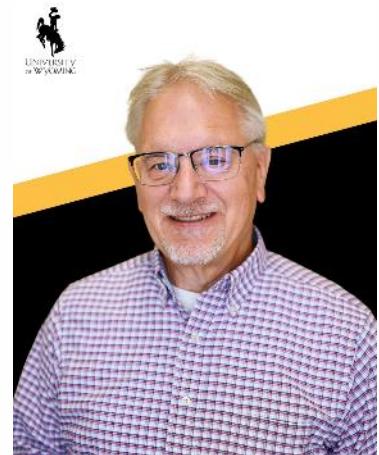




RESILIENT BRIDGE SOLUTIONS

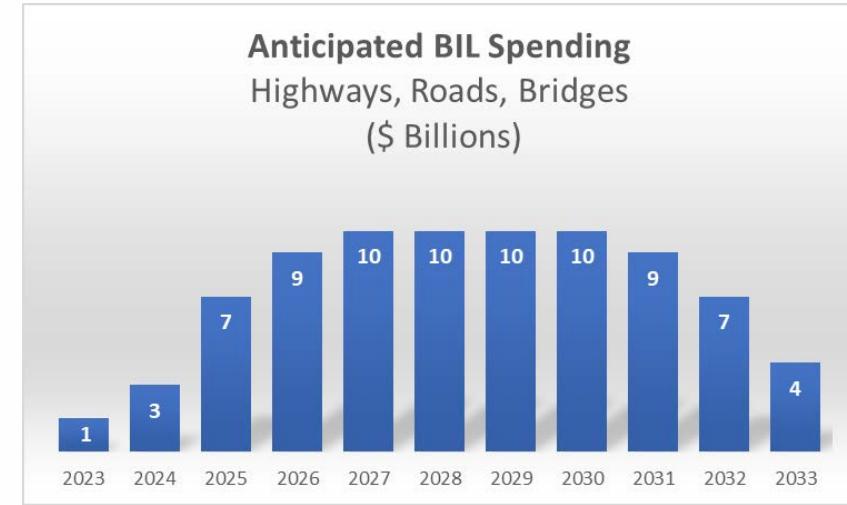
New Jersey Short Span Steel Bridge Workshop
February 12, 2026

Dr. Michael G. Barker, PE
University of Wyoming &
SSSBA, Director of Education



Resiliency – Infrastructure

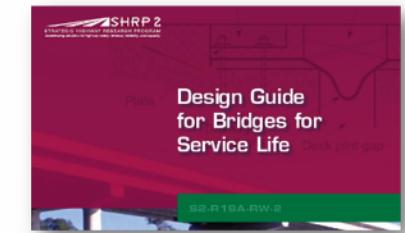
- **Bipartisan Infrastructure Law**
 - \$39.5 billion over 5 years to repair or replace as many as 15,000 bridges
 - Minimum 15% must be used to build off-system bridges



* Source: McKinsey Insights

- **PROTECT (\$7.2 billion)**
 - BIL establishes the **Promoting Resilient Operations** for Transformative, Efficient, and Cost-Saving Transportation (PROTECT) Formula Program
 - Make surface transportation **more resilient** to natural hazards (support of planning activities, resilience improvements, community resilience and evacuation routes, and at-risk coastal infrastructure).

Resiliency



What is a Resilient Bridge?

- Service Life & Life Cycle Performance – New Target is 100 Years Life
- Robustness for Unexpected Demands: Seismic, Natural, Man-Made
- Inspectable & Repairable
- Rehabilitation & Strengthening
- Sustainable

Challenge

Because of deterioration, individual bridge components and systems such as bearings, decks, joints, columns, and girders require frequent and costly inspections, maintenance, and repairs that are often difficult to conduct. These activities cause lane closures that create congestion and impact safety for road workers and motorists. Bridge engineers need improved design options so they can deliver bridges that are operational for 100 years or more.

Learn more - <https://www.shortspansteelbridges.org/steel-bridges-beyond-100-years>

Resilience - Service Life & Life Cycle Performance

1000's of Steel Bridges Over 100 Years Old



Steel Bridge Longevity

- Practical and Effective Design
- Durable Materials
- Inspection, Maintenance & Repair
- Corrosion Protective Systems – Steel Chemistry and Protective Coatings



Service Life & Life Cycle Performance

As an Example: 95 ft Simple Span, 5 Plate Girders

Weathering Steel with Painted Ends

Integral Abutments – No Joints

Bolted Diaphragms/Cross-Frames - Fatigue



How Long Will This
Bridge Last?

Steel Bridge Longevity

- Practical and Effective Design
- Durable Materials
- Inspection, Maintenance & Repair
- Corrosion Protective Systems – Steel Chemistry and Protective Coatings



Resilience - Robustness for Unexpected Demands

Steel bridge robustness is a bridge's ability to withstand damage and maintain its structural integrity, especially in the face of unexpected events or local failures: **Seismic, Natural, Man-Made**

- **Ductility**

Steel can deform significantly without breaking



- **Redundancy**

Alternate load paths and ability for load redistribution

- **Lightweight Yet Strong**

Steel structures are lighter, reducing seismic forces



- **Bolted and Welded Connections**

Steel bridges use high-strength bolted or welded joints

- **Ease of Retrofitting**

Steel bridges can be easily repaired, rehabilitated & retrofitted

Robustness for Unexpected Demands

Seismic: Survivability & Service

High Ductility

Energy Absorption & Dissipation

Prevents Brittle Fracture and Collapse

Lighter Self-Weight

Smaller Inertial Forces

Reduces Demand on Abutments, Piers & Foundations

Strong & Reliable Connections

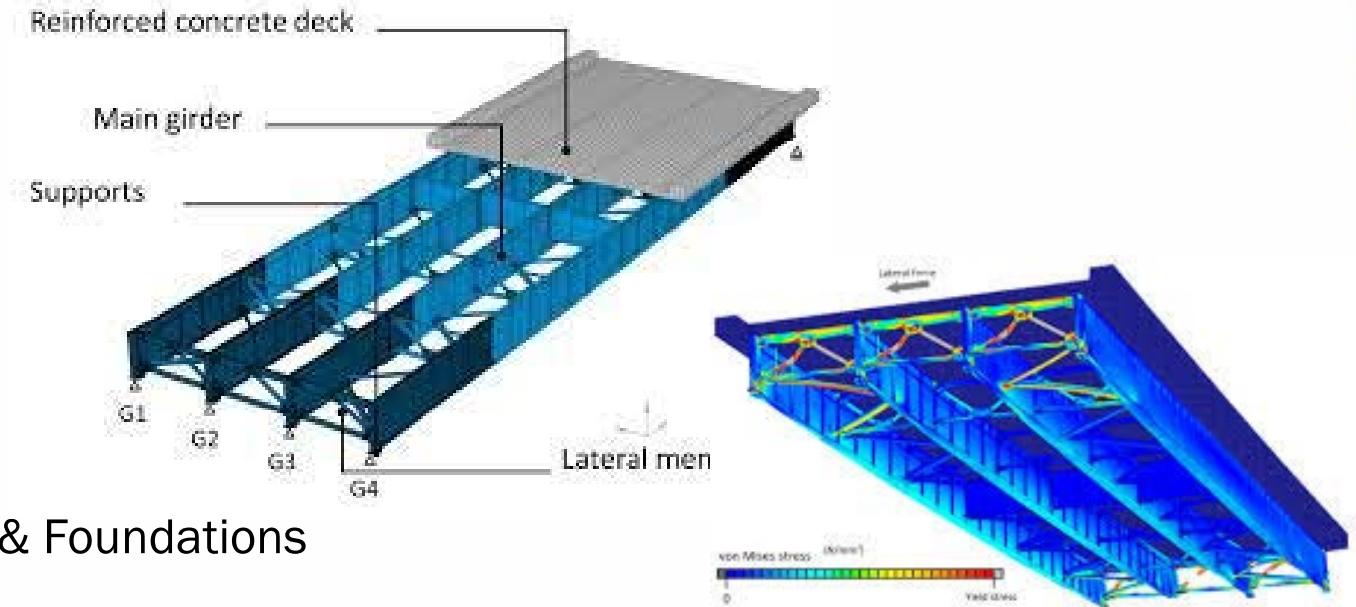
Bolted/Welded

Designed for Seismic Distortions

Redundancy

Alternate Load Paths

Redistribution of Force Effects



Kobe, Japan (1995): Many modern steel bridges survived with repairable damage.

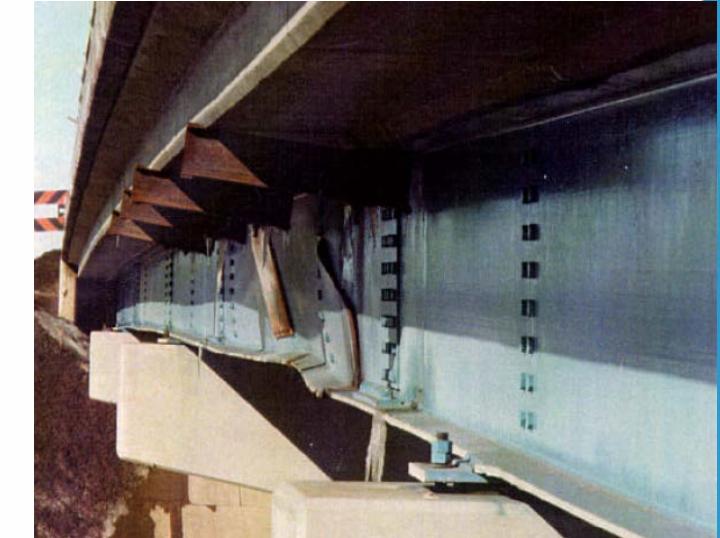
Northridge, USA (1994): Minor local damage, many bridges remained operational.

Chile (2010): Steel bridges demonstrated strong resilience and quick post-quake recovery.

Resilience - Inspectable & Repairable

Structural Steel Bridge Damage or Deterioration

- Overload
- High or wide vehicle collision
- Fire
- Structural vandalism
- Fatigue
- Corrosion



Accessibility - Exposed structural components

Ease of Nondestructive Testing (NDT)

Steel is compatible with NDT techniques

Repairable Characteristics of Steel Bridges

Modular Repairs of Damaged sections

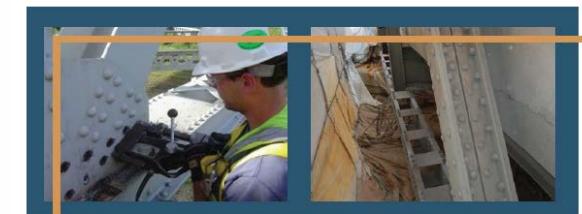
Fatigue Management Fatigue cracks can be fixed

Corrosion Repair repainted or metalized



Inspectable & Repairable

Inspectable



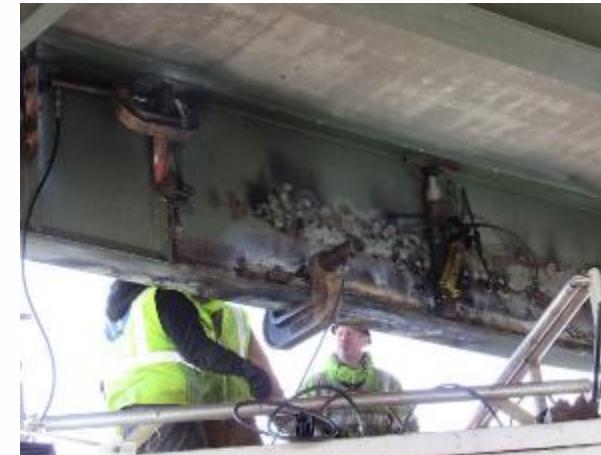
Guidelines for Field Repairs and
Retrofits of Steel Bridges
G14.2—2023



Inspectable & Repairable

Repairable - Heat Straightening, Kansas 2018

Damaged steel bridge girders can be repaired



Overheight Bridge Strikes:
The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration reports
an average of 15,000 such incidents a year

<https://kansastransportation.blogspot.com/2019/02/hot-news-damaged-steel-bridge-girders.html>

Distortions were deemed repairable
Heat straightening process to repair
Clamps and hydraulic jacks used to help influence the
return of the steel to its former shape
Seven days of the heat straightening

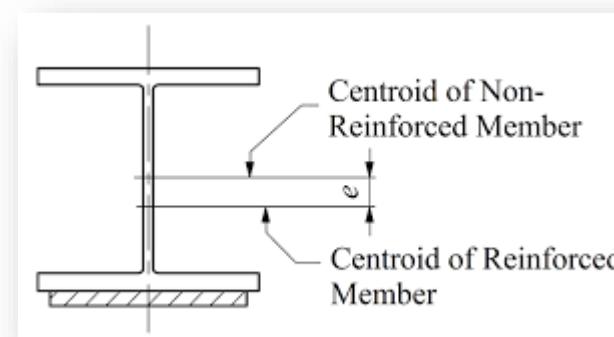


Cool Oklahoma State Video at <https://www.aisc.org/nsba/design-and-estimation-resources/preservation-and-repairability>

Resilience - Rehabilitation & Strengthening

Rehabilitation & Strengthening

- Extend service life
- Restore or increase load capacity
- Prevent or mitigate corrosion and fatigue
- Upgrade for seismic or traffic demands
- Improve safety and user experience



Rehabilitation & Strengthening

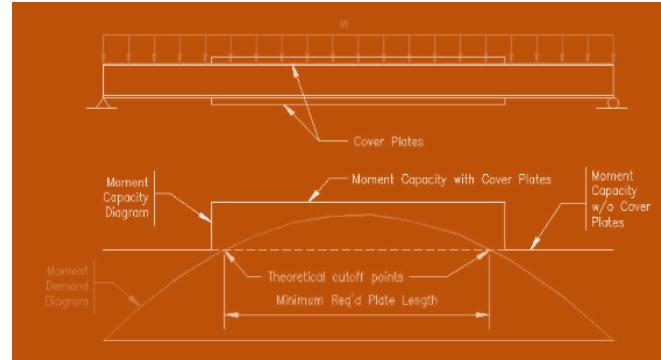
Strengthening

Why?

- Traffic Loads/Postings
- Corrosion Reduced Capacity

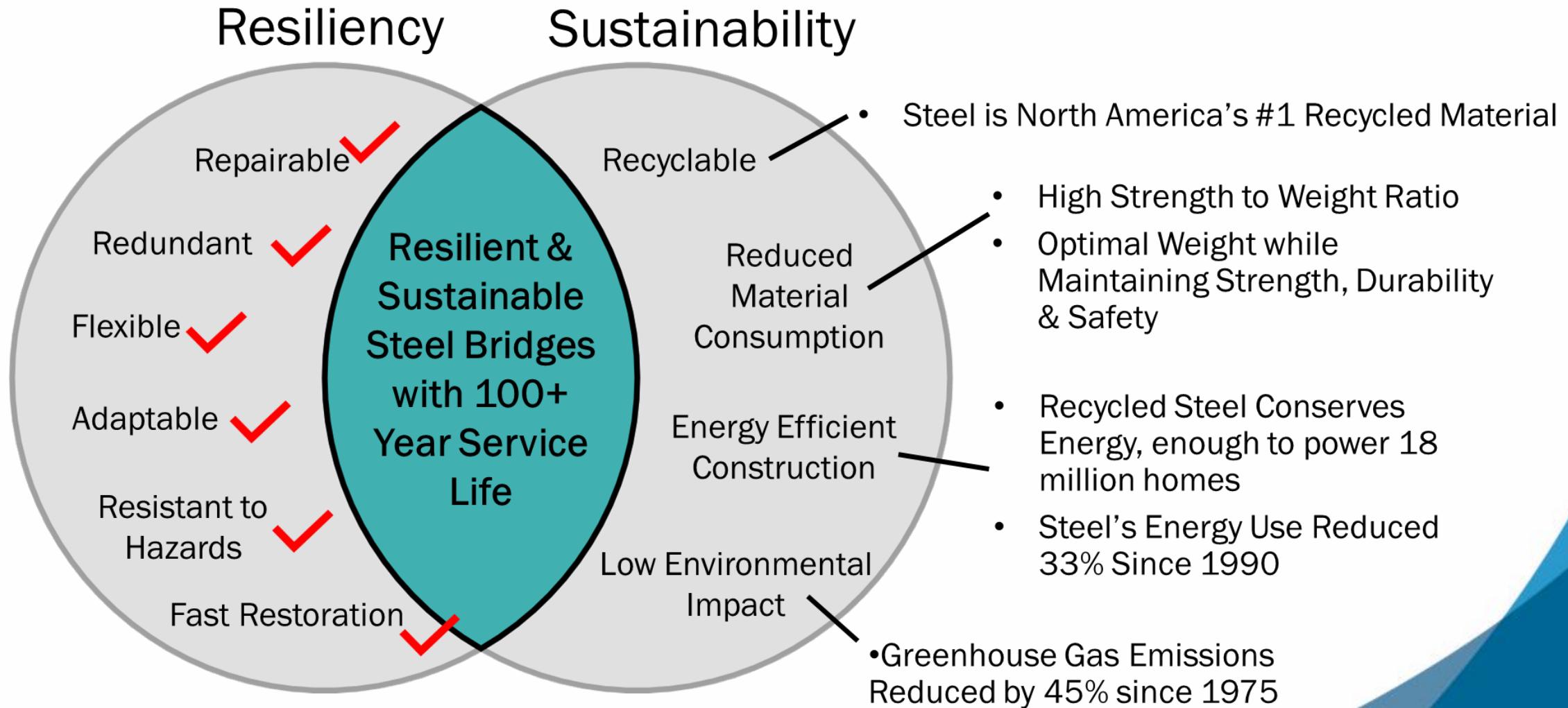
How?

- Adding Steel (Flanges/Webs)
- Replace Deteriorated Members
- Add Composite Action
- Reduce Dead Loads
- Post-Tensioning



Resilience - Sustainable

Crossover Between Resiliency & Sustainability



Steel Advantages for Resiliency

- **Long Service Life**
 - Thousands of 100-year-old steel bridges still in service.
 - Innovative new systems have life expectancy of 100+ years.
- **Robustness, Strength and Durability**
 - High strength-to-weight ratios, which allows steel bridges to resist structural damage.
 - Ductile, Redundant and Robust Structure
- **Ease of Inspection/Repair**
 - Signs of problems are clearly apparent at an early stage, making steel bridges easier to inspect and repair.
- **Rehabilitation & Strengthening for Increased Loads**
 - Quickly rehabilitate & strengthen a steel bridge, while keeping the bridge in service with minimal traffic disruption.
- **Sustainability: >90% Steel is from Recycled Material**

Quiz

An Owner Should Be able to Expect a 100 Year Life Span for a Typical Steel Girder Bridge

- a. True
- b. False

True -

Practical & Effective Design (Details and Joints)

Durable Materials (Chemistry) & Corrosion Protection Systems

Inspectability, Maintenance & Repair

Quiz

Approximately What percentage of Steel is Made From Recycled Products?

- a. 0% - it is Raw Iron Ore & Element Additives
- b. 70%
- c. 90% 
- d. 132%

Quiz

There was a Lot of Information Presented in Today's Workshop. For More Information on Any Steel Bridge Topic, a Person Could Contact (Select All That Apply):

- a. The Short Span Steel Bridge Alliance
(www.ShortSpanSteelBridges.org)
- b. The National Steel Bridge Alliance
(www.AISC.org/NSBA)

