

# Oconto River Bridge Project

## Smyth Road over the North Branch Oconto River

WisDOT ID: 9077-04-00



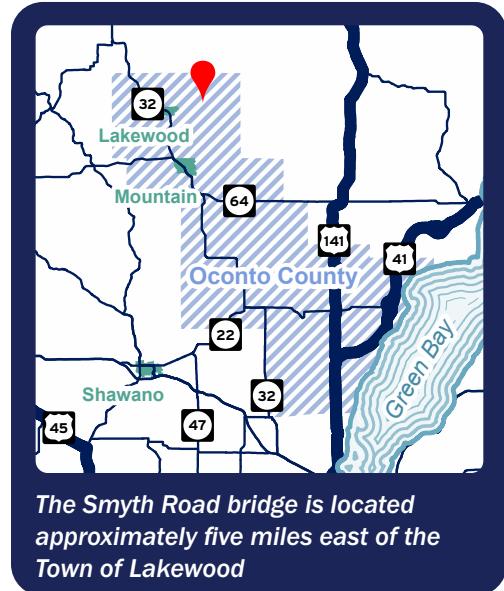
## What is happening?

Oconto County and the Wisconsin Department of Transportation, working with local stakeholders, are considering alternatives for the rehabilitation or replacement of the steel truss bridge over the North Branch of the Oconto River on Smyth Road (National Forest System Road 2101). The existing bridge, built in 1928, is listed on the National Register of Historic Places due to its engineering significance. WisDOT and Oconto County are therefore undertaking an analysis of conceptual alternatives to maintain a river crossing at or near this location, including alternatives that would not require the demolition of the structure. A brief overview of these alternatives is provided on the rear of this page.

## Why is this happening?

The purpose of the proposed project is to provide a reliable, long-term crossing of the North Branch Oconto River for all users (including snowmobiles) in the vicinity of the existing bridge by addressing structural and functional deficiencies to provide a safe and efficient transportation system.

The need for the proposed project is due to structural deterioration, functional deficiencies, and route importance.



**Bridge Structural Deficiencies:** The existing bridge on Smyth Road over the North Branch of the Oconto River is structurally deficient. Based on the Federal Highway Administration's bridge sufficiency rating formula, the bridge's sufficiency rating is 31.9 of 100, indicating that the structure's degradation is advanced enough to qualify it for Federal replacement funding.

**Bridge Functional Deficiencies:** The existing bridge was built to design standards that did not have adequate vertical clearances to serve today's traffic demand or to meet current standards. The existing bridge provides limited vertical clearance (12'-0"). The minimum vertical clearance for town roads is 14'. The limited roadway width poses safety risks, preventing safe passage for pedestrians, bicyclists, snowmobiles, and wide motor vehicles.

**Route Importance:** The Smyth Road Bridge over the North Branch Oconto River is an important infrastructure component for the Town of Lakewood, the National Forest, and the surrounding region. It provides access for recreation and industry operations. The nearest alternative crossings are seven miles to the north and more than 15 miles to the south.



## We would like to hear from you!

Keep updated on the project or contact the project team on the county website by scanning the QR code, or following this link <https://www.ocontocountywi.gov/284/Highway-Department>. We are particularly interested in any comments you may have on the historic nature of the bridge.



## Alternatives

- 1. Rehabilitate for vehicles while maintaining historic integrity
- 2. Construct new bridge on existing alignment
- 3. Construct new bridge just north of existing

