

Mississippi River Bridge at Lansing

It's been a while since our last update and a lot has happened so let's get right to it! We'll start on the east side of the Mississippi River and work our way west.

Now that the base and the footings have been poured, the contractor has started working on the top part of pier 3 on the Wisconsin shoreline. The first pour has taken place for the columns on the pier. The contractor built the rebar cages for each column, placed the forms, and then poured the concrete. When the concrete had reached its cure time the forms were removed, giving us a better look at what will be the largest pier on the Wisconsin side of the river. The contractor plans to start forming the upper half of the columns next week. When complete the pier columns will stand close to 30 feet above the top of the footing.



Pier 3 Columns

Moving west out into the Mississippi and construction of pier 2. The drilled shafts are the priority right now. These shafts are large iron tubes, or casings, that are 11.5-foot wide and are driven approximately 100-feet below the river bottom to bedrock with a large vibratory hammer. Once they hit bedrock, the contractor drills more than 20 feet into the rock to form a "rock socket".



Concrete Pumps for Drilled Shafts

When that is complete a large rebar cage is lowered into the casing. The casing is then filled with concrete. Filling this 11.5 foot, approximately 150-foot-deep tube is a challenge no matter where you are, but when you are out in the middle of the river it takes it to another level! The contractor had to set up two concrete pump trucks to make this happen. One of the trucks was on the shore, the other on a barge in the river. Ready-mix trucks would empty into the pump on shore. The concrete would then pump from one truck to the other and then into the drilled shaft. Two of the three shafts have been filled with the next one scheduled for approximately a week from now. When that is done the contractor will build a coffer cell around the shafts. That will give them a dry place to work and build the footing for the pier. When pier 2 is complete it will stand over 40-feet above the top of the footing!

Now we will move further west and a bit north to the Lansing Marina. In the coming years, the contractor will build the center span for the new bridge on barges just outside the marina. These barges will be held in place by posts, or "spuds" that will be sunk into the bottom of the riverbed. Before this can happen, the area had to be checked for the federally endangered and protected Higgins Eye mussels. Divers have been working in the river for several weeks to relocate the Higgins Eye mussels they do find and keep them safe from any of the coming construction activity.



Water Line Replacement

Our last move west takes us to the Iowa side of the river where we find out it's not just mussels that need to be relocated to build the new bridge. The contractor is moving/replacing water lines. This will allow them to dig footings for the support structure for the end of the bridge, or abutment, in Lansing. It will also give them room to build the new retaining wall in Lansing. There will also be storm and sanitary sewer work as part of the project to reconstruct Iowa 26 north and south of the bridge, as well as improving the intersection of Iowa 26 and Iowa 9

Don't forget to check out the project Facebook page at <https://www.facebook.com/LansingBridge> for regular updates. You do not have to be a Facebook member to check out the site. You can also get information on the project at <https://iowadot.gov/lansingbridge> including watching project progress on the live webcam.