



## Horton's Clips

# Winter 2021

## President's Message

Hello and welcome to the 2021 winter newsletter for Friends of McGilvray Road. Our Worker Bees have been busy maintaining the road and repairing bridge 4. Thanks to everyone walking the trail and supporting the work of the Friend's organization.

This newsletter highlights bridge 4. A special thanks to the Town of Holland who donated \$10,250.00 in financial support along with the Friends of McGilvray Road who paid out \$10,749.63. In 2021 the Worker Bees will be getting ready to repair Bridge 2 and hopefully repair trail wash-outs, weather and water permitting. If you wish to become a member of the Friends of McGilvray Road and support the work to maintain the hiking trail and historic bridges, check out this link: <http://www.7bridgesrd.org/membership.html>.

The Official Newsletter of the  
Friends of McGilvray Road  
PO Box 2976  
La Crosse, WI 54602-2976

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Check out our website and connect with us at <http://www.7bridgesrd.org>

Join us on Facebook at <https://www.facebook.com/FriendsofMcGilvrayRd>

If you are looking for a great gift idea consider a set of 8 stationery cards representing the historic bridges and wildlife created by local artists Arthur G. Anderson and Michael A. Klafke. The prints are featured here <http://www.7bridgesrd.org/andersonklafke-prints.html>. The cards are available for \$10.00 at the following locations:

- The Grind Coffee Shop
- Village of Holmen Office
- Barb Wuensch  
(barbwuensch1@gmail.com)
- Town of Holland Office
- Cordell's Standard
- Pizza Corral

Enjoy the winter season as you snowshoe, walk, or take the dog up-and-down the trail. The McGilvray Road trail continues to be enjoyed by all generations. Spring will be here soon, have fun!

Ruth Scholze, ([Rscholze73@gmail.com](mailto:Rscholze73@gmail.com))  
President of the Friends of McGilvray Road

## McGilvray Bridge 4 Reconstruction

### History

FMR began replacing deteriorated bridge decks on McGilvray Road in 2013. Bridges 6, 5, 1 and 3 were re-decked by the end of 2017. In early January 2019, when we were inspecting Bridges 2 and 4 to determine the urgency and quantity of materials needed for re-decking, it was discovered that the steel deck support beams on Bridge 4 were badly corroded. Some areas of these steel support beams were completely rusted through. **[Figure 1]**



Figure 1

Most of the corrosion could have occurred during the extended period of time starting when McGilvray Road was closed to through traffic in 1948, or after 1973 when even local vehicles were banned, until restoration started around 1990. As Bridge 4 is located on the lowest part of the trail, it is most likely to be submerged during large floods. Therefore it is probable that debris accumulated on the bottom flanges of these beams. **[Figure 2]** Debris retains moisture and creates acidic conditions from decomposition, thereby significantly accelerating corrosion.

In early 2019 it was estimated that materials for new decking and support beams, and disposal of the old decking and beams for Bridge 4 (130' long by 16' wide) would cost approximately \$10,500. All labor for the removal and reconstruction would be provided by The Friends of McGilvray (FMR) volunteers. In addition, FMR would work with the Wisconsin DNR to acquire all necessary approvals. FMR volunteers planned to provide all labor, tools, and equipment necessary to complete the work.

The Town of Holland had earlier received funds as mitigation for the impacts of the CAPX 2020 and Badger-Coulee Transmission Lines installed in the town. Because the objectives for the use of those funds were appropriate for the maintenance of the McGilvray recreational trail, we applied to the Town for funds and received approval for reimbursement of up to \$10,250 for materials for Bridge 4. The next step was to determine the logistics of the reconstruction of Bridge 4. The estimated cost to replace the steel support beams was high. Hence, it was determined that treated timber beams supports would work as well, at a lower cost, and would not be visible after the deck was installed. However, because the bridges are listed on both state and national historic registers, the proposed repair method needed to be approved by the State Historic Preservation Office, and the property owner, Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources, before any work could be done.

By the time approvals were obtained, COVID-19 had invaded and home owners started to concentrate on home repairs and construction. One result was that the price of treated wood had doubled! In the end, steel supports were no more expensive than wood, and more closely matched the original structure, so after getting approval of the revised design, these were ordered. Due to Covid-19 and tariffs the overall cost of materials had risen to more than \$22,000. Beyond the monies supplied by the Town of Holland, the rest of the cost would be funded by the Friends of McGilvray Road from accrued donations by individuals and organizations.



Figure 3



Figure 4

Because of weather and water level related delays and the need to avoid hunting seasons, only preparatory work was started in early November 2020 when Pat Caffrey began hauling wood and steel materials to the Bridge 4 site, [Figures 3 and 4] and removing old bolts. Because of the weight limits on bridges 1, 2 and 3, the materials were hauled in by using the Bridge 1 ford and Bridge 2 and 3 by-pass routes [Figure 5]; hence the need to wait for lower water levels. Bridge 4 and the trail beyond were periodically closed to the public during the construction from Thursday 12/3 until Tuesday 12/15.

## ***Bridge 4 work begins***

### **Report by Roger Ziegler**

On November 30, Patrick was already working on the bridge while I had a couple of trees to remove from the trail. I started assisting Patrick on Wednesday, 12/2. We started on the east end of the bridge and accomplished the first 13 feet or 10% of the bridge. We followed that up with another 13 feet on Friday. We realized that we would soon be hauling the old steel I-beams and new I-beams across the new decking, so we laid down a skidway of old decking over the new decking to protect the new, and decided to work from the west end back to the east for the remaining spans. Over the weekend we worked on removing concrete from the original deck that was attached to the beams near the center of the bridge. On Monday, John Papenfuss joined us and we started replacing the deck on the west side of the bridge, again completing another 13' that day. We did 13' each day after that except Sunday. We finished with the decking on Tuesday, 12/15. Over the next



Figure 5

three days, the old I-beams and lumber were hauled out.



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Figure 6

Figure 7



The job of bridge reconstruction entailed removing deck support bars of 3/4" thick steel that were between the old I-beams. We also had to remove the bolts which had been holding the old I-beams to the main cross beams, no easy job that was! Next was removing the deck boards which were 2in. x 8in. x 16ft. planking. Once we lifted a 13' section of decking, we removed the old **200 pound** I-beams by hand with straps and hauled them to a stacked pile. Above, Pat Caffrey pulls out a steel support. **[Figure 6]**

We replaced the old I-beams with new **155 pound** I-beams to which we had attached new 2x6" lumber to go between the decking and I-beams, with tar paper sandwiched between the I-beam and the 2x6's. **[Figure 7]** Finally we covered them with the new deck planking (as presented by John Pappenfus and Roger Ziegler). **[Figure 8]** The first sections took us almost 8 hours each but by the time the last one was done, we had it down to 5 hours each.



**Figure 8**

Let us again thank the Town of Holland and the many individuals and organizations who provided the monies to complete this project. In addition we would like to recognize the spectacular job done by our "Worker Bee" volunteers!

## The Busy Beavers

Here we have workers of another sort. We probably don't get to see beavers at work, but we can often spot what they have been up to. Back in 2015, the DNR agent with whom we work, Anna Jahns, discovered a beaver lodge that was inconveniently located on the trail. Unfortunately it had to be removed. Otherwise, we usually just see the results of their work in downing trees to use for their construction projects.

### ***Final Notes***

The time to reconstruct the deck of Bridge 4, was about 300 man hours including moving new materials in, to removal and disposing of the old. Approximately 30,000 lbs. of new materials were installed, and a similar amount of old materials removed, all by hand. Many additional hours were spent in planning, design, estimating, and obtaining necessary approvals.

The Friends of McGilvray Road

