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FDOT's October 22 Updates on the Pensacola Bay Bridge Recovery Efforts

TALLAHASSEE, Fla. – Pursuant to Executive Order 20-224 and the extension in Executive Order 20-225, Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) Secretary Kevin J. Thibault has directed Florida's Turnpike Enterprise (FTE) to further extend the toll suspension for the Garcon Point Bridge. Tolls are now suspended on the Garcon Point Bridge until 6 a.m. Friday, November 13, 2020.

The extension allows the Garcon Point Bridge to continue serving as a temporary detour route while the Pensacola Bay Bridge is being repaired from damage sustained during Hurricane Sally.

As demolition efforts progress on the Pensacola Bay Bridge, FDOT is advancing material fabrication in preparation for reconstruction efforts to begin.

Multiple concrete piles, the vertical support structure that's used to hold up the bridge; piers, the raised structure that sits in a body of water to support the bridge; and beams, the linear structural member designed to span from one support to another will be required to repair the Pensacola Bay Bridge. To date:

- Fifty-one concrete piles are on-hand at the precast yard.
- Thirty-six prestressed beams have been cast.
- Thirty-three concrete piles have been ordered from another facility in Tampa to facilitate the expedited schedule.
- Additional beams will be cast based on the final analysis of some of the damaged areas.
- Replacement piers will begin casting by mid-November 2020.

FDOT has mobilized three bridge contractors on site to expedite demolition and design including:

- Debris from two spans has been cleared along with the complete removal of one damaged span of the bridge as crews continue to carefully remove damaged portions from additional spans to minimize impacts to the existing structure. One barge remains under the bridge. To date, 17 of the 27 barges have been removed from the area.
- Design is underway for the permanent repairs and reestablishment of four lanes of traffic on the bridge with a focus on substructure repairs which includes the piers. Modified pier design has been reviewed and approved by FDOT, which uses six new piles instead of four piles in the existing footing.

FDOT has been continuously working to improve the traffic flow along the Pensacola Bay Bridge detour routes. The following efforts have reduced the average commute time by 25 percent:

- Installed a new temporary traffic signal at the I-10 westbound ramps at State Road (S.R.) 281
- Delineators have been installed to provide a free flow southbound movement from the I-10 eastbound ramp onto southbound S.R. 281
- Additional temporary traffic cameras have been installed that have significantly improved travel time.
- The Road Ranger service that was previously on the Pensacola Bay Bridge has been relocated to the Garcon Point Bridge to help with minor incidents and to keep traffic flowing as much as possible.
- FDOT has received approval from the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) to temporarily widen 2,000 feet of northbound and southbound S.R. 281 south of the I-10 interchange and widen the eastbound I-10 off ramp at eastbound S.R. 281 off ramp to two lanes.

To reinforce FDOT Secretary Kevin J. Thibault's, P.E. expectation of complete transparency and community assistance, FDOT's outreach team has met with stakeholder groups, state and local officials, civic organizations and local business owners to discuss the bridge reconstruction as well as other actions that are being considered to efficiently restore regional connectivity. FDOT will continue to meet with multiple stakeholder groups throughout the course of the project.

FDOT continues to develop and improve alternative transportation solutions to move people and goods safely and efficiently through the region while the Pensacola Bay Bridge is being repaired. Examples include:

- Exploring all funding avenues available to implement a ferry service between Gulf Breeze and Pensacola.
- Funding Escambia County Area Transit's (ECAT) temporary bus route to help transport passengers between the Pensacola Bay Center Park in Escambia County and the Tiger Point Community Center City in Gulf Breeze.
- Working with ECAT to modify the original route to include stops at the ECAT Transfer Center in Pensacola, the Palm Beach Club and Pensacola Beach Boardwalk in Pensacola Beach, and Gulf Breeze Hospital.
- Gathering information such as potential ridership, times of operation, and duration of service as well as reviewing existing facilities that would be necessary for the safe operation of a ferry or additional bus routes.

The Pensacola Bay Bridge has a targeted re-opening date of early March 2021. Once repairs are complete, all four lanes will be open with no load restrictions and at the same condition as expected for new construction. As each repair method is developed, FDOT will be conducting reviews to ensure the contractor is hitting all milestones in the established schedule.

Details on the detour routes, including graphics, FAQs, and regular updates can be found online at fdot.gov/PensacolaBay. Members of the public wishing to receive these updates can choose to subscribe by providing their email address on this website as well.

For additional real-time updates on the Pensacola Bay Bridge, follow FDOT District Three on social media:

- Twitter: [@MyFDOT_NWFL](https://twitter.com/MyFDOT_NWFL)
- Facebook: [@MyFDOTNWFL](https://www.facebook.com/MyFDOTNWFL)

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