In visiting the Village of Chesaning today, I was not expecting the additional damage I saw on the bridge, and it was very disappointing to see. I've spent a lot of time and effort over the years trying to save historic metal truss bridges and it was difficult to view this damaged historic bridge, a bridge that had been restored and had more than ninety percent of the original material still remaining.

At this time, I do not believe the bridge can be removed from the river with cranes and set up for restoration. Several sections of the top chord have separated at the splice joints and some splice plates appear to be broken. The west end inclined end post that is visible is severely twisted and the portal is bent and possibly separated from the inclined end posts. The verticals, diagonals, and bottom chord eyebars that are not visible may be bent and separated from the pin connections. Although the historic sections of the bridge have been seriously damaged, in my opinion the historic wrought iron members can be restored and the bridge eventually reassembled, but the time and cost will be difficult to determine and may not be within the time frame or cost acceptable to the Village of Chesaning.

The bridge is made up of historic wrought iron, modern steel, and wood. The steel and wood make up about a third of the bridge material and are not original. When the bridge is removed from the river I would recommend that the steel and wood be removed and scrapped. However, I recommend that the historic wrought iron members be removed and saved, stored in a secure location either in Chesaning or another location for future restoration. By preserving the historic material of the Parshallburg Bridge it would be noted that the Village of Chesaning has made a good faith effort to save this rare historic metal truss bridge and the monies invested in the original restoration of the bridge.

Vern Mesler