

Salisbury Bridge Restoration (Bridge 90980) - HF1476

"The preservation of the past is not just an act of remembering, but an act of giving future generations the tools to understand who they are." — Unknown



The Salisbury Bridge (Bridge 90980) stands as a symbol of our shared history. Spanning the North Fork Crow River at the boundary of Kingston and Forest City Townships, this historic bridge is a testament to the ingenuity of the Hewett Bridge Company, one of Minnesota's early pioneers in steel truss bridge engineering. It is more than a structure; it is a living part of the story of our community and our state.

With its timeless beauty, it has been a backdrop of thousands of pictures marking the passage of time for generations. Also, hundreds of canoeists and kayakers begin their journey down the beautiful Crow River here each year. It is a place of serenity.

Today, this important piece of Minnesota history is in serious jeopardy. The bridge's deteriorating condition threatens not only the structure itself but also the health of the Crow River and our connection to the past. After a bridge inspection in 2016, the bridge was closed due to significant structural concerns. Beyond the disruption to vehicle traffic, the closure also cut off a vital and safe crossing point for ATV and snowmobile users, who must now navigate a busy highway bridge instead. Since its closure, what time and weather haven't worn away, vandalism has begun to destroy. Without restoration, we risk losing both a treasured historic landmark and an important piece of Minnesota history.

Historical Significance:

- Listed on the National Register of Historic Places (Ref. #96001560) in 1995
- Built in 1899 by the renowned Hewett Bridge Company of Minneapolis
- One of the state's earliest examples of three-span, steel, Pratt through truss
- Named for Representative Jonathan Burnett Salisbury, an influential figure in early Minnesota history

Restoration Purpose:

- Restore the bridge for safe vehicle and recreational use, preserving its important role in the community
- Protect the Crow River from environmental harm caused by further deterioration
- Safeguard a vital piece of Minnesota's cultural and engineering history for future generations

Restoration Plan:

- Letters of support have been received from Meeker County, Meeker County Historical Society, Darwin Drifters Snowmobile Club and Senator Glen Gruenhagen
- Olson & Nesvold Engineers (ONE) will ensure restoration is done to historic preservation standards
- Repair steel connections showing cracks and address all other structural connections
- Repair and stabilize the bridge's supports and substructure units
- Upgrade railings to reduce opening sizes and improve safety, especially for children
- Paint and seal the bridge to preserve the restoration investment and extend its life

The Salisbury Bridge is not just a crossing over the Crow River; it is a bridge between generations. Preserving it honors the spirit, history, and resilience of our community and our state. We respectfully ask for your support of HF1476 to ensure this irreplaceable piece of Minnesota's story endures for generations to come.