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**COMMISSION VOTES TO MOVE FORWARD WITH \$310 MILLION
I-95/SCUDDER FALLS REPLACEMENT BRIDGE**

*Facility to Be Tolled at Some Future Date Due to Lack of Available Federal, State Funds;
Action Avoids Placing New Funding Burden on Users of Route 1, I-78, I-80 Toll Bridges*

NEW HOPE, PA – The Delaware River Joint Toll Bridge Commission today approved a resolution to advance the planned replacement of the I-95/Scudder Falls Bridge, which currently has numerous safety and congestion issues.

The bridge replacement project would be the largest single capital undertaking in the Commission’s history -- \$310 million – providing new capacity and other upgrades to meet future traffic demands of the coming decades. The bridge is the most heavily used crossing among the 20 bridges in the Commission’s system.

To finance the multi-faceted project, the Commission has decided to toll the facility at some future date due to the absence of federal and state transportation funding. The Commission committed to tolling the bridge because it would have been unfair to apply the financial burden to motorists at its seven existing toll bridges, most notably the heavily used Trenton-Morrisville (Route 1), I-78, and Delaware Water Gap (I-80) Toll Bridges.

“The decision to authorize moving forward with the steps necessary to toll the new I-95/Scudder Falls Bridge was not made lightly,” said Frank G. McCartney, executive director of the Commission. “But in the absence of available federal and state funding for the project, the Commission believes a toll paid by users of the bridge is the most equitable solution. Commissioners did not feel it was reasonable or fair to expect users of our other river crossing to shoulder the financial burden of the capital improvements to the Scudder Falls Bridge.”

McCartney indicated that it is the Commission’s intention to put a cashless tolling system at the crossing. This will avoid the need for construction of a conventional toll plaza that could create congestion and delays for drivers. He said the Commission would explore an “all electronic system” consisting of E-ZPass transponder readers and high-resolution cameras to identify drivers without E-ZPass. The Commission would bill drivers who do not possess the electronic toll-collection transponders.

“The Commission has an established record of responsible use of toll revenues through the execution of our capital improvement program over the past nine years,” said McCartney. “Funded solely through toll revenues, the Commission’s capital program has completed

rehabilitations or improvements to half of our 20 bridges, improved communications and security on our crossings, and introduced an electronic toll-collection system. The Scudder Falls Improvement Project will build on this legacy by providing a new, improved facility that will meet the region's transportation needs for the foreseeable future."

The I-95/Scudder Falls Bridge operates at the worst level of service (a federal highway classification called LOS F) during peak travel periods. Traffic volumes are projected to rise an additional 35 percent -- from an average 58,400 vehicles per day in 2007 to 77,500 vehicles per day by the year 2030. The replacement project is necessary because the bridge's 1950s design does not meet today's standards and it does not have the structural capacity to accommodate future traffic conditions.

The congestion and safety problems on the bridge were first articulated in the 1990 *Traffic Study of Trenton-Morrisville Bridge Crossings over the Delaware River*. In 2000, the Commission retained a consultant to conduct the *Southerly Crossings Corridor Study*, which examined ways to meet the future traffic demands of the Scudder Falls Bridge and the three nearby vehicular bridge crossings between Trenton, N.J. and Morrisville, Pa. This study attributed the Scudder Falls Bridge's congestion and safety problems to its narrow configuration and the close proximity of adjoining interchanges with entrance ramps merging onto I-95.

The proposed project area would extend 4.4 miles along I-95 – from the Route 332 interchange in Bucks County, Pa. to the Bear Tavern Road interchange in Mercer County, N.J. It would be the largest single construction project in the Commission's nearly 75-year history. The work would include a complete replacement of the existing four-lane Scudder Falls Bridge over the Delaware River with six lanes of through traffic (three in each direction), two auxiliary northbound lanes for entry/exit travel, and one auxiliary southbound lane for entry/exit travel.

Other major components of the project include:

- Widening of I-95 from the Route 332 exit in Pennsylvania to the bridge by adding an additional lane in each direction (widening to the inside of the highway).
- Reconfiguration of the I-95/Taylorville Road Interchange in Lower Makefield Twp., Pa. by eliminating the existing eastern southbound off-ramp from I-95 and combining it with the existing western southbound off-ramp.
- Reconstruct and reconfigure the Route 29 interchange through the use of roundabouts. This option would avoid traffic signals, resulting in a folded diamond interchange with two roundabout intersections at the ramps with I-95.
- Potential addition of a bicycle and pedestrian facility on the southbound side of the bridge is being considered; a decision will be made during final design, when costs are refined and cost reasonableness can be determined.

- \$7.5 million of noise-abatement walls along the approach roadways leading to and from the bridge.

On December 9, the Commission released the 561-page draft Environmental Assessment for the I-95/Scudder Falls Improvement Project for public review and comment. The public review and comment period is open until February 4, 2010. The document is a detailed study of the project's Preferred Alternative, other design alternatives, and their potential impacts on the environment and local communities, as well as the Commission's mitigation efforts. Residents, motorists or other interested parties can review the document on the project Web site at www.scudderfallsbridge.com.

The bridge replacement project is part of a comprehensive capital improvement program launched by the Commission in 2001 focused on system preservation, system protection, system management, and system enhancement. The Commission has completed the rehabilitation of 10 of its 20 bridges, expending \$365 million from 2001 to 2009. The Commission anticipates additional expenditures of \$765 million through 2019 for capital improvements for a total expenditure of \$1.13 billion for the period 2001-2019.

About the Commission

The Delaware River Joint Toll Bridge Commission was formed by the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania and the State of New Jersey in 1934. It operates seven toll bridges and 13 toll-supported bridges, two of which are pedestrian-only spans. The Commission's jurisdiction extends along the Delaware River from the Philadelphia-Bucks County line north to the New Jersey/New York border. The bridges carried more than 140 million cars and trucks in 2008. For more information about the Commission and its various initiatives to deliver safer and more convenient bridge travel for its customers, please see: www.drjtbc.org.