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National Register of Historic Places, Sturgeon Bay Bridge, Sturgeon Bay, Door County, Wisconsin, 07001420.

## Sturgeon Bay Bridge

**Reference Number:** 07001420

Michigan Street, Sturgeon Bay, Door County



Engineers: Keller & Harrington  
Builder: Wausau Iron Works  
Date of construction: 1931

Northern Door County has been linked to the rest of Wisconsin since 1887, when a wooden toll bridge was built over the recently dredged Sturgeon Bay. As tourism in northern Door County gained popularity, a more solid structure was needed to handle the growing number of vehicles, as well as the windy



conditions of Sturgeon Bay. This bridge replaced the old toll bridge in 1931. It was designed by the Chicago engineering firm of Keller & Harrington (Charles L. Keller and Howard Parsons Harrington) and constructed by the Wausau Iron Works Company of Wausau, Wisconsin. At the time of its completion, the bridge was the thirty-ninth special state bridge constructed by the Wisconsin State Highway Commission. It was also the first free passage over Sturgeon Bay and was dedicated to "those who gave their services to their country in times of emergency." The final cost of bridge was estimated at \$479,398.03.

This large, rare and complicated structure is the only movable, overhead truss, Scherzer-type, double-leaf, rolling-lift bascule bridge remaining in Wisconsin. It is considered an excellent example of Keller & Harrington's work, a firm that designed bascule highway bridges in Wisconsin and across the country. Although other engineering firms utilized the Scherzer-type bascule design (movable leafs resemble movement of a rocking chair), Keller & Harrington added an extensive overhead truss system (five Parker through trusses and two Warren trusses) to this bridge to withstand the sweeping winds of the Sturgeon Bay.

The Sturgeon Bay Bridge was slated for demolition in 1996. "Citizens for Our Bridge" (COB) was formed, using an annual Steel Bridge Songfest to advocate for its preservation. The bridge is scheduled for rehabilitation in late 2008 and remains one of two links that connect northern Door County with the rest of Wisconsin. It continues to carry local business highways 42 and 57.

**Period of Significance:** 1931

**Area of Significance:** Engineering

**Applicable Criteria:** Architecture/Engineering

**Historic Use:** Transportation: Road-Related

**Architectural Style:** Other

**Resource Type:** Structure

**Architect:** Wausau Iron Works (builders)

**Architect:** Keller & Harrington (engineers)

**Historic Status:** Listed in the National Register

**Historic Status:** Listed in the State Register

**National Register Listing Date:** 01/17/2008

**State Register Listing Date:** 04/27/2007

[National Register and State Register of Historic Places](#), Division of Historic Preservation, Wisconsin Historical Society, Madison, Wisconsin