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GOVERNOR'S OFFICE OF STORM RECOVERY ANNOUNCES COMPLETION OF PROJECT TO RESTORE VITAL INFRASTRUCTURE FOR TOWN OF SAUGERTIES

New Drainage Culvert on Wilhelm Road a Priority in Ulster County

Saugerties, NY (September 12, 2016) –The Governor's Office of Storm Recovery (GOSR) today announced the successful completion of construction for a new culvert—an underground drainage system for storm water on Wilhelm Road in the Town of Saugerties. This project is part of the NY Rising Community Reconstruction Program's efforts to create stronger and more resilient infrastructure in the event of a future storm or emergency.

“The Town of Saugerties has been working diligently with the Governor's Office of Storm Recovery to repair their critical infrastructure,” **said Executive Director of GOSR, Lisa Bova-Hiatt.** “I am pleased to announce this new culvert system has been designed to withstand a 100-year flood and create a more resilient community.”

The new pre-cast concrete culvert is 34 feet long, 9.5 feet high and 16 feet wide.

During Hurricane Irene, Tropical Storm Lee and Superstorm Sandy, the existing culvert, which was from a re-purposed oil tank railroad car, below Wilhelm Road was severely damaged by storm water flooding that exceeded its capacity. This resulted in roadway obstruction that stranded residents, compromising their access to vital commercial areas where disaster relief and recovery supplies were located. When the flood waters receded, the surrounding road infrastructure deteriorated, increasing their vulnerability to future storms.

“Being able to go ahead on the Wilhelm Road culvert project is a major step for Saugerties, and a tribute to those who are making the NY Rising program happen,” **said Town Supervisor Greg Helmoortel.** “This preventive measure protects a number of families in the event of another

major storm event such as we experienced with Hurricane Irene, and demonstrates the state's commitment to protecting the communities affected by such natural disasters. I have been pleased with the progress of all of our NY Rising projects and tip my hat to Governor Cuomo and his Office of Storm Recovery for making this happen."

"These types of projects are very important to the safety of taxpayers. At the present time there is only one way in and out of this road through normal passenger transportation. As was the case in the aftermath of Hurricane Irene, our residents were stranded for some time after the storm was over," **said Doug Myer, Town of Saugerties Highway Superintendent.** "I am extremely grateful for the NY Rising program. Without the benefit of this program our residents and our infrastructure would continue to be in harm's way."

NY Rising Community Reconstruction Program

Announced by Governor Andrew M. Cuomo in April 2013, the NYRCR Program seeks to empower storm-impacted communities throughout the State, helping them to build back better and stronger than before. Altogether, more than 650 New Yorkers served on 66 NYRCR Committees, which have collectively proposed approximately 700 locally-oriented projects. Throughout the eight-month planning process, the program has held more than 650 Planning Committee meetings and more than 250 large scale Public Engagement Events. Funding for both planning and project implementation comes from HUD's CDBG-DR Program.

Established in June 2013, GOSR coordinates Statewide recovery efforts for Superstorm Sandy, Hurricane Irene and Tropical Storm Lee. Through its NYRCR Program— as well as its NY Rising Housing Recovery, Small Business and Infrastructure programs— GOSR invests \$4.4 billion made available through HUD's CDBG-DR Program to better prepare New York for future extreme weather events. *More information about GOSR and its programs is available online at <http://stormrecovery.ny.gov/>.*

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