

Rehabilitation of Bridge 3-235

Coverdale Rd over Gravelly Fork

(DeDOT Contract T202407902)



Setting the Scene:

Bridge 3-235 is owned and maintained by DeDOT and lies northeast of Seaford, spanning Gravelly Fork. The existing structure consists of three spans supported by two sets of timber piles. Each set of timber piles has a timber pier cap to strengthen the support of the timber deck spans. The timber deck spans are topped with a concrete surface.

BR 3-235, constructed in 1983, is 60 feet long and carries both directions of Coverdale Road. This bridge carries an annual average of 1,272 vehicles per day, 11 percent of which are trucks.



Location of Bridge 3-235

Why is the bridge being worked on?

This bridge is currently closed to traffic following a crash on November 20, 2025. A truck traveling northbound on Coverdale Road crossed the southbound lane, broke through the west guardrail, struck the southwest timber wingwall that supports the abutment, and came to rest on the first pier cap supporting the bridge. This crash caused substantial damage to the timber wingwall, pier cap and sway bracings.

Repairs are needed urgently to reopen the bridge to traffic in a limited capacity. Once the immediate, temporary repairs are made there will be speed restrictions and weight restrictions on the trucks that cross over this span. DeDOT is proactively working on plans to replace this bridge in its entirety.



Severe split of the timber pier cap where the vehicle struck on November 20, 2025.



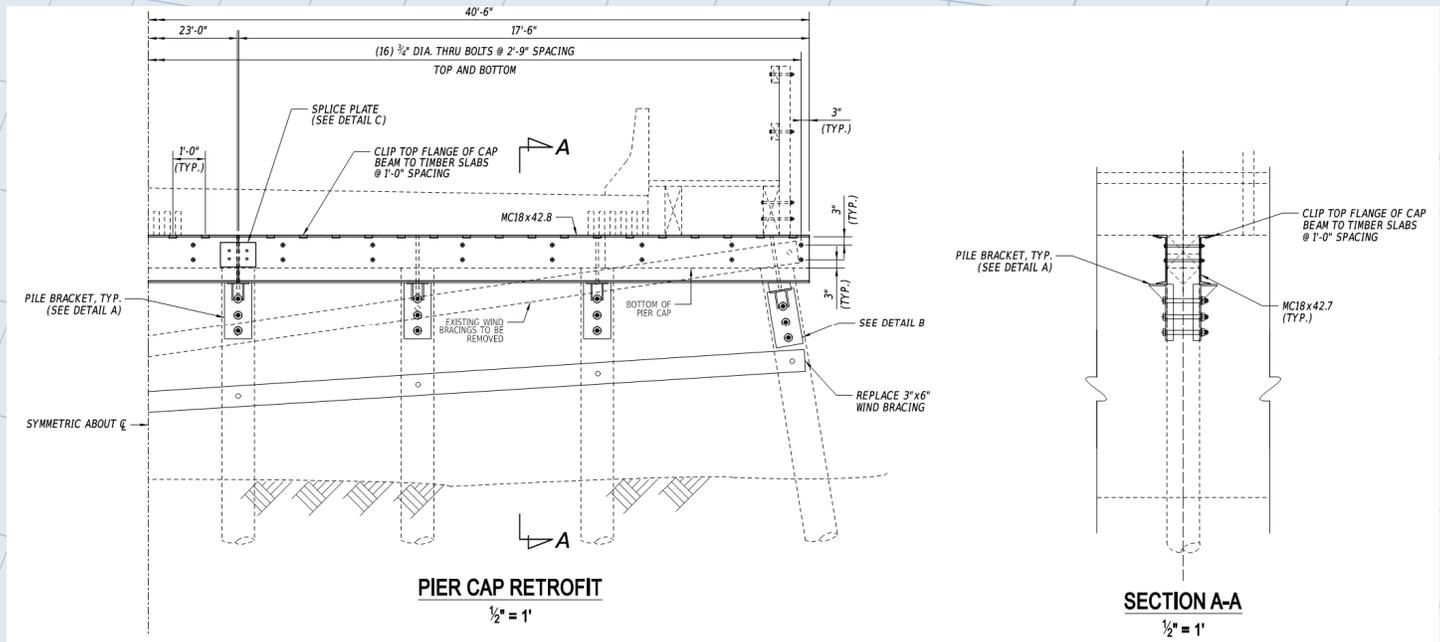
View of the same timber pier cap from a 2019 inspection. The diagonal timber pieces are sway braces that strengthen the piles.

See reverse side for additional information



What are the urgent, temporary repairs needed to reopen the bridge?

DeIDOT plans to make several emergency repairs that will enable reopening of this bridge to traffic in a more limited capacity. The pier caps will be bound with steel members on both sides to strengthen the damaged areas. The timber piles will have a steel collar placed near the top that will help support the new steel binders on the pier caps. The damaged sway braces will be removed and replaced with new timber sway braces. As mentioned above, these repairs will allow the bridge to reopen in a limited capacity. The primary loading restriction will be for large, fully loaded vehicles like dump trucks. This load restriction is out of an abundance of caution and to extend the bridge's life long enough to institute a plan for replacement.



Drawings of the planned emergency repairs: installing steel binders to the pier cap and steel collars to the piles. Dashed lines indicate existing items. Solid lines identify new items.

How will this impact my travel along Coverdale Road and when is this taking place?

This project will rely on the continued complete road closure until the repairs are completed. Because of the nature of the work, DeIDOT takes into account air temperature, weather conditions, placement of work equipment for the contractor crews, and scheduling for the crew availability. Additionally, the steel pieces need to be rolled and fabricated to meet the design needs. The work, and the road closure, is anticipated to take four weeks once all materials are available and depending on weather conditions. Work will occur in Spring, 2026.

Temporary detour routes in place following the November 20, 2025 crash will continue until work is complete. Northbound motorists on Coverdale Road will turn right onto Hastings Farm Rd, then bear left onto Wilson Hill Rd, then turn left onto Route 404 / Seashore Highway. Southbound motorists will use Route 404 / Seashore Highway, then turn right onto Wilson Hill Rd, then bear right onto Hastings Farm Rd, then turn right onto Coverdale Road.