

For Immediate Release  
June 5, 2006

Contacts: **John Undeland, WWB Project**  
703/329-0300 or 571-237-2690 (cell)  
**Michelle Holland, WWB Project**  
703/329-0300 or 703/930-7286 (cell)

**Media Access/Availability Friday-Saturday-Sunday  
Call in Advance to Schedule Interviews**

## **NEW WILSON BRIDGE OPENS TO FIRST TRAFFIC THIS WEEKEND**

### **Major Traffic Delays Anticipated Over Weekend (June 9-12) as I-95 North Traffic is Switched onto New Bridge I-95 North (Beltway Outer Loop) Reduced to Single Lane for Up To Four Miles; Continued Night-time Closures On Weekend of I-95 North and South at MD 210**

Oxon Hill, Md./Alexandria, Va. – This weekend, I-95/I-495 North (Outer Loop of the Capital Beltway) traffic is scheduled to be transferred onto the new Woodrow Wilson Bridge, completing the first of two traffic switches onto the new bridge. I-95 North/Outer Loop travelers should plan for major delays over the weekend, as very significant traffic impacts will occur. Specifically, from Friday, June 9 at 8:00 p.m. until as late as Monday, June 12 at 5:00 a.m., I-95 North/Outer Loop will be reduced to a single lane for up to four miles and several surrounding ramps will be closed and detoured. Motorists and truckers are cautioned to steer clear of the Wilson Bridge Project area, which extends 7.5-miles from Telegraph Road in Virginia to Maryland Route 210. Traffic analyses indicate that if 60 percent of travelers stay away, delays will peak at about one hour, with backups extending as far as four miles. However, delays and backups grow exponentially if diversion falls short: If 50 percent of travelers divert, projected delays grow to as long as four hours with backups as long as 14 miles.

#### **Details are as follows:**

- I-95/I-495 North (Outer Loop of the Capital Beltway) will be reduced to a single lane for up to four miles near the Wilson Bridge (between the MD 210 interchange in Maryland and Route 1 interchange in Virginia).
- Several ramps will be closed and detoured on both sides of the Potomac River.
  - In Virginia, ramps from Route 1 to I-95/I-495 North will be closed. Motorists will be detoured to the Telegraph Road interchange, where they will be able to loop back to I-95 North.
  - In Maryland, ramps from I-95/I-495 North to I-295 North and MD 210 South will be closed, as well as the ramp from I-295 South to I-95/I-495 North. Motorists will be detoured to the MD 210 and MD 414 interchanges.
- Mid-way through the weekend, a single I-95 North lane will be shifted onto the new Wilson Bridge as work to connect the new bridge alignment to the existing roadway shifts from the south to north side.
- By 5:00 a.m. on Monday, June 12, all ramps will reopen and all three lanes of I-95/I-495 North will be traveling on the new bridge.

- more -

For a detailed look at the specific changes, closures and detours, a narrated, computer-animated presentation of the new bridge traffic switches is available at [www.wilsonbridge.com](http://www.wilsonbridge.com).

Separately, motorists also are advised that further night-time traffic impacts will occur on Saturday, June 10 as the raising of 425-foot long steel beams for the new Maryland 210 interchange continues. The safety of motorists requires completely closing all lanes on north- and southbound I-95/I-495 (Outer and Inner Loops of the Capital Beltway), at the Maryland 210 interchange, for this operation. Closures are scheduled to be in effect on Saturday night (10:00 p.m. until as late as 8:00 a.m.), but will be modified if any conflict arises with the new bridge traffic switch. Traffic will be rerouted to nearby ramps with clearly marked and direct detours.

While both of these major work efforts are being done over the weekend because of substantially lighter traffic (weekend project corridor traffic volumes are 20-25 percent lower than weekday volumes during peak travel hours and summer weekend night-time traffic volumes at the Wilson Bridge Project are approximately one-third as heavy as day-time volumes), long backups and delays will occur if motorists don't stay away from the area. To help divert northbound I-95 traffic that is passing through the Washington area, the Springfield interchange ramp from northbound I-95 toward the Wilson Bridge (I-495 East) will be closed. Local traffic will be directed to I-395 and the 14<sup>th</sup> Street Bridge, while long distance travelers will be routed to I-495 North (Inner Loop of the Capital Beltway) across the American Legion Bridge.

Long distance travelers who wish to completely bypass the Washington, DC area should consider taking US Route 301, which is nearly equal in mileage as taking I-95 across the Wilson Bridge.

Signs will be posted on I-95 well before reaching the Capital Beltway, thereby enabling long distance drivers to choose alternative routes to avoid delays. **Motorists may call 1-877-INFO WWB (463-6992) for more information. Staff will be on duty to provide real-time traffic details and other information on Friday from 8 p.m. to 10 p.m. as well as Saturday and Sunday from 8 a.m. to 10 p.m.** Recorded information will be provided overnight.

Substantial additional law enforcement and safety service patrol resources are being deployed to keep traffic moving as safely and efficiently as possible. Extensive coordination with state and local emergency response agencies will help ensure that incidents are rapidly cleared and that distressed motorists are quickly assisted.

The maximum 57-hour closure for the new bridge traffic switch is necessary to mill and pave connections to and from the existing Beltway alignment to the new bridge alignment, which is approximately 30 feet to the south. These connections are on banked curves to enable safe travel. The connection to the new bridge from Virginia requires the contractor to mill a 30-inch thickness of the banked pavement to provide a smooth connection to the new bridge. Conversely, the connection in Maryland requires building a slightly banked curve by paving an approximately 15-inch thickness of asphalt. The asphalt must be placed in individual layers of five to six inches, rather than the full thickness at once. Once started, the job of adding layers of asphalt must be carried through to completion. Existing lanes cannot readily be reopened in the middle of the job because the newly laid asphalt would create an uneven and therefore unsafe driving surface. For the protection of workers and motorists alike, two lanes must remain closed to provide safe separation between the travel lane and the asphalt trucks and pavers.

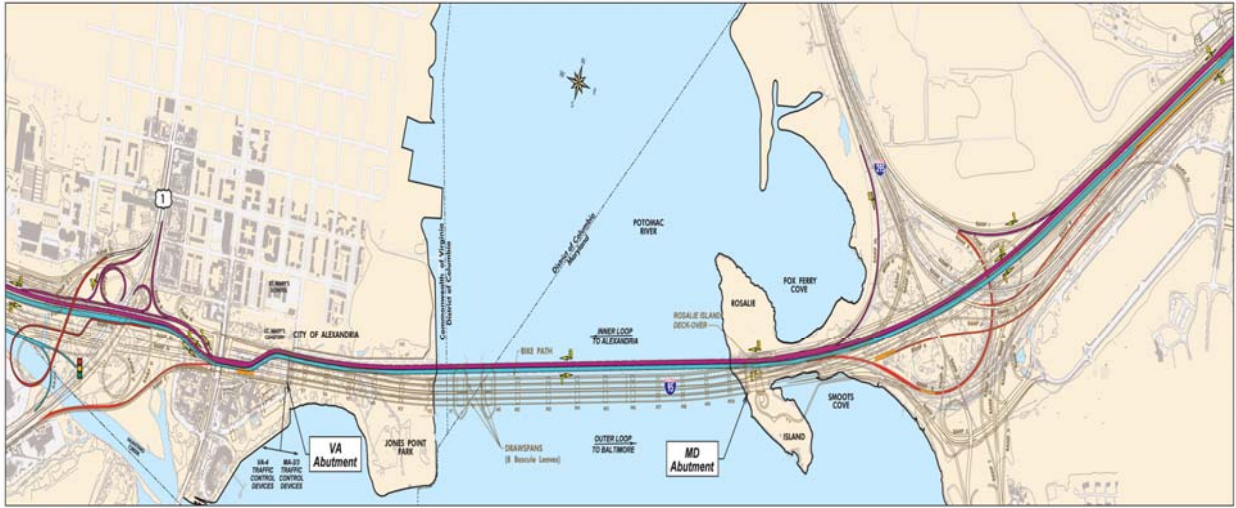
Southbound I-95/I-495 (Inner Loop of the Capital Beltway) traffic is scheduled to be transferred to the new bridge on the weekend of July 14-17. The first new Wilson Bridge will carry both north- and southbound traffic for two years until the second new bridge is scheduled to open. The opening of the first new bridge is the beginning of the end of the Woodrow Wilson Bridge corridor's notorious traffic congestion. By providing full shoulders that will enable quicker removal of disabled vehicles from travel lanes, the new bridge is expected to improve safety and result in more reliable and efficient travel. Additionally, with 28 feet more clearance over the river, the number of bridge openings will significantly decrease, thus reducing the number of traffic disruptions.

All construction and related lane and ramp closures are subject to change in the event of severe weather. Travelers are advised to get the latest details at:

- [www.wilsonbridge.com](http://www.wilsonbridge.com)
- 1-877-INFO WWB (463-6992)
- 1620 AM radio near the Wilson Bridge
- Highway signs

**See page below for detailed maps.**

**Woodrow Wilson Bridge Project Area: Closures for I-95 North/Outer Loop Switch to New Bridge.**



**Color Key:**  
 NB/EB I-95 ■  
 SB/WB I-95 ■  
 ACTIVE WORK AREA ■  
 CLOSED RAMPS ■

