

Date: 10/16/09

## **MEMORIAL BRIDGE BEING CLOSED FOR NECESSARY REPAIRS**

### **PORTSMOUTH, NH – KITTERY, ME BRIDGE CARRYING US ROUTE 1 EXPECTED TO BE CLOSED TO VEHICLE TRAFFIC FOR 4-6 WEEKS**

The New Hampshire Department of Transportation (NHDOT) and the Maine Department of Transportation (MaineDOT) announce the closure to motor vehicle traffic of the Memorial Bridge carrying US Route 1 over the Piscataqua River between Portsmouth, New Hampshire and Kittery, Maine. The closure will take place at 2:00 PM today (10/16/09).

Engineers at the NHDOT, the lead agency on this bridge, have determined that the closure is necessary due to the deterioration of a portion of the truss on the northern end of the bridge identified in the most recent detailed inspection of the bridge. Repairs will be undertaken and are expected to take four to six weeks to complete.

Upon its reopening to motor vehicle traffic, the Memorial Bridge will be posted at a three-ton weight limit, effectively banning all vehicles except automobiles and pickup trucks. The bridge has been posted with a ten-ton weight limit since July 10, 2009.

The Memorial Bridge will remain open to bicycle and pedestrian traffic, and will continue lift operations for marine traffic, unless the repair operations require a complete closure to all bridge traffic.

Signed detours will be in place on both sides of the Piscataqua River during the bridge closure directing motorists to either the Sarah Long Bridge (US 1 Bypass) or the Interstate 95 high level bridge.

The repair costs will be shared equally by New Hampshire and Maine. Private contractors are being contacted to submit proposals for the repair work that will get under way as soon as possible.