warranted, I hope paving can be an option.	West Hartfor	CT	06107
12/10/21 4:48 PM	Bill	Dakai	The overall plan looks great! My comment has to do with the proposed surface. To me a "trail" should be a venue that connects a person with natural surroundings so, to me, paving the trail would defeat the natural feel. I have ridden the entire length of the SNETT and agree that a total regrading needs to be done but please use a more natural feeling surfacing material such as stone dust or stabilized aggregate.	Millville	MA	01529
12/10/21 3:51 PM	John	Ritz	I urge the use of a packed stone dust surface for the SNETT. As a member of the Hopkinton Trails Club, I'm quite familiar with trail surface issues. Stone dust trails ARE ADA-compliant (we have wheelchair users on ours), and cost much less to build & maintain than paved trails. They are also favored over pavement by runners, walkers, and horse riders (more "give" than pavement). I've ridden my skinny-tire street bike on packed stone dust trails (Holliston's portion of the Upper Charles Trail) without any problems. The only activity that doesn't really work on stone dust is roller blading. Finally, stone dust trails are more appropriate for paths through woodlands. A paved trail is little different from a road, and it invites road-type use, including high-speed bicycle travel. The SNETT should be offering a calming, relaxed experience for its users, and a packed stone dust surface is most appropriate.	Hopkinton	MA	01748
12/10/21 3:09 PM	Kim	Powell	I live in Douglas and enjoy the trails in the DSF. It is already criss-crossed with roads creating hazards. The SNETT is gravel in most places and used by walkers, hikers, gravel bike riders, mountain bikers, and horses. I have ridden it end-to-end and it is beautiful. It is also wide enough to permit emergency vehicles when necessary. Please keep our state forest as natural as possible. I beg you not to pave the SNETT.	Douglas	MA	01516

12/10/21 2:51 PM	Gerald	Audet	<p>Hello</p> <p>I wanted to voice my opposition to paving the SNETT trail in Douglas. Part of the beauty of the trail is it's low impact, natural surface. It would be a shame to ruin this wonderful gem. There are plenty of paved places to walk and ride bikes in Douglas and the surrounding area- but not many dirt trails like the SNETT- it is so unique!</p> <p>If it makes any difference, I run or walk on the SNETT at least 15 times a month, and sometimes as much as 25-30. My wife and I essentially use it every day between the two of us- and our dogs.</p> <p>And we live less than 2 miles to 2 different access points, but used the proposed area regularly as well.</p>	Douglas	MA	01516
12/10/21 1:43 PM	Kevin	Corcino	<p>I am an avid mountain biker and am in favor of paving SNETT. It will not only improve the severe lack of paved bike paths but will also discourage illegal activities with increased usage. I live in Cumberland, RI now but have lived in north Grafton, Grafton, and Sutton for many years so I know the area well and still frequent the trails.</p>	Cumberland	RI	02864
12/10/21 1:33 PM	Michael	Tonry	<p>Count me as a user of SNETT and think it would be bad if it was paved. I think the surface should be a natural clay and stone dust material like the Airline Trail in Connecticut.</p> <p>Don't put road tar on the SNETT!</p>	Whitinsville,	MA	01588

12/10/21 12:49 PM	Kathleen	Sugrue-Richards	<p>After attending this meeting, I would like to state that my husband and I are vehemently opposed to this project doing any paving of the SNETT in Douglas. It makes no sense not to connect it to the airline trail in CT and the trail in Mendon with the same natural surface materials as used in those locations, which is ADA compliant and still usable by all current users. Paving this trail would make at least 5 other groups of users have to share a 5ft strip of natural surface, while road bikes would have the majority of space. Equestrians, mountain bikers, fat tire bikers, walkers, runners and hikers would all have to share that natural surface, which would be dangerous. Adding signage and seating to that part also takes even more space away.</p> <p>Douglas is a rural community, and there is no place for paving through the beautiful state forest. Currently these trails are used frequently by many groups. I have seen horses, dog walkers, walkers, hikers, runners, baby strollers, mountain bikes, dirt bikes and fat tire bikes, as well as wheel chairs and road bikes and fishermen. In winter, add snowmobiles and cross country skiing! There is no need to make it more "accessible to all", as it already is!!! There are beautiful ponds along the route, with many species of birds and turtles and other wildlife living there. What would paving do to them???</p> <p>There are plenty of local paved bike paths that can be used in Uxbridge, Milford, Millbury, Worcester, Blackstone and Lincoln RI. We don't need another one at the expense of a gorgeous path through nature that so many groups utilize!!! Please take into consideration the wishes of the residents of Douglas and surrounding towns. This is a gem, and we want to keep it the way it is. The user groups have done more to maintain the trails than DCR has due to staffing, and it is a slap in the face to those groups who now are not considered 30 or more years of maintaining the trails through volunteers and their own funds.</p>	Douglas	MA	01516
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12/10/21 12:48 PM	Richard	Moore	<p>It was unclear from the public presentation on December 7, 2021 whether the project includes a link to the existing segment of the Blackstone Valley Bikeway (aka Blackstone Valley Multi-Use Trail). It should definitely be connected to provide an expanded trail experience for users of both trails. A further enhancement application of \$8 million in the section of the Blackstone trail in Blackstone to connect with the eastern segment of the SNETT to Bellingham and Franklin as well as to the Rhode Island Blackstone River Greenway. The state should apply additional federal funding to complete the SNETT Trail proposal discussed at the December 7 meeting.</p> <p>I would also suggest revisiting the surface proposed for the SNETT project. I agree with those who questioned to proposal to pave the trail with more environmentally and user-friendly surface could be used.</p> <p>Richard T. Moore Board Chair Blackstone River National Heritage Corridor 677 Linwood Avenue, Whitinsville, MA 01588 617-413-7734</p>	Uxbridge	MA	01569
12/10/21 12:41 PM	William	Peck	<p>I ride, hike and walk the SNET trail all the time and I don't see a need to pave it. Please leave it as is and use this money for other projects.</p> <p>Thank you</p>	Douglas	MA	01516
12/10/21 12:13 PM	Kristofer	Munroe	<p>Please don't pave the SNETT. Paving undermines the natural feel of wooded trails. Additionally paving this trail will damage the user experience groups such as gravel bike riders and equestrian users.</p> <p>We don't need highways in the woods!!!!</p>	Hubbardston	MA	01452

12/10/21 12:04 PM	Leslie	Choquette	I would like to argue strongly against the plan to pave the SNETT. The trail is currently enjoyed by hikers, equestrians, and mountain bikers for whom the dirt surface is preferable. In my experience, paved rail trails become problematic after just a few years because roots push up through the asphalt and make a mess. Repair always seems to lag way behind the dangerous conditions too. (I stopped inline skating on the paved Ayer to Nashua rail trail some years ago because the root damage simply makes it too dangerous. It has yet to be repaired.) The current surface of the SNETT requires no maintenance and is a more forgiving surface to walk on, better for the joints. Please leave the trail unpaved. Thank you.	Worcester	MA	01609
12/10/21 10:28 AM	Adam	Motyl-Szary	Please don't pave the Forrest.	Clinton	MA	01510
12/10/21 10:09 AM	Patrick	McEnaney	I wholeheartedly oppose the plans to pave a portion of the SNETT in Douglas State Forest. Whether it is hiking, trail running, mountain bike riding or horse back riding, these outlets allow those us partaking in one of these activities to escape the road bikes that undoubtedly utilize this paved area. Furthermore, the horses that utilize this area will very likely be started by the bike riders along that stretch. Please keep this area more natural and avoid creation of a concrete jungle! Sincerely, Patrick McEnaney	Mendon	MA	01756
12/10/21 9:53 AM	Dana	Welch	Please do not vote to pave. So much of our natural environment is being taken over it is a shame to pave more.	Lyndeborough	NH	03082
12/10/21 9:49 AM	Thomas	Bubier	Hi, After visiting the rail trail in Wayland/Weston I would love to see some improvements made to the SNETT. I think rail trails are an amazing way to bring the community together in a healthy and outdoorsy manner. They are also vital connections for those that enjoy riding a bike to work in order to stay off our increasingly busy roads. There are many other rail trails in the state as well as the region that have been hugely successful and I think it's a good time to bring some of that success and joy to the Franklin area. Thank you, Thomas Bubier	Bentonville	AR	72712

12/10/21 8:36 AM	George	Blagdon	Keep it dirt	Norwood	MA	02062
12/10/21 6:36 AM	Laura	Susmann	I do not believe there's any need to pave sections of the SNETT. Soil stabilization will be completely adequate for the ADA compliance needs. Everyone needs recreation opportunities. However as I've ridden my horse in this area, I've seen few handicapped individuals making use of this property.	Dublin	NH	03444-0117
12/9/21 10:52 PM	JOHN	BOLDUC	Hi, I bike the Airline trail in Eastern CT extensively. For the SNETT section in question, I favor a stone dust surface rather than pavement. Pavement is necessary in very high traffic areas or where trail abut a river or brook so as to be able to handle flooding. This section to me would merit a non-pavement surface and would be more in character with it running through a state forest. Another benefit is tree roots often will buckle pavement requiring repairs that are more expensive than simply smoothing out a section of stone dust trail. I like the separate horse trail. Horses create large divots on non-paved biking trails. Thanks and look forward to riding the upgraded trail in 2024!	MANCHESTER	CT	06040-6321
12/9/21 9:08 PM	Jake	Radzik	Please keep in mind that this is a shared use trail that snowmobiles are allowed on it. I support whatever you decide to do for a surface as long as snowmobiles are still permitted. It would be a disappointment if this right was taken as their are limited places to go. Snowmobiles pay to have trails in the state and this is the only option in the Blackstone valley.	Oxford	MA	01540
12/9/21 8:58 PM	Cindy	Schlener	I'd like for the DCR to consider who the users are of this rail trail. More thought needs to be taken regarding the surface options. A stone dust composite surface similar to what is used on the Mass Central rail trail suits many users such as hikers, bikers and horseback riders and is also stable enough for wheelchairs etc. There are other surfaces that do just as well other than paving. Those surfaces are easier to maintain than paving. Time should be taken to research the best solution to fit all the user groups' needs along with factoring in the semi-rural nature of this location. This is not a urban or suburban area.	Hubbardston	MA	01452

12/9/21 6:05 PM	Susan	Simmons	I support ADA compliance but encourage you to explore alternatives to pavement. Mass Audubon has created successful All Persons Trails with other materials such as well packed dirt. I am concerned that paving would not only increase the amount of impervious surfaces in these areas where it's not needed, but may also cause issues during construction near sensitive wetlands and streams. Additionally, some of the users of this trail rely on its natural surface, such as mountain bikers and horseback riders. Providing a wider natural area of use for these users, while providing a more moderate width for ADA with alternative surfaces to pavement, would achieve both environmental and diverse user-group benefits.	West Suffield	CT	06093
12/9/21 4:50 PM	Wilfred	Fontaine	This is a PROFOUNDLY bad idea. You are going to ruin the beauty of this trail. Destroying it's appeal for a reason NO ONE seems to be able to express. As I'm sure you found in the zoom meeting NOBODY WANTS THIS!! Why spend MILLIONS of taxpayer dollars on something NOBODY WANTS! If you're claiming it's for "accessibility" then why don't we just pave over the beach and the grassy fields at Wallum Lake while we're at it?	Douglas	MA	01516
12/9/21 4:47 PM	David	Radzik	As an avid snowmobiler on the snett I do not wish to have it resurfaced in any way unless such resurfacing would still allow the use of snowmobiles. Certain entrances have already been blocked recently by the Douglas state forest folks to keep quads out which are prohibited but it also keeps out the snowmobiles which are allowed. To my knowledge any paved rail trail in this state has banned the use of motorized vehicles including snowmobiles. In all northern New England states the paved rail trails are designated snowmobile trails during winter months, why are we different here. I understand the conflict with motorized vehicles during warmer months and the pedestrian traffic but most of that is non existent in winter and I have to register my machine versus almost all other user groups who pay nothing. Please don't resurface the snett unless you intend to allow snowmobiles on it. Thank you very much for your time, sincerely David Radzik	sutton	MA	01590

12/9/21 2:46 PM	Janice	Melchiore	<p>I'm a resident of Douglas MA and moved here five years ago. One reason for moving to Douglas was for the recreation available in the town (biking, hiking, paddling, cross country skiing, etc.). In October 2018, we reached out to Senator Fattman about getting resources and funding to improve the Douglas and Uxbridge sections of the SNETT. We never envisioned that the request for an improved trail would result in a design for a paved surface.</p> <p>The SNETT in Franklin and Bellingham have been improved using non-asphalt materials and have a non-paved surface. My understanding is that the surface in these sections of the SNETT is ADA compliant and meets all user needs and requirements. As you know, the SNETT becomes the Airline Trail at the border of MA and CT and the State of Connecticut continues to improve the ~60 miles of Airline Trail which is entirely constructed with non-asphalt & non-paved materials. It seems that the SNETT in Douglas (and eventually Uxbridge) would be consistent with the other improved sections of the SNETT and the Airline Trail since they will eventually be one beautiful and continuous trail.</p> <p>The SNETT is a wonderful resource in the Blackstone Valley area and I very much look forward to DCR making improvements to it so that it is usable for all forms of non-motorized transportation. I do not support a paved surface but do support a design and implementation of a non-asphalt and non-paved surface.</p> <p>Janice Melchiore 11 Churchill Road Douglas MA 01516</p>	Douglas	MA	01516
12/9/21 1:44 PM	Brian	Poudrier	I don't want the trunk line paved	Douglas	MA	01516
12/9/21 12:21 PM	Julia	Taddei	Please reconsider the paving project of nature's beautiful landscape of the SNETT . The public usage has increased so much during COVID with people looking for increased connection to nature. This paving project would be a travesty to natural surfaces that provide animals and people that grounded feeling of a stable earth under their feet.	Douglas	MA	01516

12/9/21 10:13 AM	Stefanie	Covino	I support ADA compliance but encourage you to explore alternatives to pavement. Mass Audubon has created successful All Persons Trails with other materials such as well packed dirt. I am concerned that paving would not only increase the amount of impervious surfaces in these areas where it's not needed, but may also cause issues during construction near sensitive wetlands and streams. Additionally, some of the users of this trail rely on its natural surface, such as mountain bikers and horseback riders. Providing a wider natural area of use for these users, while providing a more moderate width for ADA with alternative surfaces to pavement, would achieve both environmental and diverse user-group benefits.	Worcester	MA	01602
12/9/21 10:13 AM	Jennifer	Stinchfield	This is ridiculous. We live in the country to enjoy the outdoors and these natural beautiful trails. I have been a Douglas resident my whole life, my father has been a resident his whole life and the state has done nothing to improve Wallum Lake or the land around it. The trails are enjoyed by a variety of people and animals tame and wild. There is so much to be done at the Wallum Lake State Park why bother with trails that are usable and loved the way they are. The trails are an outdoor beauty and pavement would just bring vehicles into the woods and not recreational ones. I feel you would be setting up a speedway in the woods for people to screw around on. Do you plan on keeping this pavement up, because if that is the case let's fix the pavement around the lake. The lake could use trails for wheelchairs to get through to tables and the water. The lake is beautiful but is not the least bit handicap friendly, this is including the bathrooms and water front. It is nearly impossible for anyone with a wheelchair or walker to enjoy any part of the lake. The trails are meant to be trails in the woods, not roads going through the woods. The horses don't need pavement to walk on, the dogs shouldn't be on hot pavement and what about all the wildlife you are taking away. Will this pavement change growth, water flow, etc., YES and WHY, FOR WHAT? Leave the woods in the woods and improve the state park that you have neglected for so many years. It was nice when I was a kid 40 years ago, and the town took care of it. This is a waste of time and money, why is the state so obsessed with ruining the woods, and thinking they are improving it?	Douglas	MA	01516
12/9/21 9:20 AM	Gloria	Duhaime	Please keep the SNETT a natural surface. We love our trails and this is a main connector for horseback riders, bicyclists and hikers. Pavement would encourage more illegal ATV use which would become dangerous. We have many good memories on this beautiful section running thru the Douglas State Forest. PLEASE NO PAVEMENT. Thank you	Mendon	MA	01756

12/9/21 7:45 AM	Joyce	Sandvik	I am vehemently opposed to any paved surface on the SNETT. Paved surfaces have no place in the natural environment of a state forest.	Sutton	MA	015 90
12/8/21 11:36 PM	Rebecca	Berchem	<p>I would not support paving a ten foot wide strip along the SNETT through Douglas, and leaving only a five foot wide path next to it. If it's necessary to upgrade the surface to make it more accessible, I think a natural surface (stone dust or a hardened dirt surface) would be a much better fit for this section through Douglas. There are several reasons to leave it as a natural surface. A ten foot wide paved path is not necessary to make it accessible to all, and it is limiting the functionality for those who already use the trail (making it less rural, definitely worse for hikers - hiking on pavement is not fun, horesback riders would be limited to a narrow trail), and you're taking away the opportunity for the snowmobiles to use the trail also. It would also be more difficult to hike in the winter - pavement that's not cleared of snow and treated for ice will be icy throughout the winter, which means hikers would be limited to the path along the side of the pavement. And if the horses are limited to the same five foot wide path, hikers would be trying to avoid stepping in horse manure along that narrow trail also. If barriers at the trail crossings are also part of the plan to keep motorized vehicles off the trail, that also limits the ability for snowmobiles to use the trail. It seems the money would be better spent doing something else.</p> <p>On the entire public hearing, there was not a single person who said they wanted to see the trail through Douglas paved. I heard two people who said they don't care, and everyone else who uses the trail said they don't want it paved.</p>	Douglas	MA	015 16
12/8/21 6:09 PM	jacqueline	adams	I do not wish to see the SNETT to be paved. I would like to see it in it's natural form. NO PAVEMENT. There is a paved trail next town over for anyone to use if so desired.	DOUGLAS	MA	015 16
12/8/21 6:00 PM	David	Marsden	I would not like the SNETT paved. Our natural resource is appreciated by many of us in the natural state is in. A hard pack would be a compromise but asphalt paving would be a change I don't want. There are many other paved paths for those who prefer or need them.	Douglas	MA	015 16
12/8/21 5:46 PM	Michelle	Payson	This is unnecessary and harmful to the environment. Leave the SNETT the natural environment those who frequent it prefer!	Douglas	MA	015 16

12/8/21 5:38 PM	Grace	Holland	I am a resident of Douglas, and I oppose the proposed modifications to the SNETT. I frequently use this trail, and it is very close to my home. I go there to hike and to walk with my dogs. The proposed changes will disrupt the natural beauty of the trail and the wildlife that inhabit this area.	Douglas	MA	01516
12/8/21 5:21 PM	Howard	Haringa	I abut the SNETT and want it to stay the way it is. If they pave etc... who is going to stop vehicles from driving down the trail. Families with their pets walk the trail. Keep it natural the way nature intended.	Douglas	MA	01516
12/8/21 4:41 PM	Philip	Rutledge	Please preserve the SNETT current unpaved surface. Asphalt doesn't belong in this rural setting. ADA compliance can be met without paving it. This is not connecting a population center to a tourist area like the shining sea trail on the cape, this is connecting rural with rural. Current users are happy with it as it is, including walkers, Mountain Bikers and equestrians. The ATV use is bad enough as it is and will have even more reckless illegal activity with a paved surface.	Webster	MA	01570
12/8/21 4:06 PM	Chase	Setzer	The trail is to walk the way it is now and easily accessible. I feel the money could be better invested in making more smaller trails. Also would be nice if the smaller trails were maintained more.	Webster	MA	01570
12/8/21 3:13 PM	Patricia	Marshall	As a resident of Douglas who frequently uses the SNETT, I am opposed to this project. Any of the proposed plans to resurface the trail would disrupt the wildlife and would significantly change the character of this precious natural resource. While I appreciate the time and effort that has gone into modeling several different potential scenarios, it is clear that the option that would most likely be chosen would be a 10 foot paved path with a 5 foot gravel area on the side. If implemented, this model would surely increase the number of people using road bikes on the path. In my opinion, due to the speed at which road bikes can travel, this would negatively impact individuals who use the path and the side trails for walking, mountain biking, and horseback riding. Overall, I do not believe that the proposed plan aligns well with the needs of individuals who currently use the SNETT. With that said, I have questions and concerns about the amount of outreach that was done to trail users as part of the design process. I would also like to have a better understanding of the potential impact of asphalt on the wildlife living close to the trail (particularly the turtles that frequently cross the trail and lay eggs in the sand) and on bodies of water, such as Aldrich Pond.	Douglas	MA	01516

12/8/21 3:01 PM	Derek	Beahn	<p>Hi,</p> <p>I am highly opposed to paving the Douglas section of SNETT. Me and my family are long-time Douglas residents and our home abuts the Douglas State Forest only a mile or so from the SNETT. My entire family of four are avid all-year-round users of the forest and SNETT trail. Hiking, biking, trail running, dog walking, snowshoeing, cross country skiing, hunting, etc. The existing SNETT conditions are very suitable to all outdoor activities already. Paving will not improve this, only detract from it. There is no outdoor activity that cannot be done on the trail in it's current state. Paving a road (or path) through the center of this historical and natural resource will be horrific.</p> <p>Derek Beahn & Family</p>	Douglas	MA	01516
12/8/21 2:59 PM	Jane	Rutledge	<p>I am not in favor of the proposed trail design of the SNETT involving pavement of the surface. This trail is currently used by many different people who enjoy the outdoors. All the current users are very compatible and considerate to include mountain bikers, cross country runners, hikers, families, dog walkers, and horseback riders.</p> <p>Putting a paved path thru the country does not make make sense.</p> <p>A natural surface would be more appropriate for the setting and would accommodate existing users.</p> <p>If people can push baby carriages down the trail now, I am sure it could be made ADA compliant without paving it.</p>	Webster	MA	01570
12/8/21 2:55 PM	Bill	Ernst	Don't ruin the natural beauty of the trunk trail.	Douglas	MA	01516
12/8/21 2:45 PM	Kelli	Grady	<p>I am a Douglas resident and daily trail user. I think paving the trail is a terrible idea. Stone dust or soil stabilization would be better. Pavement gets hot in the summer, and would be a problem for those of us who walk dogs. The Trunkline is one of the few places we have to get the dogs off hot pavement. Also, equestrians would be unable to ride side by side or in groups, and would have to go single file alongside the pavement. As a rider, this would have me looking for other places to go. There are paved paths available for those who choose. The Trunkline offers us a place to be in the woods on a wide path, while still having natural ground under our feet. Improvements are welcome, pavement is not. Thank you.</p>	Douglas	MA	01516

12/8/21 2:30 PM	Lynn C	Paresky	<p>I want to go on record that I am vehemently opposed to any pavement surface on the SNETT concerns. With its main headquarters located in Boston, the perspective and goals presented by DCR and its design consultants are consistent with urban development only. The proposed design plan obviously does not fit in with the perspective and goals of the residents in rural communities, especially here in Douglas. What works in urban areas does not work for Douglas. Douglas SNETT users are much more diverse than the users in urban areas. Your success with paved bike paths in urban areas is because the primary user is a road biker, unlike here in Douglas where there are so many natural surface user groups to consider. Has the design team come to Douglas and actually experienced the 6-mile area firsthand, seen the large number of hikers, equestrians, mountain bikers, dog walkers, parents introducing their children to the beauty of nature - and yes, the road bikes that are always present and the parents with strollers? Have you interviewed DCR staff who see daily the abundance of SNETT users already enjoying the SNETT on its natural surface - DCR team members like Cary VandenAkker who oversaw the Douglas DCR Office for many years, or Chuck, the current Supervisor? Or have you talked to abutters who can also attest to the types of trail users currently using the SNETT in this area? You can see for yourself or they can tell you, this 6-mile stretch of the SNETT is currently a heavily used multi-user trail - even more so since the onset of Covid. According to Patricia last night, the plan was designed "to suit most people's needs", yet the majority of users in rural Douglas prefer a natural surface, not a paved surface! Why should equestrians, hikers, mountain bikers, dog walkers and other natural surface users be pushed onto a 5-foot strip of natural surface while one user group, road bikers, is provided with a 10-foot paved strip? Unfair, unsafe!</p>	Douglas	MA	01516
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12/8/21 1:28 PM	Cheryl	Gervais	<p>Hello,</p> <p>I am writing to submit my objection to the paving of the SNETT portion through Douglas, MA. I have been a resident of Douglas since 2001, and have always resided within 5 miles of the trunk line. My family and I are frequent walkers of the trail from the South Street entrance right through Wallum Lake. The natural state of the area is what is most pleasing about this trail. Paving a wide strip plus making a side trail for equestrians will involve alot of clearing of this sometime narrow trail. A narrower equestrian trail also will make it quite difficult for riders to travel any other way than single file which is not always ideal. There are also many turtles along this path that lay their eggs in the gravel and sand of the trail. What will happen to these turtles? I also think the state could be using the money and resources for this project in many other needed areas. This is not a need or necessity.</p> <p>Bikers, walkers, runners, equestrians, off-road vehicles all are able to utilize this path right now, and in fact, this path is already widely utilized in a daily basis. People flock to this trail exactly because of its natural beauty.</p> <p>This project seems way off base and totally unnecessary. I hope that the DCR will take into account how the current users of this trail feel about this intended project.</p>	Douglas	MA	01516
12/8/21 1:28 PM	Cheryl	Gervais	<p>Hello,</p> <p>I am writing to submit my objection to the paving of the SNETT portion through Douglas, MA. I have been a resident of Douglas since 2001, and have always resided within 5 miles of the trunk line. My family and I are frequent walkers of the trail from the South Street entrance right through Wallum Lake. The natural state of the area is what is most pleasing about this trail. Paving a wide strip plus making a side trail for equestrians will involve alot of clearing of this sometime narrow trail. A narrower equestrian trail also will make it quite difficult for riders to travel any other way than single file which is not always ideal. There are also many turtles along this path that lay their eggs in the gravel and sand of the trail. What will happen to these turtles? I also think the state could be using the money and resources for this project in many other needed areas. This is not a need or necessity.</p> <p>Bikers, walkers, runners, equestrians, off-road vehicles all are able to utilize this path right now, and in fact, this path is already widely utilized in a daily basis. People flock to this trail exactly because of its natural beauty.</p> <p>This project seems way off base and totally unnecessary. I hope that the DCR will take into account how the current users of this trail feel about this intended project.</p>	Douglas	MA	01516

12/8/21 12:28 PM	kim	barnard	<p>PLEASE, PLEASE, PLEASE reconsider the plan to pave 6 miles of SNETT. This makes absolutely no sense in that the contiguous lengths on both ends of the proposed pavement are NOT paved. Why on earth pave this small section of trail that is so beloved by its CURRENT users? The trail currently receives LOTS of use because of what it is now (NOT PAVED) so by paving this trail you are absolutely going against what the CURRENT users are requesting. Even though the proposed plan takes into consideration equestrian users (of which I am not one) a single lane for horses next to a paved trail for all others is NOT going to work. Have you checked out the amount of horse poop on the current trails? Do you really think the people with children, strollers and wheel chair bound are going to enjoy walking on trails covered in horse poop? At least now the ground is natural and the poop eventually breaks down and absorbs but this is NOT going to be the case with pavement. And finally I need to add that a 6 mile paved path is nothing for an adult biker. This distance can be covered in less than 30 min on any road bike, how ridiculous is that?</p> <p>I totally understand that should the state take on this project that they are obligated to make changes that are amenable for all but this should not be done at the expense of the current users. Like so many others who made comments during the remote session last night I must add that I have not met ONE other person who believes this path should be paved.</p> <p>Please hear our voices and work with those (BSTRA, NEMBA etc) who have invested so much in our beloved Douglas State Forest. I hike this park nearly EVERY day and I want it to remain natural.</p>	Douglas	MA	01516
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12/8/21 11:41 AM	Denis	LaForce	<p>Dear DCR,</p> <p>I would like to add comment to the discussion on the Southern New England Trunkline Trail (SNETT) public meeting on December 7, 2021</p> <p>I am a long time cyclist, mostly road riding, but I thoroughly enjoy our many bike paths and rail trails. While asphalt paving may initially deliver the best surface for cycling, the smooth surface is always very short lived. I do not know of ANY paved bike paths that, after very few years, is not compromised by frost heaves and tree roots lifting the surface. It's uncanny how fast, and the extent of, this degradation makes the surface rough, unridable, and dangerous.</p> <p>On the other hand, a properly installed stone dust surface almost seems to mend itself after the ravages of nature. To my east I often ride the asphalt paved Milford bike path and the nearby stone dust Holliston bike path. The Milford path is already developing rough spots that will require expensive labor intensive equipment to mill and re-pave the rough spots. The stone dust Holliston bike path is always smooth and rideable. It may not be as fast, but the quality of the ride is always predictable and safe. Maintenance, at most, is adding and leveling additional stone dust. I have no trouble riding a stone dust surface with my skinny tire road bike and can't imagine someone in a wheel chair or mobility assist device having a problem.</p> <p>Of the three path surface treatments, stone dust gives the best long term results, is the easiest to maintain and repair, and meets the requirements for all path users. Please do not pave the SNETT.</p> <p>Sincerely,</p> <p>Denis LaForce 27 Whitins Rd. Manchaug, MA. 01526-0271 508 476 7081</p>	Manchaug	MA	01526-0271
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12/8/21 11:41 AM	Denis	LaForce	<p>Dear DCR,</p> <p>I would like to add comment to the discussion on the Southern New England Trunkline Trail (SNETT) public meeting on December 7, 2021</p> <p>I am a long time cyclist, mostly road riding, but I thoroughly enjoy our many bike paths and rail trails. While asphalt paving may initially deliver the best surface for cycling, the smooth surface is always very short lived. I do not know of ANY paved bike paths that, after very few years, is not compromised by frost heaves and tree roots lifting the surface. It's uncanny how fast, and the extent of, this degradation makes the surface rough, unridable, and dangerous. On the other hand, a properly installed stone dust surface almost seems to mend itself after the ravages of nature. To my east I often ride the asphalt paved Milford bike path and the nearby stone dust Holliston bike path. The Milford path is already developing rough spots that will require expensive labor intensive equipment to mill and re-pave the rough spots. The stone dust Holliston bike path is always smooth and rideable. It may not be as fast, but the quality of the ride is always predictable and safe. Maintenance, at most, is adding and leveling additional stone dust. I have no trouble riding a stone dust surface with my skinny tire road bike and can't imagine someone in a wheel chair or mobility assist device having a problem.</p> <p>Of the three path surface treatments, stone dust gives the best long term results, is the easiest to maintain and repair, and meets the requirements for all path users. Please do not pave the SNETT.</p> <p>Sincerely,</p> <p>Denis LaForce 27 Whitins Rd. Manchaug, MA. 01526-0271 508 476 7081 cc: Sen Ryan Fattman, Rep Joe McKenna</p>	Manchaug	MA	01526-0271
12/8/21 9:18 AM	Donna	Aldrich	<p>I oppose the pavement of the SNETT trail. There are other options we can look at to make everyone happy in using this trail. Maintaining the trail by grading it and putting something that is eco friendly that will be good for dog walkers, bicycles, equestrians would be more feasible than paving</p> <p>Paving will promote motorized vehicles on the pathway who will be patrolling their speed? Why can't we use the \$ to maintain the SNETT not by paving which will promote more problems to the area.</p> <p>It is such a beautiful trail it will ruin the natural beauty of it by paving when there are alternative options that I feel have not been looked into.</p>	Douglas	MA	01516

12/8/21 8:38 AM	GERALDINE	HERMAN	<p>please do NOT pave this trail. as both a horseback rider and a dog walker you will totally ruin it. people go there to enjoy nature. if they want to be on pavement they can find it everywhere else.</p> <p>leaving a tiny strip of dirt for equestrians is going to cause a LOT of accidents. in many places there are DEEP drop offs and by putting a horse and rider on the edge you are going to be getting sued repeatedly when people whizzing by on bicycles scare the horses. it creates a dangerous situation FOR ALL - humans and horses!</p> <p>why not leave well enough alone? everyone who uses it is happy with the situation as is.</p> <p>you may not realize it but the horse industry provides \$\$\$\$ to this state. people trailer in from all over to enjoy this trail and access to the DSF. do you want them to take their business elsewhere?</p> <p>the entire world does NOT have to be under pavement. we have far too little of the natural world left as it is. HANDS OFF!</p>	DOUGLAS	MA	01516
12/7/21 11:26 PM	Sharon	Etre	<p>Please do not pave the trunk line. It is for horses to gallop on. Bstra has worked hard to keep it for horses. Please. Keep it dirt</p>	Norwell	MA	02061
12/7/21 10:14 PM	karen	fleming	<p>I am writing to comment on the SNETT.</p> <p>There are portions of the SNETT that if hard paved would have limited access to share space. I'm also a trail runner who truly loves the trails in this and other local forests. A gravel wide path for a single woman , allows an element of safety without loosing the "woodsy " feel.</p> <p>If I wanted to run on a road I'd stay on Main St..</p> <p>Please reconsider .</p> <p>Karen Fleming Brooks North Grafton , MA 01536</p>	North grafton	MA	01536

12/7/21 9:03 PM	Carolyn	Weeks	<p>Please don't pave the snett trail in Douglas. This trails is amazing as a dirt trail. So many people enjoy this trail as is. If you pave it the beauty of the old rail bed will be gone.</p> <p>The snett trail is used by so many different people and animals from people doing geo catch, horse back riding and driving, hikers, people taking an after noon stroll to get away from the black top and crazy ness of life.</p> <p>I know there are people that want it paved for there own reasons, road bikers, small wheeled strollers. There are plenty of paved trails in Milford and Bellingham. Why can't they go there?</p> <p>I travel from Grafton MA. With my kids, horse and cart to enjoy the large dirt path. That is straight And made of dirt. It's one of the only places that is safe for us to drive our horse. .</p> <p>Also Bay State trail riders put alot of time, money, and materials with other clubs to make that part of the snett trail what it is today. How can you take that away from them if the trail was to be paved it would be a smack in there face.</p> <p>Please DO NOT PAVE this section of trail.</p>	South Grafton	MA	01560
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12/7/21 8:26 PM	Rosanna	Sabatinelli	<p>Good evening,</p> <p>I was so disappointed to hear that there were plans to pave the Southern New England Trunk trail. I have been living in Douglas for 17 years now and when we decided upon Douglas it had everything to do with the state forest.</p> <p>We are located on South St, just 2 miles down the road from the SNETT. I trailer my horses down the road to the parking area to ride the SNETT. Since Covid began the trail has been utilized much more heavily by many different groups of people. Most people are very courteous to the horse riders, but many are not aware of safety precautions that must be taken when approaching horses from behind, like announcing their presence or slowing down when bicycling passed the horses. If the SNETT is paved it will encourage many more activities like roller blading, skate boarding, and other activities that horses are not accustomed to. Not to mention the paved area is going to be 10 feet wide, this will leave very limited room for horses to ride along the side. The edges of the SNETT are very steep in many areas and if a horse was to spook at something it could have tragic consequences.</p> <p>I moved out to Douglas to be in the country, the idea that the state wants to pave the middle of the woods is very discouraging. I also walk my dogs on the SNETT trail and would much prefer the current topography to prevent wear and tear on the pads of their feet. In the summer months the pavement will get hot and possibly burn their feet.</p> <p>I appreciate the state allowing residents to make comments, I highly doubt my opinion will make any difference, In the end its all the more reason for me to relocate to another state that values the state land and maintaining its natural state.</p>	Douglas	MA	01516
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12/7/21 8:23 PM	Crysanda	Boiavert	<p>As a horseback rider and a board member of BSTRA this is another hit to the equine community who has already devoted a lot of time and money to preserve the trails along the SNETT on Douglas. This would be a slap in the face to all of us and the work that we have done and also continue to want to do. Horses were here long before cars, ATVs, bicycles, etc. And the horses are the ones who are most losing access to trails. If the SNETT is paved you are taking away a significant means of access for horseback riders on using the Douglas State forest. You would be putting to waste and a slap in the face to BSTRA for all the past and present time and money that they have invested in Douglas State forest and the SNETT. As a board member of BSTRA if the SNETT does get paved I would highly recommend that we do not continue with any further work with Douglas. The horseback riders, walkers and riders that have used the SNETT before Covid became an issue should not suffer for the increase in usage to the SNETT. The SNETT is accessible to all the way it is already. By paving it you would also be ruining the natural aspect of the trail.</p>	Leicester	MA	01524
12/7/21 8:06 PM	Paul	Peterson	<p>I am a 33 year Douglas resident (30 Main St) and frequently use the SNETT for walking. I meet many other walkers on the trail and also mountain bikers. I have wanted to do biking, but the trail is presently not suitable for street bicycles. I am 100 percent behind the project you have presented at the DCR public meeting on Dec 7. I feel the project will be great for Douglas residents and will enhance the open space that we all enjoy.</p> <p>I understand the equestrian concern. It does seem that the ratio of paved area for bicycles 10 Ft to 5 Ft for equestrian use is large and should probably be 8 Ft bicycles to 7 Ft equestrian. Perhaps there is some good reason for this. I do think that there are significantly more non-equestrian users of the trail than there are equestrian and we should support all users.</p> <p>I thank the BSTRA for their work in cleaning up the trail. I also thank the DCR for their work on the trail.</p> <p>Thank you for your work on this. Please continue on with the project.</p>	Douglas	MA	01516

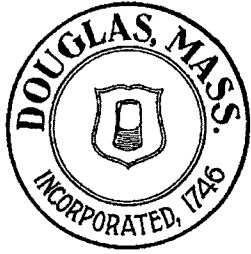
12/7/21 8:01 PM	Anna-Maria	Paul	<p>I am not in favor of paving the Southern New England Trunkline Trail. This will severely limit the ability of equestrians and mountain bikers, from enjoying the SNETT.</p> <p>Equestrians have supported this trail from the beginning. Without them, it may not have been preserved. Leaving only a small path for horses to walk on is not sharing the trail, it is limiting usage for equestrians and mountain bikers. If there is a need to put down a surface, then use one that can be used by equestrians and mountain bikers, the way it has been done in other areas of the SNETT.</p> <p>Douglas is a rural area and the forest itself is a wonderful treasure. I can't help but think about the line from the song Big Yellow Taxi, "Pave Paradise and put up a parking lot" not acceptable. Keep the forest what it should be- natural and available for all not just a few walkers.</p>	Westborough	MA	01581
12/7/21 7:52 PM	Frances	Cochran	<p>As an adult who grew up in Douglas, riding horses down the SNETT and all over the state forest, I find the plans that you have for this beautiful trail sickening. This trail perfectly combines nature with history and has been a place for all who truly love the outdoors can appreciate. Paving, painting lines....what!!?? This is the Douglas State Forest and other small, quiet towns. Douglas, a small town encased by 5000 gorgeous acres of peace, wildlife and good old organic nature. The thought of bringing in machines and noise to do the work you think is an improvement is complete blasphemy. It is everything against what this trail and the forest has offered millions of people along with wildlife habitats for years and years. If this is a sign of the times because more city people are moving to the country and want their paved trails for their bicycles and tennis shoes, then they should stay in their pavement cities where those accommodations are readily available to them. If communities such as Douglas and the many other small towns that the trunkline runs through convert to city like accommodations then what sets small town living from city life? Where do the generations of families that have been living here in peace and quiet and who respect nature and wildlife go? Your plans will completely corrupt the quiet settings of these towns and this beautiful trail. It will restrict the use of the trail by many as well. You will drive wildlife out of their habitats and in some cases probably drive them to death. For what???? At what cost??? Please reconsider this asinine idea and make the right decision to preserve, protect and let be what has been perfect and should remain perfect for thousands of more years to come.</p>	New Braintree	MA	01531

12/7/21 7:47 PM	Teddianne	Parent	I am strongly opposed to paving the SNETT. The trail is already user friendly to every type of trail recreation. It is the State Forest. To pave it would be greatly distressing to the natural beauty that most people enjoy. With the greenways in Uxbridge and Millbury and the River walk in webster there is no need to pave our state forest. I hope that this is voted down.	Douglas	MA	01516
12/7/21 4:35 PM	David	Bettridge	<p>Please don't pave the SNETT. It is one of the few remaining pathways in our area that real days gone by. It serves to remind us of how life was before cars and the rushing everywhere modern times that have taken over our lives. The money could be better spent developing more (unpaved) trails for walkers, runners, and cyclists to enjoy elsewhere in the state.</p> <p>Thank you for considering my thoughts in this matter,</p> <p>David Bettridge</p>	Providence	RI	02908
12/9/2021 6:08	Diana	Lombardi	<p>So many people enjoy the raw natural path. I hear Perhaps, No parking for horse trailers? How unfair to the hard working horse Community.</p> <p>How about paving our roads especially Route 96 in Douglas, it has been crumbling for years and wrecking our cars. How about fixing our Community in general. So many dead trees hanging over wires and roads that have slimmed down 4- 5 feet, 2 feet on each side because the Town doesn't clean up sand on roads and it grows grass , so most back roads are back to one lane.</p> <p>How about stop spending money on the famous Library? I never see lines out the door and hardly see any results from the tax money we all have to pay forever., not just until it's paid for.</p> <p>We need to think smarter for our Town and State.</p>	Douglas	MA	01511
12/10/2021 7:06	Elizabeth	Pacek	Please keep the parking areas (South Street) open for horse trailers, and a natural surface to ride on...no paving. Thank you.	Jefferson	MA	01521
12/10/2021 10:12	Peter	Martone	Please please please DO NOT introduce pavement into an otherwise all natural area. Aside from the damage that will be caused just to accomplish this, all of the animals that live there being forced out, it's just ugly.	Bellingham	MA	02011

12/10/2021 16:43	Lynne	Goodnow	HI In the best interest of the public and all recreational users, I believe the best surface for the trail is to leave it in its natural state. This would stay in line with your mission and allow for all recreational users to enjoy this trail. . Lynne Goodnow 12.10.2021	Athol	MA	0135
12/11/2021 10:22	Douglas	Caverly	I am very much apposed to paving trails in the woods. Going out to enjoy nature should not include paved paths. If you want to improve the trails and make the surface smoother for bikes and other users, take a look at the Milford bike path and the section from Milford to Hopkinton. That section of the bike path was improved with gravel, not asphalt. Sincerely, Douglas Caverly	Bellingham	MA	0201

12/15/2021 8:06	Emily	Newman	<p>Hi all,</p> <p>By way of introduction my name is Emily Newman and I am a resident of Douglas MA. I am a frequent trail user for both running, walking and biking applications. Having utilized many of the local bike paths to run the Trunkline Trail is one of my favorites due to the natural surface which is optimal for recreational use. Understanding there is a need to work on this for footing,etc. is there anything preventing this from being a packed cinder surface which compromises the need for improvements and maintains the natural surface many look for from the Trunkline Trail? One example of this is the Central Mass Rail Trail in West Boylston. Many citizens frequent that trail for a variety of physical activities. This is also a favorable surface for bicycles and wheelchairs as it is packed but also allows a softer impact alternative for runners. Having the packed cinder surface also attracts winter users as well and does not raise the question of any paving as the trails can be used for cross country skiing or snow shoeing. Although not myself, I have frequently seen equestrian users and the paved surface is prohibitive to those current users.</p> <p>Recently I have made use of the Empire State rail trail in New York that offered a variety of surfaces for biking. This cinder was a favorable option and covered most of the non-city paths. The paved trail does offer a favorable surface for long distance biking but at 6 miles the slight impact on speed would not exceed the benefit maintaining a natural surface would provide.</p> <p>I fully support renovations to add benches, rest stops and improve the surface of the trail but I wanted to share my comments that I strongly encourage the use of other alternatives to maintain the natural feel current users of the Trunkline trail come for as this is what makes the trail so favorable to many.</p> <p>Thank you for time to read through my comments.</p> <p>Best, Emily Newman</p>	Douglas	MA	0151
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12/18/2021 10:57	Colleen	Drumheller	I am against the paving of the SNETT. I have been hiking and running on the trail for about 16 years. Having a more natural ground is most appropriate for this trail and for it's occupants. The natural ground gives my dogs' paws reprieve from the hot pavement of the side streets when we run on. The natural dirt also creates less wear and tear n their pads. Having the trail as it is now allows me to point out all the various wildlife animal tracks and see differing plants sprout up around it. Having the trail as it is now allows me to view remnants of the railroad peeking through the dirt. If it is paved those railroad spikes, coal and bolts are forever suffocated under the very unnatural pavement. Paving the trail creates havoc even in the winter. As snow melts and ice forms on the pavement creating spots of black ice and great difficulty running the trail. At least when it is in its natural form ice is less of a problem. Also as more people use the paved trail more animals defecate on the pavement creating a very unpleasant walk. I have experienced this on many other paved trails and streets. At least with a more natural trail animal feces tend to break down at a faster rate and biodegrade. Also biking on the trail brings about a whole different experience than riding on pavement. With paving the SNETT you are ruining that experience of trail riding. Once you pave the trail there is no going back. You forever covered up the natural beauty the SNETT has become and why so many enjoy it for what it is.	Douglas	MA	0151
12/18/2021 23:46	Marcia	Pray	I am a trail runner who uses the SNETT regularly through out the year, rain, snow, sunshine all the above. I love running that trail because it's flat and gives when I run, helping to keep my knees from the wear and tear that cement/asphalt usually has on my knees. I would like to vote against the paving of the SNETT. There are so many equestrian rides I pass on the trail who use the trail also - please leave that trail natural the way it has been.. thank you.	Douglas	MA	0151
12/20/2021 9:55	Janet	Moore	Please do not pave - I ride my horse there and not only is it hard footing but also it scars the natural landscape	West Roxbur	MA	0213



TOWN OF DOUGLAS

Kevin D. Morse – Chairman
David P. Cortese – Vice Chairman
Timothy P. Bonin
Harold R. Davis
Michael E. Fitzpatrick

OFFICE OF THE SELECTMEN
29 Depot Street • Douglas, MA 01516
508-476-4000
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Matthew J. Wojcik
Town Administrator

Lisa Freeman
Executive Assistant

December 20, 2021

Department of Conservation and Recreation
Office of Public Outreach
251 Causeway Street
Boston, MA 02114

Re: Comments on the Proposed Southern New England Trunkline Trail Project

To Whom It May Concern:

We write to express our strong views on one aspect of the above captioned project, specifically, the proposal to install a paved surface along six (6) miles of the Southern New England Trunkline Trail (SNETT) from the Connecticut border to the Depot Street trailhead in Douglas.

As a Board, we are unanimous in our opposition to the use of pavement to improve the SNETT in Douglas as proposed in the Department's December 7, 2021 public presentation. We endorse the use of stabilized aggregate instead of pavement. We support the goal of accessibility and believe the use of stabilized aggregate will allow this important objective to be met without incurring the negative aspects of pavement.

It is true that Department staff and members of the engineering consultancy noted during their presentation on December 7, 2021 that they are not advocating for pavement in comparison to other trail surface improvement approaches. It was also clear, however, from the conversational context of the public meeting and the documents presented by various project staff members, that staff viewed pavement as the preferred solution for shared access, budget, and maintenance purposes.

We believe that pavement is an unacceptable material for the SNETT. The SNETT crosses many areas where an abundance of uncommon plant and animal life are visible in an overall setting that is minimally improved. The introduction of pavement into this environment ruins the atmosphere of the trail that so many find to be its most valuable feature.

The SNETT is also popular amongst local and out of town users precisely because it already allows for shared use amongst equestrian, bicycling, and pedestrian interests. The full width of the trail and its natural state allow users to pass, travel side by side, and yield to one another as circumstances warrant. The proposed project, if it includes paving the trail, will require that people utilize the surface suited for their mode of travel, which during good weather and

popular times of use may constrict traffic to narrow areas moving at different speeds and in narrow single file. This is a step backwards in terms of the safe, shared use of this asset.

The seclusion of the SNETT is welcoming to equestrians, who can ride with relative ease of mind that excessive noise and speed of passing traffic will not upset their horses. Paved surfaces enable higher speeds across various modes of travel on the trail. Higher rates of speed by some within a shared space creates the likelihood of significantly more conflicts between users. Further, we reject the notion that a five (5) foot wide trail is realistic for equestrian uses.

The notion presented by the consulting engineers – that pavement will reduce the number of users of motorized vehicles using the SNETT – is hopelessly naïve and completely contrary to our experience with ATV and trail bike riders in Douglas.

We are concerned that a paved path will, over the long run, prove very difficult to maintain in a safe condition. The SNETT in Douglas has many places where mature trees have root systems under the trail. Other areas have complete exposure to sunlight and weather, and pavement may expand and contract significantly, be subject to icing, and be damaged from any drainage problems that might arise. Deteriorating pavement is a significant safety concern; cracked, heaved and disintegrating pavement raises numerous dangers for users of all kinds. We are not confident the Department will have the budget to maintain a pavement path over the long run.

Mountain biking is fundamentally different from street biking. The challenge of riding on an unpaved surface and across rugged terrain attracts many mountain bikers to the SNETT. The proposed paved path would alter the mountain biking experience in a number of ways, including increasing street bike traffic and therefore, congestion, and possibly pushing mountain bikers into a more narrow space to stay on unpaved surface.

Over the last several years, the sponsors of various events that cater to equestrians, mountain bikers and runners who prefer a rugged course have begun to gravitate to the SNETT and the Douglas State Forest as a suitable venue for their specific type of event. The project as proposed will all but eliminate the trail's appeal to these users.

Presenters at the December 7, 2021 public meeting noted that pavement is not the only surface that would improve accessibility. These slides have disappeared from the version of the presentation posted on the DCR website. However, presenters were clearly heard saying that a stabilized aggregate surface would comply with accessibility standards.

Since an alternative to pavement would allow the goals of the project to be met without requiring the disturbance of the existing context and usage pattern on the SNETT, we unequivocally reject the proposal for a ten foot wide paved path on the Douglas portion of the SNETT. We ask that you reject this aspect of the project proposal and substitute a context-appropriate, properly sized stabilized aggregate path, overall trail widening, and enhanced maintenance to allow for continued shared usage of this valuable recreation asset.

These comments result from a public meeting held at the Douglas Municipal Center on December 20, 2021 at which the Board authorized these written comments (Selectman Davis participated remotely and was unable to live sign).

Thank you for your consideration.



Douglas Board of Selectmen

Kevin D. Morse, Chairman

David P. Cortese, Vice Chairman

Harold R. Davis

Timothy P. Bonin

Michael E. Fitzpatrick

12/20/2021

Date



Southern New England Trunkline Trail (SNETT) – Douglas Public Design Meeting

Chat

Files

Meeting Notes

Whiteboard



Meeting started 12/7 5:17 PM

- Patricia Domigan (Guest) has temporarily joined the chat.
- Richard Williams (Guest) has temporarily joined the chat.
- Hollenbeck, Kevin (DCR) has temporarily joined the chat.
- Cochran, Sharron (Guest) has temporarily joined the chat.
- Valerie Clark (Guest) has temporarily joined the chat.
- Lisa Mosczynski (Guest) has temporarily joined the chat.
- John (Guest) has temporarily joined the chat.
- Cheryl Fitzpatrick (Guest) has temporarily joined the chat.
- Lee Toma (Guest) has temporarily joined the chat.
- Fredericks, William (SEN) (Guest) has temporarily joined the chat.
- Danielle Morrow (Guest) has temporarily joined the chat.
- Shirley Mosczynski (Guest) has temporarily joined the chat.
- Lori Hout & Bill Rossi (Guest) has temporarily joined the chat.
- Ron Anderson (Guest) has temporarily joined the chat.
- Jake S. (Guest) has temporarily joined the chat.
- Dawn Fontaine (Guest) has temporarily joined the chat.
- Sutton, Peter (DOT) has temporarily joined the chat.
- Denny LaForce (Guest) has temporarily joined the chat.
- Philip Rutledge (Guest) has temporarily joined the chat.
- Stephen Firmes (Guest) has temporarily joined the chat.
- Bruce (Guest) has temporarily joined the chat.
- Cathrine Thomas (Guest) has temporarily joined the chat.
- Wally & Sandy (Guest) has temporarily joined the chat.
- fred (Guest) has temporarily joined the chat.
- Becky Kalagher (Guest) has temporarily joined the chat.
- Matt (Guest) has temporarily joined the chat.
- Paul Peterson (Guest) has temporarily joined the chat.
- Lori Hout & Bill Rossi (Guest) has temporarily joined the chat.



Southern New England Trunkline Trail (SNETT) – Douglas Public Design Meeting

Chat

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Meeting Notes

Whiteboard



- Joubert, Lori (HOU) (Guest) has temporarily joined the chat.
- Lafave, Raymond (Guest) has temporarily joined the chat.
- Brundage, Lynn (Guest) has temporarily joined the chat.
- Marshall, Patricia (DHE) has temporarily joined the chat.
- Judy Nawrocki (Guest) has temporarily joined the chat.
- Medina, Rachel (Guest) has temporarily joined the chat.
- Brian Forestal (Guest) has temporarily joined the chat.
- Kathy Richards (Guest) has temporarily joined the chat.
- Michael (Guest) has temporarily joined the chat.
- Kim Barnard (Guest) has temporarily joined the chat.
- McKenna, Joseph - Rep. (HOU) (Guest) has temporarily joined the chat.
- Gibbons, Kylie (SEN) (Guest) has temporarily joined the chat.
- Jane Mosczynski (Guest) has temporarily joined the chat.
- Medina, Rachel (Guest) no longer has access to the chat.
- Becky Kalagher (Guest) no longer has access to the chat.
- Medina, Rachel (Guest) has temporarily joined the chat.
- Becky Kalagher (Guest) has temporarily joined the chat.
- Steve (Guest) has temporarily joined the chat.
- Marie raiff (Guest) has temporarily joined the chat.

W Wally & Sandy (Guest) 12/7 6:03 PM
we cannot hear anyone speaking

DF Dawn Fontaine (Guest) 12/7 6:04 PM
I can hear you fine.

KR Kathy Richards (Guest) 12/7 6:04 PM
I can hear

12/7 6:04 PM
May need to check your audio Wally & Sandy, not on the presenter's end.

- Becky Kalagher (Guest) has temporarily joined the chat.



Southern New England Trunkline Trail (SNETT) – Douglas Public Design Meeting

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Whiteboard



- Richard Dagenais (Guest) has temporarily joined the chat.
- George (Guest) has temporarily joined the chat.
- Zimmer, Laura J. (Guest) has temporarily joined the chat.
- Rob Dandrade (Guest) has temporarily joined the chat.
- Fred Fontaine (Guest) has temporarily joined the chat.
- fred (Guest) no longer has access to the chat.
- James Mahoney (Guest) has temporarily joined the chat.
- Richard T. Moore (Guest) has temporarily joined the chat.
- Cary VandenAkker (Guest) has temporarily joined the chat.
- Peter Shaw (Guest) has temporarily joined the chat.
- Lynn Paresky (Guest) has temporarily joined the chat.
- Rose Zariczny (Guest) has temporarily joined the chat.
- Stone, Charles (DCR) has temporarily joined the chat.
- Frongillo, Cobi (HOU) (Guest) has temporarily joined the chat.
- Matthew Wojcik (Guest) has temporarily joined the chat.
- Rose Zariczny (Guest) no longer has access to the chat.



Lafave, Raymond 12/7 6:13 PM
What is the trailhead in Holliston done with?

- Medina, Rachel (Guest) no longer has access to the chat.
- Peter Shaw (Guest) no longer has access to the chat.



Hollenbeck, Kevin (DCR) 12/7 6:15 PM
I don't believe the trail head in Holliston is DCR.



Kathy Richards (Guest) 12/7 6:17 PM
what does the mendon and airline trail have?

- Nancy Reid-Stockwell (Guest) has temporarily joined the chat.
- Sarah (Guest) has temporarily joined the chat.
- Medina, Rachel (Guest) has temporarily joined the chat.
- Michael (Guest) has temporarily joined the chat.
- Matthew Benoit (Guest) has temporarily joined the chat.



Southern New England Trunkline Trail (SNETT) – Douglas Public Design Meeting

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Marshall, Patricia (DHE) 12/7 6:19 PM
There is quite a bit of background noise. Does someone need to mute?

- Gibbons, Kylie (SEN) (Guest) no longer has access to the chat.
- kevin (Guest) has temporarily joined the chat.
- kevin (Guest) no longer has access to the chat.
- Frongillo, Cobi (HOU) (Guest) no longer has access to the chat.



Judy Nawrocki (Guest) 12/7 6:23 PM
Keep Douglas State Forest WILD

- Medina, Rachel (Guest) no longer has access to the chat.
- Medina, Rachel (Guest) has temporarily joined the chat.
- J Dowling (Guest) has temporarily joined the chat.



Kathy Richards (Guest) 12/7 6:25 PM
where do horse trailers fit??



Lafave, Raymond 12/7 6:26 PM
I was wondering the same thing

- Oliveri, Jeff (Guest) has temporarily joined the chat.



Nancy Reid-Stockwell 12/7 6:27 PM
seating only in parking lots?



Judy Nawrocki (Guest) 12/7 6:27 PM
Sit on a rock



Valerie Clark (Guest) 12/7 6:28 PM
How big are the horse trailer parking spaces, particularly how long are they and what's the distance from the side of a trailer to the lane that traffic passes through the parking area on?

- Philip Rutledge (Guest) no longer has access to the chat.
- Philip Rutledge (Guest) has temporarily joined the chat.



Lafave, Raymond 12/7 6:29 PM
Looks like only parking horse trailers on depot st

Mark (Guest) has temporarily joined the chat.

KH Hollenbeck, Kevin (DCR) 12/7 6:29 PM
Perhaps you can make some suggestions on design specs for trailer parking?

JN Judy Nawrocki (Guest) 12/7 6:29 PM
You are going to spend money on White Pine? That's hysterical.

Shelby (Guest) has temporarily joined the chat.

Michael (Guest) no longer has access to the chat.

JS Jake S. (Guest) 12/7 6:30 PM
During winter storms will the trail be plowed?

Mary Ellen Coyne (Guest) has temporarily joined the chat.

Diane (Guest) has temporarily joined the chat.

FF Fred Fontaine (Guest) 12/7 6:32 PM
It's not available!!

M Matt (Guest) 12/7 6:33 PM
In the web browser its on the bottom center

WF Fredericks, William (SEN) 12/7 6:33 PM
Bill Fredericks, Deputy Chief of Staff & Communications Director for Senator Fattman here to listen in on his behalf. 1

RD Richard Dagenais (Guest) 12/7 6:33 PM
This looks like a lovely urban project, but it totally destroys the wilderness character of the state forest. What can be done to make this project fit into the character of the forest instead of bringing the city to the site? 2

12/7 6:34 PM
Fred, on my end it says you should be able to. Not sure if it's an issue on your end? Or the web browser? My apologies for the inconvenience. Could you provide comment in the chat if it's easier?

FF Fred Fontaine (Guest) 12/7 6:34 PM
Says "only meeting organizers can unmute"

NR Nancy Reid-Stockwell 12/7 6:34 PM
11 Cobblestone lane

Rose Zariczny (Guest) has temporarily joined the chat.

FF Fred Fontaine (Guest) 12/7 6:35 PM
Okay-my question-was there a study done asking what the taxpayers actually WANT for recreational opportunities? Not a single person I have asked wants this-or wants to pay for it.

R Berchem (Guest) has temporarily joined the chat.

KR Kathy Richards (Guest) 12/7 6:36 PM
who is asking for this to be developed? Nobody I know wants it or has complaints about the trails

LP (Guest) has temporarily joined the chat.

LB Brundage, Lynn 12/7 6:37 PM
Two other concerns about pavement are 1) paving will probably increase the speed some of the bicyclists travel at, and 2) When it rains and then the temperature drops below freezing, a paved surface will be more of a slip hazard than a natural surface would be. 1

RD Richard Dagenais (Guest) 12/7 6:38 PM
Richard Dagenais, 19 Hilltop Drive.
What do you plan to do to control motorized vehicle access? At least the current trails limit the speed of these vehicles when they do get on the trail, but we can expect them to travel over 50mph when they have a paved surface to use, endangering the other trail users.

R Berchem (Guest) no longer has access to the chat.

M Mark (Guest) 12/7 6:38 PM
We have MANY folks that ride horses on these trails and you are creating a dangerous environment for the animals and people. How have you addressed these concerns?

carol (Guest) has temporarily joined the chat.

JN Judy Nawrocki (Guest) 12/7 6:39 PM
Yay! Go Becky



Southern New England Trunkline Trail (SNETT) – Douglas Public Design Meeting

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Lisa Mosczynski (Guest) 12/7 6:39 PM

I also would like to know who is asking for this? The staff at the park is MAXED out already. There has been no discussion about winter use or the control of ATV use. We have a lot of better things to do with the \$8M price tag!



1

Matthew Wojcik 12/7 6:40 PM

Paving is a profoundly bad idea.

Fred Fontaine (Guest) 12/7 6:40 PM

She said asphalt doesn't need maintenance-that is completely false. Just look at many of the roads here in town.

Medina, Rachel 12/7 6:40 PM

agree, please consider keeping this all unpaved

Marshall, Patricia (DHE) 12/7 6:40 PM

Pat Marshall, 10 Hilltop Drive, Douglas. Can you provide more information on exactly where the State Line Trailhead will be located? Will it be directly across the street from High Street?

Brundage, Lynn 12/7 6:41 PM

Hello. I live in Uxbridge near the East Douglas line. My mother and I use the section of trail being discussed. She rides her horse and I run beside her. Neither of us want to walk or run on a paved surface. That's why we go out on the trail. Mom and I hope the trail won't be paved. Thank you.
Lynn Brundage

R Berchem (Guest) has temporarily joined the chat.

Tommy Walker (Guest) has temporarily joined the chat.

Valerie Clark (Guest) 12/7 6:43 PM

Echoing Becky Kalagher's comments - no paving, keep Douglas trails natural and I agree with the comments regarding not cifytizing the country and keeping Douglas wild, that's why people love trails. We have pavement elsewhere, they are called roads.

Gifford, John (Guest) has temporarily joined the chat.

Waterson, Brad (Guest) has temporarily joined the chat.



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Judy Nawrocki (Guest) 12/7 6:43 PM

Please leave it as is. The users love it the way it is!

Jim Eddy (Guest) has temporarily joined the chat.

Lori Hout & Bill Rossi (Guest) 12/7 6:45 PM

Yes, please leave it as is. I use it for hiking and mountain biking. It is the ONLY long unpaved path in the area, and this proposal would destroy it. I prefer to ride on unpaved surfaces, and this would force me to compete with equestrians on a 5 foot wide surface. Road bikes can exceed speeds of 30 mph on paved surfaces, and that's not safe with horses nearby.

Valerie Clark (Guest) 12/7 6:45 PM

Was there room left to unload the horse?

Rose Zariczny (Guest) no longer has access to the chat.

Tommy Walker (Guest) no longer has access to the chat.

Rose Zariczny (Guest) has temporarily joined the chat.

Lafave, Raymond 12/7 6:47 PM

There is a lot of horse trailer park on south st. U need to change the parking design

Jake S. (Guest) 12/7 6:48 PM

Please know there are more citizens that use the trail in comparison to the horse riders that are bombarding the chat/questions. When you make your decision please consider ALL people that use the trail and what would be best for everyone/most users. Douglas should not be represented based off of the horse riders in this discussion.

Jane Mosczynski (Guest) 12/7 6:48 PM

I am also concerned with this proposal exacerbating motorized vehicles on the trail. Pavement will be a magnet for their use.

Philip Rutledge (Guest) 12/7 6:48 PM

This section of trail doesn't connect tourist areas to a town center. This is wilderness to wilderness. Many people use this trail and want as is.

Becky Kalagher 12/7 6:49 PM

Horseback riders like to ride side by side to chat with each other, just like other users. 5 feet will not allow this.



1



Southern New England Trunkline Trail (SNETT) – Douglas Public Design Meeting

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VC

Valerie Clark (Guest) 12/7 6:49 PM

I hike this trail and appreciate it the way it is and don't want to be told what I'm looking at, I want to appreciate it and discover it by myself, no signs, no pavement, no development.

BK

Becky Kalagher 12/7 6:50 PM

What about snowmobiles?

DF

Dawn Fontaine (Guest) 12/7 6:50 PM

it won't allow unmute

VC

Valerie Clark (Guest) 12/7 6:50 PM

I also agree with those who observed paving is more slippery for all users.

M

Michael (Guest) 12/7 6:52 PM

Where do you draw the line with what is to be paved and what is not? Today you want to pave the SNETT in ten years are you going to want to pave trails like The Mid-State Trail, Schmidt Trail or the Saddle Trail? Please keep this natural and do not turn this into an over improved landscape such as Niagara Falls.

LB

Brundage, Lynn 12/7 6:52 PM

I've been on the section of road from my house to the trail with my mom on her horse and he has slipped on the pavement.

JM

Jane Mosczynski (Guest) 12/7 6:52 PM

I'd like to see the evidence that motorized vehicle use decreases with paving.

JN

Judy Nawrocki (Guest) 12/7 6:52 PM

I see more horses than bikes in the forest. We are in there at least 5 days a week.

VC

Valerie Clark (Guest) 12/7 6:52 PM

zoy



M (Guest) has temporarily joined the chat.

JN

Judy Nawrocki (Guest) 12/7 6:53 PM

ADA approves gravel!



Southern New England Trunkline Trail (SNETT) – Douglas Public Design Meeting

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BW

Waterson, Brad 12/7 6:53 PM

Jumping on the SNETT on foot or on the bike is a magical experience and you can be out in nature. Is there a way to make this accessible without paving?



1

RM

Medina, Rachel 12/7 6:53 PM

it can be ADA compliant with unpaved surface, take Hop River Trail in CT as an example



Sarah (Guest) no longer has access to the chat.

VC

Valerie Clark (Guest) 12/7 6:53 PM

It's not just the slippery pavement with horses, it is the hard surface - that's not good for horses or people, difficult on the bones and ligaments and muscles.



1

M

Michael (Guest) 12/7 6:53 PM

If this needs to be ADA compliant then create a path the width of a standard sidewalk and not nearly the full width of the trail.



1

FF

Fred Fontaine (Guest) 12/7 6:53 PM

ADA compliance ABSOLUTELY can be accomplished without paving!

RD

Rob Dandrade (Guest) 12/7 6:54 PM

I live in Uxbridge and walk my dog on the SNETT frequently. I see equal volumes of Bikes, horses and walkers. I think you may have the width of paved versus soil reversed- you need to give more space or all space to soil for horses. 5 feet is not wide enough for horses. Agree with Becky. Don't see horse trailer parking at South Street proposed even though I see many horse trailers in this lot. Douglas State Park and forest have such fabulous trails for horses and it would be a shame not to extend it to the SNETT.



1



Sarah (Guest) has temporarily joined the chat.

BK

Becky Kalagher 12/7 6:54 PM

DCR has an accessibility program that maybe working with other users we could provide wheel chairs that are suitable for natural surface.

JM

James Mahoney (Guest) 12/7 6:56 PM

Please keep the trail natural. Pavement is not the way to go. I moved from Randolph to get away from all of the pavement!



kevin (Guest) has temporarily joined the chat.

Southern New England Trunkline Trail (SNETT) – Douglas Public Design Meeting

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kevin (Guest) has temporarily joined the chat.

Matthew Wojcik (Guest) no longer has access to the chat.

SM

Shirley Mosczynski (Guest) 12/7 7:00 PM

Has there been a wild life assessment done in this area?

1

Dawn Fontaine (Guest) no longer has access to the chat.

BK

Becky Kalagher 12/7 7:00 PM

There are tons of strollers that use that trail all the time.

W

Wally & Sandy (Guest) 12/7 7:00 PM

We think paving the trail would be out of character in the Douglas State Forest. We believe that the trail should be improved, but not paved. By combining the planned 10 foot section with the 5 foot equestrian trail, this would give all users a 15 foot wide unpaved trail.

1

FF

Fred Fontaine (Guest) 12/7 7:01 PM

Yup-there are lots of strollers on that trail.

KR

Kathy Richards (Guest) 12/7 7:01 PM

yes I see strollers all the time. and BSTR does maintain the trails quite a bit

JS

Jake S. (Guest) 12/7 7:01 PM

can i follow up?

Cathrine Thomas (Guest) no longer has access to the chat.

Richard T. Moore (Guest) no longer has access to the chat.

Cathrine Thomas (Guest) has temporarily joined the chat.

Dawn Fontaine (Guest) has temporarily joined the chat.

JN

Judy Nawrocki (Guest) 12/7 7:03 PM

It's already multi use

It's a trail

M

Mark (Guest) 12/7 7:04 PM

I want to know where the federal government explicitly states that this trail system needs to be paved for ADA compliance? I want the details to be published?

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JN

Judy Nawrocki (Guest) 12/7 7:04 PM

It should remain an old rail bed

FF

Fred Fontaine (Guest) 12/7 7:04 PM

He didn't answer my question. Was there a study done asking what the taxpayers want for recreational opportunities!!!!!!

M

Mark (Guest) 12/7 7:05 PM

Can I ask that our state representatives be allowed to speak up one way or another in light of the fact the majority of local residents are opposed to this project?

FF

Fred Fontaine (Guest) 12/7 7:06 PM

How is this being paid for?

M

Michael (Guest) 12/7 7:06 PM

Will snowmobiles still be permitted?

Nicholas Furno (Guest) has temporarily joined the chat.

SF

Stephen Firms 12/7 7:07 PM

Whatever you can do to minimize/eliminate the motorized vehicles is of great value to all users. Need a balance for all.

VC

Valerie Clark (Guest) 12/7 7:07 PM

It's also a dangerous environment for dogs, walkers, children. Users should not be separated in order to justify paving.

Kim Barnard (Guest) no longer has access to the chat.

Lynn Paresky (Guest) has temporarily joined the chat.


















Rob Dandrade (Guest) no longer has access to the chat.









NF






Nicholas Furno (Guest) 12/7 7:09 PM

Has any consideration being given to the endangered species that live along the trail? I have documented evidence of Rare orchids, carnivorous plants, salamanders, and turtles. The turtles lay their eggs directly on the sand path and paving completely destroys that habitat for this wildlife.

1

-  Judy Nawrocki (Guest) 12/7 7:09 PM
Clearly there is an overwhelming response to NOT pave this. WE are the people that USE this area. Listen to us!  1
-  Steve (Guest) 12/7 7:10 PM
You will connect to the Air Line going south, providing 68ish more miles and a connection to the East Coast Greenway. Any thought to adding facilities for multi day riding? Small camping sites, water? porta potties? wayfaring signage off the trail for eateries or private camping?  1  1
-  Sarah (Guest) 12/7 7:10 PM
I'm not confident that Patricia who commented on "two stall" horse trailer parking, and that trotting on frozen pavement was safe, fully understands the needs of equestrians.
-  Jared Williams (Guest) has temporarily joined the chat.
-  Matt (Guest) no longer has access to the chat.
-  John (Guest) no longer has access to the chat.
-  J Dowling (Guest) 12/7 7:14 PM
Have the committee members visited the local area in person? They mispronounced Wallum Lake Road earlier. An on-site visit may help the committee recognize the unique area and current usage of the trail.
-  Xanadu (Guest) has temporarily joined the chat.
-  LP (Guest) no longer has access to the chat.
-  Linda Lachapelle (Guest) has temporarily joined the chat.
-  Stephen Fimes 12/7 7:19 PM
Having a connected and paved path from Blackstone to the CT border is a great idea.
-  Danielle Morrow (Guest) no longer has access to the chat.
-  Valerie Clark (Guest) 12/7 7:21 PM
Connecting trails is fine, the trail as it is already multiuse.
-  Brian Forestal (Guest) 12/7 7:21 PM
As an example, the City of Milford paved their rail trail, the Town of Holliston used stone dust on their trail that connects to Milford's trail.

-  Richard Dagenais (Guest) 12/7 7:22 PM
Why not go in the other direction toward the center of town, and stay out of the more natural areas of the state forest?
-  Shirley Mosczynski (Guest) 12/7 7:22 PM
Has there been an endangered species study done along the trail corridor?
-  Maureen (Guest) has temporarily joined the chat.
-  Nicholas Furno (Guest) 12/7 7:24 PM
This trail is already usable by anyone so long as they have the proper tires. We use this trail to observe the habitat and wildlife and this plan has a direct negative impact on the wildlife there and will quite literally pave over endangered orchids and turtle nesting grounds.
-  Dawn Fontaine (Guest) no longer has access to the chat.
-  Fred Fontaine (Guest) 12/7 7:26 PM
I can't believe they haven't told us how this is being paid for!!
-  Jake S. (Guest) 12/7 7:26 PM
Rep. McKenna thank you for taking the time out of your day to join this meeting.
-  Judy Nawrocki (Guest) 12/7 7:27 PM
Thanks for the support to keep the trail WILD. Let's keep the fight going! DO NOT LET THIS HAPPEN!

Let the people in Webster know. They use the trail as well!
-  Rose Zariczny (Guest) has temporarily joined the chat.
-  Matthew Benoit (Guest) no longer has access to the chat.
-  Maureen (Guest) 12/7 7:29 PM
how does this behoove residents that are paying taxes?
-  Fred Fontaine (Guest) 12/7 7:30 PM
How much has already been spent on design etc. for something nobody wants. That's why I REALLY want to know if a study was done asking the taxpayers HOW they want OUR money spent on recreational opportunities. Perhaps the rep can answer this.
-  Judy Nawrocki (Guest) 12/7 7:30 PM
Use the money to hire more rangers.

Southern New England Trunkline Trail (SNETT) – Douglas Public Design Meeting

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Join

LH

Lori Hout & Bill Rossi (Guest) 12/7 7:30 PM
For those of us opposed to paving this trail, please see <https://www.mass.gov/doc/attachment-7-shared-use-paths-and-greenways/download>, which states "Both the Massachusetts Architectural Access Board and the ADAAG require that accessible elements be maintained. For example, if stone dust is used as an accessible surface and rain washes a section of it out, the AAB and ADAAG require maintenance to repair the section to meet their minimum accessible design standards."

Rose Zariczny (Guest) no longer has access to the chat.

Donna Aldrich (Guest) has temporarily joined the chat.

JN

Judy Nawrocki (Guest) 12/7 7:31 PM
NO pavement.

LH

Lori Hout & Bill Rossi (Guest) 12/7 7:31 PM
My point being that stone dust is an option.

BW

Waterson, Brad 12/7 7:32 PM
Please keep the SNETT unpaved.

LB

Brundage, Lynn 12/7 7:32 PM
My husband and I walk and run on the trail. It is much better than running on pavement!

M

Maureen (Guest) 12/7 7:32 PM
;let the tax payers decide. Plese tell me how this benefits us?

PM

Marshall, Patricia (DHE) 12/7 7:32 PM
Pleese do not pave the Snett.

JN

Judy Nawrocki (Guest) 12/7 7:32 PM
YES! FIGHT!

NF

Nicholas Furno (Guest) 12/7 7:32 PM
If the citizens are universally against this, then why would it even still be considered? Who are you representing?

BF

Brian Forestal (Guest) 12/7 7:32 PM
Please do not pave the SNETT.

Southern New England Trunkline Trail (SNETT) – Douglas Public Design Meeting

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Join

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BF

Please do not pave the SNETT

Jim Eddy (Guest) no longer has access to the chat.

JN

Judy Nawrocki (Guest) 12/7 7:32 PM
Listen to us!

Sarah (Guest) no longer has access to the chat.

Stephen Firmes (Guest) no longer has access to the chat.

George (Guest) no longer has access to the chat.

JN

Judy Nawrocki (Guest) 12/7 7:33 PM
You have your answer.

BW

Waterson, Brad 12/7 7:33 PM
Thank you for hearing us.

kevin (Guest) no longer has access to the chat.

M

Michael (Guest) 12/7 7:33 PM
keep it natural stone dust

RL

Lafave, Raymond 12/7 7:33 PM
Stabilized soil or stone dust. No pavement

M

Maureen (Guest) 12/7 7:33 PM
WE SAY NO!!!!

Joubert, Lori (HOU) (Guest) no longer has access to the chat.

NF

Nicholas Furno (Guest) 12/7 7:33 PM
How does stone dust impact the turtle nesting?

M

Maureen (Guest) 12/7 7:34 PM
hy does it need to change at all????

FF

Fred Fontaine (Guest) 12/7 7:34 PM
Why are we paying a "team" to work on something nobody wants?

Lafave, Raymond (Guest) no longer has access to the chat.



Fred Fontaine (Guest) 12/7 7:34 PM
Why are we paying a "team" to work on something nobody wants?



Lafave, Raymond (Guest) no longer has access to the chat.



Judy Nawrocki (Guest) 12/7 7:34 PM
It's clear. Keep it WILD.



Maureen (Guest) 12/7 7:34 PM
Thank you Fred



Becky Kalagher 12/7 7:34 PM
Can we get a copy of the design plan



Brundage, Lynn 12/7 7:34 PM
Thank you.



Mark (Guest) no longer has access to the chat.



Nancy Reid-Stockwell (Guest) no longer has access to the chat.



R Berchem (Guest) 12/7 7:34 PM
Merry Christmas



Waterson, Brad (Guest) no longer has access to the chat.



Cochran, Sharron (Guest) no longer has access to the chat.



Jake S. (Guest) 12/7 7:34 PM
Thank you for your time.



Mary Ellen Coyne (Guest) no longer has access to the chat.



McKenna, Joseph - Rep. (HOU) (Guest) no longer has access to the chat.



Meeting ended 2h 18m 12/7 7:34 PM

TO: Department of Conservation and Recreation
Office of Public Outreach
251 Causeway Street
Boston, MA 02114

FROM: Jacob and Brittany Schultzberg
2 Stonehill Drive
Douglas, MA 01516

Subject: Southern New England Trunkline Trail (SNETT)

We are writing to address several comments and questions that we have regarding the proposed Southern New England Trunk Line Trail Project. We abut the SNETT and use it daily, whether it's walking our dogs, mountain biking, jogging or site seeing. This is a great trail and an asset to Douglas and the Blackstone Valley. Unfortunately, this trail is often forgotten about, and general maintenance has been lacking. We feel that this proposed 10-foot paved path, plus separate equestrian path, would enhance this trail. It would make the trail more accessible to everyone's recreational desires, as well as improve future maintenance time and costs.

During the public meeting on December 7, 2021, most comments came from a small group of very vocal proponents to this project. Several commentators said that no one wants the trail paved but this is not true. Most people who are in favor or are neutral to this project do not have a voice against this small group who have taken on outreach efforts to get their friends and family to write to the D.C.R. and local state representatives. We worry that the officials are being swarmed with the same repetitive comments and concerns from those strongly against this project. Others also comment that the trail should be left in its present condition.

We want to address the concerns we have with the current state of the trail:

- The trail is made of loose gravel, sand and reclaimed material. This trail is overrun with illegal dirt bikes and ATVs that leave ruts across the trail and surrounding wetlands. These illegal riders have no concern towards anyone who is out using the trail as it is designed.
- Swales along the SNETT are not maintained. They were originally designed to divert water runoff. The lack of maintenance allows standing water and ice in the winter. This standing water creates muddy trail conditions and attracts mosquitoes. These concerns are mostly noticeable between South Street and SE Main Street, and between Yew Street and Franklin Street. There is a culvert that runs from the trail and under SE Main Street. This culvert is often clogged and the swales are not pitched properly to handle runoff water.
- Street crossings along the trail are not well marked and can be dangerous to cross due to speeding cars and lack of signage.
- Rocks protrude from the ground all along the trail and create many tripping hazards.
- Because of the lack of maintenance, we and our neighbors are the ones out on the trail after storms clearing downed trees and debris. It could be days until D.C.R. is out there handling this.

- Overgrown weeds and brush during the summer are never maintained in a timely manner. Between SE Main Street and Yew Street this is particularly noticeable as you are forced to walk through tick infested overgrowth.
- It is nearly impossible to push a stroller or pull a wagon along most of this trail because of the large rocks that stick out of the ground and the loose material and ruts caused by ATV use.
- This trail is littered with piles of horse manure. Horse riders will tell you this manure is natural and just grass. At the end of the day, manure is solid waste that comes out of the back side of a horse that attracts flies. These piles are not just grass when you walk your dogs and you are constantly trying to avoid them.

All of these concerns are what most users of the trail deal with. Equestrian riders do not have to worry about these as they are riding on a horse that walks along with no issue. For every equestrian rider we see, there are hundreds of other users. We feel that the proposed pavement path with a side path for equestrian usage will best handle these concerns and make the SNETT accessible to the most amount of people possible. The 10-foot-wide paved portion will be a minimal width in comparison to the entire width of the SNETT right of way. Most areas are cleared 20-30 feet wide, and the proposed pavement would be a minimal impact in the grand scheme of things. There are also many miles of trails within the Douglas State Forest that will remain untouched. Since the proposed project contains a path for equestrian use, there will be no impact on the number of trails available for equestrians.

Though we feel that this proposed project as is would be a great asset to the town and all potential users, we are not opposed to upgrades to the SNETT using a soil/gravel product. Shall the D.C.R. cave to the pressure from this small percentage of total users, we encourage the D.C.R. to continue with proposed improvement to drainage, swales, signage, parking and road crossings. We also encourage the D.C.R. to work with the Bay State Trail Riders Association and come to a solution where the organization will be required to perform ongoing maintenance to the SNETT. We recommend and feel it appropriate that the following maintenance shall be performed by the Bay State Trail Riders Association:

- Yearly grading of the trail to remove deep ruts caused by ATV usage and allow proper drainage of water
- Yearly clearing of debris from swales and culverts
- During the summer months, monthly clearing of overgrown brush and weeds
- Monthly clearing of downed trees, branches and limbs
- After windstorms, immediate clearing of downed trees, branches and limbs
- Weekly removal of horse manure from the trail and parking lots
- Weekly grooming of the trail

We encourage the D.C.R. to move forward with this project as presented and follow through with their initial multi-use intent when they purchased this right of way. During the public meeting on December 7th, many comments against the paving were from people outside the immediate area of the SNETT. Many equestrian riders drive from outside of Douglas every so often and park horse trailers to access the trail. We feel that the D.C.R. should take comments from those who abut the trail and use it regularly with higher consideration. We remind you that

you are the Department of Conservation and Recreation, not the Department of Conservation and Equestrian.

Respectfully,

Jacob Schultzberg and Brittany Schultzberg



BSTRA has a long and vested history with the SNETT. Our Executive Director and founding father, Ed Whalley was instrumental in showing and convincing the State that purchasing this abandoned railroad bed would be a great asset to the trails community and a 22 mile backbone for a network of trails. He was also a driving force in securing the National Recreational Trail designation in perpetuity for the SNETT in 1994.

Beginning in 1989, we started working on improving and cleaning up the SNETT and to-date have committed more than \$128,400! Part of our work included a report called "The State of the SNETT" done in conjunction with the National Park Service in the fall of 2014:

Page 7 states: Restoring the Trail Tread. Railroad ballast on below grade sections. Geotextile fabric should be used to keep new surfacing from sinking into the existing ballast. New material can be $\frac{3}{4}$ minus gravel and should be compacted after application.

Page 12: Recommendations. Monitor the beaver activity east of Morse Pond. Once it has stabilized, grade and add gravel to the railbed.

The following recommendations for Rt. 96/South St to Yew St to Franklin to Depot to Martin to Monroe Street were all completed with RTP grant. These were to add gravel fill to a mud hole, add gravel surfacing if needed, and grade.

The rest of the report does not mention paving it at all.

The Franklin and Bellingham sections have been finished off with a soil stabilizer to keep it a natural surface path that is enjoyed by all, including equestrians. Where the SNETT enters Connecticut and becomes the Air Line Trail, the finished sections are stone dust. As they continue their improvements, they plan on the same natural surface of stone dust. It makes no sense to not continue this natural surface in Douglas.

Depending on what is "allowed or allocated" for equestrian use, it will probably regulate us to riding single file. We will not have room to ride abreast and have conversations. A natural surface will allow us to ride side by side, then as common-sense trail etiquette dictates when we approach other trail users, we move over to single file.

This also presents another challenge. Riders going in opposite directions. And all other users on the natural surface section. That is going to force someone onto the paved section to safely pass. And what of other trail users that prefer a natural surface also congregating on that five-foot-wide path?

Next issue. Cantering along the SNETT with a natural surface and my horse spooks, still cantering but the horse "jumps" sideways. On the natural surface it is no problem because we still have a good solid footing underneath. If we end up on the paved surface, we are looking at a trickier situation that could have a bad outcome if the horse goes down because it slipped on the pavement.

Carriage drivers. Paving the SNETT will definitely exclude them. One of our members is in her 80's and drives a pony. That is her way of getting around to enjoy the trails. And we have a picture of another member by the stone arch bridge on our brochure driving her horse on the SNETT.

Our organization, along with others, use the Douglas State Forest trails and the SNETT for organized rides. One of our events that we have held for 30+ years is the Fall Hunter Pace. This event and others are how we raise money to continue our trail work that benefits all trail users.

Also of note, every spring we see turtles come up onto the railbed, dig holes and lay their eggs. Pavement will surely be detrimental to them also!

This is a rural community where we all enjoy the natural beauty the SNETT has to offer us as horseback riders as well as other current trail users. We don't want to see our natural beauty marred by black top.

South Street Parking: in your presentation the picture you showed of this parking lot has horse trailers in it. This design plan has no accommodations for them to park here. It is obvious that it is used by them. It is also used by snowmobilers in the wintertime. They will not be able to park here either unless they park in the paved area and block off a good number of vehicle spots. Same with any type of truck and trailer combination.

Depot Street Parking: Much better design than the first presentation. Noticed that parking for cars has gone from 22 to 39 in this new design. Reserving judgement on the parking area for truck/trailer because there were no details. By details, I mean measurements. It just shows where there should be room for six truck/trailer rigs, but from the picture I can not tell if there is enough room for six.

For that I would request further review and input.

I have a question. This section of the SNETT is in the Douglas State Forest section. The DSF is classified as a Reserve. Per Reserve status, trails should be in the class 1 to 3 category. Will paving it put it into the class 4 category?

Representing our many members and all other horseback riders that use this trail, we strongly and wholeheartedly request that the design not include a paved way. Please keep it a natural surface that is so much better for the environment and compatible for all trail users.

Respectfully,



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