



Update: Long closures over but Portage Lake Lift Bridge project continues

April 23, 2015 -- Major mechanical work on the Portage Lake Lift Bridge and the accompanying long bridge closures are over, but the Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT) cautions motorists that ongoing maintenance work will continue to impact traffic in the Houghton-Hancock area through the summer.

Moving into the summer construction season, crews will be focusing on concrete and steel structural work, deck repair, painting, electrical work, LED lighting upgrades, installing additional security and operation cameras, replacing warning gates, adding barrier gates, and driving new pilings and rip-rap around a bridge pier. While intermittent, short-term 15- to 20-minute closures and some two-hour full closures of the bridge may still be scheduled at a later date, most of this work will only require lane closures.

Lane closures motorists should expect include:

- Through June 15: One lane closed in each direction.
- June 15 to Sept. 15 (peak summer travel season): Single-lane closures are planned, but they will be limited to between the hours of 6 p.m. and 6 a.m.
- Sept. 15 to Dec. 15: Single-lane closures are planned. Additionally, some closures of one side of the bridge will be necessary during this period. At these times, two-way traffic will be maintained on the open side of the bridge.

As part of the maintenance project, the M-26 northbound ramp onto the bridge in the city of Houghton has been closed since January. Traffic has been rerouted through downtown Houghton. That closure will remain in effect intermittently throughout the summer as needed for work on the bridge structure and decking.

Marine traffic will also be affected by the project. Bridge lifts for marine traffic will be restricted from April 15 to June 15 and again from Sept. 15 to Dec. 15. During those periods, the bridge will only perform on-the-hour openings for pleasure craft. There will be no lifts at the 8 a.m., noon and 5 p.m. hours. From June 15 to Sept. 15, the bridge will lift on demand for all marine traffic. The bridge will continue to lift on demand for commercial vessels throughout the shipping season.

This \$8.4 million project involves upgrades and preventive maintenance on the Portage Lake Lift Bridge between Houghton and Hancock. It started in mid-December 2014 and is scheduled to be completed in mid-April 2016.

For up to date information on this project go to the list of statewide lane closures at www.michigan.gov/drive. Follow MDOT's Superior Region on Twitter at: www.twitter.com/MDOT_UP.

Scan this code with your smartphone for a direct link to the project website.



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