

Economic Importance

Wadhams Road is a vital north-south, all-season route serving the eastern part of St. Clair County. Its crossing over the Black River is the only crossing in a 14-mile stretch west of I-94/69. Approximately one mile south of the bridge is an interchange with I-69. Approximately eight miles farther south is an interchange with I-94. North of the bridge, Wadhams Road connects with Vincent Road and Wildcat Road into Sanilac County as a parallel route to M-25. Especially in the summer months, the Wadhams/Vincent Wildcat route carries a high volume of traffic that avoids recreational traffic on M-25. It is a major route for gravel haulers from pits north of the bridge.

Wadhams Road is signed as an alternate route for M-25 as a bypass around the City of Port Huron.

If there is an incident that shuts down portions of I-94, Wadhams Road is used as an emergency alternate route. If the bridges on I-94 over the Black River are closed, traffic is routed out to the Wadhams Road crossing. The crossing also carries a high volume of commuter traffic.

The Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT) plans to start replacing the bridges on I-94/I-69 over the Black River in 2011 in advance of its work to expand or relocate the Blue Water Bridge Plaza and before work is done on the Ambassador Bridge in Detroit. Whether MDOT does the bridge work under traffic or if freeway traffic will be detoured, freeway traffic will avoid the construction zone and seek another route. The Wadhams Road bridge is the next crossing of the Black River to the west. It is imperative that the Wadhams Road structure be replaced to accommodate all-season traffic before work on the I-94/I-69 bridges start.