

**Dotter Road Bridge over Mill Creek in southeastern Venango County**



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Just before Mill Creek enters the Allegheny River, it passes under three bridges - a concrete arch, a stone arch and this beautiful iron pony truss built by the Smith Bridge Company. The other two bridges are along abandoned railroad grades. This bridge is on a rural dirt road.



This county-owned bridge got a new wooden deck in October of 2002. According to the Franklin, PA *News Herald*, the cost for a new deck was approximately \$12,000. This preservation effort was recognized by the Oil Heritage Region, Inc. when on April 24, 2003 the County of Venango was presented the 2003 Oil Heritage Region Historic Preservation Award for an historic structure.



New deck is in place

There are still a number of beautiful truss bridges in Venango County, but this one is certainly among the most striking. The bridge derives beauty both from its structure and from its surroundings. The Dotter Road Bridge is located in a remote area, popular with campers. The **Allegheny Valley Bicycle Trail** can be easily accessed from a road next to the bridge. From that bike trail along the old Pennsylvania Railroad grade one can easily visit the **Rockland Tunnel** in one direction and an old girder bridge in the other. The bike trail extends all the way to Oil City, with plans for expansion to connect with the **Oil Creek State Park** bike trail.