

Thank you for attending tonight's public information meeting to share details of an upcoming maintenance project to improve the condition of the Route 223 (Old Ferry Road) bridge over Milford Haven in Mathews County. When the project is finished, in April 2023, the condition of the bridge will be restored to allow the movable spring span to open on demand for marine traffic.

## Fast facts

**Project mobilization:** May 2022

**Project complete:** April 2023

**Project contractor:** Archer Western Construction, LLC

**Project contract award:** \$8.3 million

**Project total cost:** \$10.7 million



*Prior to 2021, the bridge connecting Gwynn's Island and mainland Mathews County opened more than 3,000 times a year, which was more than any other movable bridge in Virginia*

## Why is this project needed?

The project mobilizing at the bridge in May will replace many mechanical and electrical elements that operate the bridge's movable swing span, allowing boats in Milford Haven to pass underneath. The project will also make spot structural steel repairs throughout the bridge, and will renovate the bridge tender house.

Built in 1938, the Route 223 bridge over Milford Haven is listed in "Fair" condition, which is a classification indicating that a bridge's service life will be increased by performing maintenance or specific element replacement. This project seeks to improve the overall bridge condition and restore the ability of marine traffic to request a bridge opening on demand. Due to the condition of the center bearing, which allows the bridge to rotate to navigation open position, openings for marine traffic are currently limited to six scheduled openings a day: 2 a.m., 5 a.m., 8 a.m., 11 a.m., 7 p.m. and 10 p.m. Limiting the number of openings reduces the risk that the bridge may become lodged in the open position and prevent vehicle traffic from traveling on and off Gwynn's Island.

## What residents can expect

Vehicle traffic can cross the bridge at nearly all times during this maintenance project. Between May and August 2022, periodic single lane closures may be needed, with one-way, alternating traffic directed by a flagging crew.

In August, a temporary traffic signal may be installed at each bridge approach. If the contractor chooses to install a signal, it would control one-way, alternating traffic crossing the bridge 24 hours a day for the remainder of the project. If installed, the signal would be removed by early April 2023.

***The bridge will be closed to traffic for two overnight work shifts***, between 10 p.m. and 6 a.m. These hours were chosen specifically for times when traffic volumes are lightest, and to avoid any conflict with school traffic. Based on the contractor's expected progress, we expect there will be one evening closure in September, and a second evening closure in October. Emergency response vehicles will be staged overnight on Gwynn's Island during these two evening closures. In the event of an emergency, first responders will have an area where an individual can be transported through the work zone to an emergency vehicle staged on the other side of the bridge.

Specific dates for the closure will be announced in advance this fall, once work is underway and a detailed project schedule is available. The overnight closure dates will be communicated through message boards placed near the bridge approaches, as well as through news releases, the project page on [www.VirginiaDOT.org](http://www.VirginiaDOT.org), and through social media channels.

## What mariners can expect

Repairs will require the bridge to be closed to navigation position for approximately seven months, which is estimated to occur from mid-August 2022 to mid-March 2023. Watercraft that do not require a bridge opening will be able to continue traveling under the bridge during the project.

Until the bridge is placed in the closed navigation position in mid-August, it will continue to open on its current schedule for six daily openings.

The bridge's navigational clearance is approximately 11 feet vertically and 80 feet horizontally when closed. Watercraft that cannot navigate underneath the bridge within the vertical clearance will be redirected when it closes in mid-August since the swing span will not be able to open until repairs are complete.

## Project contacts

Thank you for your patience and understand as we seek to improve this bridge for residents and visitors to Gwynn's Island. Please call or write if we can answer questions or provide assistance throughout this project.

### **VDOT Construction Project Manager**

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### **VDOT Project Website**

Visit [www.virginiadot.org/Route223bridge](http://www.virginiadot.org/Route223bridge)  
for updated information on this project

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### **VDOT Customer Service Center (open 24 hours a day)**

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