



DAVID EVANS
AND ASSOCIATES INC.

Bridge Postings: Where Do They Come From and What Can I Do

Presented by
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Stewart Linz PE



House Keeping

- Let us know what topic you'd like to see next.
- Add your contact info in the chat for future invites.
- Trainings every other month.



TYPE QUESTIONS INTO THE
CHAT.



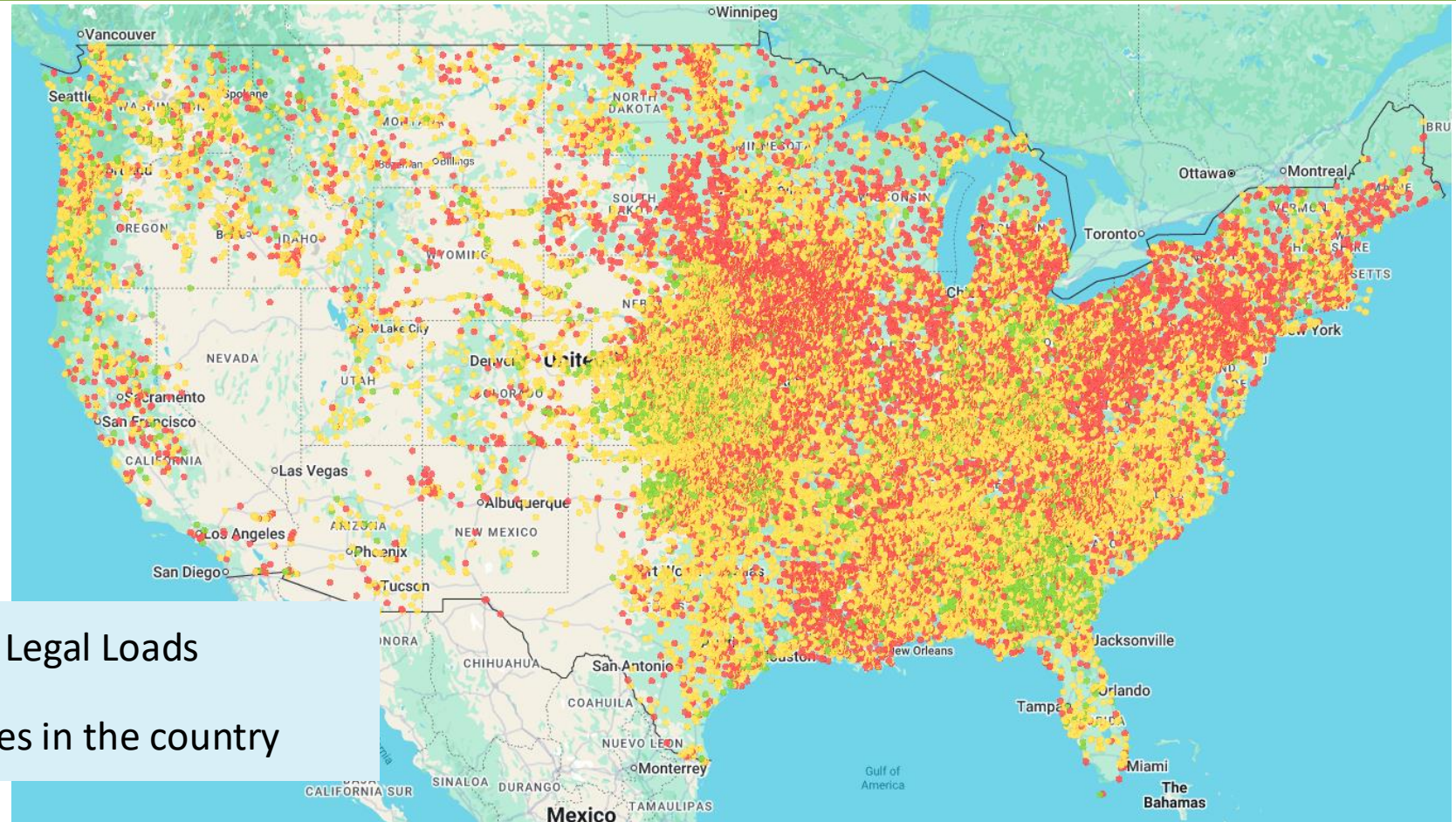
THE PRESENTATION WILL BE
RECORDED AND MADE
AVAILABLE.

Overview

- Load Ratings Background
- Load Restriction Requirements
- Options for Maintenance
- Why Postings Matter



Bridges Posted for Legal Loads

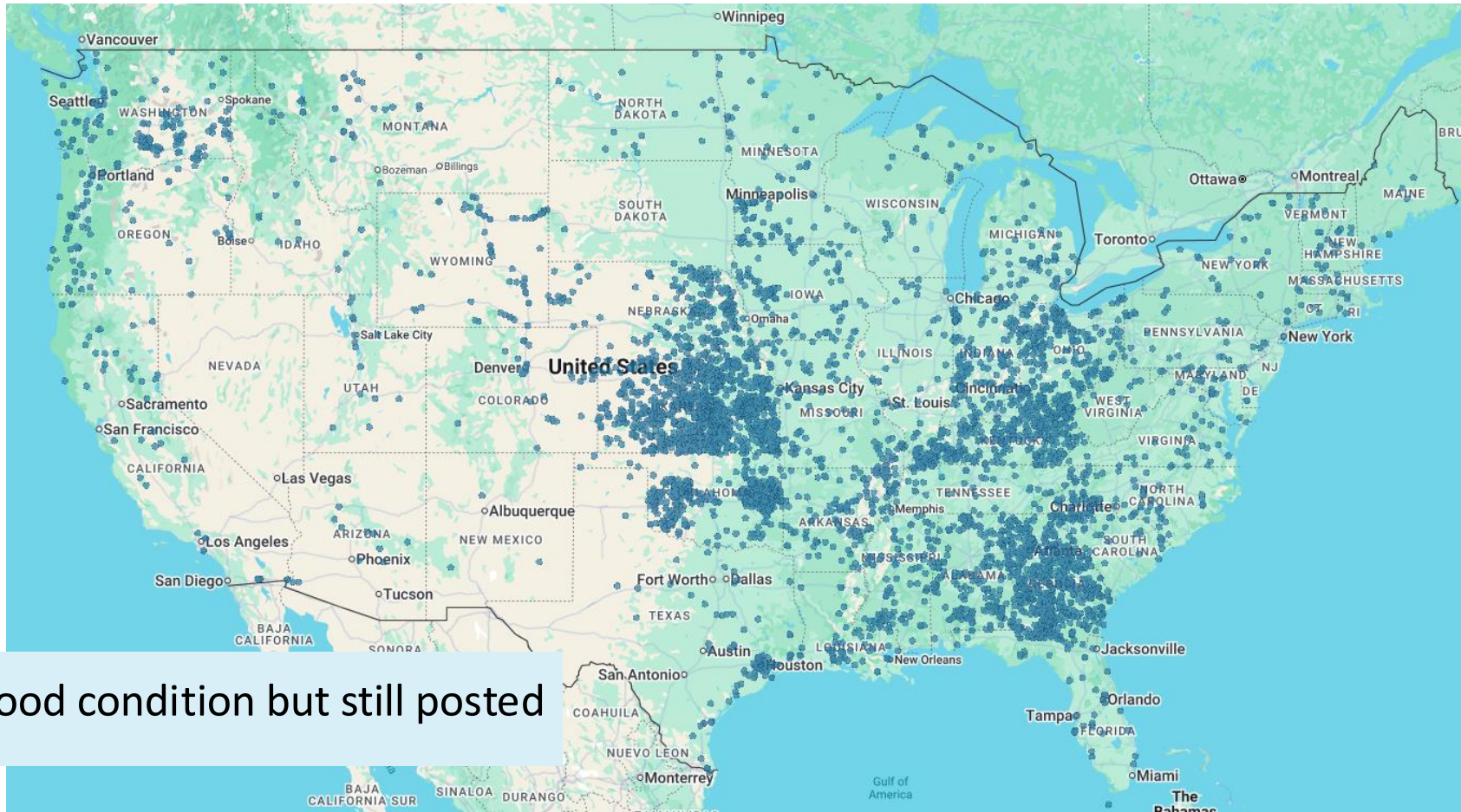


- 56,651 Bridges are Posted for Legal Loads
- That is nearly 10% of all bridges in the country

Source: Infobridge.fhwa.dot.gov



Bridges Posted for Legal Loads

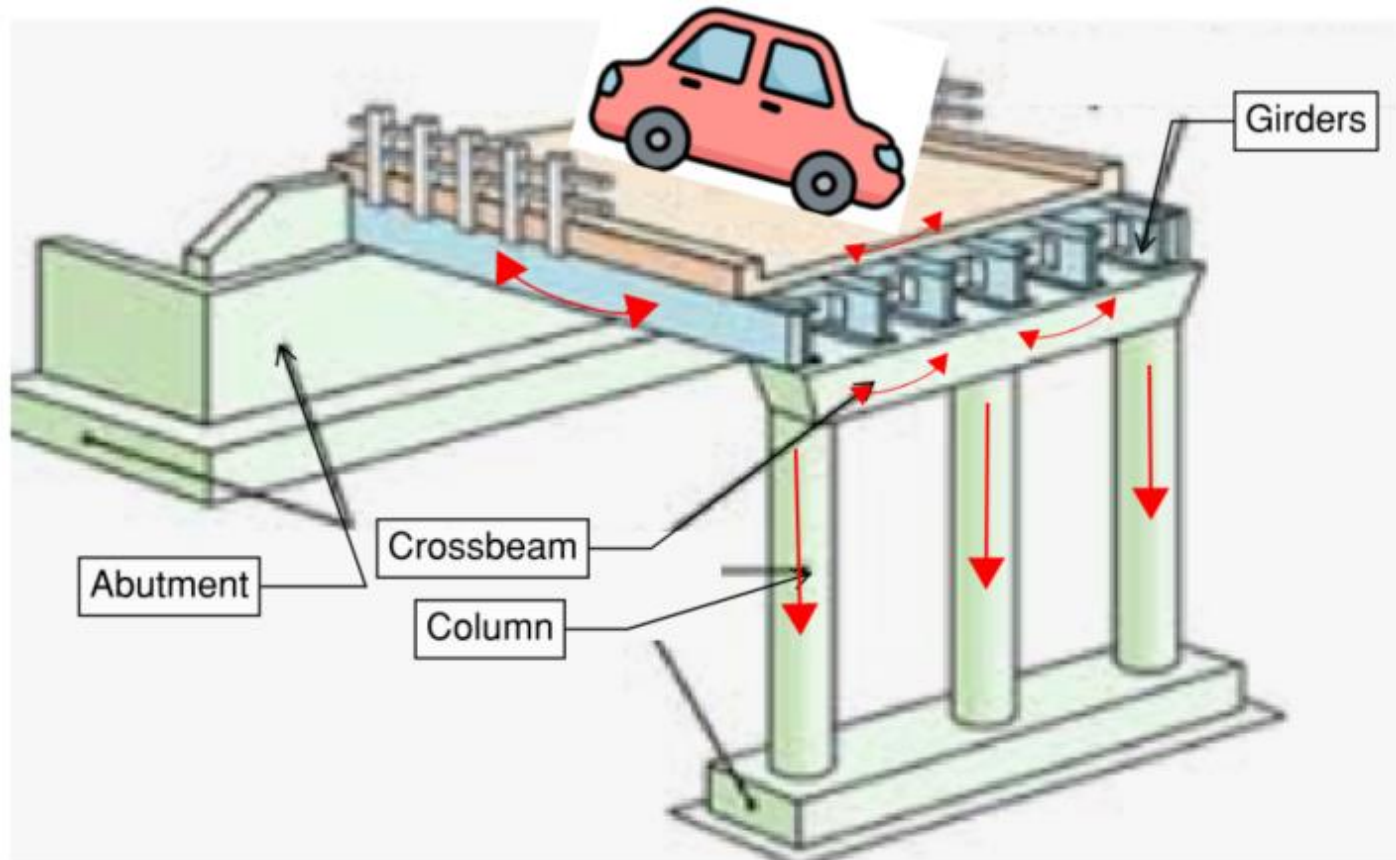


5,425 are in good condition but still posted

Source: Infobridge.fhwa.dot.gov



Load Rating Basics: Beam/Girder



Load Rating Basics

$$RF = \frac{\text{Capacity} - \text{Bridge Weight}}{\text{Truck Weight}}$$

$$RF = \frac{\text{Reserve Capacity}}{\text{Truck Weight}}$$

Load Rating Basics

If Reserve Capacity > Truck Weight

$$RF = \frac{\text{Reserve Capacity}}{\text{Truck Weight}}$$

RF > 1 ... No Restriction



Load Rating Basics

If Reserve Capacity < Truck Weight

$$RF = \frac{\text{Reserve Capacity}}{\text{Truck Weight}}$$



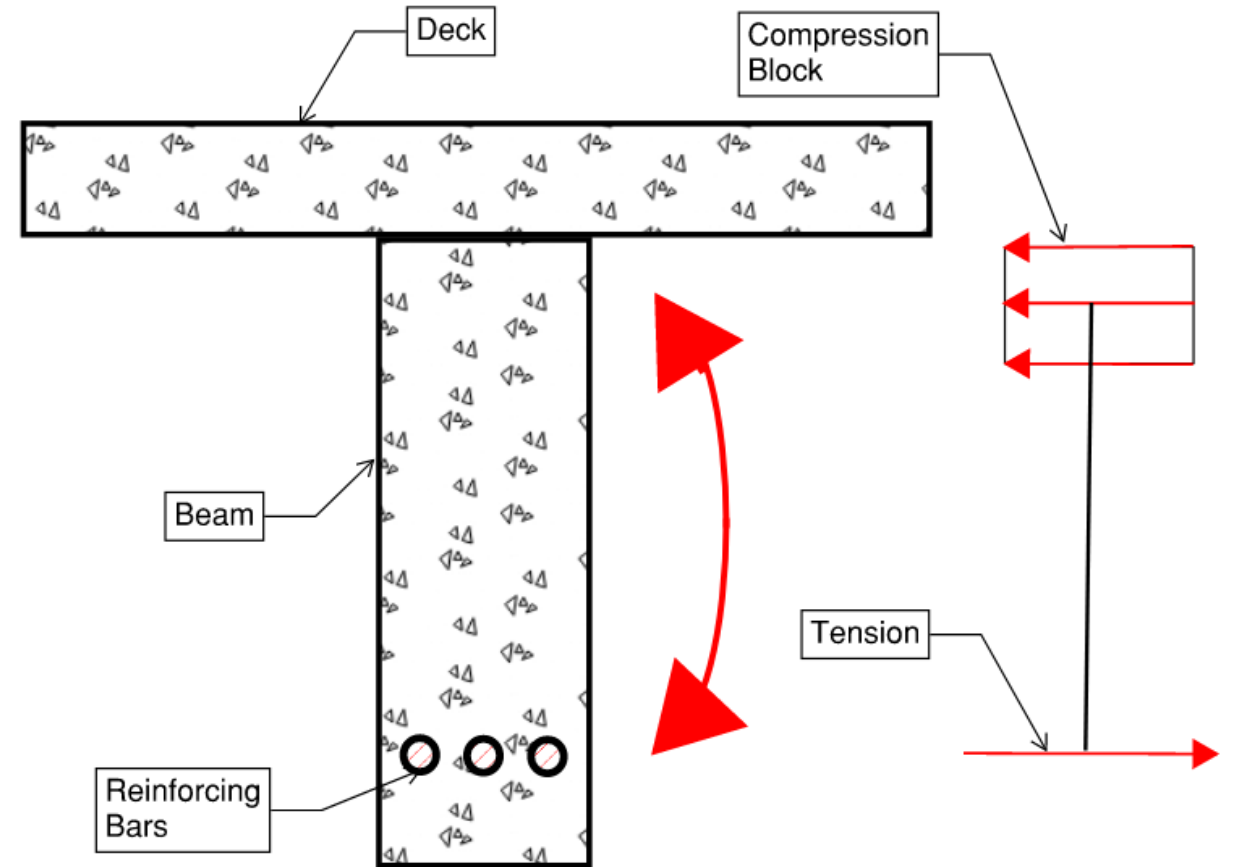
RF < 1 ... We Have a Problem

So what do engineers do?

- **Estimate** how much weight the members can hold. (Capacity)
- **Estimate** the weight of the bridge, including the weight of railing, and wearing surfaces. (Dead Loads)
- **Estimate** the weight of traffic. (Live Loads)



Estimate the Capacity: RC Beam



Account for Changes in Capacity



Rot in Timber

Changes in Capacity: What's left?

Steel Corrosion



Changes in Capacity

Concrete Deterioration



Changes in Capacity

Footing Scour



Bridge Design Loads:

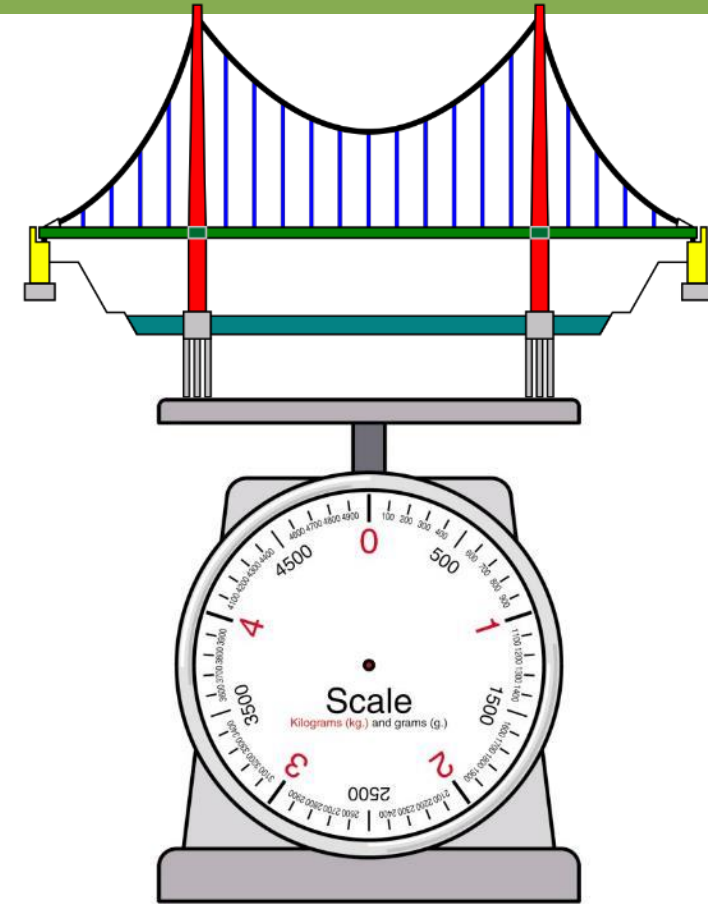
- Permanent (Dead Loads):
 - Weight of the bridge
 - Wearing surface
- Transient Loads (Live Loads):
 - Trucks, Pedestrians, Vehicles
- Less Common: (Extreme Event)
 - Seismic
 - Ice loads
 - Blast Load
 - Vessel Collision

Load Combination Limit State	DC DW EH EV ES EL PS CR SH	LL IM CE BR PL LS	WA	WS	WL	FR	TU	TG	SE	DR	Use One of These at a Time				
											EQ	BL	IC	CT	CV
Strength I (unless noted)	γ_p	1.75	1.00	—	—	1.00	γ_{TU}	γ_{TG}	γ_{SE}	γ_{DR}	—	—	—	—	—
Strength II	γ_p	1.35	1.00	—	—	1.00	γ_{TU}	γ_{TG}	γ_{SE}	γ_{DR}	—	—	—	—	—
Strength III	γ_p	—	1.00	1.00	—	1.00	γ_{TU}	γ_{TG}	γ_{SE}	γ_{DR}	—	—	—	—	—
Strength IV	γ_p	—	1.00	—	—	1.00	γ_{TU}	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Strength V	γ_p	1.35	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	γ_{TU}	γ_{TG}	γ_{SE}	γ_{DR}	—	—	—	—	—
Extreme Event I	1.00	γ_{EQ}	1.00	—	—	1.00	—	—	—	1.00	1.00	—	—	—	—
Extreme Event II	1.00	0.5/ 1.00	1.00	—	—	1.00	—	—	—	1.00	—	1.00	1.00	1.00/ 1.00	1.00
Service I	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	γ_{TU}	γ_{TG}	γ_{SE}	1.00	—	—	—	—	—
Service II	1.00	1.30	1.00	—	—	1.00	γ_{TU}	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Service III	1.00	γ_{LL}	1.00	—	—	1.00	γ_{TU}	γ_{TG}	γ_{SE}	1.00	—	—	—	—	—
Service IV	1.00	—	1.00	1.00	—	1.00	γ_{TU}	—	1.00	1.00	—	—	—	—	—
Fatigue I—LL, IM & CE only	—	1.75	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Fatigue II—LL, IM & CE only	—	0.80	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—

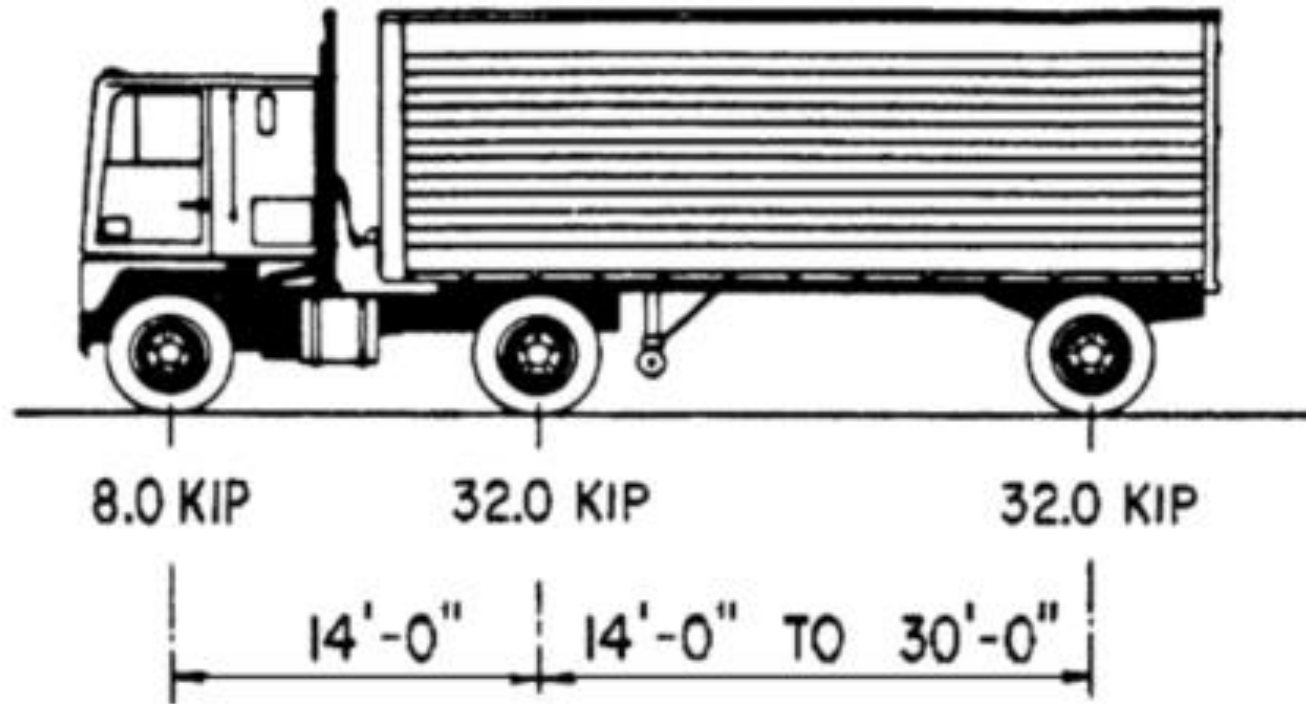


Bridge Weight

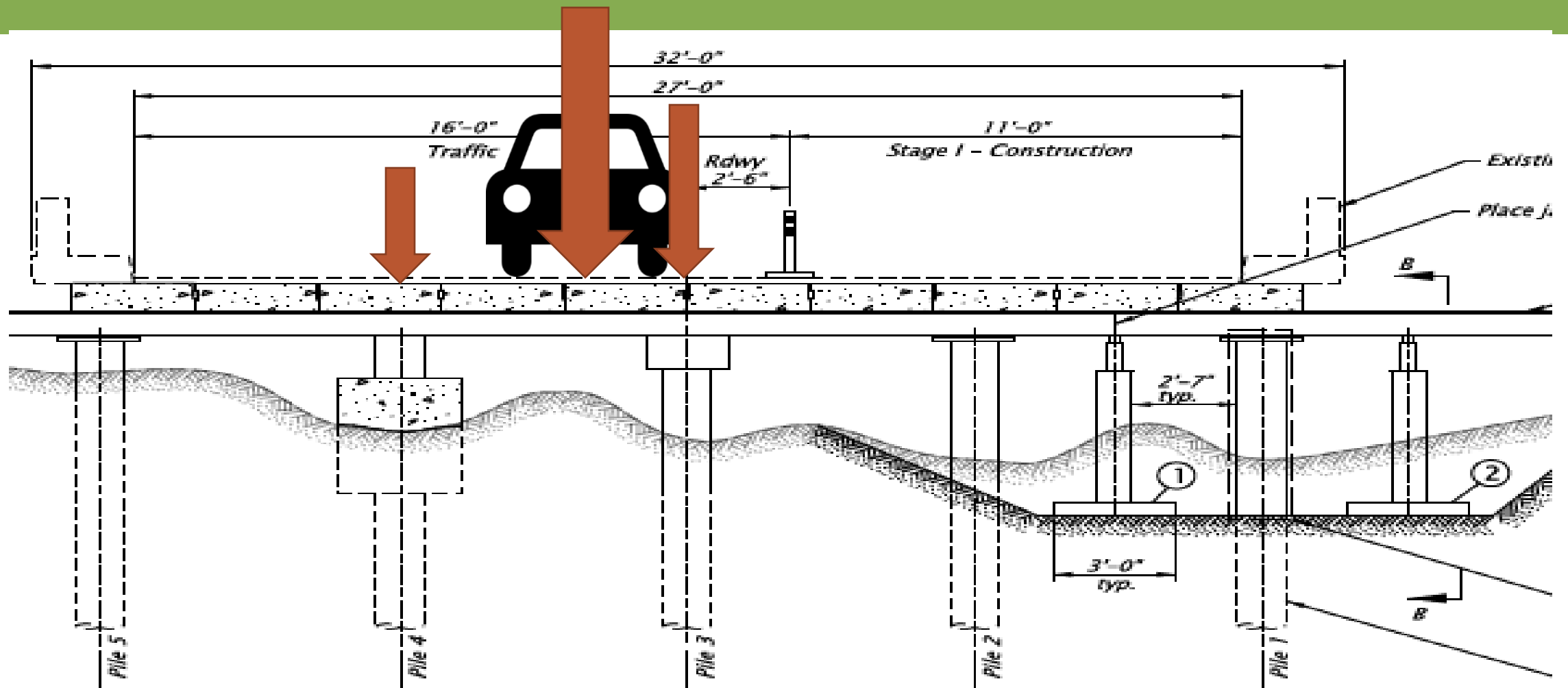
- Can be **estimated** pretty close.
- Estimates are used to shorten work.
- When all the weights are added up. Increase the weight by 25%-50% to make sure the results are conservative.



Vehicle Loads:



Live Load Distribution



How does the LL work through the bridge?

Empirical Equations:

- Type of bridge
- Girder Spacing
- Span Length
- Number of Girders
- Stiffness Properties

Type of Superstructure	Applicable Cross-Section from Table 4.6.2.2.1-1	Distribution Factors	Range of Applicability
Wood Deck on Wood or Steel Beams	(a), (l)	See Table 4.6.2.2a-1	
Concrete Deck on Wood Beams	(l)	One Design Lane Loaded: $S/12.0$ Two or More Design Lanes Loaded: $S/10.0$	$S \leq 6.0$
Concrete Deck or Filled Grid, Partially Filled Grid, or Unfilled Grid Deck Composite with Reinforced Concrete Slab on Steel or Concrete Beams; Concrete T-Beams, T- and Double T-Sections	(a), (e), (k); also (i) and (j) if sufficiently connected to act as a unit	One Design Lane Loaded: $0.06 + \left(\frac{S}{14}\right)^{0.4} \left(\frac{S}{L}\right)^{0.3} \left(\frac{K_g}{12.0Lt_s^3}\right)^{0.1}$	$3.5 \leq S \leq 16.0$ $4.5 \leq t_s \leq 12.0$ $20 \leq L \leq 240$ $N_b \geq 4$ $10,000 \leq K_g \leq 7,000,000$
		Two or More Design Lanes Loaded: $0.075 + \left(\frac{S}{9.5}\right)^{0.6} \left(\frac{S}{L}\right)^{0.2} \left(\frac{K_g}{12.0Lt_s^3}\right)^{0.1}$	
		use lesser of the values obtained from the equation above with $N_b = 3$ or the lever rule	$N_b = 3$
Cast-in-Place Concrete Multicell Box	(d)	One Design Lane Loaded: $\left(1.75 + \frac{S}{3.6}\right) \left(\frac{1}{L}\right)^{0.35} \left(\frac{1}{N_c}\right)^{0.45}$ Two or More Design Lanes Loaded: $\left(\frac{13}{N_c}\right)^{0.3} \left(\frac{S}{5.8}\right) \left(\frac{1}{L}\right)^{0.25}$	$7.0 \leq S \leq 13.0$ $60 \leq L \leq 240$ $N_c \geq 3$ If $N_c > 8$ use $N_c = 8$

Truck Loads

- A lot more variability than figuring out the bridge weight.
- Need more conservatism with **estimating** the weight.
- Typically 2-3 times larger than just the bridge weight.
- Increase the truck weight by 135% (175% design) to account for variation.

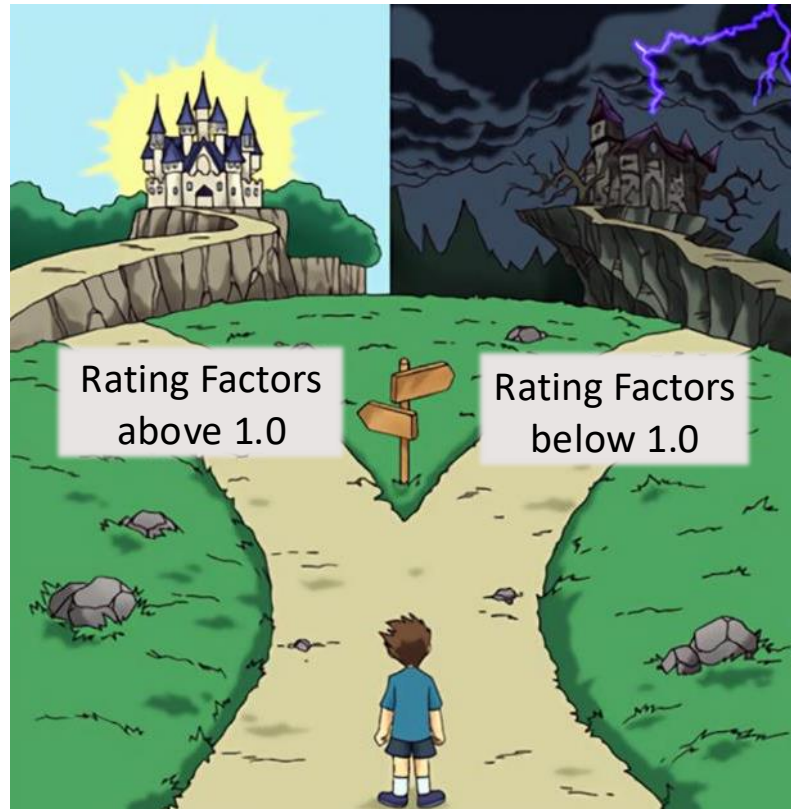


Load Rating

$$RF = \frac{\text{Capacity} - \text{Bridge Weight}}{\text{Truck Weight}}$$

The Load Rating Crossroads

- Rating complete
- No load posting
- Good vibes



- Work to do
- Potential posting
- Bad news for maintenance

What Can Maintenance Do?

- Post the Bridge
- Remove Weight
- Shore the Bridge
- Strengthen/Repair the Bridge



FHWA - 30 Day Load Posting Requirement



U.S. Department
of Transportation

**Federal Highway
Administration**

Memorandum

Subject: **ACTION:** Timeframe for Installing Load
Posting Signs at Bridges

Date: April 17, 2019

From: /Original signed by/
Joseph L. Hartmann, Ph.D., P.E.
Director, Office of Bridges and Structures

In Reply Refer To: HIBS-30

To: Division Administrators
Federal Lands Highway Division Directors



Communication:

- Understand how the restriction would impact nearby businesses
- Ask what is causing the restriction and how it could be addressed
- Decide on a course of action



Print Signs and Post the Bridge



Temporary Shoring: Localized



Temporary Shoring: Whole Bent



Permanent Shoring?



Strengthen Bridge



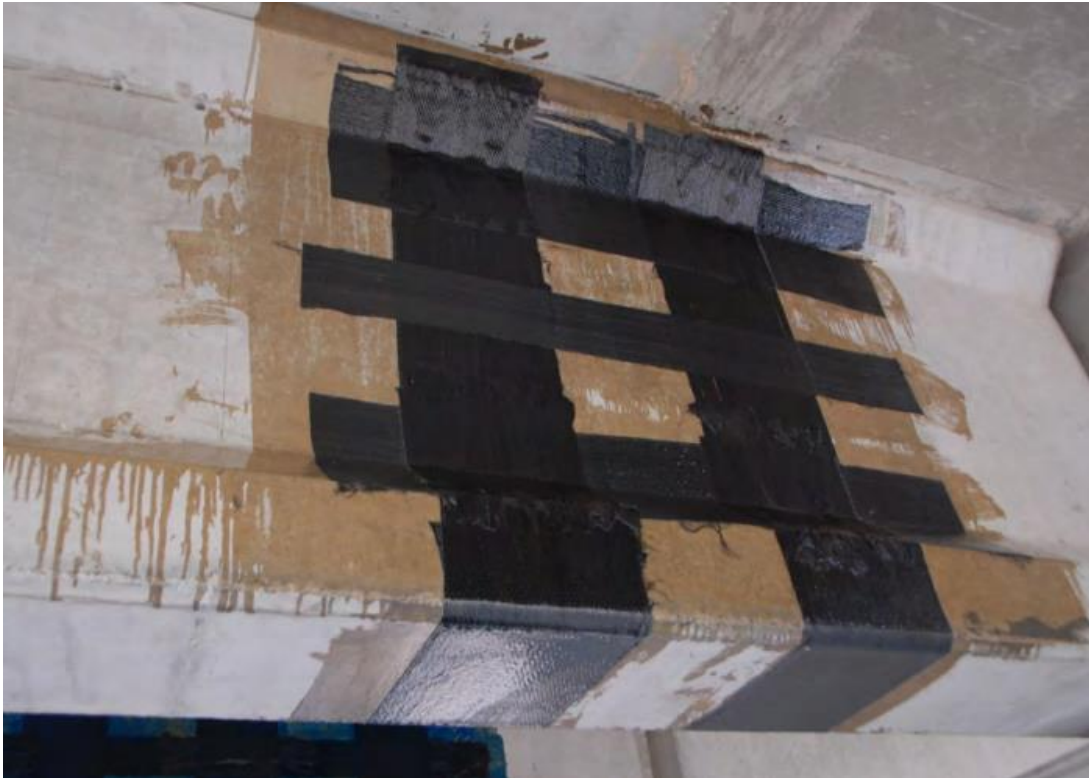




Concrete Beam Encapsulation:



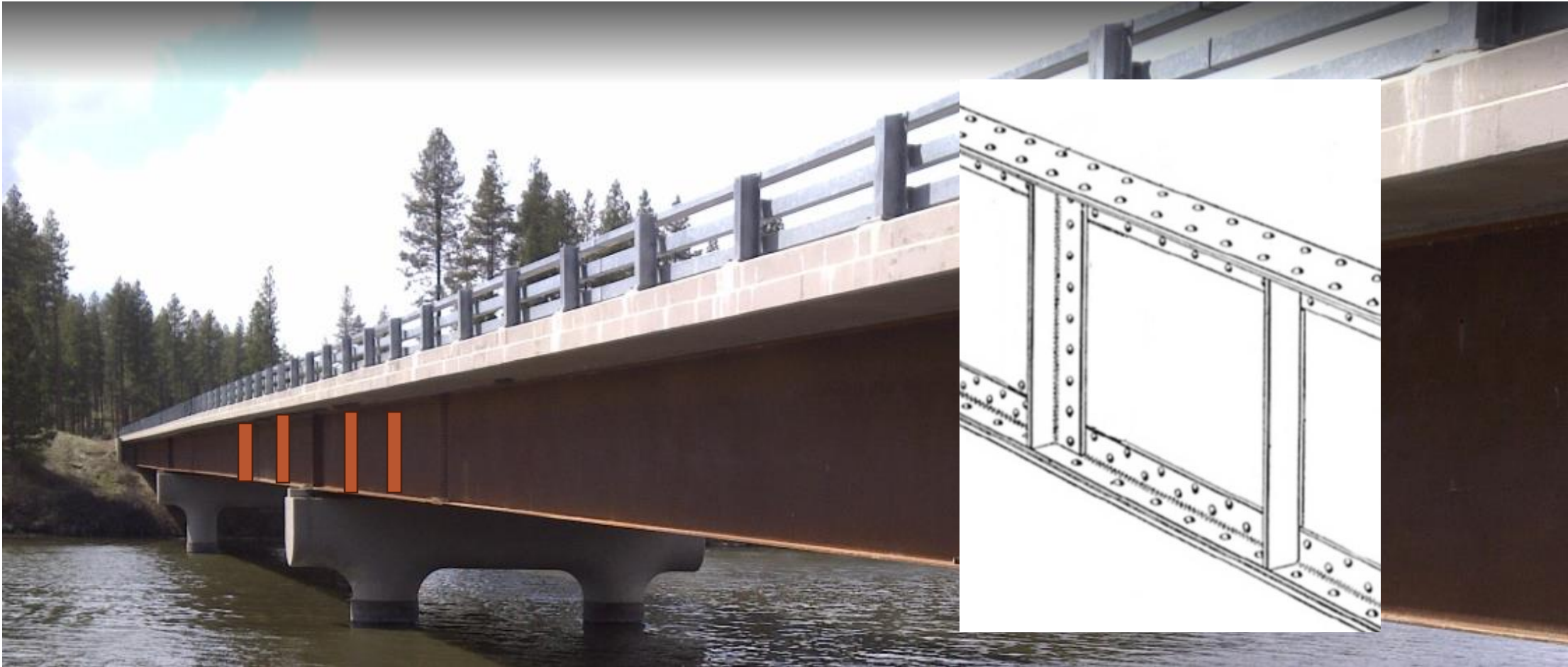
CFRP Wraps



Strengthening Steel Members

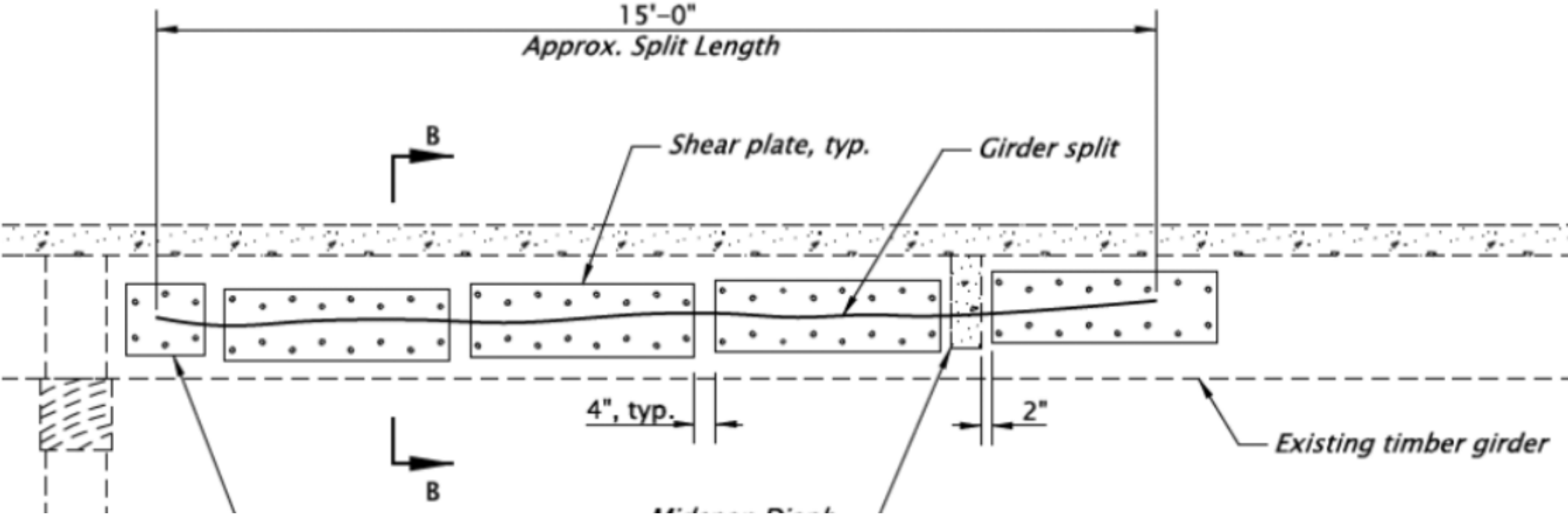


Steel Girder Bridge: Bolt on Stiffeners



Timber Girder Split Repair:

Fish Plating: New Repair



Timber Repairs: Timber Girder Split



Timber Pile Repair: Helper Pile



Pile Repair: Banding

- Piles tend to fail but mushrooming outwards.



- Installing steel sleeves to hold the pile together can buy some time.



Cap Repairs: Encapsulation



Why do you want to implement posting?

- As a matter of public safety and as a way of safeguarding vital transportation infrastructure, State and local law enforcement agencies enforce weight restrictions on trucks and heavy vehicles traveling public roads.
 - To protect the Public
 - To protect the Bridge
 - To protect Ourselves and Agency



HOW DO WE DO THIS



- **MAINTAIN ACCURATE LOAD POSTING and SIGNAGE**
 - Ensure Posting Signs Match Rating
 - Signs are Not Obstructed, Legible and are Properly Placed





ROAD
CLOSED
YCRD

BRIDGE
OUT

WEIGHT
LIMIT
03T
04T
06T



Upcoming BPP Meeting:

Midwest and Northeast

- October 13th-15th
- Chicago, Illinois



SAVE THE DATE!
OCTOBER 13TH - 15TH, 2026

2026 NORTHEAST & MIDWEST BRIDGE PRESERVATION PARTNERSHIP MEETING

MIDWEST
BRIDGE PRESERVATION PARTNERSHIP



The Bridge Preservation Partnerships are regional forums of bridge practitioners working together to promote the benefits of bridge preservation through information sharing, education and application.

NORTHEAST
BRIDGE PRESERVATION PARTNERSHIP



**HYATT REGENCY MCCORMICK PLACE
S. MARTIN LUTHER KING DR.
CHICAGO, IL**

ILLINOIS | INDIANA | IOWA | KANSAS | KENTUCKY | MICHIGAN | MINNESOTA | MISSOURI
NEBRASKA | NORTH DAKOTA | OHIO | OKLAHOMA | SOUTH DAKOTA | WISCONSIN

CONNECTICUT | DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA | DELAWARE | MAINE | MARYLAND | MASSACHUSETTS
NEW HAMPSHIRE | NEW JERSEY | NEW YORK | RHODE ISLAND | VERMONT

A photograph of a concrete slab with a large, irregular hole. The hole reveals a network of steel rebar (reinforcement) within the concrete. The surrounding concrete is dark and appears to be part of a larger structure, possibly a bridge or a large building. The lighting is somewhat dim, highlighting the texture of the concrete and the metallic sheen of the rebar.

Questions

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