

Environmental Assessment (Cultural Resources) Railroads New Haven-Hartford-Springfield Rail Project

AHS prepared the cultural resource sections of environmental-impact documents for the upgrading of the New Haven-to-Springfield rail corridor in central Connecticut and western Massachusetts. The project includes restoration of a second track, passing sidings, a new layover yard in Springfield, grade-crossing improvements, new stations, and improvements to existing stations. AHS inventoried and documented historic buildings, bridges, districts and other above-ground resources that would be affected by project actions and conducted archaeological testing of impact areas.



Many of the bridges along the corridor are stone arches, such as this 1870 example in Berlin.

Throughout the project, AHS coordinated with staff members of the Connecticut Department of Transportation (CTDOT), the two State Historic Preservation Offices (SHPOs), and the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA). The guiding concept is that the rail corridor as a whole represented a linear historic district that is eligible for the National Register of Historic Places. With more than a dozen rail-related historic buildings and about 150 historic bridges and culverts, this concept provided for maximum flexibility in addressing impacts, as well as establishing a strong overall context.



Hartford Union Station, one of several historic rail-related buildings along the rail corridor.

In addition to addressing state and federal requirements in the EA/EIE, AHS prepared a technical report several hundred pages in length that included full documentation of the historic rail corridor and all its individual components. AHS's work also provided the underpinning for a Programmatic Agreement among the SHPOs, CTDOT, and FRA.

Although initiated in 2012, the majority of the project work was conducted on an aggressive timetable, requiring a major staff commitment.