SUSQUEHANNA RIVER BIKEWAY SOUTH WILLIAMSPORT TO UNION COUNTY FEASIBILITY STUDY



Prepared for:

LYCOMING COUNTY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND PLANNING SERVICES

LYCOMING COUNTY EXECUTIVE PLAZA BUILDING 330 PINE STREET WILLIAMSPORT, PA 17701

Prepared by:

LARSON DESIGN GROUP, INC.

1000 COMMERCE PARK DRIVE WILLIAMSPORT, PA 17703-0487

UPDATED JANUARY 2007

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FEASIBILITY STUDY

The Lycoming County Economic Development and Planning Services engaged the services of Larson Design Group to conduct a field assessment of the area along the Susquehanna River between the South Williamsport Recreation Complex and Union County. The purpose of the study was to evaluate potential routes for a bikeway connecting South Williamsport to Union County.

On October 17, 2000 Bradley J. Aurand, E.I.T. and Kevin Maggs, both from Larson Design Group, conducted a field walk of the possible bikeway paths to identify potential obstacles for the trail as well as constraints and option viability.

PROPOSED ALIGNMENTS

The enclosed maps provide a visual alignment for the proposed alignments discussed below. Also included are typical cross sections along the proposed alignments.

South Williamsport to End of Sylvan Dell Road:

This alignment provides a route from the South Williamsport Recreation Complex along Charles Street, River Road and Sylvan Dell Road. An alternative to follow the existing rail line from the crossing on Charles Street to Sylvan Dell road was considered. This alternative was not considered feasible due to the high use of the line and limiting factors related to the terrain and width of right-of-way.

- 1. Construct an 8' wide shared use bikeway on the east berm of Charles Street north to River Road a distance of 3.540 feet.
- 2. Construct an 8' wide shared use bikeway on the southeast berm of River Road connecting with the proposed South Williamsport Bikeway and then on the southern berm of Sylvan Dell Road a distance of 16,145 feet.

Sylvan Dell Road to Armstrong Road:

This alignment follows an earthen maintenance road along the utility line and then old logging roads. The alignment traverses along the northern slope of Bald Eagle Mountain providing excellent views of the River. The terrain here is consistently steep, often sloping at a grade of 2H: 1V or greater towards the river. These existing roads/paths provide a level area to construct a trail, but will require drainage structures and bank stabilization in several areas.

- 1. Construct an 8' wide independent bikeway on an existing earthen maintenance road for the power line a distance of 22,015 feet.
- 2. Construct an 8' wide independent bikeway on an existing earthen logging road to Armstrong Road a distance of 8,735 feet.

Armstrong Road to Brick Church Road:

The majority of this alignment is a shared use bikeway on the berm of existing roads. There are opportunities to move the alignment off the berm to create and independent trail.

- 1. Construct an 8' wide shared use bikeway on the southwestern berm of Armstrong Road a distance of 10,615 feet.
- 2. Construct an 8' wide shared use bikeway on the northern berm of Route 405 a distance of 5,115 feet and then crossing Route 405 to Seagers Station Road.
- 3. Construct an 8' wide shared use bikeway on the northern berm of Seagers Station Road a distance of 4,381 feet to Brick Church Road.
- 4. Construct an 8' wide shared use bikeway on the western berm of Brick Church Road to the southern side of Norfolk Southern right-of-way a distance of 767 feet.

A connection to Muncy can be constructed from the SEDA-COG right-of-way as it crosses Seagers Station Road. This connection would be shared use bikeway with a low volume SEDA COG rail line crossing the Susquehanna River on the Railroad Bridge. There is sufficient separation on the bridge from an abandoned line.

An alternative to crossing Route 405 to Seagers Station Road is to cross under the Norfolk Southern Rail Line going east towards Muncy and then crossing Route 405 and connect to the Muncy SEDA COG Spur using an independent bikeway across cropped fields.

An alternate or additional alignment could follow Seagers Station Road to the at-grade crossing of the Norfolk Southern rail line, rather than or in addition to the alignment that turns north onto Brick Church Road.

Brick Church Road to Union County Line:

The majority of this alignment is a shared use bikeway adjacent to an active Norfolk Southern rail line. There is sufficient right-of-way width for the majority of this section due to an abandoned line.

- 1. Construct an 8' wide shared use bikeway on the southern portion of Norfolk Southern right-of-way to Thomas Street in the Borough of Montgomery a distance of 7,235 feet.
- 2. Construct an 8' wide shared use bikeway on the west berm of Thomas Street a distance of 219 feet.
- 3. Construct an 8' wide shared use bikeway on the north berm of Broad Street a distance of 3,547 feet.
- 4. Construct an 8' wide shared use bikeway north on S. Main Street a distance of 320 feet.
- 5. Construct an 8' wide shared use bikeway along Bower Street Extension to the Sewage Treatment Facility a distance of 1,497 feet.
- 6. Construct an 8' wide independent bikeway on an earthen road through wooded land south of the Norfolk Southern rail line a distance of 3.270 feet.
- 7. Construct an at-grade crossing of the Norfolk Southern rail line and construct an 8' wide independent bikeway on an abandoned rail line on lands owned by Lycoming County a distance of 8,700 feet to the Union County Line.

An alternate or additional alignment could continue adjacent to the Norfolk Southern rail line rather than turning on Thomas and then Broad Street. This alignment would pass through the Municipal parking lot at 2nd Street and then cross S. Main Street to the Bower Street Extension.

POTENTIAL ISSUES

The following issues will need to be addressed early during preliminary design. They include:

- Use of the power line maintenance road in the Utility right-of-way. This will have to be coordinated with the Utility Company and liability issues resolved.
- Use of Norfolk Southern right-of-way. Although there is sufficient separation, due to an abandoned rail line, coordination and resolution of liability issues will be required.
- A rail trail adjacent to an active SEDA COG rail line and use of the Susquehanna Railroad Bridge will need to be coordinated with SEDA COG for the Muncy connection.
- Coordination with property owners in the Borough of Montgomery who have encroached on the Norfolk Southern right-of-way should be made.

CONCLUSIONS

It is our opinion that a bikeway from South Williamsport to Union County along the Susquehanna River is a feasible project. There are several positive and negative issues with each alternative route that make them more or less desirable than the other routes. But overall, the preferred bikeway alignment, provided that easements could be obtained from the power company and the railroad, would allow cyclists to travel from South Williamsport to Union County along a safe bicycle corridor with only minor interaction with traffic (auto or rail). All in all, a bicycle path from South Williamsport to Muncy is a viable option.



The alignment will require widening of Sylvan Dell Road from South Williamsport to the end, where access to the power line maintenance road can be achieved.



This is the access to the power line road directly off Sylvan Dell Road.



Logging road on the north slope of Bald Eagle Mountain.



This picture was taken where the forestry road meets Anderson Road. The railroad tracks are just to the left, and the logging road is directly behind.



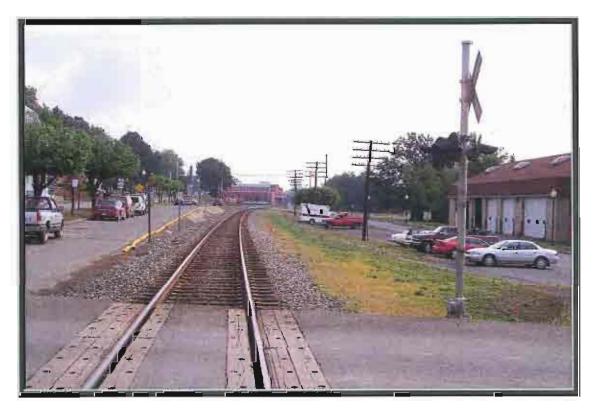
The bikeway would travel along S.R. 405, which has a wide, paved shoulder that would be ideal for a bikeway.



Norfolk Southern right-of-way at Brick Church Road.



Norfolk Southern right-of-way near Montgomery.



Municipal parking lot in the Borough of Montgomery.



Access to the at-grade crossing southwest from the Sewage Treatment Facility.



At-grade crossing of Norfolk Southern active rail line.



Abandoned rail line on property of Lycoming County.



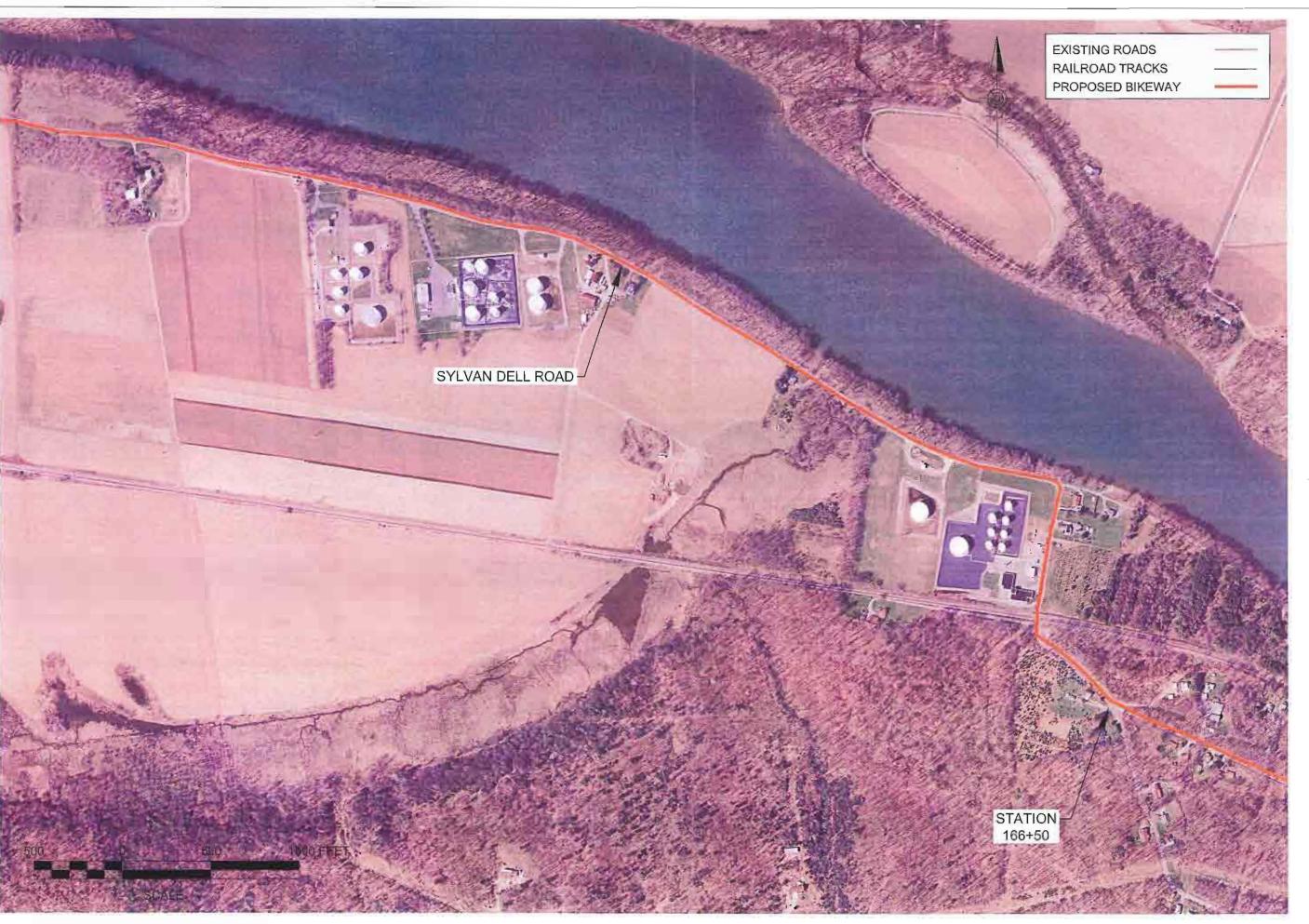
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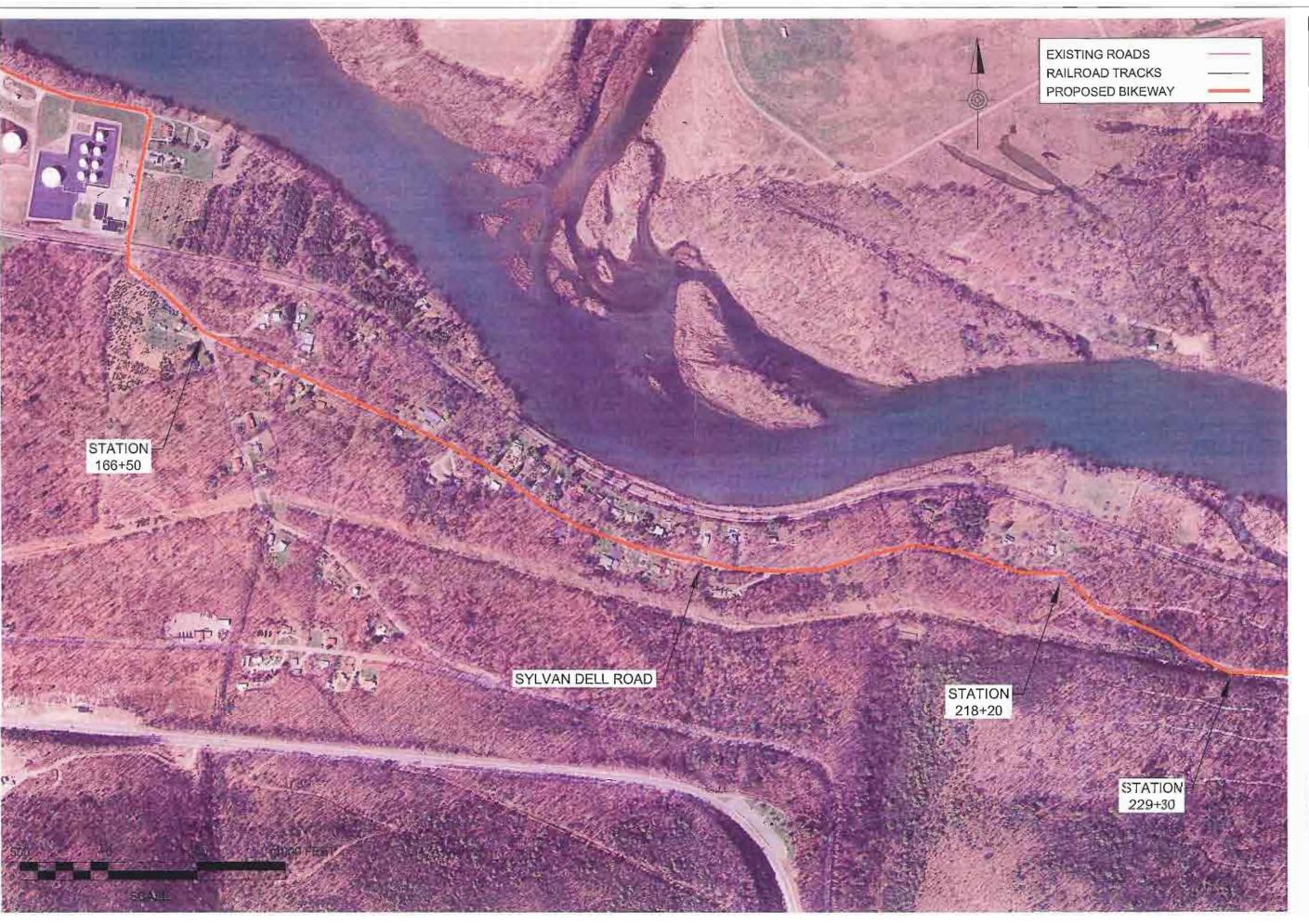
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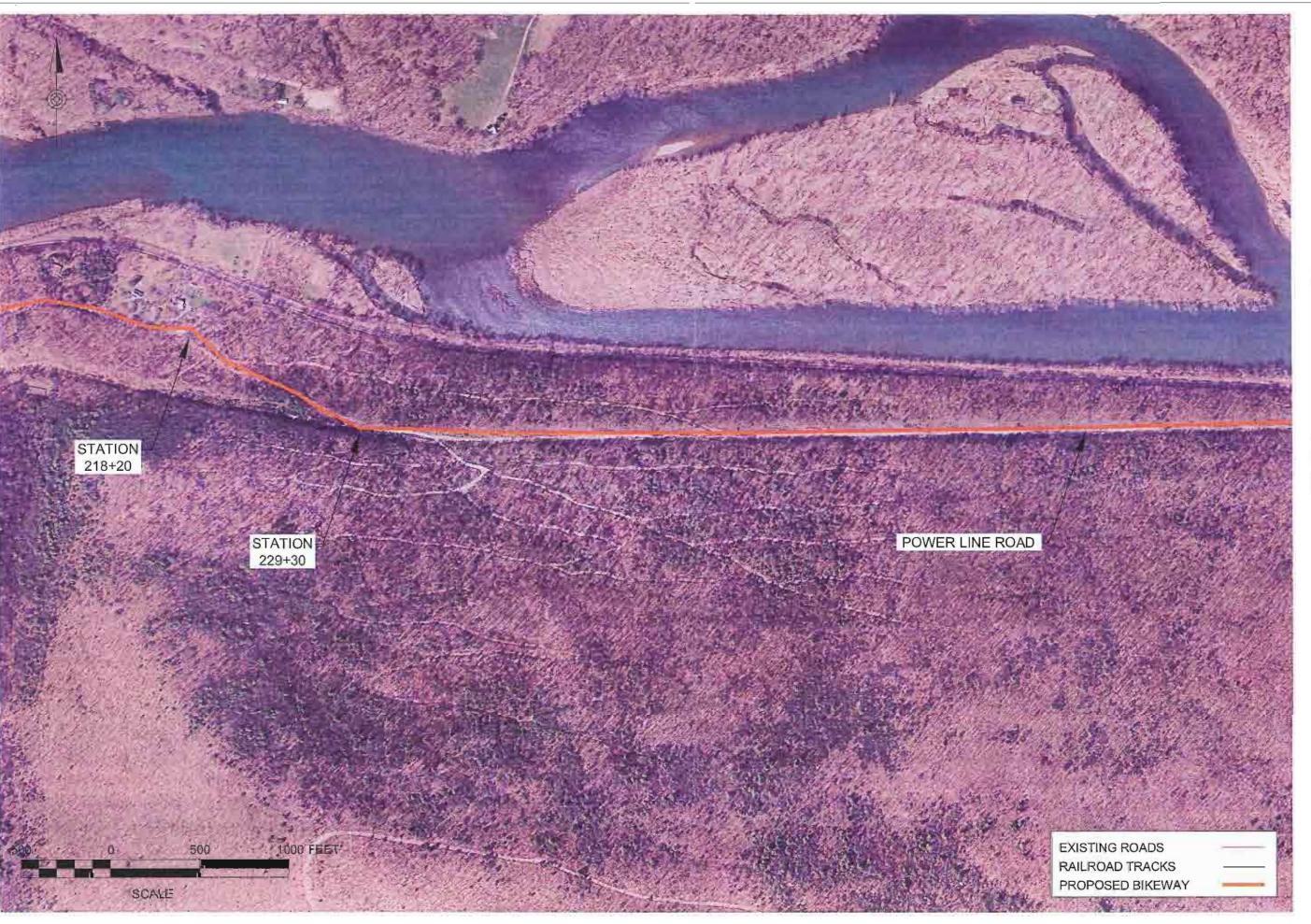
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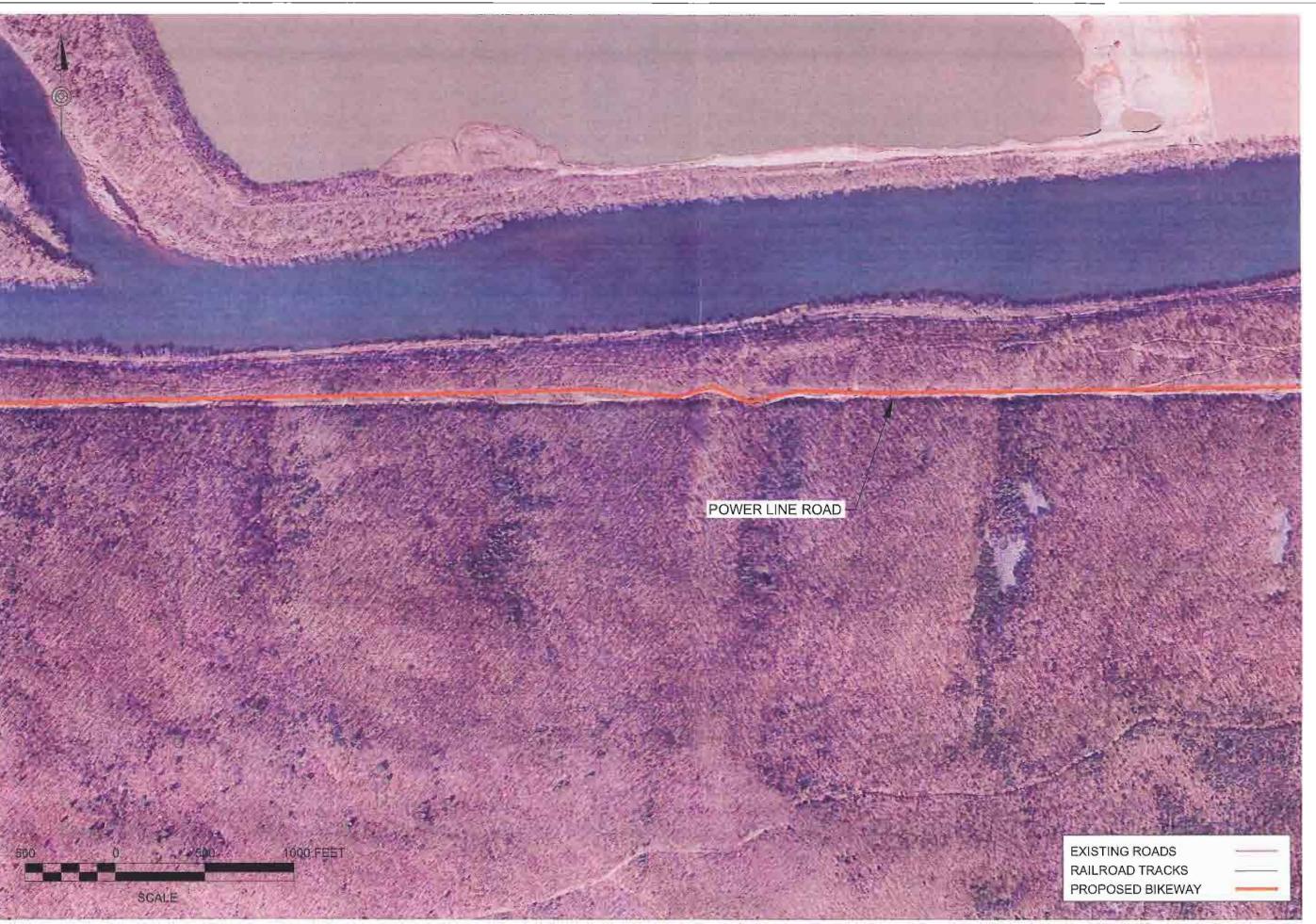
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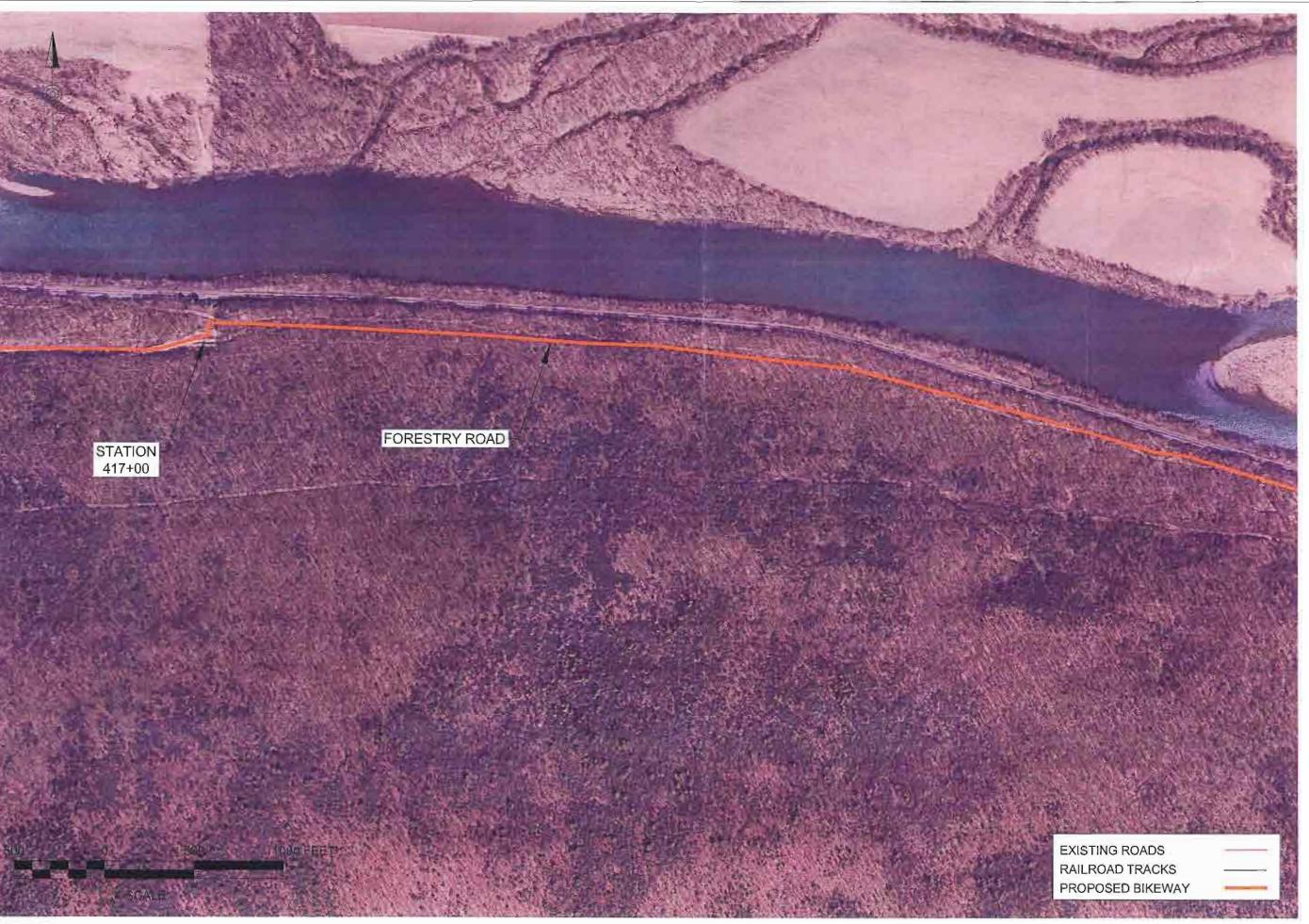


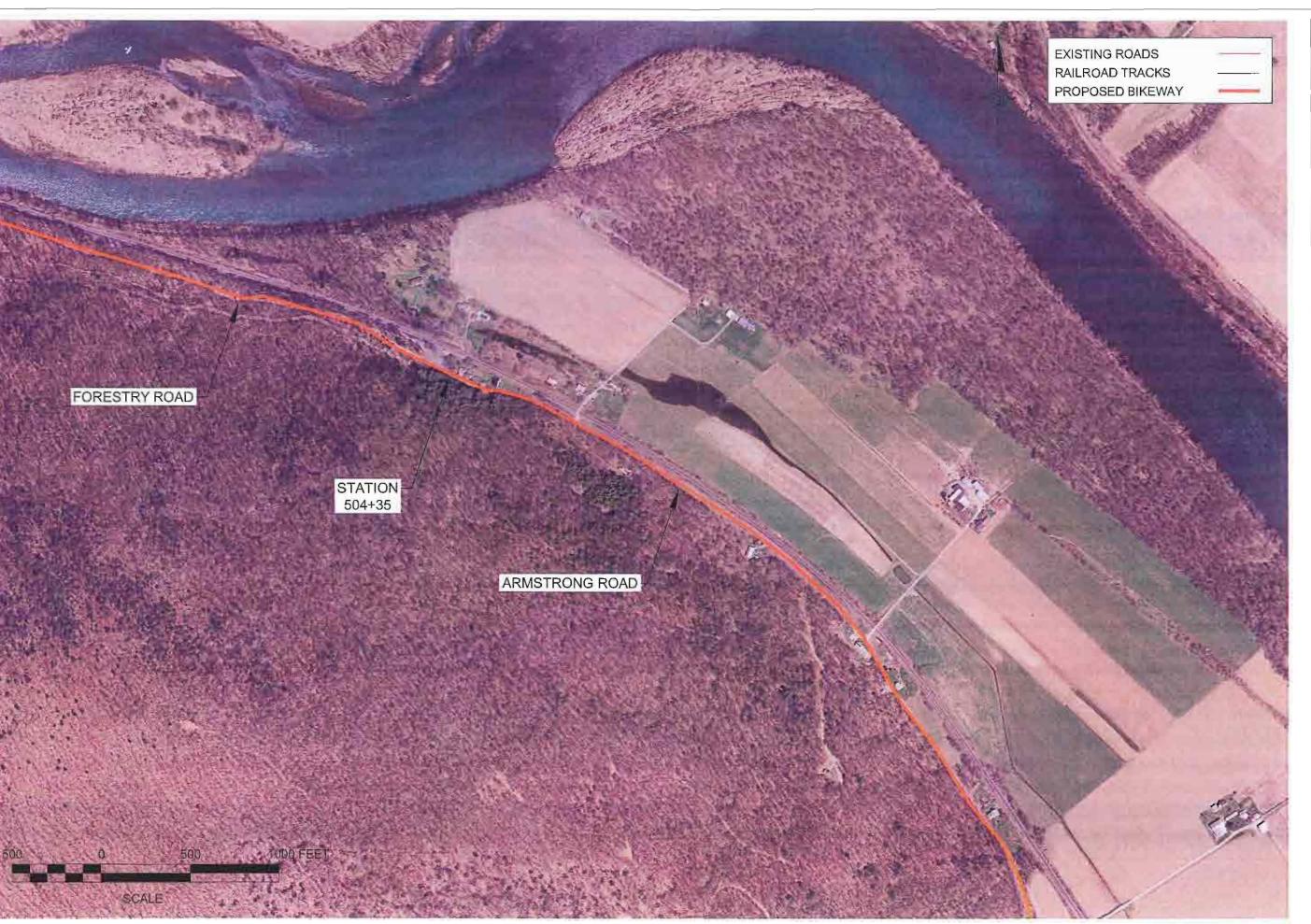




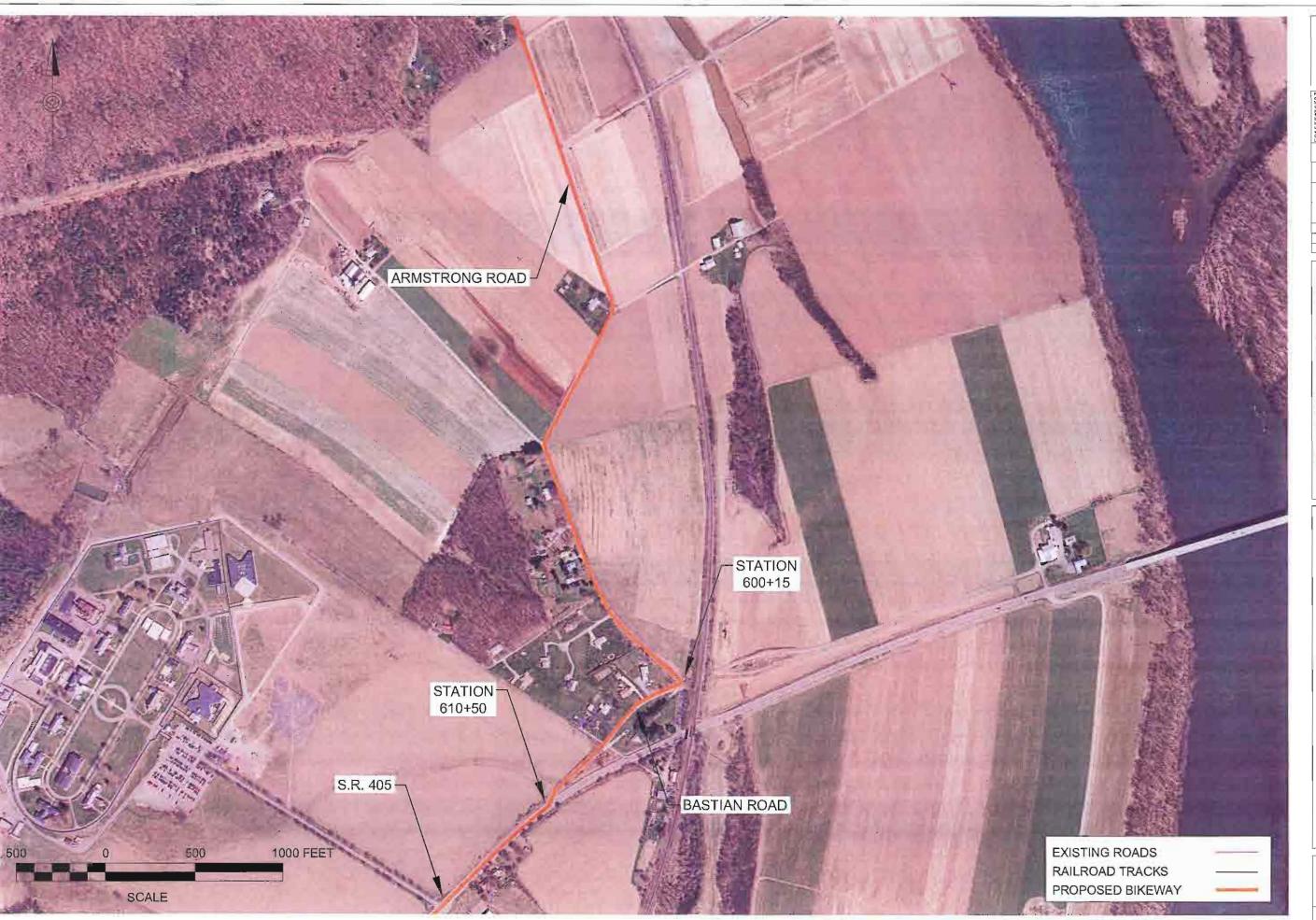


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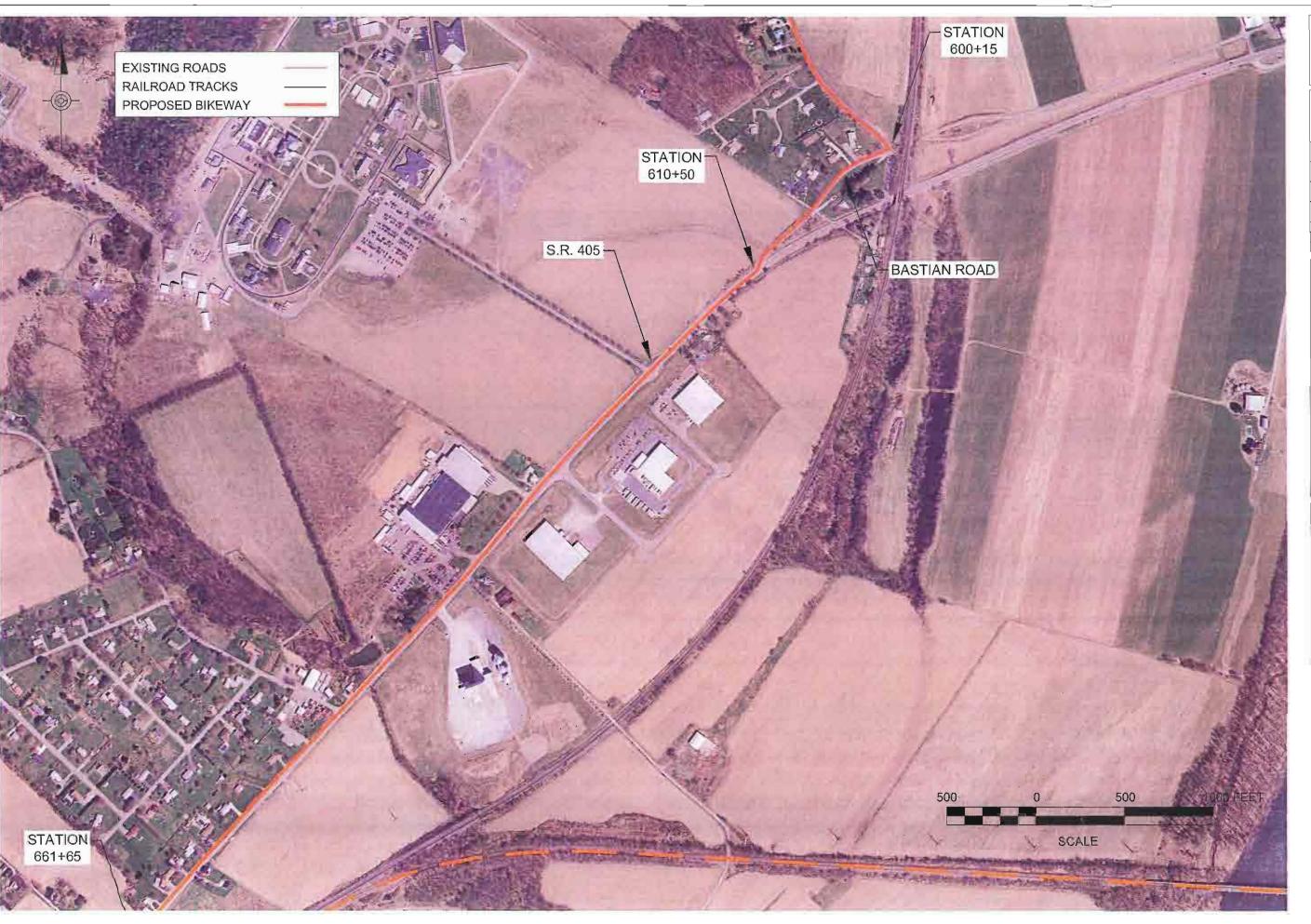


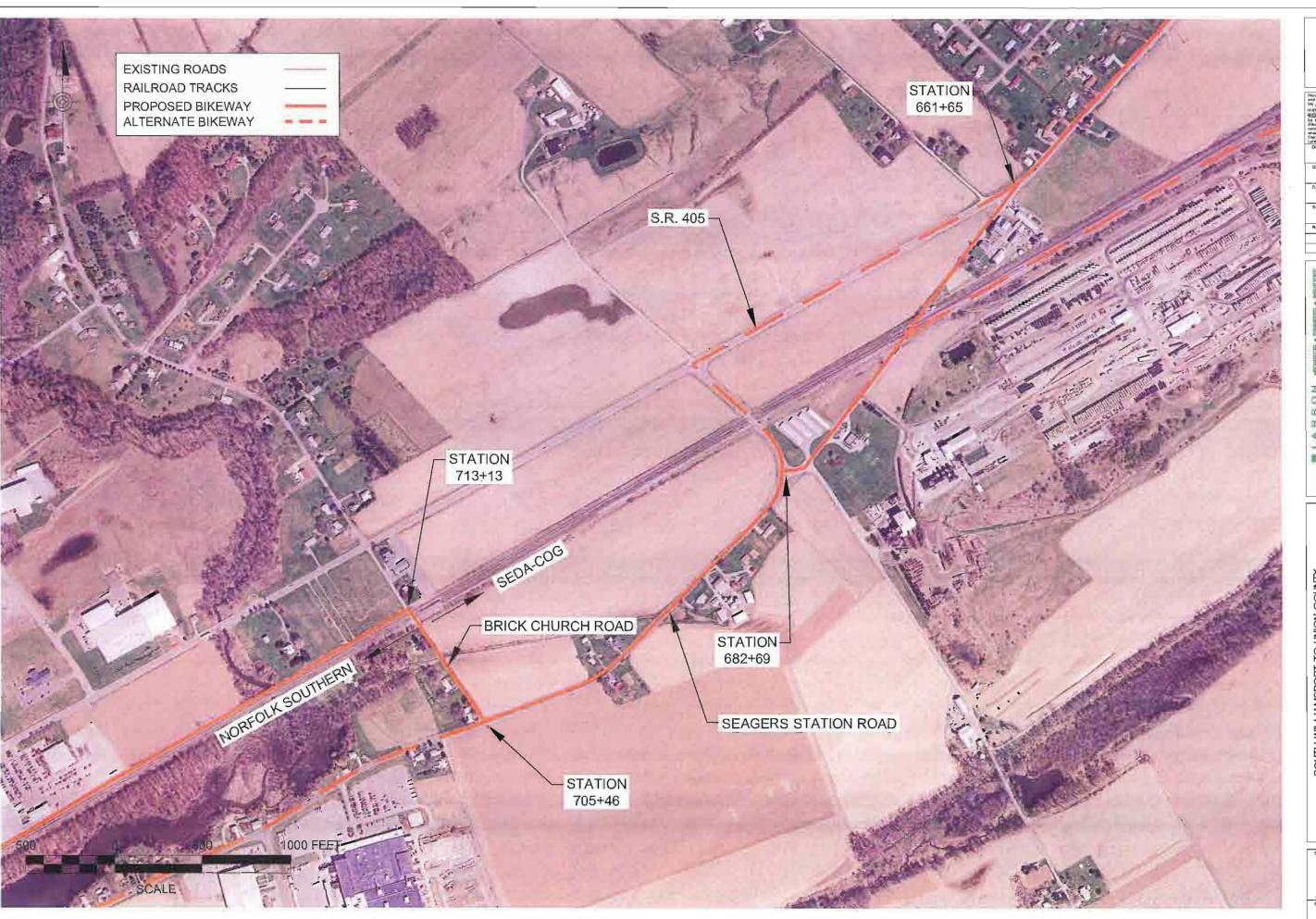


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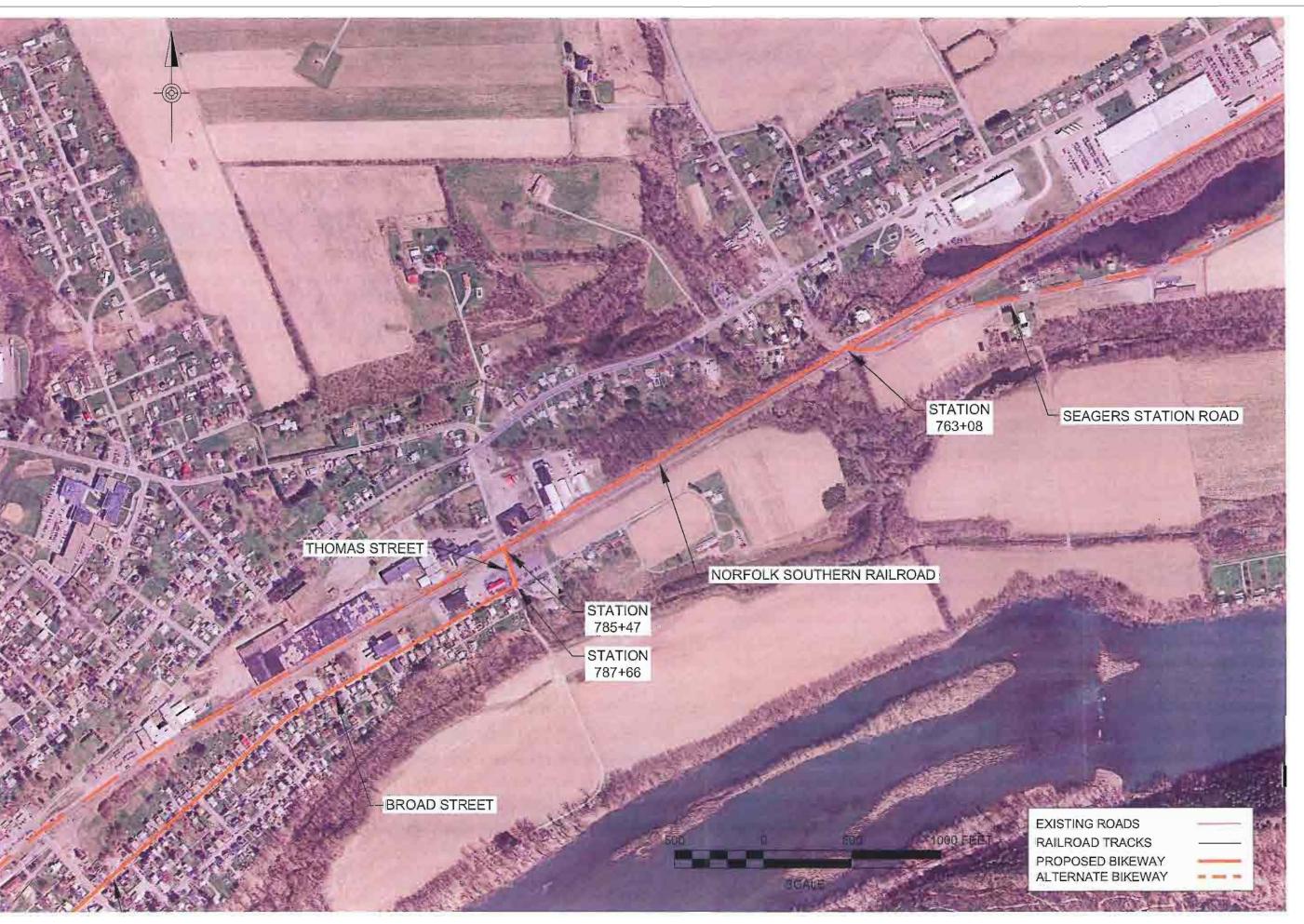


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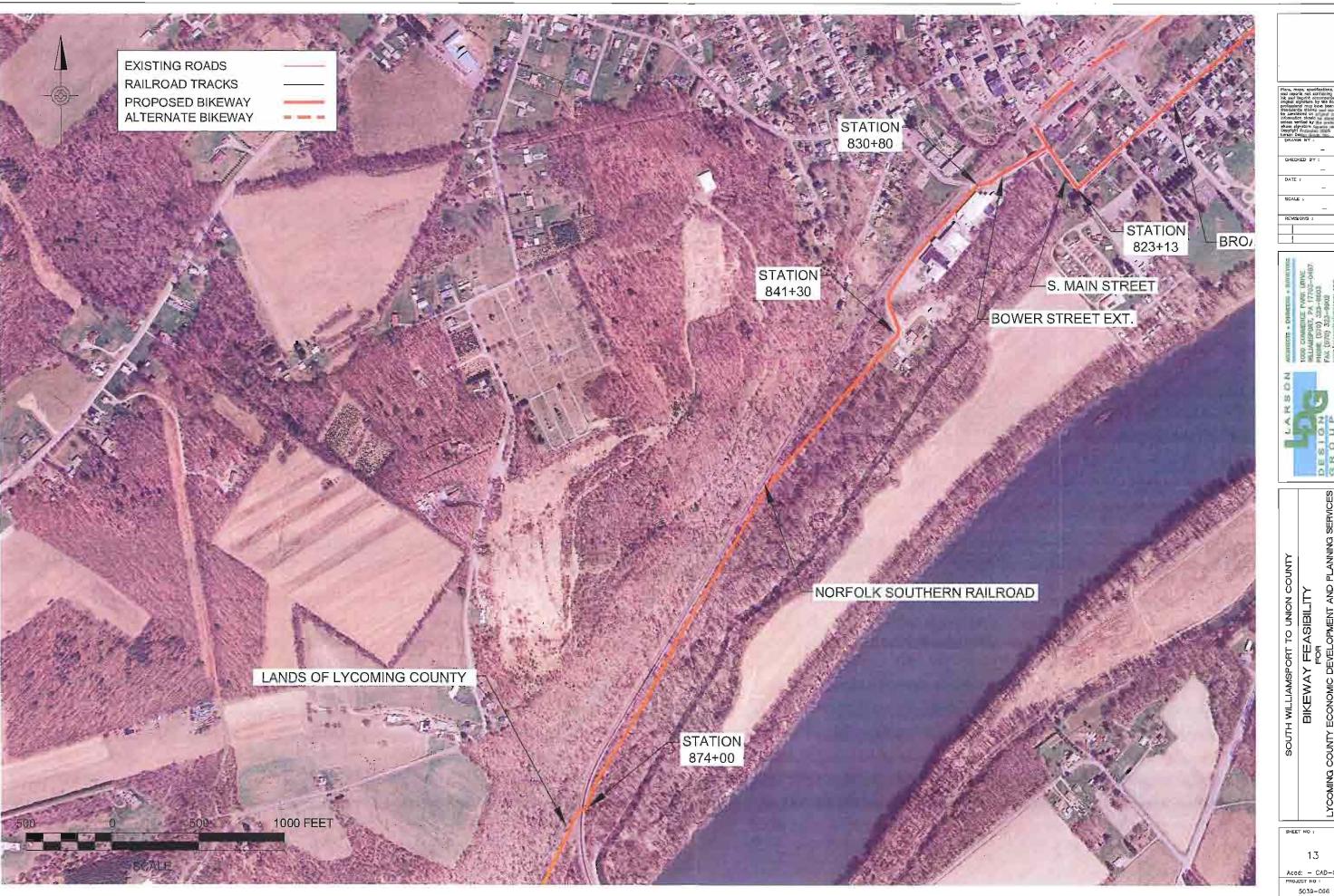




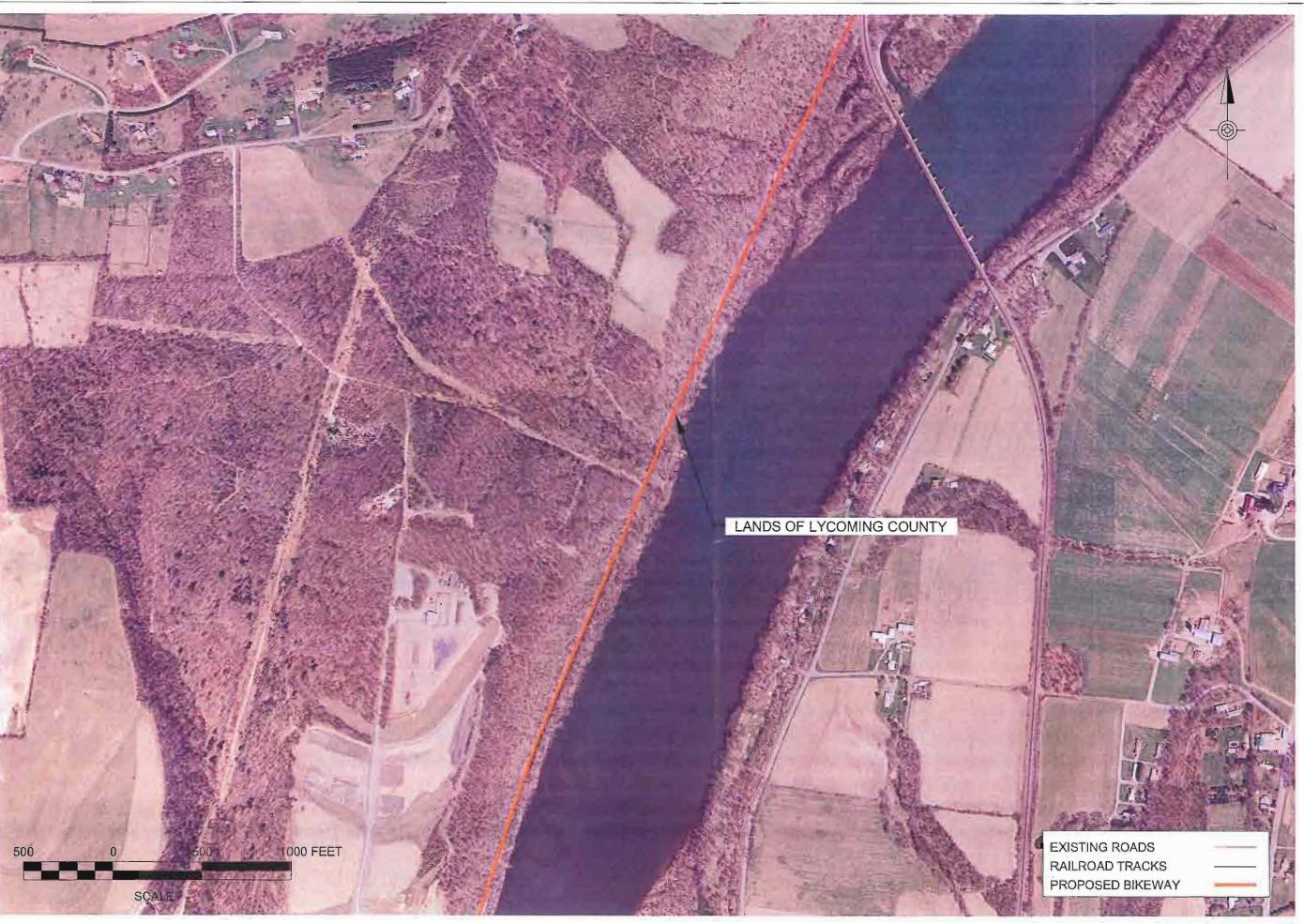
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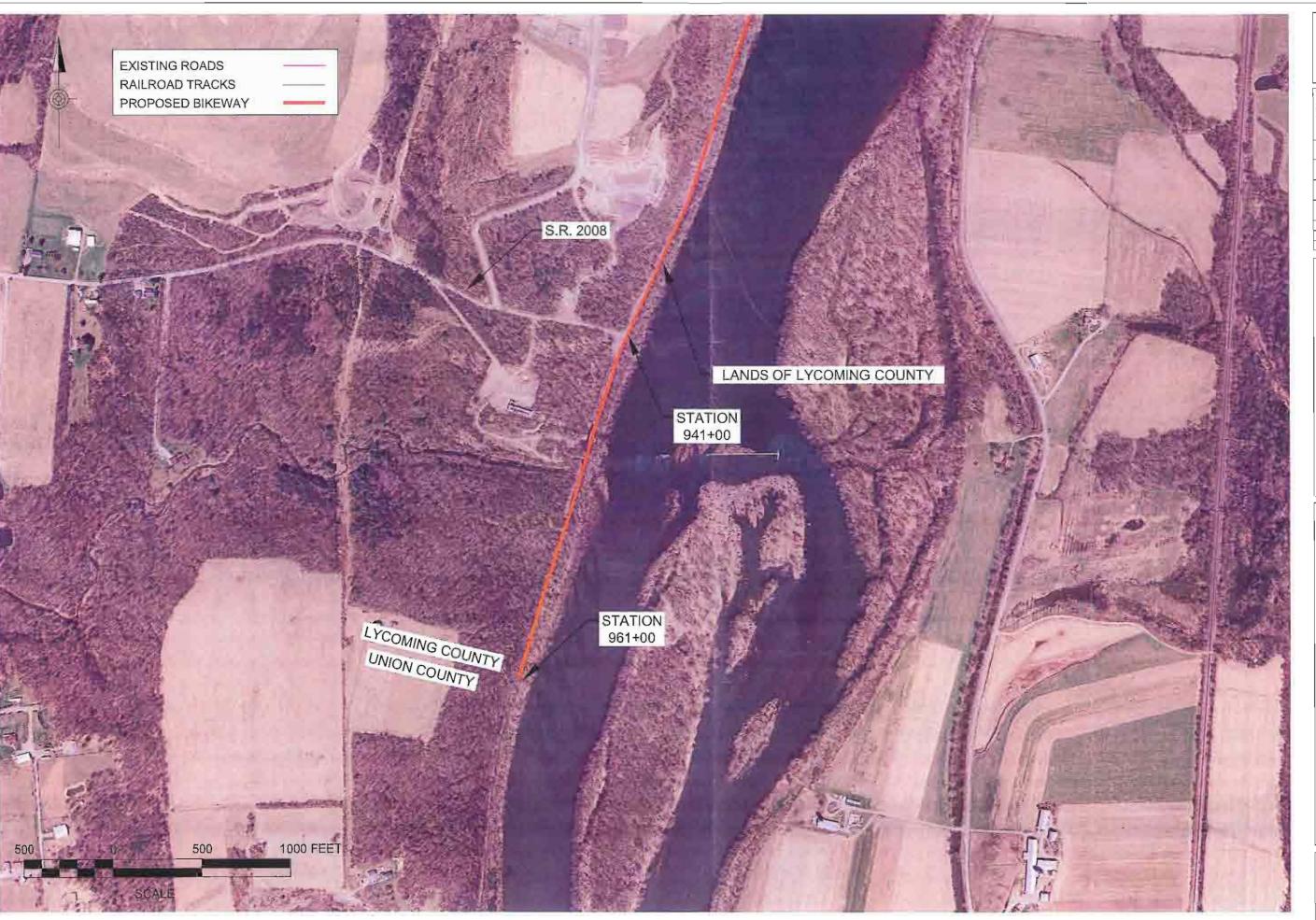
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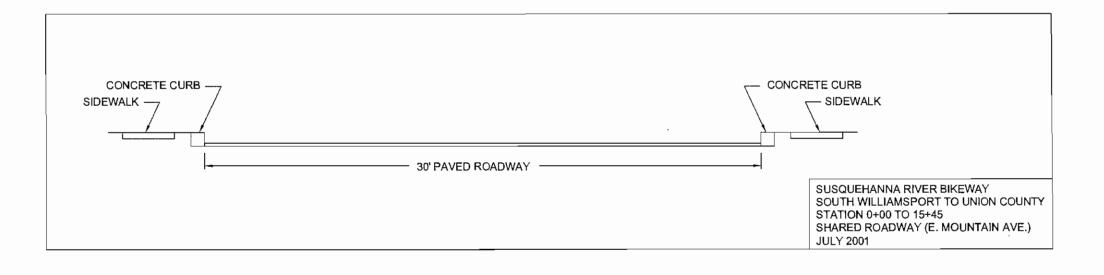
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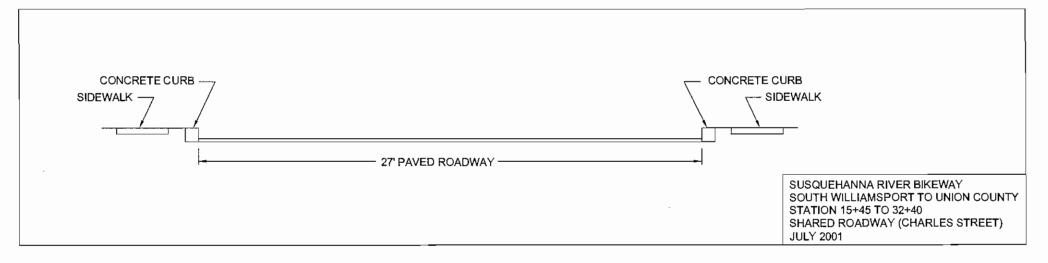


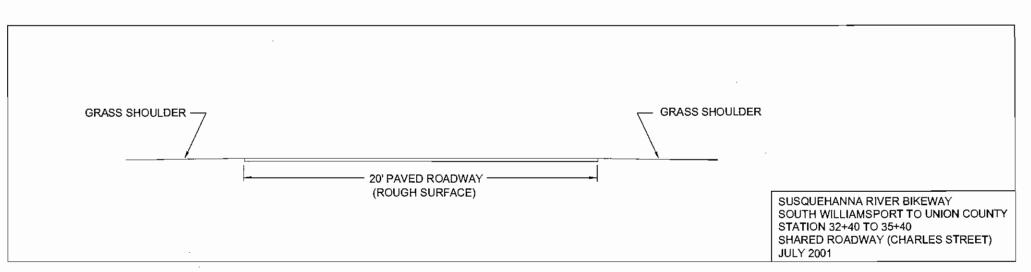
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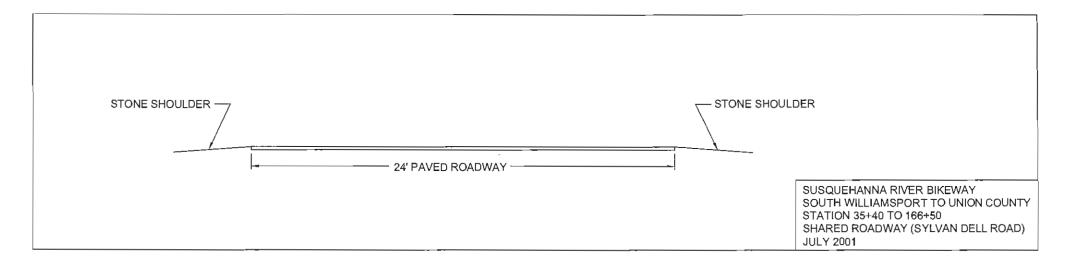
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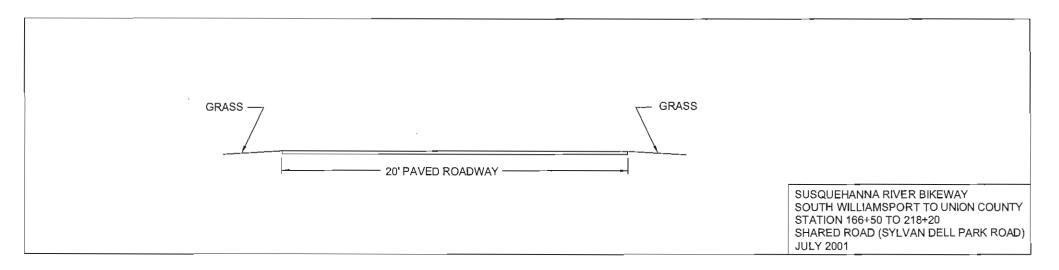


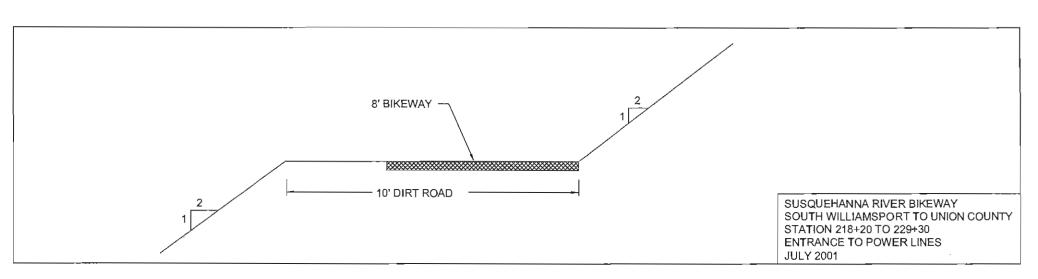
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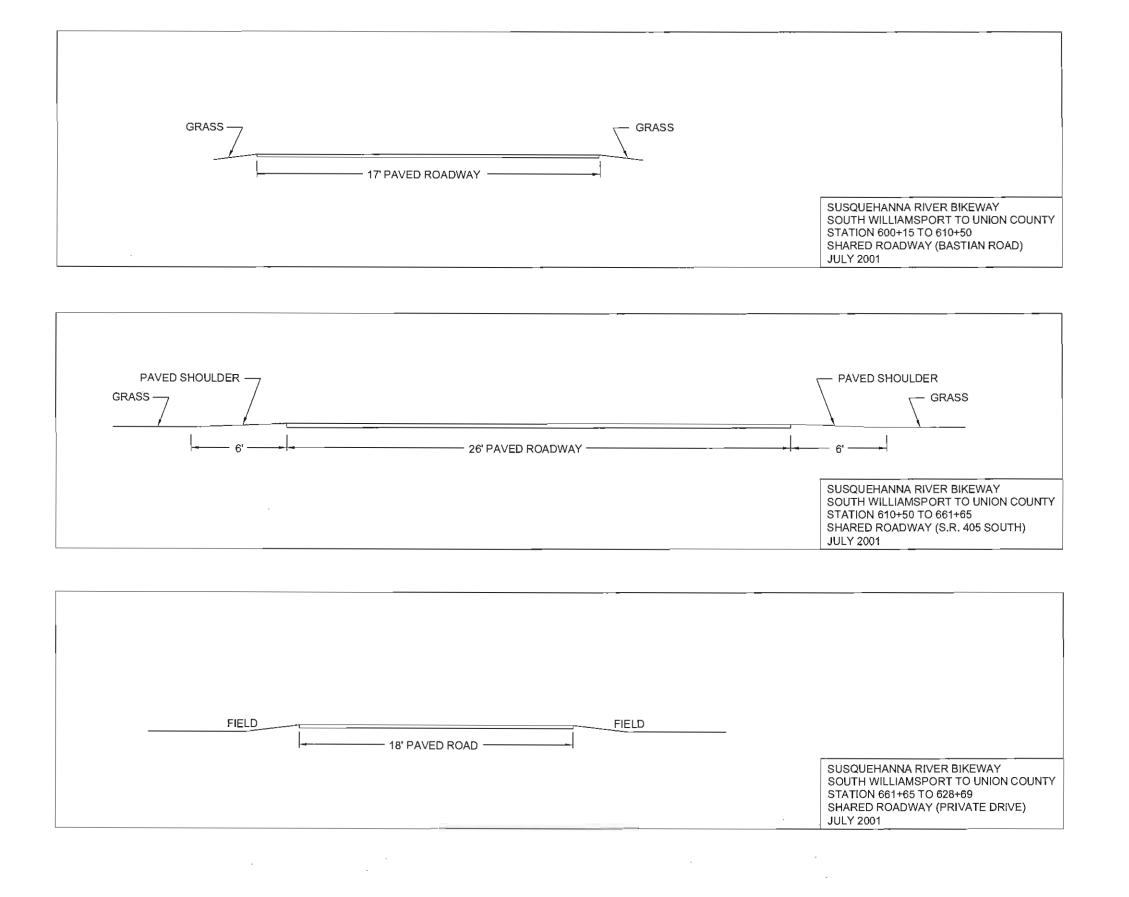






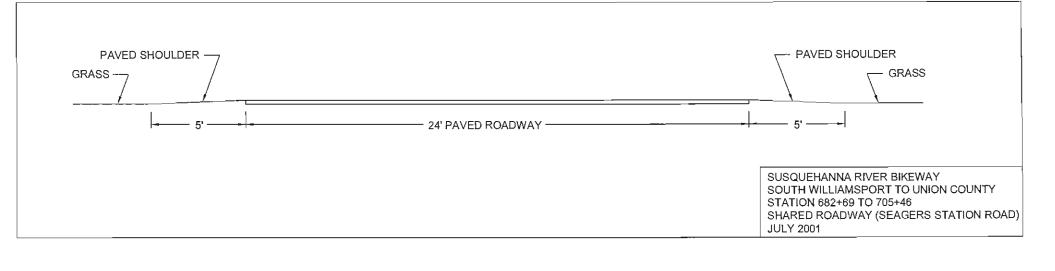
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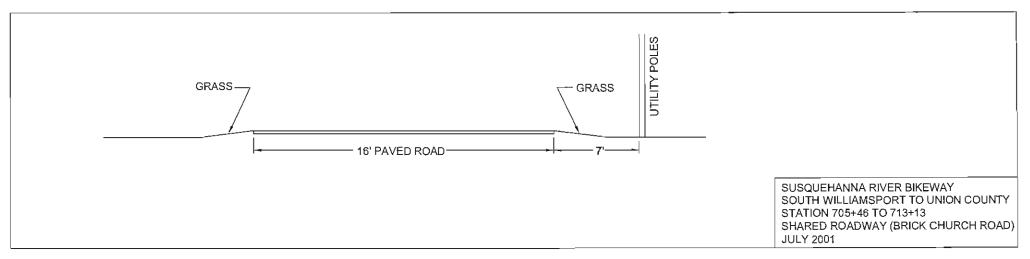
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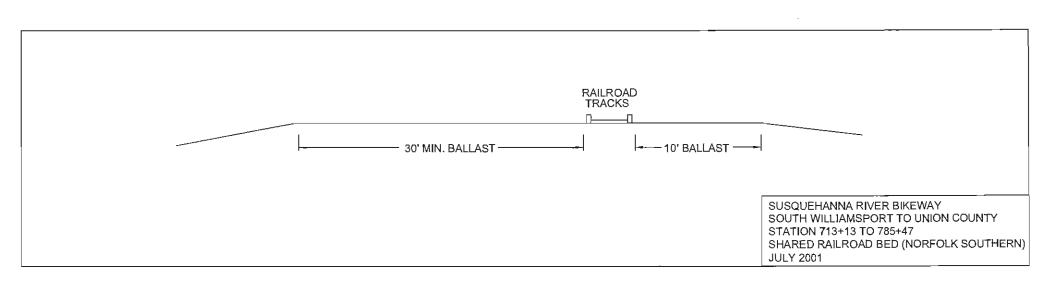




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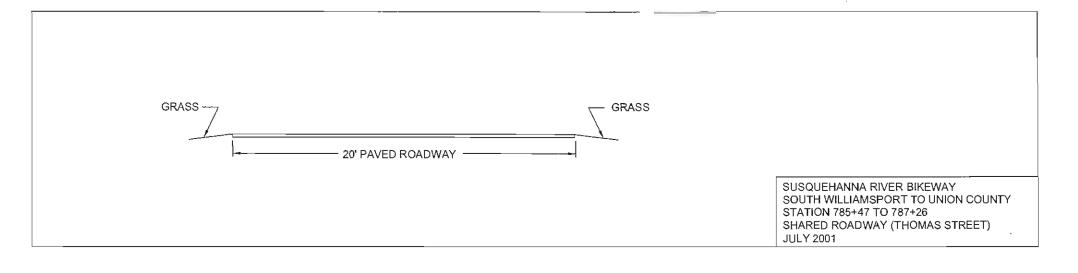


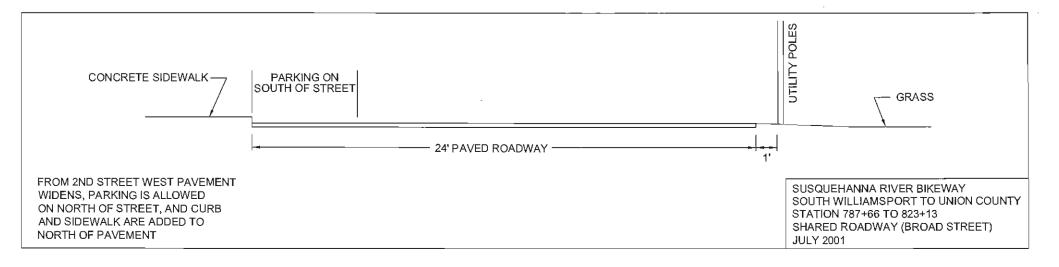
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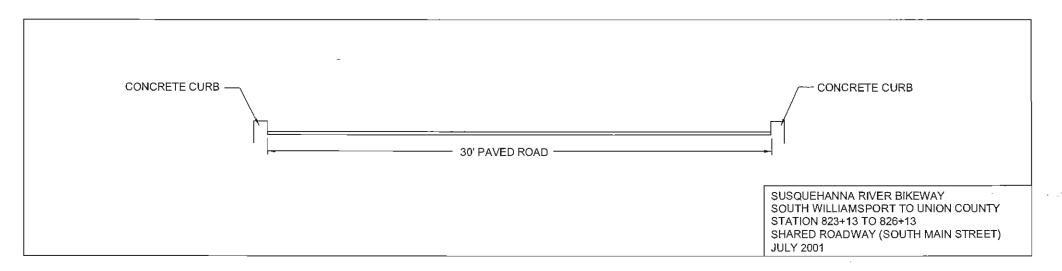
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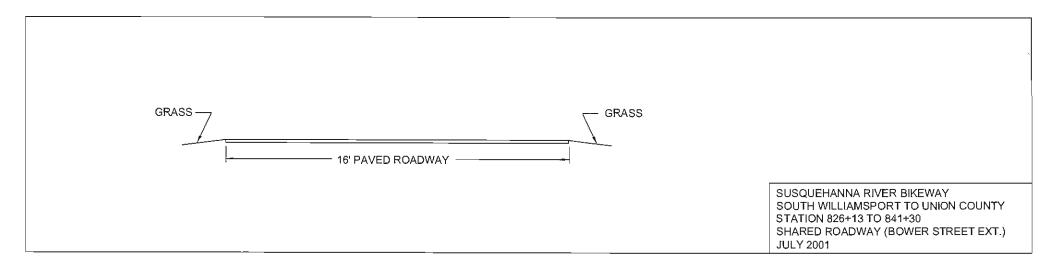


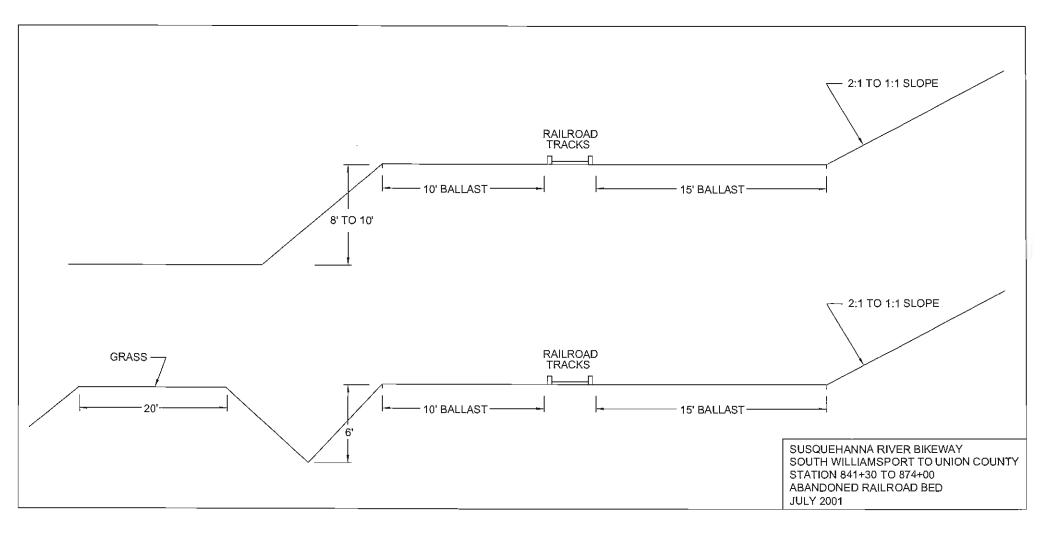
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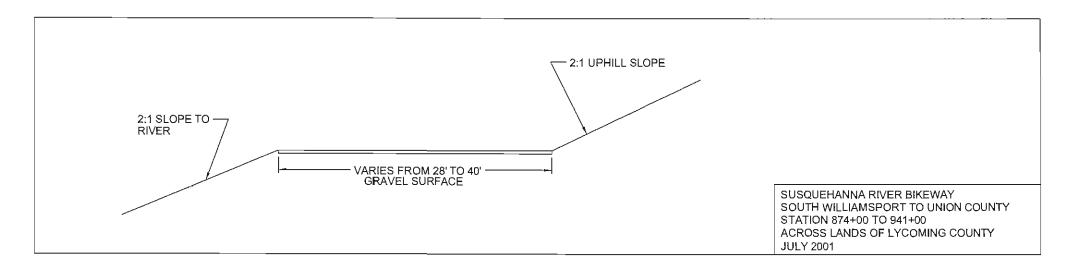


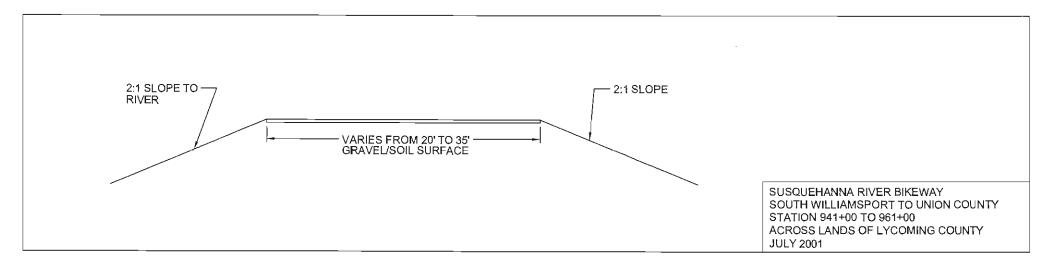
CROSS-SECTIONS (SHEET 6)

BIKEWAY FEASIBILITY

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CHOSS-SECTIONS (SHEET 7)

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