

U.S. Institute for **Environmental Conflict Resolution**

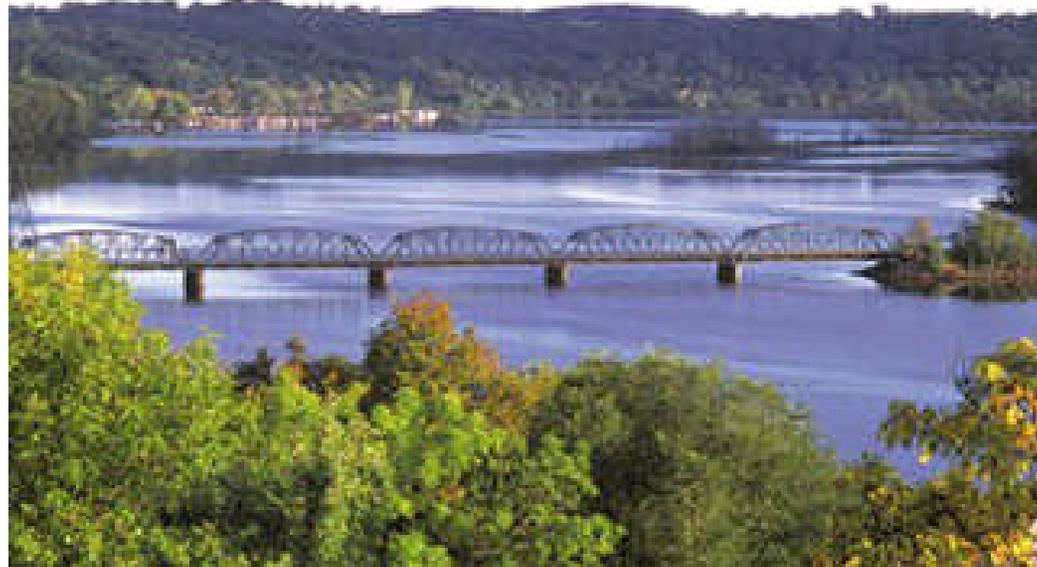


Morris K. Udall Foundation

# **ECR Case Study: St. Croix River Crossing**

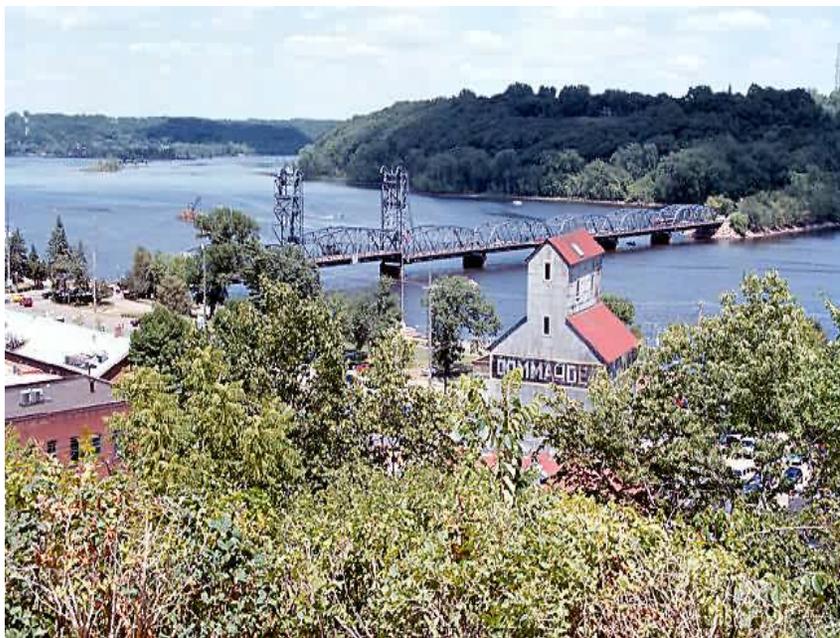
# St. Croix River Crossing Context

- MN – WI Border, near Twin Cities
- “Scenic & Recreational” St. Croix River (part of W&SRS)



# St. Croix River Crossing Context

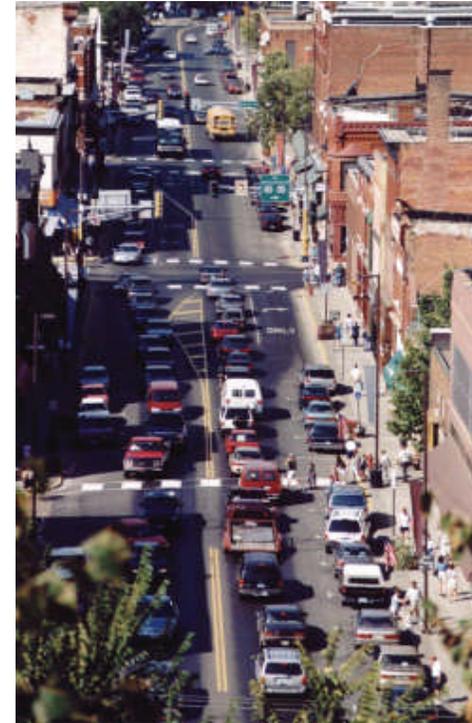
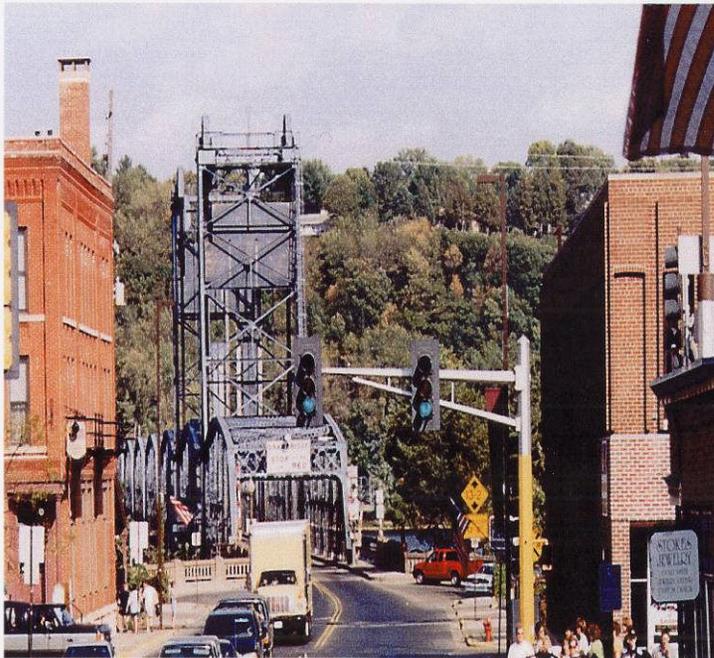
- Historic town (Stillwater, MN)
- Historic lift bridge



# St. Croix River Crossing Context

**BUT.....**

- Lift bridge has deteriorated & is overused – safety issues



- And Stillwater is congested

# Key Issues

- Lift bridge is icon but would be removed for a new bridge under NPS “no proliferation policy”
- New bridge could:
  - ▶ induce growth, especially on WI side
  - ▶ impact undeveloped shoreline and endangered mussels
- New bridge with sufficient capacity:
  - ▶ might be out of scale with surroundings
  - ▶ presents connection challenges on both sides of River

# Chronology

1950s - 1970s	Bridge discussions begin
1980s	MnDOT, WisDOT & FHWA begin working on new bridge proposal
1990	Draft EIS developed
1995	Final EIS issued; NPS approves; ROD signed
1996	Sierra Club sues and wins; NPS reverses approval
1998 - 2000	Alternative bridge options proposed—and rejected
2001	Agencies at impasse; USIECR engaged
2006	Agreement reached

# USIECR's Involvement

- Asked to intervene by FHWA/ WI (Summer 2001)
- Conducted conflict assessment (Fall 2001)
  - ▶ Separate decision-making for old and new bridges
  - ▶ Use collaborative approach including all stakeholders
- DOI changed requirements; States re-started negotiations (Summer 2002)

# DOI – DOT – ACHP Negotiations

## Previous Requirements (Conservation Fund)

No additional \$



\$15 Million



\$10 Million



# USIECR Involvement (Continued)

- Facilitated selection of mediators (Fall 2002)
- Helped convene stakeholders (Spring 2003)
- Oversaw collaborative stakeholder process (2003-2006)

# Mediation Process

- Separate lift bridge and new bridge processes, initially
- Processes include all key stakeholders (27)
  - ▶ Federal agencies (7)
  - ▶ State agencies (6)
  - ▶ Local governments and agencies (4)
  - ▶ Private advocacy groups (10)
- Working toward consensus solution

# Progress & Successes

- Planning for \$5M lift bridge rehabilitation (short term) completed in 2003
- Inclusive stakeholder group meets for 3 years
- Consensus on preferred alternative reached
- Stakeholders meet & reach agreement (July 17, 2006)



# Lessons Learned

# Discussion

