

Historical Marker - L2124 - Taft Memorial Highway / Murray D. Van Wagoner Memorial Bridge (Marker ID#:L2124)



Front - Title/Description

Taft Memorial Highway

In 1930 organizers from Michigan, Ohio, Kentucky, Tennessee, Georgia, and Florida formed the Taft Memorial Highway Association to promote automobile tourism. Named after the nation's twenty-seventh president, William Howard Taft, the highway stretched from Sault Ste. Marie, Michigan, to Fort Myers Beach, Florida. Inspired by hundreds of similar associations across the country, founding members lobbied officials for modern roads and bridges along their selected route. Morenci organizers participated actively in the association. Although the association ceased operations during World War II, the state highway bridge over the Silver Creek remains as a legacy of local effort in a national movement.

Significant Date:

Two World Wars and the Depression (1915-1945)

Registry Year: 2003 ***Erected Date:*** 2004

Marker Location

Address: M-156 north of Skyline Industrial Dr.

City: Morenci

State: MI ***ZipCode:*** 49256

County: Lenawee

Township: Seneca

Lat: 41.71229200 / ***Long:*** -84.21135200

Web URL:

Back - Title/Description

Murray D. Van Wagoner Memorial Bridge

The Michigan State Highway Department built the steel-beamed Murray D. Van Wagoner Bridge over Silver Creek in 1935 at a cost of \$35,700. The federal relief project helped the community by providing work during the Great Depression. The Morenci community, and boosters from the Taft Memorial Highway Association, held a dedication ceremony attended by 5,000 people. Namesake Murray D. Van Wagoner, head of the State Highway Department and a future governor of Michigan, made the keynote speech. Adjacent is the 1893 Sterling Road truss bridge, relocated in 2004 from nearby Hillsdale County by the Michigan Department of Transportation for use as a crossing on the pedestrian trail.