

News Release



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AMTRAK COMPLETES NIAN TIC RIVER BRIDGE REPLACEMENT PROJECT

New span provides improved reliability for rail passengers, less disruption to maritime traffic and expanded beach access for the public

NEW YORK— [Amtrak](#) has completed the three-year Niantic River Bridge Replacement Project which provides improved operational reliability for rail passengers along the Northeast Corridor with increased train speeds, less disruption to the boating community and expanded beach access to area residents.

The original span was built in 1907. The new bridge continues to serve as a key link for passenger and freight rail traffic between New York and Boston, carrying 54 trains daily (38 Amtrak intercity trains, 2 freight trains and 14 commuter trains).

“The replacement of the Niantic Bridge is a positive step in modernizing and enhancing critical rail infrastructure along the Northeast Corridor that supports the regional economy,” said Amtrak President and CEO Joe Boardman.

The work involved the construction of a new two-track electrified movable bascule bridge across the Niantic River, 58 feet south of its previous location between East Lyme and Waterford, Conn., realignment of the track along west and east approaches to the bridge, track embankment construction, scour protection, new retaining walls and the creation of new electrification and signaling systems.

The boating community is also benefiting from the project. The new bridge is constructed with broader channel access for maritime traffic from 45 feet to 100 feet and raises the vertical under clearance above the water from 11.5 feet to 16 feet. Also, Amtrak rebuilt the Niantic Bay Boardwalk, replenished the beach with 76,000 cubic yards of sand and nearly doubled the number of parking spaces at Cini Park in East Lyme, Conn., to 127 spaces, increasing public beach access. The refurbished beach and boardwalk re-opened to the public in early June in time for the summer season.

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“The replacement of the Niantic River Bridge was one of the most visible and complex projects supported by the 2009 American Recovery and Reinvestment Act, and its completion is an important milestone for our region and our country,” Congressman Joe Courtney said. “This new bridge is a key link for passenger and freight rail traffic between New York and Boston, and will support efficient rail service for many years to come. Completion of this bridge will leave a lasting legacy for rail service in our area, and I applaud Amtrak, state and local officials, and other stakeholders for their close teamwork in making this project a reality.”

“The Town of East Lyme is proud to have been a partner with Amtrak during the past three years and is thrilled with the replacement of the old RR Bridge,” said East Lyme First Selectman Paul Formica. “The new railroad bridge along with the renovation of the Niantic Bay Boardwalk and Cini Park are world class and will significantly improve and enhance regional travel by both rail and water. This area will be enjoyed by the region for generations to come. Great job Amtrak!”

“It is with great excitement that I look at our new railroad bridge over the Niantic River,” said Waterford First Selectman, Dan Steward. “The results are wonderful and the contractors have done a great job of keeping us informed and answering our requests. Hopefully, the new larger opening will help with water traffic and the ability to help water flow in and out of the river. We are proud to have this new bridge and pleased that it is completed. Thanks again to Amtrak for all of their efforts in this regard.”

After the original bridge was demolished this spring, a portion of its remnants were donated by Amtrak to the Connecticut Eastern Railroad Museum for preservation and to the towns of East Lyme and Waterford for future use and display to the general public.

The project was funded, in part, by the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act and was constructed by Cianbro/Middlesex Joint Venture VII Group from Littleton, Mass. Partners in the project included the U.S. Department of Transportation, the Federal Railroad Administration, Town of East Lyme, Town of Waterford, U.S. Coast Guard and the East Lyme Public Trust Foundation.

About Amtrak®

Amtrak is America’s Railroad®, the nation’s intercity passenger rail service and its high-speed rail operator. A record 31.2 million passengers traveled on Amtrak in FY 2012 on more than 300 daily trains – at speeds up to 150

mph (241 kph) – that connect 46 states, the District of Columbia and three Canadian Provinces. Amtrak operates intercity trains in partnership with 15 states and contracts with 13 commuter rail agencies to provide a variety of services. Enjoy the journey® at Amtrak.com or call 800-USA-RAIL for schedules, fares and more information. Join us on facebook.com/Amtrak and follow us at twitter.com/Amtrak.

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NIANTIC RIVER BRIDGE REPLACEMENT

A new, moveable, rail bridge providing greater reliability, less disruption to maritime traffic, and expanded beach access to the public.

PROJECT OVERVIEW

A new Niantic River Bridge has replaced one of the oldest movable bridges in the country, a two-track, bascule (rolling lift) bridge that was built in 1907 and operated continuously until it was replaced in 2012. The bridge is one of five movable bridges along the Northeast Corridor rail line between New Haven, Connecticut and Boston, Massachusetts.

The completion of the bridge project is an important milestone in Amtrak's plans to replace outdated infrastructure, increase capacity for rail operations, and improve reliability and trip times on the Northeast Corridor, by providing sustainable travel options that support a vibrant, growing economy in the Northeast Region.

One of Amtrak's most complex capital projects, the bridge replacement was partially funded by the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act and successfully completed in May 2013. Prior to its replacement, the old Niantic River Bridge served as a key link for passenger and freight rail traffic between New York and Boston. Because it was no longer economical to repair the bridge, it required full replacement to provide reliable rail operation and will now enable Amtrak to increase train speeds on and near the bridge and minimize delays.

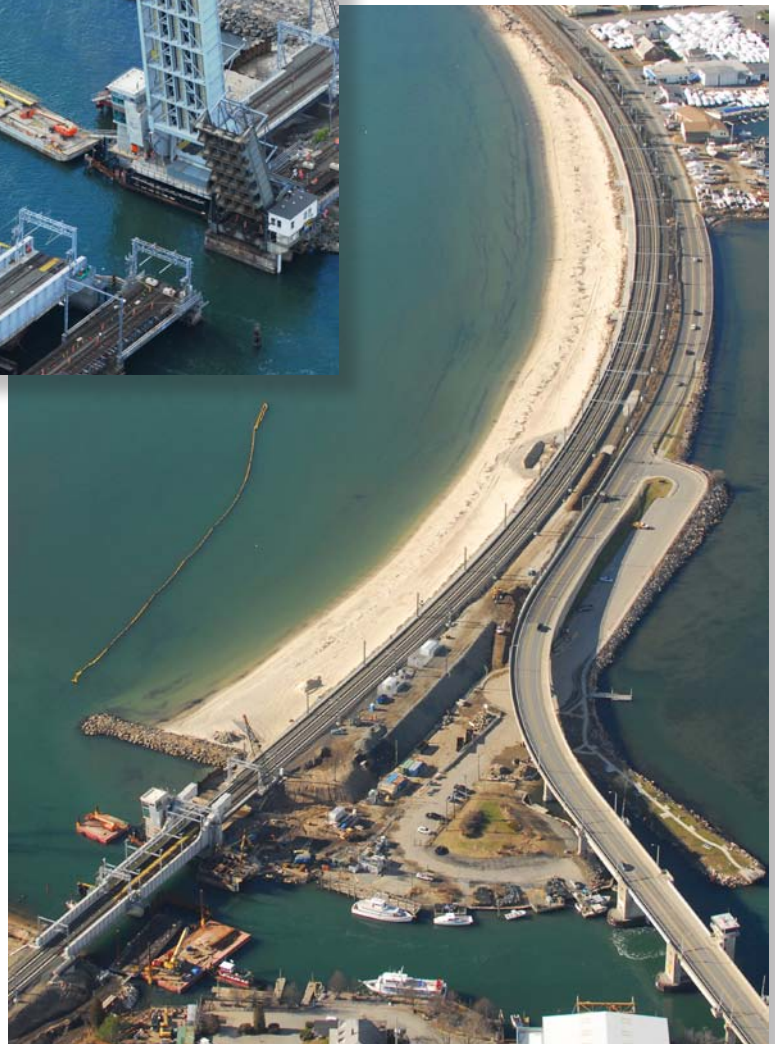
The project involved the construction of a new two-track, electrified railroad bascule bridge across the Niantic River 58 feet south of its previous location between East Lyme and Waterford, Connecticut.

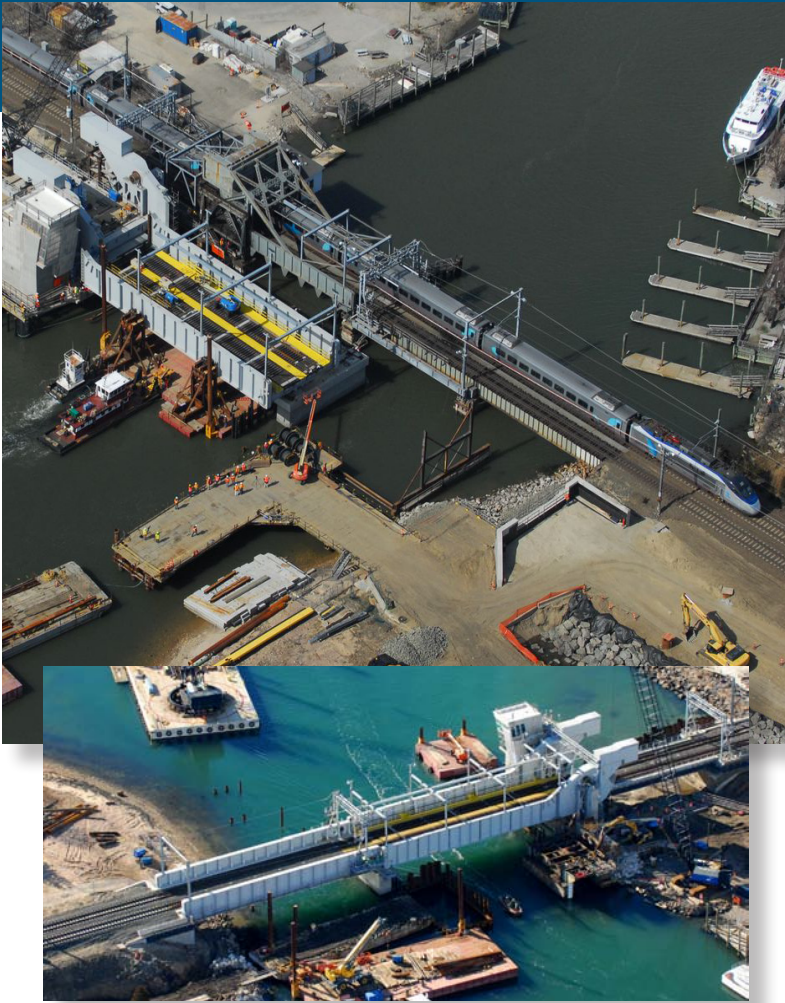
PROJECT SUMMARY

Timeline	The project started in January 2010 and was completed on schedule in May 2013.
Funding	The total project cost was \$154 million, supported by American Recovery and Reinvestment Act funding and Amtrak general capital funds.
Partners	U.S. Department of Transportation Federal Railroad Administration, Town of East Lyme, Town of Waterford, U.S. Coast Guard, and East Lyme Public Trust
Contractor	Cianbro/Middlesex Joint Venture VII



Left: Old and new Niantic Bridges in the open position. *Below:* Looking west, a view of the new Niantic Bridge, Overlook Beach and newly constructed boardwalk.





Left: The new Niantic Bridge under construction, while an Amtrak train passes over "Old Nan." Below: The new bridge after demolition of "Old Nan."

PROJECT BENEFITS

Increased Speed & Reliability - The new bridge allows Amtrak trains to travel at speeds of 60 miles per hour, up from 45 miles per hour. The new bridge also provides greater reliability and reduces the risk of delays associated with mechanical failures.

A Higher Span & Broader Channel for Maritime Traffic - The new bridge broadens the navigation channel beneath the bridge from 45 feet to 100 feet and raises the vertical under-clearance above the water from 11.5 feet to 16 feet in the closed position, allowing more vessels to travel under the bridge without a bridge opening, minimizing delays to the boating community and to rail passengers.

Beach Access - As part of this project, Amtrak rebuilt the Niantic Bay Boardwalk, replenished the beach with 76,000 cubic yards of sand, and nearly doubled the number of parking spaces at Cini Park to 127 spaces, increasing public beach access.

Jobs - During peak construction, the Niantic bridge project employed as many as 50 people full-time, through both Amtrak and contracted work forces.

Historic Preservation - Remnants of the old Niantic Bridge built by King Movable Bridge Company have been donated to the Connecticut Eastern Railroad Museum in Willimantic for preservation, including the control house, lengths of chain, a sprocket, and the original builder plate. The towns of East Lyme and Waterford also acquired lengths of chain and other parts of the original bridge for preservation. Before its replacement, "Old Nan" operated safely for 105 years and was used daily by Amtrak Acela, regional, commuter, and freight trains.

PROJECT ELEMENTS

Major work elements included: construction of new track alignments on the east and west approaches to the bridge and expansion of the navigation channel beneath the bridge from 45 feet to 100 feet. Sections of the Niantic Bay Overlook boardwalk were reconstructed and the beach was replenished with 76,000 cubic yards of sand. The new bridge was phased into service from September to November, 2012, followed by the removal and demolition of the old span.

In order to build the new three-span railroad bascule bridge 58 feet south of the existing bridge, track along both the west and east approaches to the bridge had to be realigned. The west approach work involved track construction, embankment construction, scour protection, retaining walls and reconstruction of the boardwalk. The east approach also entailed track construction, embankment construction, scour protection, and retaining walls. A new electrification system used to power the trains was built, as well as a new signal system.

As part of the project, the existing Niantic Bay Boardwalk was relocated due to the new track alignment on the west approach. The wooden boardwalk was removed and replaced with a concrete walkway. The sidewalk that passed under the old bridge's westernmost span was demolished and rebuilt to a new alignment connecting the boardwalk to East Lyme's Cini Park.



FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT

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