

Executive Summary

In September 2011, a 127-year-old covered bridge in Lancaster County dramatically washed downstream during the flooding caused by Tropical Storm Lee. On the National Register of Historic Places, Siegrist's Mill Covered Bridge is one of only 900 authentic wooden covered bridges remaining in the country.

Less than two years later, the county-owned structure has been entirely rebuilt according to original methods, using authentic, 19th-century techniques and salvaged materials from the structure. The one-lane, 192-foot bridge is now open to vehicular and pedestrian traffic, with genuine architectural details and added height to its abutments to mitigate future flooding issues.

RETTEW worked with stakeholders including the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, The Pennsylvania Historical & Museum Commission, Lancaster County Facilities Management, bordering municipalities Rapho and West Hempfield townships, and nearby property owners to finalize design and permitting plans in line with owner goals and stakeholder input. The Federal Emergency Management Agency and the Pennsylvania Emergency Management Agency provided funding, and the bridge was reconstructed without using any modern materials such as steel beams. RETTEW and Lancaster County ensured details such as mortise and tenon joints, wooden pins, and authentic stone masonry were included in the plans and final product.

Siegrist's Mill bridge is an important feature to the social and historic fabric of Lancaster County, and will continue to help bolster the tourism industry and exist as a longstanding part of local scenery and infrastructure.