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COMMISSION AWARDS TREE-CLEARING CONTRACT FOR SCUDDER FALLS BRIDGE REPLACEMENT PROJECT

NEW HOPE, PA – The Delaware River Joint Toll Bridge Commission today announced the award of a contract to clear trees and other vegetation necessary for the upcoming Scudder Falls Bridge Replacement Project.

The first phase of tree and brush clearing work is scheduled to take place along Pennsylvania's I-95 segment between the Route 332/Newtown interchange and the Taylorsville Road interchange, beginning in January and continuing into late March. This work will allow for the subsequent installation of noise-abatement walls along the highway corridor in Lower Makefield, Pa. beginning in the spring of 2016.

The tree clearing contract was awarded to A.P. Construction, Inc. of Blackwood, N.J. for a not-to-exceed amount of \$1,814,999.39, culminating a competitive bidding process initiated in late September. Commissioners approved the contract at their monthly meeting on Monday, November 23.

The contract consists of the clearing, removing and disposal of trees, logs, dead trees and other vegetation and debris within the designated noise-abatement wall corridors for the Scudder Falls Bridge Replacement Project. The largest segment of noise walls will be constructed along I-95 in Lower Makefield. A smaller length of noise walls is slated to be built on the bridge's I-95 approach in New Jersey, but that work is not expected to begin until late 2016.

Under the contract, additional tree cutting is to be performed during late 2016 and early 2017 in the area where the Scudder Falls Replacement Bridge will be constructed and in the areas of the bridge's two flanking interchanges, both of which will undergo reconfiguration as part of the project. Additional tree-cutting contract tasks include implementation of soil-erosion and sediment-control measures, storm-water inlet protection, and silt mitigation within the cleared areas.

As a precursor to the phase-one tree cutting work and subsequent Pennsylvania noise wall construction activities in early 2016, an open house/public information presentation is being organized. The session is scheduled to take place between 4:30 p.m. and 7:30 p.m. Thursday, December 3, at the William Penn Middle School, 1524 Derbyshire Road, Yardley, Pa.

Among other things, residents who attend the open house will be asked to choose from three options for what the residential side of all of the noise walls should look like. (Noise-attenuation measures had been sought by Lower Makefield Township officials and residents during the early stages of project planning.)

The session will consist of a variety of viewing stations where the public may examine project concepts, renderings and information boards. A member of the project design/engineering team will be stationed at each set of display boards to provide explanations and answer questions.

A video about the project also will be available for continuous viewing. The video will consist of an introduction about why the current bridge needs to be replaced, a general outline of the bridge replacement project's major construction elements, and an explanation of how the work will be staged to mitigate commuter travel impacts.

The Pennsylvania-focused open house is expected to include the following displays:

- Timeline for design and construction
- Status of advance contracts for Pennsylvania noise-abatement wall corridor clearing and Pennsylvania noise wall construction
- Design and construction sequencing of the Scudder Falls Replacement Bridge
- The broad plan of changes for the Taylorsville Road/I-95 interchange in Pennsylvania
- The proposed layout of a redesigned Route 29/I-95 interchange in New Jersey
- A status update on the project's planned environmental-mitigation measures
- Examples of selected treatment options for the residential-facing sides of the project's noise-abatement wall installations; attendees can then fill out a short survey to identify what treatment option they prefer for the side of the walls that will face residential properties

The event will be the first in a series of outreach activities the Commission plans to conduct in coming months to reacquaint the public with this important regional transportation project. Future outreach sessions also will enable the Commission to gather public comments on various project issues.

The Scudder Falls Bridge Replacement Project involves a heavily commuted 4.4-mile portion of the I-95 corridor extending from the Route 332/Yardley-Newtown Road exit in Bucks County, Pa. and the Bear Tavern Road/Route 579 exit in Mercer County, N.J. The congestion-prone highway segment is a choke point for job-commuter traffic between Bucks County, Pa. and Central Jersey.

The nearly 55-year-old bridge and nearby interchanges are classified as functionally obsolete. To address recurring traffic safety and capacity problems at the bridge, its adjoining interchanges and I-95 approaches, the Commission is pursuing a comprehensive project for the highway segment.

Construction activities for the replacement bridge are expected to get underway in early 2017. The project is expected to take up to four years to complete. More precise construction start and end dates will be established as final design progresses toward completion next year.

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 is a self-supporting public-service agency that receives neither federal nor state tax dollars to finance its projects or operations. Funding for the operations, maintenance and upkeep of its bridges and related transportation facilities is solely derived from revenues collected at its toll bridges. 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 about 138.2 million cars and trucks in 2014. For more information about the Commission and its various initiatives to deliver safer and more convenient travel for its customers, please see: www.drjtbc.org.