Oceanic Bridge FAQ

On October 17, Monmouth County closed the Oceanic Bridge (S-31) over the Navesink River to motor vehicle, bicycle and pedestrian traffic for repair work to rehabilitate the bridge's 100-foot, center bascule span.

What type of work is being done?
The rehabilitation work on the double-leaf bascule span includes the removal of the existing grid deck and construction of a new grid deck. The work also will include the rehabilitation or removal and replacement of stringers, floor beams, supporting steelwork and a catwalk. Also, work to strengthen structural steel and to repair mechanical and electrical systems will be done along with the cleaning and painting of the existing bascule span steel.

Why does the bridge have to be closed for such a long period of time?
The nature of the work requires that the center, movable sections of the bridge be removed and resurfaced and that work to the machinery, motor brakes and bascule span lock mechanism be done. As parts are taken out of service, they are repaired, reinstalled and tested in phases. Work on different elements and sections are being done simultaneously to limit the length of time the bridge is closed to the traveling public.

What is the status of the work?
During the first month, the detour was put in place and the contractor mobilized operations to the bridge. On-site work included the installation of a temporary platform and swing staging to facilitate work on the bascule span's north and south leaves. Painting and repair to steel components of the bascule span girders, flanges and floor beams are in progress. Cleaning and priming of existing components on the north leaf were 90% complete. More than 7,500 pounds of rust, the weight of a large sport utility vehicle, was removed by Nov. 23. Mechanical work included de-energizing the north side machinery, dismantling and removing motor brakes, couplings, and an auxiliary reducer. These parts are being repaired off-site. All work is proceeding on schedule.

How did the bridge get to be in this condition?
The 72-year old Oceanic Bridge is a heavily used bridge in a salt water environment. Cars and are vehicles are much heavier now than when the bridge was built. For that reason there was a 3-ton weight restriction on the bridge prior to the start of this repair work. The proximity of the bridge to the ocean air and the salt water has contributed to the oxidation and subsequent deterioration of the metal and cement bridge.

When will the bridge reopen to traffic?
Weather permitting, the work is to be completed in time for Memorial Day weekend 2012.

Why is the bridge's center section left open?
There two reasons. First, to accommodate marine traffic, one section of the bridge's double-leaf bascule span will be kept in the upright position. Also, the north leaf of the bascule has had its power source deactivated for repair work.

Why is this a Monmouth County project?
The county-owned Oceanic Bridge connects Bingham Avenue in Rumson to Locust Point Road in Middletown; both are county roads. Monmouth County owns, operates and maintains the Oceanic Bridge and three other movable, draw bridges as well as 976 other bridges and culverts throughout the 427-square mile county. All of these structures are monitored and maintained by the county's Department of Public Works and Engineering. The Monmouth County Board of Chosen Freeholders oversees the operation of county government infrastructure, activities and programs.

Who is doing the work to rehabilitate the bridge?
The work is being done by the Iron Bridge Group, Inc. of North Brunswick with oversight by county's Department of Public Works and Engineering. The contract amount of the rehabilitation project is $3,554,380.

Where may I get more information about this project?
Information about the Oceanic Bridge and other county road and bridge projects is available on the Roads and Bridges section of the county Web site at www.visitmonmouth.com. There is also an interview with Freeholder Deputy Director John P. Curley and County Engineer Joseph Ettore available on YouTube that explains the project; there is a link to the interview from the county Web site.

What is the detour route?
From Rumson, traffic can either travel west through Fair Haven and Red Bank to Middletown or travel east through Sea Bright and Highlands to Middletown.

Northbound traffic from Rumson on Bingham Avenue (CR-8) is detoured east through Fair Haven and Red Bank on East River Road (CR-10) to East Front Street to Route 35 North to Navesink River Road (CR-12A) in Middletown. Or, northbound traffic can detour from Bingham Avenue south, turn left onto Rumson Road (CR-520) to Sea Bright and turn left onto Ocean Avenue (Route 36 North) to Highlands and take the jug handle for Navesink Avenue in Middletown. Follow Navesink Avenue and turn left onto Locust Avenue and left again onto Locust Point Road (CR-8B).

Southbound traffic from Middletown is detoured west on Navesink River Road (CR-12A) to Route 35 South in Red Bank and follow detours signs to travel west on East Front Street (CR10)/ East River Road through Fair Haven and into Rumson. Or, southbound traffic can detour from Navesink River Road (CR-12A)/ Locust Point Road (CR-8B) and turn right onto Locust Avenue, turning right onto Navesink Avenue and then bear right onto Route 36 South through Highlands and into Sea Bright. Turn right onto the Rumson-Sea Bright Bridge and follow Rumson Road (CR-520) west to Bingham Avenue. Turn right onto Bingham Avenue (CR-8).