



The Rock River bridge in Indianford has a badly deteriorated deck, which will be replaced next year.

Photo by Stu Bloom

Indianford Bridge closing for major repairs next year

By Andrea Bloom,
Reporter staff

The Rock River bridge on County Hwys. M and F near the Indianford Dam will be closed for four months early next year, while its badly deteriorated deck is replaced.

Construction could start as early as next February. Traffic will be rerouted on a detour using State Hwy. 51 and County Hwy. F, according to Rock County officials.

The condition of the bridge and plans to repair it were discussed at a public information meeting on March 7 at the Fulton Town Office.

"The majority of the structure is in very good shape, except for the deck," said Vincent DiFrances, an engineer with K. Singh & Associates, the design consultant for the project.

The deck consists of the roadway and sidewalk part of the bridge. A handout provided by Singh says the deck "is severely deteriorated, with spalled concrete, extensive cracking, and exposed reinforcement. In its current condition, approximately 50 percent of the bridge deck is delaminated, which is a precursor to additional spalling [disintegration]."

"So 50 percent of that deck is very close to coming apart," DiFrances said.

The six-span steel girder

bridge, officially named B-53-0016, was built in 1956.

The engineers considered replacing the whole bridge rather than just the deck. The cost of full bridge replacement was estimated at \$3.8 million, while replacing just the deck would cost \$1.8 million.

Looked at on a per-year cost basis, "There is significant cost savings to doing the deck replacement and extending the service of the existing structure by 40 years rather than a full replacement," DiFrances said.

The total cost of the project is estimated at \$1.9 million, with 80 percent coming from federal funds and 20 percent coming from Rock County.

In addition to replacing the bridge deck, the work will also include installing new drains; repairing, blast cleaning and coating the steel girders, which are starting to rust; removal and replacement of concrete under the bridge that is starting to fall off; and new railings.

"The existing bridge railings don't meet current crash test standards," DiFrances said. And he said a low curb railing that separates the bridge's sidewalk from the roadway will be removed, because it was determined to be a trip hazard.

"You could actually trip and fall into the live traffic that way, so that will be coming out," he said. The sidewalk will now have a six-inch curb

to separate it from the roadway.

The work will also include replacing the guard rails along the approach to the river, which are currently too far apart.