OFFICIAL PUBLIC HEARING TRANSCRIPT
Formal Public Hearing for the Replacement of
The Herbert C. Bonner Bridge (Bridge No. 11)
On NC 12 over Oregon Inlet
Dare County Administration Building, Manteo, NC
July 6, 2010
B-2500

Let's go ahead and get started. I would like to welcome you to the hearing, the public hearing for the Bonner Bridge Replacement Project. My name is Drew Joyner and I'm a Public Hearing Officer for the Department of Transportation.

Before we get started, a couple of housekeeping things. For those of you who are familiar with the building, the restroom is right outside this door and there's additional ones down this hall to the right. If you would please, as a courtesy for everyone, put your phones on mute or cut them off at this point. There's nothing more embarrassing than in the middle of the hearing and everybody's looking at you. You don't want to do that. I've been up here before and have these things go off. Let's not do that as a courtesy to your neighbors.

Does everyone have a handout? If you did not get a handout, raise your hands and we'll bring you one. We thought we made sure everyone got one on the way in. Also, if you did not sign in on your way in, please sign in on your way out. We do want to make sure that we know you're here. We appreciate that. Then, we'll put you on a mailing list for any additional newsletters and information on the project.

I'm going to start off real quickly with the introduction of some of your local elected officials that are here tonight. We've got a lot of folks representing the area and I just want to cover those really quickly. We got a representative from Representative Walter Jones' office that is here tonight, Millie Lilley. We have a representative from Senator Richard Burr's office here tonight, Betty Jo Shepherd. We have the Chair of the Dare County Commissioners, Warren Judge. The Vice Chair of Dare County Commissioners, Allen Burris and several commissioners, Max Dutton, Jack Shea, and Virginia Tillett. We also have Dare County Sherriff, Rodney Midgett, is here as well. As far as our local elected officials, I think I've gotten everybody. Have I missed anyone? I certainly don't want to leave anybody out.

We'll do some quick introductions of NCDOT staff that is here. I'll go through that very quickly. But I did want to mention, Stan White, your representative on the North Carolina Board of Transportation, is here tonight there in the back. He's here representing your area. From NCDOT staff, from Division 1, we have Jerry Jennings, Bob Capehart, and Pablo Hernandez. From Project Development, this is the DOT staff that has actually been doing the project development study, we have Rob Hanson, Brian Yamamoto, Beth Smyre, and Kristine O'Connor. From the Roadway Design staff, that

does the actual design or managing the contract for the design is Doug Taylor and Zak Hamidi. From our Design Build Group is Nelish Surti. From Right-of-Way, our Right-of-Way Agent, is Mike Kinlaw. I don't want to fail to mention my staff, the Public Involvement Staff, these guys are really the backbone, I'm sort of a figure head up here, I don't really do a whole lot of work. These guys actually do all the work for me. But Ed Lewis, Jamille Robbins, and Paul Cameron are here today helping me out. There's several back at the office that made this possible as well. From Parsons Brinkerhoff, it's a private consulting firm that is helping us out on the project is John Page, Roland Robinson, and Bobby Norburn. We also have some folks from our Federal Highway Administration partners, Ron Lucas and Clarence Coleman here as well.

So now that we know who all is here, let's talk about what's going to happen tonight. Just a quick agenda of how this is going to work tonight for the formal presentation. I hope you've had an opportunity to go to our open house and talk one on one to some folks and get the project information from everybody. What we're going to do is during the formal part of our presentation; I'm going to do a little bit of an overview and kind of run through the handout and getting the highlights. Then I'm going to review the maps that have changed since the final EIS which I'll go into in a few minutes. Then there's the most important part of tonight's hearing which is the citizens' comments. We want to hear from you and a lot of folks have signed up to speak. What I'll do is once I've finished my presentation, I will call on folks that have signed up to speak in the order that they have signed up and come up to the microphone. Again, as a courtesy to everyone we're going to ask everyone to limit their comments to about 3 minutes. That gives everybody an opportunity to be heard tonight without us being here until 3:00 in the morning. And, if you didn't have an opportunity to sign up and a mood hits you and you really want to speak, once I've gone through the sign-in sheet, I will open it up to the floor and anyone else who would like to speak as well, you can come up as well. At that point, if you have more than 3 minutes of things to say, you can come up again, after everyone has had an opportunity to speak; so we certainly want to give you that opportunity. I'll go into other ways that you can comment in a couple of minutes. That's basically how tonight is going to run.

So, again, this is the public hearing for the Bonner Bridge Replacement Project. The Department of Transportation proposes to construct a bridge to replace the existing Bonner Bridge, demolish and remove the existing Bonner Bridge and improve NC 12 from the community of Rodanthe all the way to the Oregon Inlet. So really, why are we here tonight? Again, the main purpose of us being here tonight is to hear your comments. We're going to provide some information to let you know what we've been doing in the last year or two but we really want to hear from you the public. So, why are we here tonight? We say yeah, we're here to hear from you but why are we here tonight? We're going to talk a little bit about what has happened over the last couple of years since the completion of the last environmental report which was a Final Environmental Impact Statement that was completed in 2008. At that point we had a recommended alternative and we were sort of moving forward on the project. Since then, there have been several changes to the project. There are four key changes that I'm going to go over. All of those are covered in the Environmental Assessment. I'll show you right here. This right here is the first volume of a two volume set for the Environmental Assessments. This

document is what we've done over the last couple of years and its changes to the project. That's really what we're going to cover in general. I promise you I will not read the entire thing. I think it is just the first couple of chapters, I'm just kidding. I don't want to put you guys out. So we'll talk about the environmental assessment covering four key changes.

The first change is that we're not going to build a long bridge. We have eliminated the long bridge from consideration. The main reason is that we just cannot afford to build that long bridge alternative because that needs to be built at one time for it to be effective. We don't have the money to build that.

The second key change is that we made a slight change to the southern end of the new Bonner Bridge over the Oregon Inlet. Instead of building it where it connects right on top of the new bridge or the existing bridge, we've moved it a little bit to the west so it connects to NC 12 a little further west so that we can keep traffic on existing Bonner Bridge until the new Bonner Bridge is built and that way we can shift traffic over. We've worked with the US Fish and Wildlife Services on this the last couple of years.

The third is we've changed all of our design plans or we've changed some of our design plans in the Rodanthe area to specifically miss the Rodanthe Historic District in the Chicamaconoco Life Saving Station. So we've got some changes to the alternative that were impacting on those resources.

The fourth is, we have a new preferred alternative. As I mentioned before, we have a preferred alternative in the Final EIS, I'm just going to call it FEIS for short. We have a new preferred alternative which essentially has phased the project such that we will build the Bonner Bridge as Phase I, and then for the remainder of phase or phases of the project we're leaving open at this time while putting in place the management plan whereby we will look at the remaining project area and as needed, we will make decisions to basically solving any problems that happen in that area. So that's basically the four key changes. I'm going to go into a little more detail on those as we get in a little bit further in the presentation. I did kind of want to get you the highlights on that right now.

A couple of other things, the maps that we have on display tonight, we also had those at a couple of locations listed on your handout on page 1. Those have been there for the last 30 days and will continue to be there until the end of the comment period August 9. Excuse me, they are also located, the Environmental Assessment and the project maps are located on our website of the project, www.ncdot.org/projects/bonnerbridgerepairs , that's one word, and then if you basically scroll down to the bottom of that webpage and the replacement project is located there.

So, how do you participate? How do we get your comments? I talked about one way which is to come up to speak tonight. I will also make a note that everything that we're talking about tonight, my presentation and any of the comments that we get are being recorded and will be transcribed for the project records. So your comments will go directly into the project record. The other couple of ways that you can comment is, if you look on the back of your handout, there's a comment sheet. Then you just rip that off and

you can fill that out tonight and leave that on your way out. Or, you can mail it to the address listed there. Or, you can email me. My email address is listed there. I don't know if I mentioned it before but you can fax them as well if you choose to. So there are numerous ways that you can send in your comment. They all weigh the same. Some people think , 'Oh I got to come up here and I got to speak in front of everybody or they won't take me seriously'. We really do look at all the comments. We really do go in and we really do listen. I know that comes as a shock for folks that have been dealing with the Department for years, but we really do.

On that note, what's done with the input? What do we do with this? At the conclusion of our comment period which again is August 9th, we would like to have all the comments in by August 9th. At the conclusion of our comment period, we take all the comments, the project team looks at all the comments and we address them and we make changes to the project that are appropriate based on these comments that we hear and weigh it against what can and can't be done on the project. That project team goes through and you have what is called a Post Hearing meeting. If anybody is interested and wants copies from that meeting, we will go through all the comments and you'll see how we address those comments. If anybody wants copies of that, send me an email or put that on your comment sheet that you want those.

So in terms of this project, I'm sure everyone is wondering, what happens next? Where do we go from here and that sort of thing. Again, we'll address all the comments. What we're looking for her with the environmental assessment is have any other changes been made to the project in the last couple of years? Are any of those changes significant? If they are significant, then what we'll need to do is go back and do a supplemental environmental impact statement. Then when that is complete, we can do a Record of Decision, which is our final design copy. This is a lot of legal stuff, a lot of documents and a lot of paperwork. I know from the general public, it's a lot of seemingly red-tape. That's the process we'll go through. If we find that there or no significant changes that are shown in the environmental assessment do not or are not significant, then we will go ahead and complete the record of decision. Once the record of decision is complete, within 6 months we plan on finalizing a contract for final design and construction and it will be called design build. A firm will actually do the final design and construct the bridge in a single contract. So the first thing that firm will do is complete the final design plans for the project, they will apply for and receive permits for the project, and then construction will begin. While the final design plans are being completed, NCDOT will begin a comprehensive coastal monitoring program. This is the monitoring program I was talking about. It will look at the entire project area and see what we need to focus on next and start working on that part of that.

So project funding on this is 80% Federal and 20% is State funding match. The schedule, I talked about that a little bit before. As soon as we can get the ROD done, within 6 months we hope to have the contract awarded for final design and construction.

Let's talk real quickly about the purpose and need of the project. I'm just going to run quickly through this. The purpose of the project is to: provide a new means of access from Bodie Island to Hatteras Island for its residents, businesses, services, and tourists

prior to the end of Bonner Bridge's service life; provide a replacement crossing that takes into account natural channel migration expected through year 2050 and provides the flexibility to let the channel move; and to provide a replacement crossing that will not be endangered by shoreline movement through the year 2050.

So, let's go into a little more detail on the Preferred Alternative, the new Preferred Alternative. The new Preferred Alternative, as I mentioned before, actually looks at phasing this project and making a decision on Phase I to replace the existing Bonner Bridge and again we'll show you the map in just a second. And for the second, or I should say future phase or phases cover the remaining project area. What we have open for this is that all of the alternatives of the five alternatives that we looked at that were our detailed study alternatives, in the final environmental impact statement, those are still sort of on the table and as part of this Coastal Monitoring Program, we will look at those options and in the future decide which pieces or parts or whole that we will do and in what order and funding sources and that sort of thing for those other options.

A key point is during these additional phases, there will be additional opportunities for the public to comment and be involved in each of those. So we will have an opportunity for those. But this alternative does allow for us to go ahead and construct Phase I which is replacing the Oregon Inlet Bridge, the existing Bonner Bridge. These are the other study alternatives that were listed; the Nourishment Alternative, the Road North Bridge South Alternative, and the All Bridge, and the Phased Approach/ Rodanthe Bridge Alternative. So all of those are sort of on the table for the additional phases of the project.

The other piece that we talked about a few minutes ago, is the Pamlico Sound Bridge Corridor being dropped. The cost of the Pamlico Sound Bridge Corridor is over a billion dollars. That cost would have to be more or less done at one time in order for this to be feasible. We can't just build a piece of the bridge and have that actually be usable. So we looked at this and feel like the alternatives are not practical, feasible, or prudent and it eliminated that from further study. Another reason that we look at eliminating this is the public access to the refuge, the Pea Island National Wildlife Refuge, is limited to a single point on the southern end.

So the other key change that we were talking about a few minutes ago is the design change to the Oregon Inlet Bridge. Again we can point this out a little bit, on this one at least everybody can see, on this southern most end or western most end, it depends on how you're looking at it where we will connect to NC 12. Again, we've moved the connection to NC 12 a little further west so that we can replace the existing Bonner Bridge while leaving traffic on that.

The fourth key point is that we changed three alternatives, the Road North/ South Alternative, the All Bridge Alternative, and the Phased Approach/ Rodanthe Bridge Alternative. We've moved where the new bridge on those alternatives would connect into NC 12 so that it does not impact the, or actually does not go inside the Rodanthe Historic District. You can kind of see that there. So real quickly, you've probably seen some of these throughout the course of the project but the current bridge or the proposed

bridge characteristics we're looking at two 12-foot lanes with 8-foot shoulders and bicycle safe rails for the bicycles. We are going to maintain access to recreational facilities at both north and south ends of the bridge. This is something that is a little bit new, we are committing to provisions for fishing at the Oregon Inlet Bridge. We don't know what that's going to be at this point. We are actually looking for info on that so we are committing to putting those provisions in place but we haven't made a decision on that so certainly tonight would be a good opportunity or the 30-day comment period would be a good opportunity to comment on that. Then the other piece of this is the navigation height of 75 feet is open for a distance of 3300 feet.

Project costs. On page 16 of your handout there is a figure. I will do you the honor of not reading through all of that. I apologize because we had some printer error. It was actually supposed to be rotated so that it would be big enough for somebody like me to actually read it. It's a little small. If anybody has any issues with that, you can let me know and we can send you a bigger copy of it if you have trouble reading it. But, those are the project costs, the project cost estimates. For the Bonner Bridge Phase I itself, we are looking at a range of $216 to $315 million. On these two tables here, we have kind of a low and high cost. What that does is that takes in account some of the items that we are not 100% sure of right now. There's a lot of variability out there. For instance, the rate of erosion for nourishment sand we can't guaranteed what that's going to be, what final dredging needs are going to be, what the construction material cost and availability… there is some variability in that … permit conditions, there's some variability in here. So what we've done is kind of got a low and a high cost and quickly it will fall somewhere in between there with some of the various options. The Preferred Alternative which is the Parallel Bridge Corridor NC 12 Transportation Management Plan Alternative (Inaudible)… said, it's kind of a mouthful, but that is Preferred Alternative. It's consistent with the Dare County Land Use Plan.

I'll talk about Right-of-Way really quickly. For the Phase I, we're not looking right now at having to purchase any land from private property owners, but that's for Phase I. For later phases, there may be some property that needs to be purchased, depending on what option that we choose within which alternative, depending on how that goes. But if we do end up purchasing Right of Way, after the final design, and forgive me for reading this, but this is some of the legal requirements. After the final design of any future phase is complete, the proposed right of way limits will be staked on the ground. If you are an affected property owner, a Right of Way agent will contact you and arrange a meeting. The agent will explain the plans and advise you as to how the project will affect you. The agent will inform you of your rights as a property owner. If a permanent right-of-way is required, professionals who are familiar with real estate will evaluate or appraise your property. The evaluations or appraisals will be reviewed for completeness and accuracy; then, the Right-of-Way Agent will make a written offer to you. The current market value of the property at its highest and best use when appraised will be offered as compensation. The Department of Transportation must: 1) treat all owners and tenants equally; 2) fully explain the owner's rights; 3) pay just compensation in exchange for property rights; and 4) furnish relocation advisory assistance. We do have Right-of-Way Agents available tonight if anyone has any questions.

If you are a relocatee, that is, if your residence or business is to be acquired as part of the project, and that would be for part of the future phases, additional assistance in the form of advice and compensation is available. You will be provided with assistance on locations of comparable housing and/or commercial establishments, moving procedures, and moving aid. Moving expenses may be paid to you. Additional monetary compensation is available to help homeowners cope with mortgage increases, increased value of comparable homes, closing cots, etc. A similar program is available to assist business owners. The Right-of-Way Agent will explain this assistance in greater detail.

If you need additional information, my contact information is in here. Again, we talked about the project website. It has a wealth of information up there. We also have a Project Hotline with an 800 number that you can call and ask for John Page or Bobby Norburn and just mention the Bonner Bridge Replacement Project.

The next couple of pages, page 12, 13, 14, and 15, list the impacts to both the human environment which is y'all and the natural environment for both the Oregon Inlet Bridge and… the Oregon Inlet Bridge is page 12 and 13… and for the Rodanthe area which is pages 14 and 15. I won't go through all this in detail, but if you have any questions certainly see me or contact us and we'll be glad to go through any of the questions you may have. What it actually shows is a comparison of the Preferred Alternative that was in the FEIS in 2008 and the Environmental Assessment that is out here right now. So you can kind of see those and compare it to all of the changes that have been shown.

I also have a "Frequently Asked Questions" sheet which is actually four pages in here attached to this. Again, I won't go through that, I'll let you read. But that covers some of the frequently asked questions so you're welcome to look through that and let us know if you have any questions.

The next sheet, just before our Comment Sheet, is called a Title VI Public Involvement Form. If you don't mind filling that out for us before you head out today. This is voluntary. We do ask for you zip code and street name, if you don't mind giving it. But you can certainly just give us the zip code because we're trying to get some demographics information that will help us with our Title VI compliance. Again, this is completely voluntary but this would be helpful to us so I would appreciate that if you would fill that out.

Okay, so this is where it gets really interesting because I'm going mobile. I'm going to hit the highlights on our maps here. Okay. We have a couple of maps here and as I mentioned before, we have made changes to a couple of the alternatives and it comes with the maps. What I'm showing today are the three maps in which there were changes that we've seen since the completion of the Final Environmental Impact Statement. I'm going to run through those and rather than going through all the other maps, if you would like to see them, they are still posted in the hall out here for all the other pieces and parts of the alternatives and options that we have for further phases of the project. None of those maps have changed since the Final Environmental Impact Statement was completed. If you came to the earlier hearing, what you'll see on those

maps is the same thing. But certainly those are available for you to look at and available online. If you have any questions, please let us know.

Real quickly, the way the maps are put together, we have several colors on here and I'm just going to run quickly through them. Buildings are brown. Existing right-of-way, which is property that DOT already owns, is dark green. Light green is proposed right-of-way; that's right-of-way that we need to acquire for the project. The light green with slashes in it are easements that we would buy both temporary and permanent. The existing roadway is in gray with slashes through it; that's roadway that we're going to remove as part of this project. Orange is roadway that we're going to resurface as part of the project. Yellow is proposed roadway, this is proposed new roadway that we have as part of the project. Red are proposed structures, essentially bridges for this project. Existing bridges that will be eliminated, or will be retained, excuse me, are candy cane striped. It's basically red and white striped. Red and black stripe are structures/the bridge that we will be removing as part of this project. Blue is lakes, rivers, streams, and oceans. The utility easements are purple. The cemeteries are purple with slashes. Historic property boundaries are red dashed and property lines are black dashed. The proposed right-of-way line for the project is a black straight line with RW sort of in a circle. So that's what we've got on this. I'm not going to go into a whole lot of detail on these maps but this does show, this particular map shows the changes that we've made on the southern end of the proposed southern end of the new Bonner Bridge. Again, we can leave the existing Bonner Bridge in place until the new one is constructed. Traffic can stay on that one. Once the new bridge is constructed, we can move traffic on to the new one and demolish and remove the existing bridge. That's what's shown on this one.

The next map here shows both the Parallel Bridge Corridor, Road North/Bridge South and the All Bridge Alternative. Both of those two alternatives, again, these would be options for later phases of the project. We talked about before where it's going to connect. The new bridge proposed in those two alternatives is going to connect to the north of the Rodanthe Historic District with a new connection there. That's basically the change that we've made on this particular one since the Final Environmental Impact Statement was completed in 2008.

If nothing else, me walking around keeps you a little bit more awake than that boring stuff I went through a minute ago. This is the map for the Phased Approach Rodanthe Bridge Alternative. Again, we have made changes to this alternative to end the bridge prior to the Rodanthe Historic Distict. That's the main change that you'll see here since the completion of the Final Environmental Impact Statement. The remaining information on here is essentially what you saw before.

So those are the three maps that you would be most concerned with if you came to our earlier hearing. So, I have rambled on long enough. This is the part that you've all been waiting for. We need to give y'all a chance to speak. So again, I'm going to run through the way this is going to work. We have the microphone set up here. What I'll do is, I'll call everybody's name. If you would bring me the sign in sheets, I would appreciate that. What I'm going to do is go through the folks that have signed in and then those who haven't signed in. If you would come up and please speak directly into the microphone,

please say your name and address for the record before you get started and then you'll have 3 minutes to speak. We have these nifty little lights up here. When the light starts blinking red, your 3 minutes are over and if you would, sort of wrap things up at that point. Again, if you have a little bit more to say after everyone else has had an opportunity, you're welcome to come up again and I'll give everybody and opportunity at that point.

Some things to keep in mind about the comments tonight. Please remember that everyone's opinions are valid despite the fact that you completely disagree with it. Please be courteous. Give everyone an opportunity to speak. Give them; afford them the opportunity that you would like for yourself. So, give everyone an opportunity to be heard. Also, this is not a vote. So if everybody up here says raise your hand if you want this bridge or don't want this bridge, or we want to do this or we want to do that, this is not a vote. We are here to gather your comments but we're not voting on anything today. This is not a popular referendum, as it says in our handout. So that's basically how the proceedings are going to go for the remainder of tonight. Again, if you would, come up, state your name and address for the record. Please do speak in the microphone and remember that we are recording this so again, you've got to speak in the microphone so that we can get all your comments because again, they are important to us.

Jamille do I need to turn this on?

Jamille Robbins: It should be on.

Moderator: Okay, I don't want y'all to be a guinea pig so I figure I'll test it first. I'd hate for the first person to be a guinea pig on here. Our first speaker tonight is Raymond Sturza.

Raymond Sturza: I told you I would get the opportunity to introduce myself. Thank you Drew. I'd like to say, "Good Evening" to everyone and say that my name is Ray Sturza. I'm the Mayor of the town of Kill Devil Hills, North Carolina and my address is 601 West Sopple Street in Kill Devil Hills.

I want to start tonight by thanking the Department of Transportation for it's steadfast determination to see that the replacement of Herbert C. Bonner Bridge is one day a reality. I would be remiss if I didn't offer a special note of appreciation to both Stan White and his predecessor RV Owens, and probably RV's predecessor for their steadfast determination to see that this replacement bridge becomes a reality.

Unfortunately, I have to say that I fear your steadfast determination has not seen its final test and I encourage you tonight to rededicate yourselves because it's been a long time. Rededicate yourselves to see that this essential link to and from Hatteras Island until its completion. Some of you here tonight might be wondering, why is the Mayor of Kill Devil Hills here? Why should he concern himself with the Bonner Bridge? To that I say, every mayor in North Carolina should be concerned about the Bonner Bridge tonight.

Yes, I share concerns about the safety and the welfare of anyone that lives on Hatteras Island who depends on that bridge for access to their home. And yes, I share the need, as do my fellow citizens everywhere not just in Kill Devil Hills for access to the natural beauty and recreational facilities of our national seashore. So yes, I'm concerned. But more importantly I'm here tonight to express my concern for our country. I've watched with complete and utter disbelief as Federal agencies and third party litigation oriented interest groups have crippled the permit process with endless studies and re-studies. All the while, costs have risen and the day we all dread when the existing bridge becomes too dangerous to pass grows ever closer. We all know that's what's going on.

The need to replace the Herbert C. Bonner Bridge is not rooted on some ideological game board. We're not dealing with artificial money or monopoly money here tonight. We have safety and economic welfare of our friends and neighbors at stake here tonight with this issue.

I'm going to conclude by simply stating what so many of us have known for so long. Let's get on with it. To paraphrase our President, and I'm not going to say it quite the way he did, but to paraphrase our his frustration with the situation in the gulf. I'm going to conclude by saying LET'S JUST BUILD THE PREFERRED ALTERNATIVE, the short bridge right there next to where the old one is and let's get started as soon as possible.

Drew, thank you for being here tonight. Thank you for the opportunity to share these comments.

Moderator: Thank you Mr. Sturza. Mayor Sturza. The next speaker will be James Fletcher.

James Fletcher: James Fletcher, I live in Mann's Harbor. I represent the commercial fishermen through the United National Fisherman's Association. I've got a couple of questions. I'll fill in as long as the 3 minutes last.

Number 1 – Where is the title search for this property? Fish & Wildlife have run their mouth saying they have an interest there. If you look at the land taken for the Cape Hatteras National Seashore (Inaudible), if DOT does a direct title search, you will find out that property is part of the Cape Hatteras National Seashore Park. So why are we letting the help, which is US Fish & Wildlife, even open their mouths? Tell them shut up, go home and ask National Park Service to manage the property that they own.

Second – Where is the study for a tunnel? Why hasn't a tunnel been considered? According to the Corps of Engineers, the crossing only needs to be 2400 feet. Fifty foot deep, 2400 feet for allowing the water (Inaudible …) is what the Corps of Engineers is saying. So the question is why haven't we studied the tunnel? The cost will be … oh it cost too much. If you look around the world, a tunnel project that last 70 years equals out. A little bit more cost in construction, a little bit less cost long term. But, on 2400 feet against what's being proposed that's the question.

Now I got a question down here. Who speaks for the 30 or more people that have lost their lives in Oregon Inlet because of the way this bridge was built for our use? Nobody thought about the commercial fishermen having to go through it. Every body built the bridge in '62, and I want to mention the man's name John Corbett because the meetings in the late '50's he was the one that told DOT that the pilings were not deep enough in the proposed bridge as it went on. Now this document on page 9 shows a block segment of the bridge. Rather than building the bridge with these block segments, make the causeway to where the tunnel starts. If the right thing is done, you will find out that on the north side of Oregon Inlet, it is private property and not park service property. So DOT can look at that.

Then on the bottom of page 4, back in the document, again, they say if Fish & Wildlife would allow it, then they would allow the Terminal Groin to stay in there. As I say, we do not need to be dealing with Fish & Wildlife. DOT does not need to be dealing with Fish & Wildlife. If they will check the deeds, they will find out that Cape Hatteras Seashore owns the property and I ask them to please (…Inaudible …).

Moderator: Thank you Mr. Fletcher. The next speaker, Jennifer Frost.

Jennifer Frost: I'm Jennifer Frost from Nags Head. I just wanted to say, and I won't take anyone else's time, to congratulate you for the short bridge and please let's have it done by Thanksgiving. Thank you.

Moderator: Thank you Ms. Frost. The next speaker is Robin Mann.

Robin Mann: Thank you Drew and I support Jennifer. Good evening, my name is Robin Mann and I am here representing the Outer Banks Chamber of Commerce and its 1000+ members in Currituck, Hyde and Dare Counties.

The Outer Banks Chamber of Commerce supports the Short Bridge Alternative as now stated and believes it is the only physical, responsible, and viable option available. The construction of this replacement bridge has been discussed, analyzed and studied for over 20 years. The cost of ongoing repairs have continued to mount at an alarming rate while estimates of construction of the new bridge have escalated dramatically. The timely construction of this bridge is vital to maintaining safe, efficient, and reliable access and egress to and from Hatteras and Ocracoke Islands. If the existing bridge reaches a critical point of just repair before the new bridge is completed, it will have a devastating economic effect not only on Hatteras and Ocracoke Islands but to all of Dare County, northeast North Carolina, and the entire state.

The Bonner Bridge is a critical transportation link to and from Hatteras and Ocracoke Islands and is important to maintaining the economic and social health, public safety, business and commerce, tourism, and quality of life of residents on Hatteras and Ocracoke Islands. The Chamber Membership strongly supports the timely construction of the short bridge to ensure the current level of paved access to the north end of Hatteras Island, an important recreational resource for fishing, wind surfing and beach enjoyment for visitors and our residents and the only access to the Historic Coast

Guard Station on the south side of Oregon Inlet. The Bonner Bridge is also the link that allows the citizenry of the entire United States access to their Cape Hatteras Island, Cape Hatteras National Seashore and recreational area.

The Outer Bank Chamber of Commerce urges NC Department of Transportation to begin construction of the bridge in such a manner as to be economically feasible, capable of being constructed within the necessary time frame to maintain full transportation to and from Hatteras Island and which maintains the full level of access to the entire area south of Oregon Inlet and is enjoyed by the public today. We urge you when you complete these three workshops and these two public hearings to please make this your top priority. Keep it in the forefront for all the residents and all the state of North Carolina. Thank you.

Moderator: Thank you Ms. Mann. The next speaker …*(humming noise coming from audio system)*… Okay we're going to try one more time. Okay, the next speaker is ,,, I'm sorry I can't read the handwriting …It looks like Sharp. Okay. Ken Sharp. I'm sorry I didn't see the "r" in there. Ken Sharp Jr.

Ken Sharp Jr.: I appreciate the opportunity. My name is Ken Sharp. I reside in Manteo with my family. I spent 25 years on the Outer Banks. I'm a proud citizen. I'm proud of that bridge that is there now.

I want to thank everyone for the hospitality here. Tonight I learned a lot. You know I've been trying to educate myself as much as possible to get just an idea of where everything's going with this, considering it's been 25 years and we were discussing jetties back then when I was a fisherman but I'm not a fisherman anymore. But in real life, we get things done. You know, we negotiate, we get it done. It's pretty simple. If you spend any time with the public on this beach, good people, and you talk to them about how they can up their business, how I can up my business … I have a company, construction company. I negotiate more customers every day. It's not a perfect science. It's not something that you cut off your nose to spite your face either. You got to make it happen to get it done. You know, this is urgent. It's a "2". I don't know how to go any farther than that. I drive over the bridge and that bridge is like a part of my eyes. It's part of my family. I spent 20 years going under that thing. I saw more things than probably, you know, the majority of people here. I would be safe to say it seems that going on, on the top of it as much as go under it. You know there's a life, there's a city, there's people that travel under that bridge when you're sleeping. Many good men, many, many good men have lost their lives. You know, I just go back to the same thing, why do we have to talk about it. It's a "2. It's not complicated. You know we can't continue to litigate and push this limit like we always push. You know 25 years ago, I sit there and think to myself, we talk about Jennings – it didn't happen. R.V Owens. If I sat here tonight and talked about it to everyone, I could spend 3 hours probably. I could get all my friends to come in here with me and they wouldn't want to. You know why? Because they are so tired of waiting. They wait. We wait for everything around here. But anyways, we get carried away.

The environmental groups, we're through, we're done. It's over. You've done your piece and we care about the environment. My wife might go to the beach, the birds, and water and everything. We need a bridge. You've got people traveling up and down. What happens one day when one car breaks down with a tire and three tractor trailers come over that thing full of gas? Has anyone ever thought about that? Is it strong enough to hold that? We don't know, I mean, we don't . So I for one don't want to be on that bridge when it falls in. You know I saw the other side when it fell in and I left, you know. I moved to the mainland. People that cross that bridge they need a link to the mainland. They need something that people know now they're going to rent because they have enough going on with the economy as it is. Now they have to worry about whether folks are going to come to their motels, fishing boats and everything. You know, we need a bridge.

I know the commissioners are doing the best they can for us; I appreciate that. I appreciate the opportunity tonight. I had a lot of other stuff written down but my emotions took over. Just build me a bridge. Please. Thank you.

Moderator: Thank you Mr. Sharp. The next speaker is Rodney Midgett.

Rodney Midgett: Thank you sir. I'm Rodney Midgett , I'm a resident of (…inaudible…) and I'm Sheriff of Dare County.

While the economic security of Hatteras Island and Dare County are important issues to consider, public safety must be the primary concern when considering the replacement of Bonner Bridge. As an elected public safety official, I believe this is the paramount issue. Bonner Bridge serves in the central role of providing emergency access EMS, fire service, and law enforcement agencies. It's also a vital resource for hurricanes and emergency evacuations. Motorists depend on Bonner Bridge for the safe access to and from the Hatteras Island. The commercial vehicles rely on it to deliver needed supplies. If load limits or one way traffic restrictions are needed in the future because of deteriorating condition of the bridge, I'm concerned that our already overburdened Sheriff's Office will not be able to provide adequate staffing to police necessary restrictions on a 24-hour basis. Additional hurricane and emergency evacuation would be impaired.

As Dare County Sheriff, I'm deeply concerned about what would happen if the Bonner Bridge were to fail. My first concern is for lost of life and risk of serious injury that could occur near a bridge failure and the subsequent search and rescue operations. Power lines running underneath the Bonner Bridge provide the electrical service for all Hatteras Island. In the event of the bridge failure, these lines would be vulnerable. Any disruption of these services from Hatteras Island would have a direct impact on crime and public safety. Furthermore, it would impede business operations and have life threatening consequences for those with serious medical issues or who are depended upon life supporting equipment.

Emergency ferry service in the aftermath of a bridge failure would not be capable of handling a large amount of essential EMS, fire service, and law enforcement

traffic that will be needed. Furthermore, hurricane and other evacuations will be severely hampered. This poses a significant threat to local safety since emergency ferry service would have to cease due to severe weather conditions, public safety would be further compromised. During such time residents and visitors would be helpless without any type of emergency transportation. The back of Bonner Bridge, the Sheriff's office and other public safety offices would face serious challenges maintaining adequate staff readiness on a continuous basis. Many public safety employees rely on the Bonner Bridge to report for duty. Without it, personnel levels would be compromised and further threaten public safety.

As Dare County Sheriff, I support the new preferred alternative outlined in the Environmental Assessment dated May 7, 2010. I endorse it because it provides for immediate replacement of the Bonner Bridge. This is a public safety necessity. In my professional opinion, it is imperative that the Bonner Bridge be replaced as quickly as possible and without further environmental studies or delay. Failure to replace the bridge in an expeditious manner fully jeopardizes public safety.

Moderator: Thank you Sheriff Midgett. The next speaker is Bruce Mathews.

Bruce Matthews: Good evening, my name is Bruce Matthews. I'm a resident of Manteo and I'm Vice President of Surf and Sound Realty. We're a property manager on Hatteras Island.

We manage approximately 475 vacation homes. Of those homes, we have probably ten to eleven thousand reservations a year. Each reservation consists of 8 to 10 people. Quick math will tell you that almost one hundred thousand guests come to Hatteras Island to our vacation homes every year. Those guests depend on that bridge for safe passage. We as a state, as a county, as residents of Hatteras Island, and as a people, we owe those people safe passage. That's our responsibility. That's the Department of Transportation responsibility.

We fully support the NCDOT recommended Short Bridge Managed Approach. We only ask that as you look down the road at all the different phases, that when the time comes that it doesn't take 18 years to make a decision on each phase. We need the bridge now and we need actions on those phases as the situation occurs in a timely manner. We thank you for all you've done and we look forward to a new bridge. Thank you.

Moderator: Thank you Mr. Matthews. And if y'all would, keep your comments down so that we can make sure everybody can be heard up here.

The next speaker is Warren Judge.

Warren Judge: Thank you Drew and thank you everybody for coming out. Thank all of you who have spoken so far as well as all of you who will speak. I'm Warren Judge and I live in Kitty Hawk. I chair the Dare County Board of Commissioners.

A famous quote from Yogi Berra, 'It looks like this is déjà vous all over again'. We have been down … I see now I've got friends and it's almost dating back 10 years. We've watch each other's kids grow up while we were trying to build this bridge. The Dare County Board of Commissioners on behalf of the residents and visitors of Dare County, strongly believes that the Bonner Bridge needs immediate replacement as a matter of public safety and necessity. We support NCDOT's new preferred alternative outlined in the Environmental Assessment. We concur with the elimination of the Pamlico Sound Long Bridge Alternative in favor of the Transportation Management Plan for development of NC 12. We believe the Environmental Assessment does not have significant impacts requiring further study and delay and we recommend immediate construction of the bridge.

We believe that the new preferred alternative is a practical solution and it achieves two objectives. The Bonner Bridge is the lifeline that you've heard people speak well to this between Hatteras Island and the remainder of Dare County. It is our road on and off the island. Bridge inspections – there was a conditional assessment done in December of 2006 reported that due to the advance stages of deterioration, replacement of the Bonner Bridge within the next 10 years remains a necessity. Folks, any further delay in replacing the bridge only increases the risk to the general public. One may argue that this is not a good analogy but we all are reminded within the last 3 or 4 years, about the collapse of the bridge in Minneapolis. We certainly don't need a tragedy like that in the middle of this inlet on our bridge. Bonner Bridge is vital as you heard our Sheriff speak so eloquently to public safety as well as the economic and cultural historic and social well being of our community. We talk about the economy; Dare County and Hatteras Island represents 25% of the commerce of Dare County and 20% of the annual land taxes. Folks, we need Hatteras Island. We need that link.

I was one of the commissioners in office during Hurricane Isabel when Hatteras Village was separated by and inlet. Just being on duty during those times, you will realize the necessity of having a land link such as a bridge. It took the ferry almost 3 hours to make the route to make the travel from the emergency docking point to Hatteras Village. That's on way to run a community in today's world. It might have been great for our grandparents and those before us but life is changed. This feat of life is different now. The bridge is a necessity.

Dare County concurs as I said with the elimination of the Long Bridge. Please don't … somebody stopped me when I came in this morning earlier today and say, look I got this new idea how we can change the bridge and … Lord, folks, let's get on with them. We don't need them … This is repeating what we heard earlier. We don't need further studies. Mayor Sturza was so eloquent about that point, and I'll come back up later on. Thank you.

Moderator: Thank you Mr. Judge. The next speaker is Allen Burrus.

Allen Burrus: Good afternoon. I appreciate you being here again. I was sitting here thinking just a few moments ago. You know it seems like just yesterday when it

was 1963, we were riding across the bridge, (Inaudible) but who would have thought just 30 years later we would have been told that it was going to be replaced. Okay now 30 years have come and gone and that was 17years ago. Now we've waited 17 years and it still hasn't been replaced. I mean we've looked at all kinds of things and studied it over and over. I got a half a page here. But the fact remains that you cannot google any other bridge in America that you can find that it's been studied as much as this bridge has been studied and you want us to continue to study it again. It's the craziest thing I've ever seen. I mean look at it any way you want to look at it. It's been there 47 years. The road to it has been there since the '30's since they put Model T's on there and gone back and forth. Then a man named Jody Judd put a ferry across there in the '40's. So we've done everything that you can think about being done up and down those roads and affected everything that could be affected, any way you look at it. As the President and Congress are pushing to support environmentally plus cars and all that will be affected and expecting it to last than we've every affected it with even more cars than before with even more cars. Yet you expect us to study it again. The answer is "Hell No". We're over it. I live there.

My name is Allen Burrus. I live in Hatteras Village. I ran a grocery store that started in the 1800's by my great, great grandfather. I'm going to get buried and if God will in a cemetery that has people that have been there since the 1700's. We're just stunned by the thought that you want to study it again. I mean you've had EIS's, you've had supplements to the EIS's. You've had final things set up. You've tried to work with Fish & Wildlife. Hey, we've got a right of way through there. Build it on a right of way and get her done. Build the bridge. Thank you.

Moderator: Thank you Mr. Burrus. The next speaker is Jack Shea.

Jack Shea: Good evening everybody. I'm really pleased to see so many people here. It shows the interest we all have in getting this project done.

The current bridge, as I understand, they had a 30-year life expectation. I hope the next bridge will have a much more smaller life expectation. Since 1993, the Environmental Assessments began and it seems to be ongoing. We seem to be wrapping ourselves in red tape while we have still had this same new problem. Why on earth have we spent so much time and money since 1993 and not built a better bridge. We have seen these endless studies for a bridge project while residents and visitors have been traveling over this bridge which by the last assessment it was rated a "2" on a scale of 1 to 100 with 100 being the highest rating for safety. This accesses the southern part of Dare County. It's also an economic lifeline for our country. Let's expedite this bridge project, the preferred parallel bridge and let's cut through any more red tape.

For the record, my name is Jack Shea. I'm a Dare County Commissioner. I live in Sullivan Shores. Thank you very much.

Moderator: Thank you Mr. Shea. The next speaker is Beth Midgett.

Beth Midgett: I hope I'm tall enough. My name is Beth Midgett. I do live on Hatteras Island. I'm the Chair Person for the Citizens Action Committee to Replace Bonner Bridge Now.

Along with Dare County, our grass roots organization has for a very long time called for the immediate replacement of the ailing Bonner Bridge. We are committed to this as a matter of public safety. Built in 1963, this transportation lifeline to and from Hatteras Island only had a 30 year projected life span to the year of 1993. Since that deadline has passed and it was 13 years ago, a lot has happened but still now bridge. There have been over 16 steps of environmental studies, public hearings, evaluations and still now bridge. There have been supplements and even supplements to the supplemental studies. Still, no bridge.

A catastrophic bridge failure would be devastating to our community. Those that drag would drag their heels in the replacement of Bonner Bridge are playing Russian Roulette with the safety of our residents and visitors. We should not have to endure the risk and uncertainty of traveling every day on a structure that is slowly deteriorating and suffering a slow death. A bridge whose efficiency rating only scores a 2 or even a 4 out of 100 is truly vulnerable. The people who depend on the bridge for access to and from Hatteras and Ocracoke Islands deserve better and they deserve safer. The Bonner Bridge is our transportation lifeline. It represents the veins and the arteries of our community. It's vital to sustain our number one industry – tourism, and it's how millions of visitors each year are able to visit the Cape Hatteras National Seashore Recreational Area. Let there be no doubt that in the event of a bridge failure, the emergency ferry system would not be able to support this.

The Bonner Bridge is vital in many other ways. It is how our small family-owned businesses survive. And, it's the only link to our community that our community has the hospital, after-hour urgent care, kidney dialysis and other medical specialties unavailable on our isolated island. The Citizen Action Committee to Replace Bonner Bridge Now supports NCDOT's new preferred alternative. It's a workable compromise that would finally clear the way for immediate replacement with a parallel bridge. We further support the elimination of the Long Bridge Option as unrealistic and unable to be funded. We also support NCDOT's Transportation Management Plan for Highway 12. And finally, we believe the latest environmental assessment should be the last study ever needed. The previous FEIS along with the latest EA more than adequately demonstrate the range of impacts. There is not need for further environmental studies and delays. There is a no-need technology that is developed that is yet to be studied. There is no new knowledge about the environmental impact that has not already been reviewed over and over again. Now is the time to stop studying the bridge. Now is the time to start construction on a replacement bridge without further delay. This is imperative to public safety.

Unfortunately, as an organization, we've only had a few weeks to prepare for these public hearings which coincide with the very peak of our busy summer season. Now is when our community of small business owners must work 24-7 to make a living during the short summer season in order to sustain their family for the entire year. Yet

even during this busy time, our grassroots group of volunteers sacrifice time away from their businesses to reach out to our residents and visitors. They have hand collected the signed statements of over 1200 people who support NCDOT's new preferred alternative. In the midst of the summer heat these volunteers turned out to do a face to face and talk with people at fish fries, community events, church gatherings, grocery stores, local businesses, and door-to-door. These signed statements will be presented Thursday at the public hearing in Buxton.

In these written comments, people talk from the heart. They will tell you why the Bonner Bridge is important to each one of them. We, the people, are looking to you for immediate record of decision so construction can finally begin.

Moderator: Thank you Ms. Midgette. The next speaker is Diannalea Knight.

Diannalea Knight: Hi, I'm Diannalea Knight and I'm the Vice Chair of the Dare County Republican Party and we are also in support of the short bridge.

The Bonner Bridge and some of this information my husband who is a steel inspector and he took a look at this bridge and he was shocked that number one, it's still standing; and number two, that someone hasn't died on it; and number three, that we haven't built it years and years ago. The Bonner Bridge is now in its 16th year beyond the initial retirement date and is now rated a 2 out of 100 in the North Carolina Department of Transportation Assessment Report of 2006. I would imagine by now it's a number one. The report shows there is serious deterioration of the bridge's structure and support such as the ash do gurter concrete elimination exposed reinforcement steel on the under side of the bridge deck roadway; exposed pre-pressed strans in the ash do gurters that are severely corroded and heavily corrosion of structural steel components and barrions. That is just some of the deficiencies found there and there are many more. According to the same report, the estimated cost to repair the deficiencies found was on almost 43.5 million dollars. And by the way, it's only 20 million dollars more to build it that this state would have to bear.

Considering the deficiencies of the bridge, the safety of the people driving, the 5000 vehicles per day and double that during the summer, must be taken seriously. By seriously I mean, building the new bridge, connecting the two islands is a must and not a maybe. The economic impact would be severe if the traffic flow was interrupted since Hatteras Island counts for 20% of the taxable property values in Dare County that totals the 3.1 billion dollars and of course tourist dollars. Also, 95% of the Cape Hatteras National Seashore Recreational Area would be inaccessible to the public for which it was reserved in the first place.

Finally I'd like to say that one of the first persons said that we need a tunnel. I'm from Maryland, I was there when they built the tunnel up there. If you think there going to use some land here imagine if they built a tunnel. They've taken at least another 100% of that land. Thank you.

Moderator: Thank you Ms. Knight. The next speaker is Bob Steinburg.

Bob Steinburg: Good evening ladies and gentlemen. It's good to see so many people out, so many concerned citizens. This is an issue that is at the forefront of everybody's mind. It's down here and it's in the Outer Banks. I got my hair cut this morning in Edenton and the barber said to me, 'I just got back from a fishing trip and vacation with my family. And you know a couple of days, the weather was so hot that I actually went under the Bonner Bridge to fish seeking some shade. And while I was seeking some shade, a piece of concrete fell out from under the bridge. Fortunately, I wasn't underneath it.' But that's the kind of problem/problems that we have with this particular structure.

We have reached almost an Armageddon. This situation it seems to me is nothing more than a political football. This decision should have been made long ago and hasn't. When I say a political Armageddon, I say it from this standpoint; the State of North Carolina is in an absolutely terrible shape, fiscal shape. While we've been debating whether to build this bridge or not to build this bridge and how we're going to bridge it – build it, the cost is gone up and up and up so that now the portion of the cost that North Carolina is going to be responsible for and that is if it's done soon, who knows, it may be a few more years until the offing is over 60 million dollars. Sixty million dollar expenditure for a state that really doesn't have or can't even send the tax refunds back to the people. We're paying taxes in North Carolina on time. So this, we've got some problems folks. You know when you got down, and you talk to these people and most of you people have stories to share yourself. When I was down recently for the hearings and the beach closures and so forth; when you sit and you talk to these merchants, I rode over the ferry with a gentleman that has an oil truck. He was going from Hatteras over to Ocracoke and I was talking with him and he was saying … This man was literally in tears. I mean he was crying, he was afraid. The merchants are afraid that are both in Hatteras and Ocracoke. These folks they're desperate, they're scared and there is no time to wait.

Politicians have got to get off their keister, it must be an election year, because here we go again, we're talking about Bonner Bridge and then two more years when it's the next election, we'll be talking about the Bonner Bridge again. So, you know, my campaign slogan, I'm running for the NC House and this isn't a political pitch but this fits. Enough is enough. That's my slogan. That's the situation here whereas it relates to this particular issue and many others. These are good people who live down in Hatteras. They know how to treat the environment. They've been treating the environment well and saving the environment for the rest of us for hundreds of years. Yet, we're doing battle with these environmentalists that want to shut down more and more of the beach. And we're going to have issues with the bridge. It's one thing after the other and no wonder these people are scared. And folks every one of us to the man and woman, we need to ensure that the Department of Transportation gets this bridge done now. No more BS. No more Crap. It's time to build the bridge.

Moderator: Thank you Mr. Steinburg. The next speaker is Bob Ciardi. Do we have Joan Drextler?

Okay, well that's all I have as far as folks who have signed in to speak already. Is there anyone who would like to speak who has not spoken yet that would like to speak? If you would just raise your hands. Anyone? Okay, if there's not any one new who would like to speak, is there anyone who needs another 3 minutes who has already spoken? Anyone? Okay, and re-state your name if you would please sir.

Ken Sharp: I am Ken Sharpe again. I don't know if you got me. But what can you say? I wanted to make sure I said what I support and was in favor of. The wife and I are in favor of the preferred phase. We're definitely not in favor of the Pamlico Bridge Corridor.

I have a lot to offer. I really do. I spend a lot of time listening. I questioned when it was going to be my turn to come up and speak. You know you have a lot more going on in your life; get some (Inaudible), bills paid, business to run; then all of a sudden you realize it's your turn. It's your time to come and talk. I fished 25 years of my life, probably 20 of them here. You know, I don't have anything against the environmentalists. When I was younger, I don't know if I could have sat here and told you that. I really don't. You know, I've grown to learn to work with people and try to understand. I've had to learn a lot about the environment. I wasn't an environmentalist when I was younger. You know, it's not over. I promise you. Commissioners, I think you all had a chance to see how they operate. They're covert. It's not done. When they don't get the corridor, I read in the computer about how they're going to take it all back to court again. You know. I have this to ask from them. I don't know if anyone here is listening but it is going to go on record. I do have this to ask of them, please negotiate this one out. There's a lot of good people who have spent a lot of time trying to make this happen. For once, I mean once, just once, negotiate this one out and let it happen. Please let the bridge go. Please build the bridge. You know I think of (Inaudible…) there is some good people's houses around here. Like I said, I don't have any burdens or (Inaudible…) to burn with anyone but it would be nice. Thank you for your time.

Moderator: Thank you Mr. Sharp. Anyone else? Again, please restate your name.

Robin Mann: Again, my name is Robin Mann. I'm a resident of Mann's Harbor. I'm going to speak for myself now.

I lived on the Hatteras Island back in '89 –'90, I forget what year it was the barge hit the bridge. But, I was down there trying to make a living. It is a scary thing when the people can't get to you and you can't make a living. So at that time, I had to take the ferries back up to Nags Head and work two jobs to make a living. It's very scary. As you mentioned, they aught to be scary because it is a 2, or it was a 2 years ago. So you know, I don't understand why … like we said please don't do any more studies. Build the bridge. Every time I cross the bridge to Mann's Harbor I feel guilty because I have a beautiful bridge. And the people on Hatteras Island and Ocracoke deserve the same. The State of North Carolina, the people deserve the same. Thank you.

Moderator: Thank you Ms. Mann. Any further comments?

Diannalea Knight: I'm Diannalea Knight and now I'm going to speak for myself. I live in Manteo. I've only been down here 5 years but I'm a retired registered nurse from Baltimore Shock Trauma Center. We don't have a Shock Trauma Center here. And, if that bridge collapses and we don't build this bridge, every body here is going to pay the millions of dollars for the law suits. We all know that and we have got to build this bridge because we do not have a hospital that can withstand the type of injuries that would concur, that would occur excuse me, if this bridge collapses. I really, really hope that we stop studying this bridge. I think we've studied it enough. One of the things that I did was look at how many times that could have happened. Well, it is enough. There's too many times that we've looked at this and this is an unsafe bridge. If this was a 2 in 2006, you better believe it's a 1 or 0 in 2010. As a registered nurse, I don't want to be called upon when they say, 'Any body who's a nurse, any body who's a doctor or anybody who does this or does that, come down to the bridge and help save these people's lives'. That's what we need to be thinking about is people's lives that would die if this bridge dropped.

Moderator: Thank you Ms. Knight. Yes sir.

Jack Shea: Okay, again, my name is Jack Shea, Dare County Commissioner. I too was living here in the '90's when a barge hit the bridge and took out a span. I own an airplane and I was flying people down to Hatteras and back to Hatteras Island. I was on standby in case someone needed a medical emergency. I listed myself to be called so I could fly them up to Norfolk or wherever else they had to go. Believe me, those folks that I talked to down in Hatteras at that time were really panicked because of the fact that they were cut off. Yes we had ferries but they weren't very timely or reliable. You know I would hate to see that happen again. If this bridge were to collapse, we would have a major problem especially during the summer time with all kind of visitors here.

So, let's get this thing going and let's not have any more studies or any more lawsuits or any of those stall tactics. Thank you.

Moderator: Thank you Mr. Shea. Anyone else? Yes please.

Beth Midgett: I can't believe I'm voluntarily talking in public again. I took my shoes off because I am from Hatteras Island. I live in Hatteras Village. I have lived through or course the bridge straight in 1990 and of course being in Hatteras Village and endured a number of days without water and such because we stayed there during Isabel.

Speaking for myself now, I take it as a huge responsibility to be part of the bridge committee. As a parent and as a host for vacationers and for I think a responsible member of the community, you have no idea how stressful it is to wonder what will happen if something happens down there. We try to never think of the worse case scenario but we've had a couple of worse case scenarios happen to us. To think that we're even considering at this point of doing another set of environmental studies is unbelievable to me after what we've already been through. Please don't do this to us. You can't do this to us again down there. Please don't do it. Okay. Thank you.

Moderator: Thank you Ms. Midgett. Is there anyone else who would like to speak? Okay.

Well with that, I don't have anything else. So, I want to thank you for coming out tonight. We do appreciate your attendance. Please drive safely on the way home.

Hearing Adjourned.

Drew Joyner, Moderator
Human Environment Unit
July 6, 2010

Typed by Demorris N. Hukins