



WEST PENN TRAIL

at

HIGH LEVEL BRIDGE [1950]



Water impounded behind the Conemaugh Dam could rise as high as 55 feet above the level of the roadway on this 1907 railroad line. Therefore, construction of the dam required that this rail bed be abandoned and relocated onto a higher line, above maximum water level attainable in the reservoir behind the dam. The steel bridge, overhead here (and its elevated rail line along the rim of the lake-to-be) had to be built before the dam was closed and the 1907 railroad grade covered with water.

To minimize the steepness of the climb to the higher level of the new railroad grade, relocation of the tracks was begun 2.0 miles down the river valley, near Salina.

At the east end of this high-level bridge, the original plan was to dig yet another tunnel through Bow Ridge, but an open cut was found to be less expensive. The cost of relocating the railroad was 25.8 million dollars; the dam cost 13.9 million dollars; acquisition of land cost 6.6 million dollars.